

## 1.1 Role of telecommunications and IT in an emergency

During times of crisis, telecommunications systems help keep staff safe and allow programmes to keep functioning. In emergencies, local communications networks are often disrupted, making it difficult to talk to team members or send messages back to supporting offices. CARE operations need to put in place emergency telecommunications and IT support systems to guarantee that CARE staff can always talk to each other and be contacted in a crisis.

Telecommunications (telecoms) systems are an important set of tools available to emergency staff when working in hazardous areas. Good communications allow important information to be passed to and from field staff about changing conditions that may strongly matter to their safety. New information can be used to change emergency work plans according to the current information.

Telecoms and IT systems are also used to pass information back to neighbouring COs, Regional Management Unit(s), Lead Member(s) and other CARE offices. Computer communications (email/internet) allow current emergency information-including situation reports, media releases and photographs-to be sent out quickly from the crisis area to inform the world about what is happening during the crisis.

Telecoms and IT systems need to allow the transfer of both 'voice' and 'data'. 'Voice' means people are able to talk to each other. 'Data' means the office is able to use computers and IT systems to send photos and written information such as situation reports and media releases using telecommunications systems.

## 1.2 Role of Telecoms and IT Support Manager in the emergency team

The role of a Telecoms and IT Support Manager in an emergency team is to ensure that the emergency team has adequate and effective means of communication at all times. This includes guaranteeing available and functioning hardware as well as providing training and advice in its use.

During assessments and initial responses, the Telecoms and IT Support Manager(s) will often be one person. After there is enough time to bring in or employ new staff members, the telecommunications and IT roles will be divided. During an assessment, the Telecoms and IT Support Manager is responsible for setting up all forms of communications for the teams. This includes satellite and mobile phones, radio systems and internet using both local internet service providers (ISPs) and portable satellite systems. It is important that all members of an emergency assessment and response are able to contact each other. The Telecoms and IT Support Manager will be responsible for ensuring all phone numbers and radio channel/call signs are distributed to all staff members. After the assessment, the telecoms and IT staff will be responsible for ongoing improvements, maintenance and training.

See [Annex 20.1 Telecommunications Officer job description](#), and [Annex 20.2 IT Officer job description](#).

## 1.3 CARE International (CI) roles and responsibilities for telecommunications

Position	Key responsibilities
Telecoms Officer	Assess telecommunication needs and set up new systems as necessary.
IT Officer	Assess computing needs and set up new systems as necessary.
Security Officer	Provide recommendations for security telecommunications systems/equipment in the CO and emergency response areas.
Programme Officer(s)	Provide recommendations for telecoms and IT needs in response areas.
Procurement Officer	Locate vendors and obtain pricing, and then purchase equipment.
Finance Officer	Arrange finance for procurement.
Assistant Country Director	Authorise telecoms and IT procurement requests.
Country Director	Oversee telecoms and IT recommendations and purchases.
CARE Emergency Group (CEG)	Monitor CO capacity. Provide person(s) to boost telecoms and IT/logistics capacity when current office staff are overloaded or not yet hired. Provide training for telecoms and IT new staff.