

Cox's Bazar – Refugee Crisis

ETS Situation Report #25

Reporting period 01/09/2020 to 30/09/2020

Following the increased needs to support the humanitarian efforts in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis, World Food Programme (WFP), in its capacity as global lead of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), is supporting the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) by addressing common Information and Communication Technology (ICT) needs. Through the establishment of the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) WFP and its partners ensure a coordinated ICT response and support to those working on the provision of lifesaving assistance to the affected population.

Highlights

- The ETS has initiated the procurement of 15 self-standing towers needed to improve the telecommunications network between the Madhuchara hub and the camps.
- Since the beginning of the year, the ETS has provided critical security telecommunications and data connectivity services in 27 sites.
- Local ETS partners are now providing connectivity in 9x Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) treatment sites as part of the COVID-19 response.



The ETS team conducts regular maintenance of its services across all sites.

Photo credit: ETS Bangladesh

ETS Activities

- Since the beginning of the year, the ETS has provided critical security telecommunications and data connectivity services in 27 sites, including e-voucher outlets, logistics and residential hubs, SARI/ITC sites, a camp-in-charge office and relay sites from where ETS internet signals are retransmitted.
- The ETS had an interactive introductory meeting with the new Senior Emergency Coordinator in Cox's Bazar to discuss and present activities, issues and plans.
- The ETS Coordinator attended the monthly civil military meeting along with other sector coordinators to learn updates about the security situation in the camp.
- To support the COVID-19 response, the ETS continues to coordinate the provision of critical data connectivity services in 22 Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) treatment centres and Isolation and Treatment Centres (ITC). To date, connectivity is being provided in 11x sites:
 - The ETS is providing connectivity services in 2x SARI treatment sites and plans to provide connectivity in an additional 11x SARI treatment sites.
 - ETS partners are providing connectivity in 9x SARI treatment sites: UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in two sites; International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in three sites and Médecins Sans Frontières Amsterdam in four sites.
 - MSF Belgium requested ETS data connectivity services for two of their SARI treatment sites.
- The ETS has initiated the procurement of 15 self-standing towers at a cost of US\$1,020,000 to improve the communications network between the Maduchara hub and the camps. The towers are needed to

overcome the challenge of the mountainous terrain which is currently hindering the provision of telecommunications services. The towers are expected to be delivered in early January 2021.

- The Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) held a meeting on Sunday 27 September to discuss the Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2021 with estimated timelines for the exercise.
- The ETS continues to conduct regular assessments, installations and maintenance activities to ensure the full operability of its services.

Staffing

- The new IT team leader/ Deputy ETS Coordinator arrived in Bangladesh on 12 September and quarantined for two weeks before joining the team in Cox's Bazar.

Challenges

- The team is facing challenges with providing connectivity in new locations where there is no line-of-sight to the nearest ETS network. This has resulted in the team needing to take more time to connect the sites and having to rely directly on ISP services which are not always reliable.

Funding

- The ETS is 74% funded with US\$3.8 million received out of US\$5.1 million required for 2020.

Key Information

- All information on the ETS response in Cox's Bazar can be found [here](#).
- The latest ETS infographic is also now available and published on the website.
- The next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on 14 October, 2020.
- For further information or to contact the team on the ground, please email Bangladesh.ETS@wfp.org

Contacts

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