

Nigeria - Conflict

ETS User Feedback Survey results

Survey period 30/07/18 to 26/08/18

Since November 2016, the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS)¹ has been providing vital communications services in North-East Nigeria to enable humanitarian on the ground to carry out their jobs efficiently and safely, ultimately assisting more people and saving more lives.

The ETS in Nigeria, led by the Ministry of Communications and co-led by the World Food Programme (WFP), is responding with government, private sector and humanitarian organisations to ensure a coordinated response.



After providing services to over 1,200 humanitarian in 2018, the ETS conducted a User Feedback Survey in August 2018 to assess the quality of the services available to the entire humanitarian community. The results will help the ETS to identify areas of improvement to continue maintaining high quality communications services where needed.

Overview and Methodology

The survey comprised 10 questions and was distributed on 30 July 2018 to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the local ETS Working Group, Global ETC partners, Internet users in Bama, Dikwa, Gwoza and Maiduguri registered in WIDER – an Ericsson Response tool used to manage and distribute Internet connectivity- and to the wider response community in Nigeria through the ETC social media channels

¹ In Nigeria, the humanitarian community is operating under a “sector approach”. The Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS). was officially activated in November 2016.

and WFP and OCHA situation reports and other Information Management (IM) products. During frequent field missions to the humanitarian hubs, the ETS team encouraged users on the ground to participate in the survey.

Although the initial deadline of the survey was 19 August 2018, the ETS extended the deadline for one additional week to allow additional humanitarians to share their feedback.

203 humanitarians responded to the survey. The majority of respondents represented United Nations (UN) agencies (54%) and international and local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (43%).

Key Findings

ETS Communications Services

The ETS User Feedback Survey resulted in an overall user satisfaction rate of 93,6% across the core ETS services (Internet connectivity and security telecommunications-related services) provided in North-East Nigeria. The survey highlighted:

- **88,82%** satisfaction rate for **Internet** services.
- **95,45%** satisfaction rate for **security telecommunications services**.
- **96,61%** satisfaction rate for **push-to-talk satellite-based voice** services.
- **94,11%** satisfaction rate for **radio training** services.
- **93,22%** satisfaction rate for **radio programming** services.

Respondents indicated that ETS Internet connectivity is the most-used ETS service across North-East Nigeria, namely in Bama, Dikwa, Gwoza, Maiduguri, Monguno and Ngala. While 68.8% of the respondents accessed ETS Internet connectivity, 23.35% have used ETS security telecommunications services. After Internet and security telecommunications, push-to-talk satellite-based voice solution and radio training were the third and fourth most-accessed services – 13.85% and 13.28% respectively².

ETS Coordination and Information Management services

- 30% of the respondents confirmed their attendance to the local ETS meetings in Maiduguri and/or received updates from the ETS during the Logistics Sector Working Group meetings. Over 95% of the respondents to this question were satisfied with the frequency of the meetings, topics discussed and availability of the ETS team.

² Please note that respondents could rate all the ETS services they had accessed (one or more). Thus, these percentages should not be read as a total sum.

- 26% of the respondents of the respondents were aware of the ETS Information Management products produced regularly (services maps, factsheets, situation reports, infographic, minutes...). Almost 99% of those were satisfied with the quality of the ETS Information Management products.
- 59% of the respondents confirmed they have visited the ETCluster.org website. The ETS survey was extensively circulated among close to 2,000 users and partners in North-East Nigeria while most of them are exclusively users of ETS services, not directly involved in the ETS response.

The relatively low results on the Coordination and IM services might be a consequence of most of the respondents not being directly engaged in the ETS response. The ETS is addressing this gap by displaying Information Management products on the ETS activities and services in all humanitarian hubs and participating in local Working Group meetings in Maiduguri to ensure not only IT personnel but the wider humanitarian community is up-to-date on the latest ETS developments.

Additional Feedback

The ETS received the following additional comments / feedback. After each point, the ETS provided an explanation:

- Most of the comments received were regarding the **ETS network**, a possible **increase the bandwidth** in the humanitarian hubs as well as **expanding the coverage range**:
 - *"Propose to have back-up connectivity solutions";*
 - *"Increase the Internet capacity and allow partners into the Hub not on restricted timings";*
 - *"Allow Team-viewer";*
 - *"Establish facility/services so teams can have conference calls, webinars especially in areas that have no GSM coverage. This can allow us to provide capacity building via technology to many humanitarian workers in the field who really need this"*
 - *"Internet services should be always available".*

The ETS acknowledges the challenges experienced by users of its Internet services especially in the field hubs and is in frequent contact with the hubs managers to provide quick remote support. To complement the existing solar system in place for ETS radio infrastructure and overcome fuel shortages affecting the generators' power supply at the hubs, the ETS is planning to deploy a hybrid power solution to ensure ETS services are available 24/7. The assessment mission to gather the requirements to develop the hybrid power solution took place in July-August 2018 (at the time of the survey being circulated). In addition, the ETS is working on the deployment of a second satellite terminal at the humanitarian hubs as a back-up solution to ensure no connectivity downtime is affecting humanitarian activities.

Given the high number of comments received on increasing the bandwidth in the humanitarian hubs, the ETS will revisit the needs and respond accordingly.

The humanitarian hubs across North-East Nigeria are being managed by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). To run hubs operations efficiently and guarantee security in the hub through an access control system, the Humanitarian Hubs Task Force agreed to allow non-guest humanitarians to access ETS services in the hubs six hours per day- three in the morning and three in the afternoon- following the recommendations from IOM and the ETS.

