Nigeria – Protection Crisis

ETS User Satisfaction Survey report

Survey period 06/10/20 to 23/10/20

Since its activation on 23 November 2016, the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) has been providing reliable Internet connectivity and security communications services in North-East Nigeria to enable humanitarians on the ground to carry out their jobs efficiently and safely, ultimately assisting more people and saving more lives.

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

Photo: ETS Nigeria

By the end of October 2020, the ETS had provided services to more than 4,190 users from 111 organisations. The ETS conducted a User Satisfaction Survey in October 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 12 questions and was distributed on 6 October to all users of ETS services in Maiduguri as well as the field hubs in Banki, Bama, Damasak, Dikwa, Gwoza, Ngala and Monguno. The ETS team encouraged users to participate in the survey by sharing weekly reminders, one-on-one reminders and placing QR codes around all humanitarian hubs for easy access to the survey questions. The survey was extended until 23 October to ensure the maximum number of respondents could participate.

A total of **788 humanitarians responded to the survey**, setting the record as the highest number of responses to an annual ETC/ETS user satisfaction survey globally. Most respondents represented international NGOs (60%), United Nations (UN) agencies (22%) and local NGOs/government/other (18%).

Key Findings

Existing ETS Services

The ETS User Satisfaction Survey resulted in an overall user satisfaction rate of **96%** across the core ETS services provided in North-East Nigeria, which exceeds the 80% baseline set as the key performance indicator for the survey. Similarly**, 95%** of survey respondents described ETS services provided in North-East Nigeria as useful to their operation.

The survey highlighted:

- **95%** satisfaction rate for **Internet connectivity** services.

- **96.2%** satisfaction rate for **security telecommunications** services.

- **95.4%** satisfaction rate for **telephony** (voice communication such as satellite phones) services.

- **96.4%** satisfaction rate for **customer support** services.

Rating of each ETS service by user satisfaction
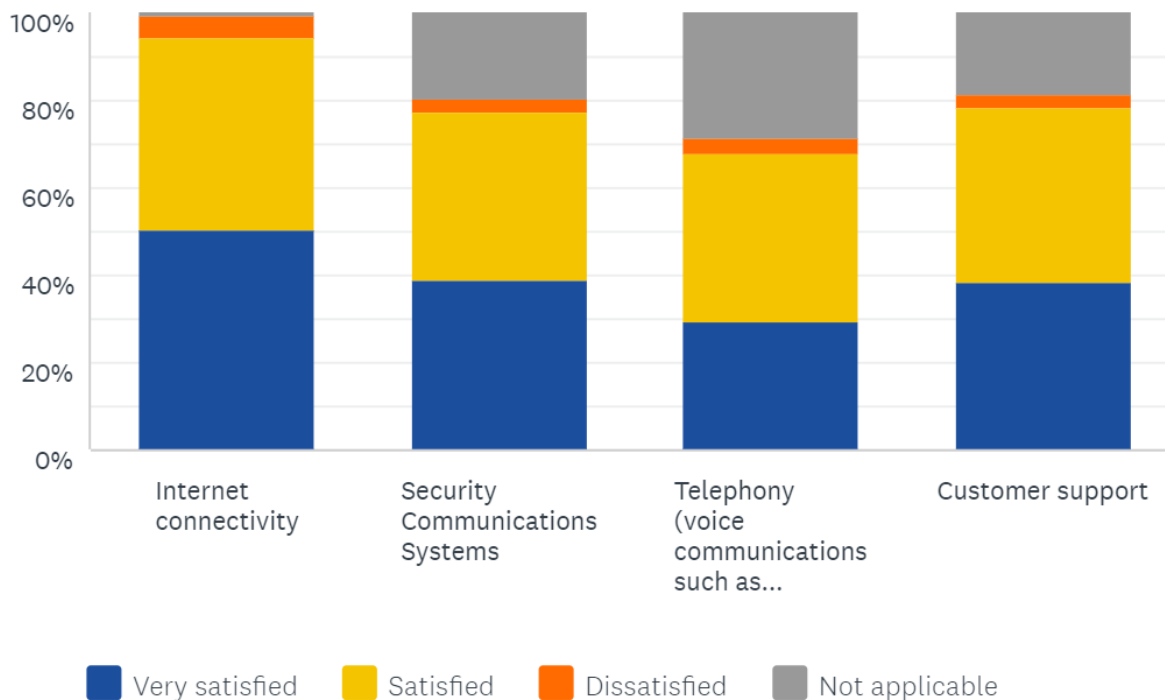
The results showed that out of those who participated in the survey, ETS Internet connectivity is the most-used ETS service across North-East Nigeria, namely in Monguno (93%), Maiduguri (89%), Dikwa (88%), Gwoza (86%) and Bama (83%).

