



## **Bangladesh – Cox’s Bazar – Refugee Response**

### **ETS User Satisfaction Survey Report 2021**

**Survey period 28/10/21 to 18/11/21**

#### **Background**

In 2017, violence in Myanmar forced Rohingya people to flee across the border to Bangladesh. There are currently about 950,000 Rohingya refugees living in refugee camps in the Ukhia and Teknaf areas ([UNHCR, 2021](#)), and about 134 humanitarian organizations working across the response ([ISCG, 2021](#)).

The Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) was activated in Bangladesh in August 2017 to support these organizations by providing shared security telecommunications and data connectivity services to the humanitarian community responding to the refugee crisis and enabling them to deliver life-saving operations.

The ETS conducted its annual User Satisfaction Survey, collecting responses over the course of three weeks, from 28 October to 18 November 2021. The survey was conducted to assess the performance of ETS services and activities, including data connectivity, security telecommunications, customer support, coordination, and information management (IM) activities for humanitarians in the three operational areas where the ETS provides services: Cox’s Bazar, Ukhia, and Teknaf.

The survey also aimed to identify areas of improvement in line with evolving needs on the ground. The results will help the ETS to better understand the needs of humanitarians responding to the emergency and how to improve these services in Bangladesh.

#### **Overview and Methodology**

The survey comprised of 13 questions and was launched on 28 October 2021. The invitation was distributed to all ETS Bangladesh registered data connectivity users (502), all radio users that utilize the ETS security telecommunications network (936), all sector coordinators to share with their teams, and to the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) contact lists. Additionally, the ETS team promoted the survey in-person in the ETS office and ETS data connectivity sites by facilitating submissions and posting informational flyers.

The survey closed on 18 November 2021 after an extension of one week to encourage additional participants. 196 humanitarians responded to the survey from a mix of UN agencies (69%), International NGOs (23%), local NGOs (5%), and other humanitarian staff members (3%). The roles most represented among respondents were program staff (11%), field management/assistant (8%), medical professionals (7%), IT staff (6%), and engineers (5%).

## Key Findings

### Overall ETS services and activities

The ETS user satisfaction survey resulted in an **overall user satisfaction rate of 90%** for ETS services and activities provided in the operational areas.

This includes data connectivity, security telecommunications, customer support services, as well as coordination and information management activities. A further breakdown of the results is provided in the sections below.