- Out of 2013 respondents, two expressed strong concerns about the **role of the ETS**:
 - *"ETS staff need to better understand their role defined by the need to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies!"*
 - *"I do think it is important that the ETS sees itself as a sector with over-arching responsibilities to serve the entire humanitarian community. I can tell you that this is not the impression I got interacting with the ETS colleagues in the early days of response. At that time, they were more focused on their affiliations with the sector lead agency rather than their role of providing emergency telecommunication services for the humanitarian response."*

In line with its mandate, the ETS is providing shared communications services to the entire humanitarian community in North-East Nigeria, not giving priority in any case to its lead agency –WFP. In addition, ETS services are deployed in common operational areas identified by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), available to all humanitarians. At the beginning of the emergency response, the ETS team was based at the WFP Area Office in Maiduguri, which could have led to some misperceptions. As the team expanded, the ETS opened its offices at the Red Roof humanitarian camp in early 2017. The ETS will continue to put efforts in communicating about its mandate and activities in Nigeria to address these type of concerns.

- Several respondents mentioned the need to have dedicated **training activities** for IT staff:
 - *"To propose a mandatory training for all staff on the use of ETC";*
 - *"The ETS has done so well in the area of communications by introducing the PTT satellite-based voice solution. They can try to organise more of ETS specific training for NGOs".*

The ETS is organising training on radio communications procedures on a demand-basis to humanitarian organisations in North-East Nigeria. In addition, the ETS delivers the radio communications module part of the Safe and Secure Approaches to Field Environments (SSAFE) training sessions organized by the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) in Maiduguri. In 2018, the ETS has trained over 400 humanitarians from 30 organisations on security telecommunications procedures such as radio check and communications during convoy movements.

As part of the 2018 project, the ETS was planning to deliver technical radio training to humanitarians in North-East Nigeria as well as other capacity building activities for partners and government counterparts involved in the IT response in the country. Implementation delays of other ETS planned activities forced these training courses to be postponed to 2019. The ETS recognizes the humanitarians' need of training activities expressed through this survey and will increase the engagement with partners on the ground to expand the training opportunities as required.

- A couple of respondents would like the ETS to **increase awareness** of its activities:
 - *"Create more awareness of ETS services and provide online training sessions";*
 - *"Send regular updates and also invitations to partners".*

To address this gap and ensure the wider humanitarian community is aware of the entire ETS service catalogue they can benefit from, the ETS is displaying IM products on information board in the humanitarian hubs, key locations.

The ETS is currently disseminating Situation Reports (SitReps) on a monthly basis with partners at local and global levels. To enhance coordination of IT activities on the ground, the ETS is organising dedicated ETS Working Group meetings in Maiduguri and offering the option to join online for those humanitarians not in Maiduguri. The ETS will also increase its presence in local sectors' working group meetings to ensure humanitarians are aware of the ETS communications services to facilitate their response.

- A number of humanitarians asked the ETS to **extend its communications services** to locations where no hubs are established or planned:
 - *"Include INGOs on the security communication network especially in remote areas".*
 - *"Install more VHF repeaters in other locations that are not secure to facilitate good communication within the NGOs";*
 - *"The ETS should deploy services in areas with no humanitarian hub, like Pulka."*
 - *"The ETS needs to extend the VHF coverage to some areas like GSS Camp in Gwoza as sometimes is difficult to reach someone there".*

While ETS communications services deployed in the humanitarian hubs across North-East Nigeria are available to both UN and NGO communities, they are not covering the totality of the affected states where some humanitarian partners might be operating. In line with its mandate, the ETS is deploying services in common operational areas where several organisations can make use of them. In the case of North-East Nigeria, the establishment of humanitarian hubs is based on the needs assessments carried out by HCT members. The ETS encourage organisations with pressing communications needs in areas with no established/planned humanitarian hubs, to raise them to the HCT for their action.

- Some respondents mentioned the need to make the **Internet registration process** easier for the end-user:
 - *"The ETS should generalise its user registration system. For example, once a staff registers with his/her email in one location, the staff should be able to access the ETS internet in all the locations where ETS services are available without registering again."*

The ETS currently has deployed a solution for registration and access to the Internet services –WIDER, from Ericsson Response- in Maiduguri, Bama, Dikwa and Gwoza. In Damasak, Monguno and Ngala, the ETS is testing another user management solution to facilitate the registration of new humanitarians in the system. At this stage, interoperability of both user management systems is not possible. The ETS continues to work on these challenges to improve the end-user experience.

- The ETS received a large number of comments **thanking the team** for providing **critical services** to **support** them and allowing them **to be in touch with their families**:
 - *"The ETS helps us in sending reports on time and being connected with friends and family";*
 - *"The ETS has been of great help to us working in the North East where access to GSM facilities have been truncated by the activities of insurgents. It gives us the opportunity to send and receive reports to and from our headquarters and browse the internet to know what is happening in other world around us";*
 - *"They really help the humanitarian workers and improve the activities of all the NGOs";*
 - *"The ETS has done a great work by helping the various NGOs staff in the North-East to communicate to their families."*

Next Steps

The ETS is taking all feedback received into consideration to improve the existing services in Nigeria and ensure the communications needs of humanitarians are covered. It will also feed into the Lessons Learned exercise, which will evaluate the ETS response in Nigeria.



This report will be shared with global and local partners of the ETS operation in Nigeria, with representatives of the World Food Programme (WFP) in Nigeria - local co-lead of the ETS- and will also be published on the ETC website, accessible to the wider public.

All information related to the ETS operation in Nigeria can be found on the ETC website:

www.etcluster.org/emergencies/nigeria-crisis

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: Nigeria.ETS@wfp.org