Improving ETS services

The survey asked the humanitarian community for suggestions on how ETS services may be improved and what additional ETS services they require to better support their response (respondents were given an open-ended option):

- **Internet connectivity:** The speed of Internet connectivity services can be unreliable. Suggestions to improve connectivity services include using a higher bandwidth and unlimited access to websites.

- **Power:** The lack of a stable power supply was raised as an issue. The 24/7 availability of ETS Internet services in all field locations is regularly impacted, as all humanitarian hubs are dependent on the use of fuel generators. Suggestions to overcome issues caused by unreliable power supplies include the use of solar-powered solutions to support connectivity equipment.

- **Access to the hub and connectivity services:** Most respondents requested that access to ETS connectivity services across all humanitarian hubs be standardized and increased to cover a time period of 8am to 6pm, to enable increased access to ETS connectivity services by humanitarians. Currently, the access time varies between hubs and humanitarians are unable to use the services whenever needed.

- **Technical support and trainings**: Participants expressed the need for increased technical support for their various organizations, especially in field locations, as well as an online training module on how to use ETS services.

- **Extended connectivity coverage:** Some respondents suggested the ETS extend connectivity services beyond the humanitarian hubs – including in guesthouses and offices – to facilitate communication. Similarly, survey respondents requested additional access points be installed in the humanitarian hubs. Several respondents also suggested the creation of a commercial network that various organizations can apply for and use at a fee.

- **Removal of connectivity restrictions**: Participants requested the removal of restrictions on some training sites, the upload/download of some documents, and access to social media platforms, particularly during the weekends.

- **Availability of satellite phones**: Humanitarians highlighted the need for access to satellite phones to aid communication with their colleagues in Maiduguri, especially in cases of emergency.

- **Information sharing:** Respondents would welcome the introduction of information-sharing platforms such as focal group discussions with INGOs and NGOs and email bulletins on its services.

- **Notifications:** In cases where connectivity users have breached the ETS IT policy, respondents requested a notification period of more than one day before the service is blocked, to allow time to facilitate the unblocking process.

ETS Coordination activities

Respondents were asked to describe the quality of ETS coordination e.g. coordination meetings, ICT Working Group meetings, advocacy on behalf of partners, fostering of relationships between partners, advice and support.

In response, participants reported a **95%** overall quality rating for ETS coordination provided in North-East Nigeria.

The survey highlighted:

- **94%** quality rating on **clear updates on plans, activities and gaps**.
- **93%** quality rating on **encouraging collaboration**.
- **94%** quality rating on **technical support and guidance.**

Suggestions to improve the quality of ETS coordination included:

- ***Organize more training sessions*** for focal IT staff from humanitarian organizations to develop their capacity in using ETS services.
- ***Establish a feedback mechanism*** that enables ETS service users to share the challenges they encounter with the system on a regular basis, to complement the one-off annual survey.
- ***Provide toolkits and information on the available ETS services.***

ETS Information Management (IM) activities

Respondents were asked to rate how useful they find ETS IM products in terms of supporting operational decision making and information sharing.

The findings indicate that an average of **97%** of respondents find ETS IM products useful.

The survey highlighted:

- **99%** usefulness rating on Situation Reports (**SitReps**).
- **96%** usefulness rating on **infographics**.
- **96%** usefulness rating on **factsheets**.
- **97%** usefulness rating on **meeting minutes**.
- **96%** usefulness rating on **dashboards**.

Suggestions to improve the usefulness of ETS IM products included:

- *Involve all stakeholders when sharing IM products* to improve awareness of ETS services and updates among humanitarians, especially in field locations in North-East Nigeria.

- *Increase the frequency of surveys* to elicit feedback from the humanitarian community.

- *Improve information sharing* by setting up information boards at the gazebo where ETS users sit, including information on the terms and conditions of using the ETS Internet network.

Additional Feedback

The ETS asked survey respondents to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the ETS in North-East Nigeria. A total of 446 respondents provided the following feedback:

Weaknesses/requests included:

- *Internet connectivity:* Internet connectivity can be slow and unstable at times, especially when the number of users is high. Additionally, the network does not cover all the rooms in some of the humanitarian hubs.

- *Need for information on ETS services:* Emphasis was placed on the need to provide familiarization to all users on how ETS services work.

- *New locations:* Respondents highlighted the need for ETS services in some additional locations such as Pulka and Damboa.

