Global Partners for Emergency Communications
Disasters. Droughts. Emergencies. We need to talk.

When disasters strikes, the immediate needs are obvious: survivors need food, shelter, blankets, and medicine. But none of these necessities will reach survivors without the largely invisible communication networks that must be set up quickly to enable relief workers to save lives.

Recognizing the vitality of strong communications networks for humanitarian relief efforts, The Vodafone Group Foundation and the United Nations Foundation have jointly developed a robust emergency communications program that brings resources and mobile technology infrastructure to support the critical role of communications in disaster response.

In February 2008, the foundations became the World Food Programme's "Global Partners for Emergency Communications" by funding the creation of an **ICT Humanitarian Emergency Platform** that, for the benefit the entire humanitarian disaster response community, will:
- optimize and standardize ICT solutions in emergencies;
- expand the pool of trained ICT experts;
- establish a network of stand-by partners ready for deployment; and
- enable immediate dispatch of ICT emergency responders

The 3-year, $6.1 million partnership – including a $4.3 million commitment from the UN Foundation-Vodafone Group Foundation Technology Partnership, matched by a $1.8 million commitment from the WFP – will help meet challenges posed by the increasing demand for ICT managers available for immediate deployment the moment disaster strikes.

It builds off a December 2006 UN Foundation and Vodafone Group Foundation grant to the UN World Food Programme (WFP) to launch an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) **Emergency Preparedness and Response training program** that:

1. Increased number of staff trained and deployed – For WFP alone, this is a 200% increase in capacity, enhancing WFP's ability to respond to multiple major emergencies each year.
2. Compiled and updated ICT Standards – For the first time, the project allowed the review, documentation and co-location (via Best Practices guide) of ICT emergency standards.
3. Faster and cheaper deployment – Provided the basis for easy access and a common understanding about ICT procedures across WFP, and with UN and NGO partners.
4. Improved ICT emergency preparedness and response processes – Provided the basis for additional research and development to assess new ICT services available for emergencies.

The WFP is the lead UN agency tasked with delivering food and supplies whenever and wherever a humanitarian crisis occurs. As the UN's front-line emergency relief agency, the WFP is also the UN's lead service provider for security communications in emergency responses worldwide.

The **Vodafone Group Foundation and United Nations Foundation technology partnership** began in October 2005 when The Vodafone Group Foundation committed £10 million, matched by £5 million from the United Nations Foundation, to leverage the power of information communications technologies (ICTs) in global humanitarian work. A key focus for the Partnership is upon Emergency Response Communications – improving access and ability to use technology and telecommunications tools in natural disasters, conflicts and famines. www.unfoundation.org/vodafone