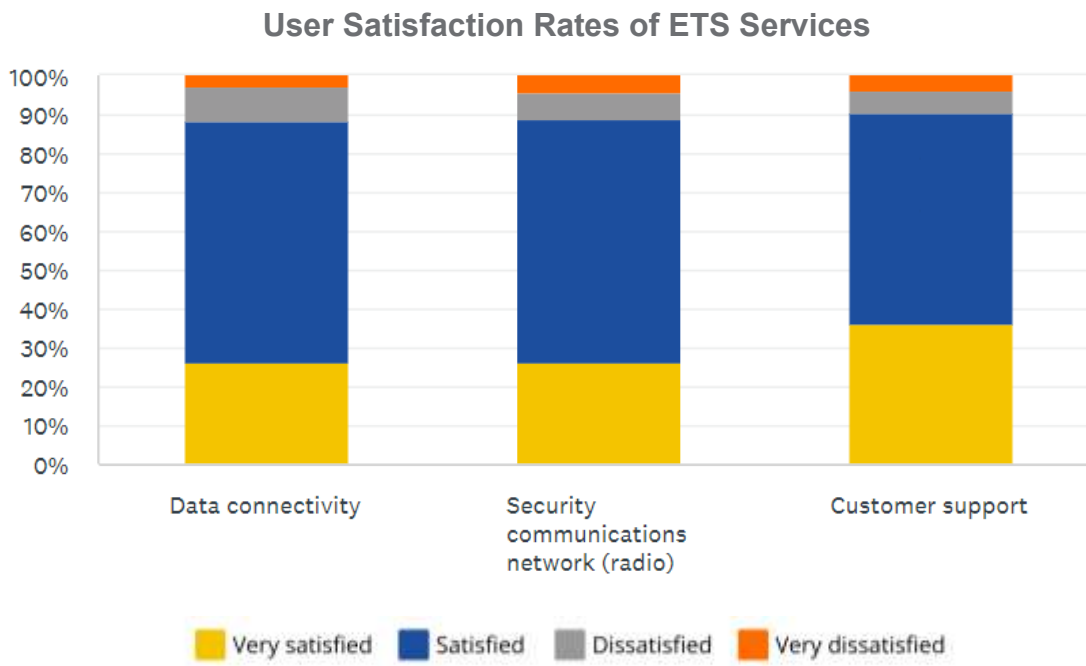
### ETS services

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the core ETS services provided across the three operational areas of Cox's Bazar, Ukhia, and Teknaf, which includes data connectivity, security telecommunications (radio network), and customer support services.

In response, participants reported an **89%** user satisfaction rate for these three ETS services provided in Bangladesh.

The survey revealed:

- **88%** satisfaction rate for **data connectivity** services.
- **89%** satisfaction rate for **security telecommunications** services.
- **90%** satisfaction rate for **customer support** services.



## Feedback on ETS services

The survey asked respondents the reasons for the user satisfaction rating given, as well as asking for suggestions on how ETS services may be improved (respondents were given an open-ended option):

- **Data connectivity:** Respondents commented positively on the availability of data connectivity services and were generally satisfied with the accessibility of connectivity in both Cox's Bazar and the camps, with many remarking on these "life-saving" communications services and on the positive impact of ETS towards the humanitarian response. Needs for improvement by responders included stated dissatisfaction with the stability of the connection - mentioning it often slows or disconnects during heavy rains or monsoon storms, and there are sometimes fluctuations in the speed of the internet, especially during power outages or inclement weather. There were also requests to improve speed of connection for mPOS devices in the e-voucher sites for faster transactions. The ETS actively works towards resolving these issues by conducting frequent site visits, installing solar solutions in case of power outages, and swiftly responding to service reports through user communication mechanisms. The suggestions submitted by respondents on how ETS can improve the service included making the registration process more user friendly, installing connectivity in more sites in the camps for better access, improving internet connection at night in the camps, adding more towers to expand the network, improving router power, installing additional power outage backups, and advertising more where the ETS network is available.
- **Security telecommunications:** The majority of respondents reported never facing issues with the VHF radio network, and generally have good connection. Some of the users did comment on issues in some areas of the camps - both Ukhia mega camp and Teknaf - stating that radio connection is sometimes intermittent or poor, and that they are not always able to communicate.
- **Customer Support:** Customer support was the highest rated service, with respondents receiving positive support from the ETS team that was quick, professional, and dedicated to supporting users. This includes positive reviews on assistance for network registrations, user guidance, and responding to helpdesk requests. The only areas for improvement received about customer support is that some of the respondents did not know this service existed and was available to users. Suggestions submitted on how ETS can improve this service includes implementing user trainings, hiring additional staff to support users and respond to issues in sites, and share more information on how to access customer support.

## ETS response on feedback of ETS services

The ETS is actively working to resolve several of the above stated recommendations and areas for improvement of ETS services that responders mentioned. To resolve issues with the data connectivity network, the ETS quickly responds to each outage with site visits and by ensuring all equipment is operational and stable, as well as working with partners to expand the network through the use of new towers and additional relay sites to expand to more sites. However, the registration process cannot be changed due to the need for multi-factor authentication as essential for internet security, and due to the restrictions in place by the Government of Bangladesh to avoid unauthorized internet access in the camps. As ETS is accountable for the

data network utilization by users, the registration process and platform does not have room to change despite these requests, and the ETS customer support team is available for user assistance and account registrations.

The issue of poor connectivity and reach of the network in Teknaf has been reported to ETS previously, and the telecommunications team is currently working on assessing the VHF connection in collaboration with UNDSS and strategizing how to expand the network to more areas.

To improve customer support, ETS will continue to expand the service to reach more users, and work on disseminating information about customer support availability and how to access it.

