West Africa Ebola Crisis

Situation Report #3

Reporting period 04/10/14 to 23/10/14

These Sitreps are distributed every two weeks. The next report will be issued on or around 07/11/14.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster has not been activated in response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. As there are clear needs across the three affected countries for ICT services, the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) has mandated the World Food Programme (WFP), as global ET Cluster lead, to respond as if the cluster was activated. The ET Cluster, its partners and membership are responding together for a coordinated response.

Highlights

- To coordinate requests and offers for support, the ET Cluster has compiled and circulated a *2014 Needs and Partners* matrix covering the three pillars of the inter-agency ICT response. Partners such as BT, Ericsson Response and the Government of Luxembourg have confirmed support.

- In coordination with UNDSS, sites for expansion or establishment of security telecommunications services across the three countries have been confirmed. Equipment has been ordered to upgrade (where possible) or install networks in 15 locations across the three affected countries.

- ET Cluster member NetHope conducted a mission in Liberia to understand how it can better support the inter-agency ICT response.

Ongoing Activities

Pillar 1: ETU Comms Support
Provide internet connectivity services in 60x Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs). Voice communications will also be provided in these ETUs as well as up to 150x Community Care Centres (CCCs).

- BT currently has VSATs installed in Bo, Makeni and Freetown in Sierra Leone supporting SOS Children's Villages operations. The team is evaluating the viability of extending connectivity from these VSATs to affected areas.
    - Depending on the situation and locations, further equipment could be deployed in the three affected countries.

The ETC provides timely, predictable and effective Information Communications Technology services to support the humanitarian community in carrying-out their work efficiently, effectively and safely.

- Ericsson Response has confirmed the provision of microwave and wireless equipment (WIDER) including 100+ indoor and 90 outdoor access points. 2x IT specialists will also be available to support assembly and configuration of equipment outside of the three affected countries.

- emergency.lu has confirmed the provision of 2x Rapid and 2x Regular deployment VSAT kits to support the response as well as bandwidth subscription for up to six months per site.

Pillar 2: Common Humanitarian IT Services

Provide internet connectivity services & 24/7 security communications network in 15 common operational areas.

- In coordination with UNDSS, sites for expansion or establishment of security telecommunications services across the three countries have been confirmed. Equipment has been ordered to upgrade (where possible) or install networks in 15 locations across the three affected countries:

GUINEA	SIERRA LEONE	LIBERIA
1. Gueckedou 2. Macenta 3. Nzerekore 4. Kissidougou 5. Conakry	6. Freetown 7. Kailahum 8. Kenema 9. Makeni 10. Kono 11. Port Loko 12. Bo	13. Voinjama 14. Gbarnga 15. Buchanan

Pillar 3: Comms 4 Communities

    a. In partnership with healthcare providers, establish technology services to allow patients to communicate with their families.

    b. Support organisations responding in the Comms 4 Communities area with their activities where/ if requested.

- ET Cluster secured 500 mobile phones to support patients isolated from their families in ETUs.

- Supported by the ET Cluster, in collaboration with partners, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is:
  - Coordinating educational messages - approved by local governments - for Mobile Network Operators (MNO) to distribute via short-code SMS/USSD/IVR free to end users.
  - Supporting healthcare workers' mobile services, including civil registration, data surveillance and reporting, financing mechanisms and clinical workflow management, and providing support on assessment of national network, identifying possible service delivery gaps where ET Cluster could provide access to healthcare workers.
  - Supporting international organisations working with operators to provide e-payments to healthcare workers.
  - Supporting advocacy and access to anonymised Call Data Records (CDR) to enable analysis on disease spread and contact management

- – Working closely with project partners including GSMA to support assessment of MNO infrastructure and network capacities
- – Engaging with local MNO's to support response including negotiation on SIMM, mobile credit, network heat maps and status

- Ericsson is working with local operators and UNICEF to send 1,300 mobile phones to Liberia and Guinea for local healthcare workers. At the request of UNMEER, and in cooperation with NetHope, OCHA is securing an additional 11,000 phones to support aid workers with data collection.

UNMEER

- Connectivity at Logistics Bases, Mission Logistics Bases (MLBs) and Forward Logistics Bases (FLBs) will be provided by UNMEER. A plan is already in place for the deployment of O3B VSATs in affected countries. A total of 9x dishes will be available within the coming month. Under Pillars 1 and 2 of the ET Cluster response, connectivity may be extended from these VSATs to ETUs, CCCs or common operating areas.

Challenges and Gaps

- Once construction of ETUs is complete, no further modifications to technical installations can be made. Design and establishment of ICT services must take this into consideration. All equipment must be serviced from outside the ETU and equipment that is installed inside the ETU will be disposed of after the operation.

- Due to the high risk nature within the three affected countries, the operation is experiencing staffing challenges. The ET Cluster is appealing to partners for experienced IT, telecommunications and electrical specialists. To keep the number of staff at risk to a minimum, where possible, staff will be located outside of affected countries.

- The ET Cluster is exploring the possibility to provide 60x LCD TVs with remote IP webcams and 120x LCD TVs to ETUs for patients and families in waiting areas.

- 150x portable solar panel charger for Thuraya phones with docking stations are still required as well as bandwidth for Thuraya IP+ terminals.

- The ET Cluster response was originally budgeted at US$2.9 million. To meet escalating demands, this will be increased to US$9.4million.

Meetings

Global ETC teleconference: Friday 24 October, 2014

09:00	New York
13:00	UTC
13:00	Dakar / Conakry / Freetown / Monrovia
15:00	Rome
17:00	Dubai

Local ETC meetings

- *Guinea:* Thursday 30th October, 2014
- *Sierra Leone:* TBC
- *Liberia:* Tuesday 28th October, 2014

ETC Services

Maps of proposed services can be downloaded here:
http://ictemergency.wfp.org/web/ictepr/emergencies2014/ebola-outbreak

Acronyms

CCC	Community Care Centres
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETU	Ebola Treatment Unit
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FLB	Forward Logistics Base
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
MLB	Mission Logistics Base
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNMEER	UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response
WFP	World Food Programme

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website: www.ETCluster.org

For more information, to contact the team on the ground, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: WestAfrica.ETC@wfp.org

Background on the crisis:

In March 2014, a rapidly evolving outbreak of Ebola haemorrhagic fever started in Guinea. The outbreak subsequently spread to Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal. On 1 Aug, WHO and the government of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia launched a joint US$ 100 million response plan as part of an intensified international, regional and national campaign to bring the outbreak under control. On 8 Aug, WHO declared the Ebola outbreak in West Africa a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) (WHO, 8 Aug 2014). On 28 Aug, WHO issued a "roadmap" to scale up the international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. On 16 Sep, the Overview of Needs and Requirements document was presented to UN Member States, which covers activities in the three most-affected countries of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone for six months.

Sources: ReliefWeb