



HUMANITARIAN CONNECTIVITY CHARTER

DEMONSTRATING THE MOBILE INDUSTRY
COMMITMENT TO PREPARING FOR AND
RESPONDING TO HUMANITARIAN CRISES



Mobile networks and the connectivity they provide can be a lifeline for those affected by natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies. The number of these crises and their impact is growing. Between 2004 and 2014, an estimated 1.8 billion people were affected by natural and complex disasters. Mobile networks facilitate both access to information and coordinate assistance with Government, NGOs and the international humanitarian community before, during and after disasters. In recognition of their crucial role, mobile network operator (MNO) members of the GSMA have defined and committed to a set of shared principles in the spirit of supporting and enhancing humanitarian connectivity.

Benefits of the Humanitarian Connectivity Charter

- The Mobile Industry can use its scale and reach positively to contribute to preparedness during disaster situations and to support the humanitarian response afterwards
- The opportunity to help is global. Our industry has prompted the increased awareness of vulnerabilities around disaster situations. The industry can foster a stronger global citizenship and engagement around disaster awareness and relief possibilities
- The Charter presents an opportunity to showcase the collaborative commitment of MNOs to their customers, communities, Government and the International Community through the humanitarian benefits of this Charter

Humanitarian Connectivity Charter Principles

The Humanitarian Connectivity Charter outlines shared principles of commitment and a series of aspirational collaborative actions to demonstrate the support of the mobile industry to communities and other stakeholders in disaster situations. The principles of this Charter are:

- To enhance coordination within and among Mobile Network Operators before, during and after a disaster
- To scale and standardise preparedness and response activities across the industry to enable a more predictable response
- To strengthen partnerships between the Mobile Industry, Government and the Humanitarian sector

The ultimate aim of the Charter is to strengthen access to communication and information for those affected by crisis in order to reduce the loss of life and positively contribute to humanitarian response

Intended Outcomes of the Humanitarian Connectivity Charter

Through pursuing the principles of The Charter, signatories will work towards the following outcomes:

- Creating accessible and resilient connectivity for mobile subscribers and communities affected by disaster situations
- Establishing before, during and after a disaster best practice standards for the mobile industry
- Reliable information sharing that will benefit communities, humanitarian responders and the mobile ecosystem
- An ability to maintain focus on business continuity and revenue protection during a disaster, enabling the delivery of critical services to impacted communities and responding agencies
- Improved leveraging of MNO core assets, competencies and relationships with external partners to deliver humanitarian communication activities
- Greater visibility of the unique role of mobile communication and the mobile industry in supporting disaster and humanitarian response

GSMA Support

The GSMA will support MNOs in the implementation of the Charter. The Principles, objectives and aspirational activities of “The Charter” are supported by The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), The UN Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. These and other interested parties will work with GSMA signatories on the adoption and implementation of The Charter activities.

Activities to Support the Humanitarian Connectivity Charter

Signatories of this Charter commit to working towards adoption of the following activities, where permissible or possible:

Before Disaster: Working towards Enhanced Internal Preparedness to Support Government and Humanitarian sectors

- **Single Point of Contact (SPOC)**
MNOs will nominate a single (or multiple) point(s) of contact to act as the focal point for coordinating with relevant Government agencies, humanitarian organisations and NGOs before a disaster strikes
- **Information Sharing Template**
MNOs will develop mechanisms to share current information about restoration activities, coverage outages and other disaster preparedness initiatives in order to create a database on preparedness
- **Operator-to-Operator support**
MNOs will aim to pre-identify where they may be able to contribute support to other members of the mobile eco-system should disaster strike
- **Planning**
MNOs will work to develop a comprehensive disaster-preparedness and/or business continuity management (BCM) plan
- **Preparedness**
MNOs will endeavor to participate with partners (government, humanitarian and other stakeholders) to engage in simulations or workshops to strengthen partnerships and preparedness
- **Common Humanitarian Short-code**
MNOs will make concerted efforts to work with regulators to identify and place on standby, a zero-rated short-code to be activated to support Humanitarian Information Services

During and following Disaster: Supporting affected communities and the Humanitarian Response sector

- **Activation of Databases**
Upon request by the United Nations or local authorities MNOs in affected countries, or region, the above mentioned databases and the common humanitarian short-code once established will be activated
- **Supporting Access to Mobile Services**
MNOs will pledge to make mobile services more accessible to those affected by humanitarian crises through provision of free or subsidized access where appropriate
- **Roaming**
MNOs will work together to establish agreements to enable the provision of reduced roaming tariffs for international response agencies or subscribers in emergencies abroad for a defined period of time
- **External Communications**
MNOs will develop a communication strategy focused on regularly informing subscribers of restoration activities