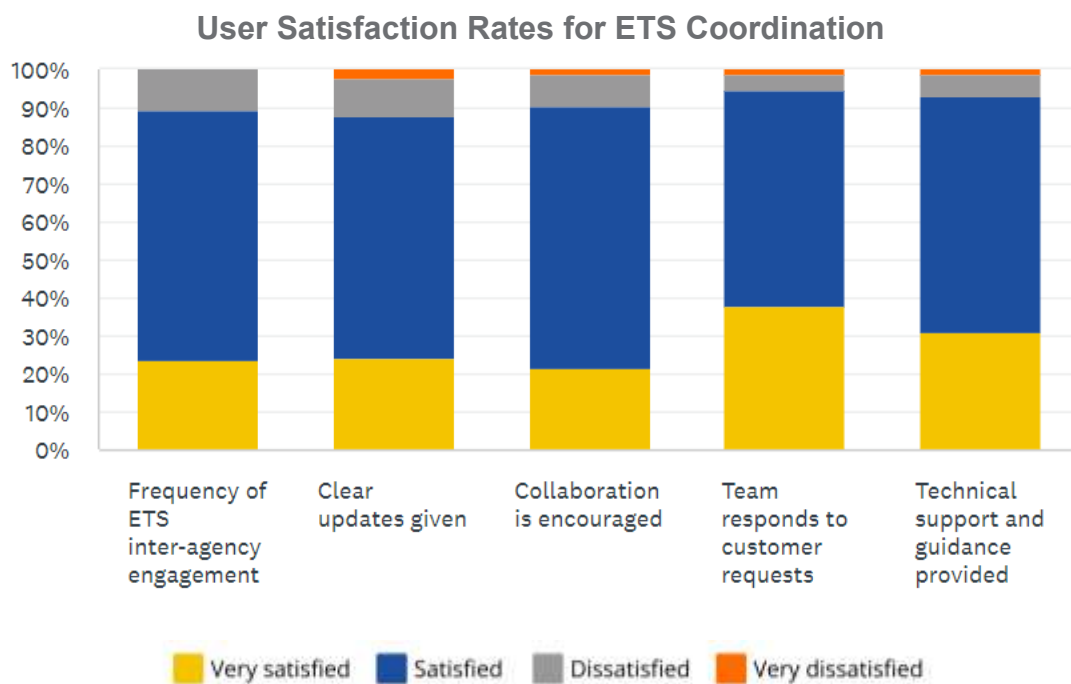
## ETS coordination activities

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the quality of ETS coordination activities e.g., coordination meetings, ETS Working Group meetings, collaboration and advocacy with partners, responding to customer service requests, and technical support and guidance provided by ETS.

In response, participants reported an **88%** user satisfaction rate for ETS coordination provided in Bangladesh.

The survey revealed:

- **75%** satisfaction rate for **frequency of ETS/ICT inter-agency engagement**
- **88%** satisfaction rate for **clear updates on plans, activities, and gaps.**
- **91%** satisfaction rate for **encouraging collaboration.**
- **95%** satisfaction rate for **responding to customer support requests.**
- **93%** satisfaction rate for **technical support and guidance.**



## Feedback on ETS coordination activities

Suggestions to improve the quality of ETS coordination included:

- **Increased interaction with organizations in the response** was a common area of feedback. It was suggested by respondents to engage more with national NGOs, as most of the services are targeted and used by UN agencies and International NGOs, as well as suggesting increasing collaboration between agencies and other sectors for services and information on ETS activities. Comments also recommended improving involvement with organizations that are receiving services, as some respondents stated there is limited communication with some of the user organizations and would like more direct interaction with ETS staff members. More meetings with respective focal points were requested for organizations and it was requested that ETS be more active and vocal in ISCG coordination meetings so other sectors can better understand activities and services.
- **Trainings** for users were requested across services. Requests for trainings on how to use services and what is available from ETS was commented on as a potential benefit for users and partner organizations.
- **Improve communication** through new mechanisms was requested by few respondents. Suggestions for improving communication between ETS and user organizations and users included increased methods of information sharing through emails, portals, group chats, and SMS messages to make communication more transparent and increase engagement with more organizations working in the response. There was a specified preference for using email as the primary method of communication as opposed to group chat messaging, however, several other users were satisfied with the group chats currently being used for communication of information.