Strengths included:

- *Quality service delivery:* ETS continues to provide quality services, the team is consistent and is always looking for ways to improve its service to the humanitarian community.

- *Prompt response:* Most respondents commended the ETS team on its prompt response to complaints and resolving of technical issues in field locations.

- *Technical expertise:* Several survey respondents commended the ETS on its technical expertise and availability to provide technical guidance to humanitarian organizations.

- *Professionalism:* Respondents highlighted the commitment, competence and good customer relationship skills of the ETS team as one of the major strengths of the ETS in Nigeria.

- *Uniting factor:* Survey respondents commented that the ETS serves as a uniting factor which brings all humanitarians together and enhances communication, especially in field locations.

- *Overall ETS activities and services:* Most of the survey respondents highlighted good ETS coordination, collaboration and capacity building activities, as well as an appreciation of the Internet connectivity and security communications network services provided by the ETS, especially in hard-to-reach areas in North-East Nigeria. It was highlighted that the availability of ETS services facilitates lifesaving humanitarian assistance.

ETS response and analysis

Internet connectivity services

The ETS acknowledges the challenges experienced by users of some of its Internet connectivity services – especially in deep-field locations – and aims to provide the required support. Most of the interruptions experienced during the last two months were mainly due to the ongoing Internet Service Provider (ISP) migration and to power outages.

To mitigate the impact of power cuts, the ETS plans to deploy a hybrid power solution at each of the hubs from December 2020 to ensure ETS services are available 24/7. The required equipment has been deployed to all field locations and installation is being planned, following the easing of travel restrictions caused by COVID-19.

While both the request for an extension of connectivity services beyond the hub and a payment structure for ETS Internet connectivity services is outside the mandate of the ETS, the ETS recognizes the need to establish connectivity hotspots outside the humanitarian hubs.

In 2019, the ETS installed one satellite terminal at the humanitarian hub in Banki and another one at the humanitarian hub in Monguno, to cope with interruptions to the service. The ETS plans to deploy one additional satellite terminal at five remaining humanitarian hubs to strengthen the current communications systems and to provide humanitarians with a reliable back-up connectivity solution.

In January 2019, the ETS doubled the Internet connectivity bandwidth in Bama, Damasak, Dikwa, Gwoza and Ngala, and quadrupled the bandwidth in Banki and Monguno to significantly improve user experience and to better support the efficient implementation of humanitarian activities. It was later identified that 50% of the Internet traffic was through sites such as YouTube and Facebook, which are part of non-priority traffic on ETS networks. The ETS currently prioritizes traffic and manages bandwidth distribution across each of the sites.

Participants requested increased access time to humanitarian hubs in all field locations, to utilize ETS connectivity services. The ETS will forward this request to the humanitarian hub task force, chaired by WFP. Humanitarian hub access is managed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS), which are forum members of the task force.

Security telecommunications services

The ETS is available to provide the required technical advice and support to all humanitarian organizations in the use of security telecommunications systems. Regarding the use of satellite phones, the ETS encourages all humanitarian organizations to purchase satellite phones and provides the option for these organizations to use ETS satellite coverage for their operations.

Coordination activities

The ETS acknowledges the suggestions from the humanitarian community on the need to deliver more technical training sessions. Currently, the ETS conducts training sessions for organizations on a request basis. This year, the ETS has trained 165 humanitarians on basic security telecommunication procedures.

All other suggestions to improve ETS coordination activities will be reviewed as part of the next steps for this survey, including requests to implement a regular feedback mechanism to complement the annual user satisfaction survey.

Information Management (IM) activities

The ETS acknowledges the requests to share IM products more widely, to keep humanitarians informed about ETS activities. IM products are shared with members of the local Working Group and coordination team and are published on the ETCluster.org website. The list of subscribers will be expanded in response to this survey.

Similarly, the request for more frequent user feedback surveys is being considered by the ETS. There are discussions on designing a mid-year survey to assess Internet connectivity, in addition to the regular annual user satisfaction survey.

In 2020, the ETS commenced Internet user awareness sessions which focus on explaining the IT policy to IT focal points, field coordinators and other key personnel in humanitarian organizations. The sessions aim to encourage personnel to share the IT Policy with all ETS users in their organizations. The ETS has trained 49 focal persons from five organizations this year.

Next Steps

The ETS is taking all feedback received into consideration to improve the existing services in North-East Nigeria and ensure the communications needs of humanitarians are met. The results will also feed into a Lessons Learned exercise in Q4 2020/Q1 2021 which will evaluate the ETS response in Nigeria. This report will be shared with global and local ETS partners, representatives of WFP in Nigeria and will also be published on the ETC website, which is 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