## ETS response on feedback of coordination activities

The ETS is currently working on improving coordination with a new strategy to engage with additional partners through network expansion by providing data connectivity to more organizations and working across agencies to collaborate on programs. In 2021, the ETS worked directly with UNDSS, IOM, UNHCR, and WFP on program implementation. The ETS Working Group meetings started in October after a pause throughout 2021, with plans to continue hosting the Working Group meetings at least once per month with members from 16 organizations providing inputs to ETS programming and services. The ETS has also already increased its presence in ISCG coordination meetings, and will continue collaborating across sectors

To fulfil requests for training needs in the response, ETS is currently developing capacity-building activities for telecommunications that will be implemented in the new year. The team will first conduct a needs assessment to analyze the specific gaps in knowledge and skill, and formulate trainings around these results in 2022.

The ETS will continue to use communications mechanisms such as group chat messaging and email, and consider expanding to other methods of information sharing and outreach to partners for collaboration.

## ETS Information Management (IM) activities

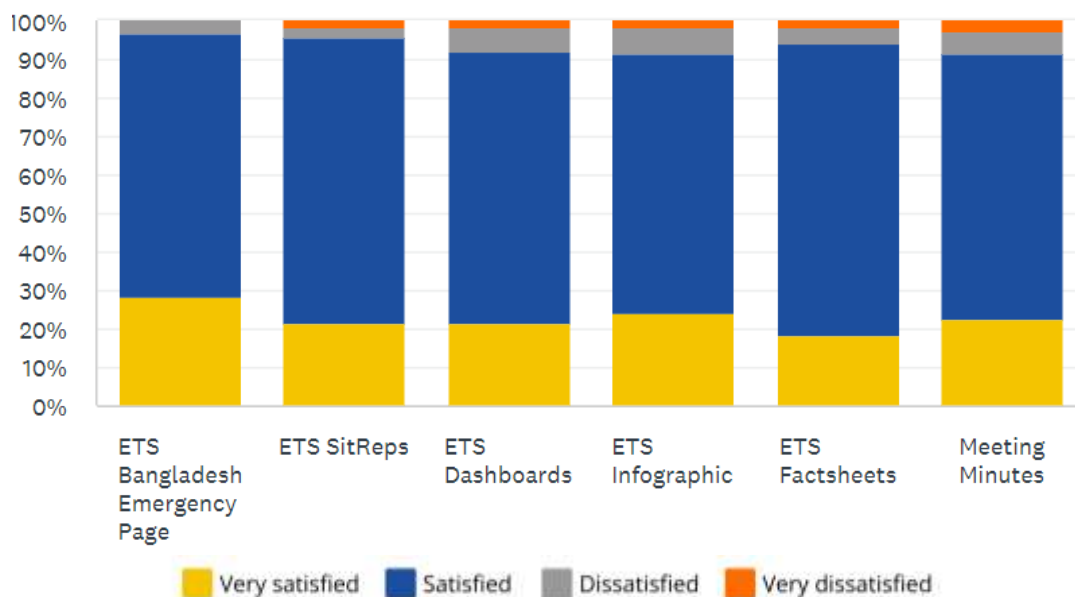
Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the quality of ETS information management (IM) products in terms of supporting operational decision making and information sharing.

In response, participants reported an **94%** user satisfaction rate for ETS IM activities.

The survey revealed:

- **97%** satisfaction rate for the **Bangladesh emergency page** on the ETC website.
- **96%** usefulness rating on **Situation Reports (SitReps)**.
- **92%** usefulness rating on **dashboards**.
- **91%** usefulness rating on **infographics**.
- **94%** usefulness rating on **factsheets**.
- **91%** usefulness rating on **meeting minutes**.

### User Satisfaction Rates for ETS Information Management (IM) Activities



### Feedback on IM activities

Suggestions to improve the usefulness of ETS IM activities included:

- **Share information more widely** to both NGOs and UN agencies. The only suggestions submitted regarding IM was that users have not seen these products or did not receive information on the above. It was suggested to have more communication and outreach of these to NGOs especially, as well as across UN agencies outside of WFP.
- In general, participants were satisfied with the products and timely information received.

## ETS response on feedback from IM activities

The ETS is currently working on updating their distribution list, to ensure information about services and IM products reach a larger, more targeted audience. This will also address other issues presented in the survey feedback on needs for improved communication with users and knowledge of ETS services across the response. The ETS will continue publishing all products monthly, which can be found on the ETS Bangladesh website [here](#).

## Additional Feedback

The ETS asked survey respondents to identify the main strengths and areas to improve the ETS in Bangladesh across operational areas. There was a total of 64 responses for “strengths”, and a total of 58 responses for “weaknesses”. Respondents provided the following feedback:

### Strengths

- **Data connectivity services** were highlighted as ETS strengths, including appreciation for the ability to connect to the ETS network in multiple sites and across e-voucher sites, recognition of strong connectivity, and the quality of equipment in the sites as a strength.
  - *“ETS is a valuable service to the response and their team is incredibly responsive and effective. Growth of ETS with expended data connectivity would have a substantive impact on coordination and communication in the response, especially efforts towards localization with the increasing involvement of local NGOs”*
  - *“In the remote camp context, we don't have even mobile network connection in most of our health facilities, but by means of ETS, we are having adequate internet connection, that enables us to communicate with other sectors, and our higher management smoothly.”*
- **ETS staff members** were highlighted as a strength in many responses, stating staff members are flexible, cooperative, proactive, responsive, and knowledgeable with qualified technical expertise.
  - *“The ETS team are incredibly professional, responsive, and helpful”*
- **Customer service** was noted to be one of the strengths of ETS, with responders commenting on professional user support, quick response rates, and effective field support.
  - *“Customer support was very good. Got a hands-on experience on how to sign up for ETS and further user guidance”*
  - *“I get smooth service whenever I need. If we [are] facing any problem regarding ETS, they give us rapid support all time.*

### Areas to improve

- **Additional ETS staff** needed to provide the required level of support. It was highlighted by a few respondents that increased staff could help with addressing the multiple needs across sites.

- **The lack of training** was submitted by multiple users as an interest among ETS users and partners. This is currently in development by the team and will be rolled out next year to provide telecommunications and ICT trainings to users from NGOs and UN agencies.
- **Slow connection and outages** in ETS data connectivity sites were reported by multiple respondents as an area to improve, as many experienced fluctuating connections, which is needed in the camps due to limited mobile data connectivity.

## Action Taken and Next Steps

The ETS is taking all feedback received into consideration to enhance the existing services in Bangladesh and to provide an improved response to emerging challenges. The gaps reported by respondents have been analysed and included in the ETS workplan and strategy next year and have been considered in the development of the 2022 strategy for the Joint Response Plan (JRP) in coordination with the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG). This will include addressing challenges in data connectivity, working with partners in the camps, expand the coverage of the VHF radio network, and install new data connectivity sites where needed.

Additionally, the ETS reinstated the Local ETS Working Group monthly meeting with partners and organizations working in the response to improve communication and coordination with partners. This working group will garner inputs from organizations working on the ground to assess their needs and inform ETS decision-making. The Working Group partners will be strongly involved in strategizing and addressing the gaps assessed in this survey, as well as identifying other areas of need.

This report will be shared with users and partners of ETS services in Bangladesh, the Global ETC partnership network, World Food Programme (WFP) Bangladesh (as the ETS leading organization), the ETS Working Group in Bangladesh, and the Inter-Sector Coordination Group to share with their distribution list across sectors. It will also be published on the ETC website, which is accessible to the wider public.

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

[www.etcluster.org/emergencies/bangladesh-refugee-crisis](http://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/bangladesh-refugee-crisis)

**For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact:**

[Bangladesh.ETS@wfp.org](mailto:Bangladesh.ETS@wfp.org)