

## ETC Situation Report #06

### Syria Crisis

Reporting period 09/05/2013 to 16/06/2013

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#### **Summary:**

- An IASC System-Wide Emergency was activated on 15/01/13. Humanitarian organizations are scaling up operations in response to the evolving crisis. Only the ETC and Logistics Cluster have been activated in Syria to date.
- The situation in Syria remains extremely volatile and subject to rapid change.
- The UN has reduced staff within Syria for security reasons and most agencies are operating from hotels. Local staff are working from home.
- The ETC is attempting to provide common telecommunications services within Syria, however lack of access and restrictions on movement have complicated these efforts and have led to a number of missions being cancelled.

#### **Cluster Responsibilities:**

- The ETC in Syria is providing emergency telecommunications support to humanitarian organizations on the ground including VHF/HF radio programming and installation.
- Responsibility for the provision of ETC/Common ICT services across the region is shared between WFP (Syria, Turkey and Iraq) and UNHCR (Lebanon and Jordan).
  - WFP is providing support to UNHCR telecommunications service provision if and when required.
  - WFP coordinates regional activities in close collaboration with UNHCR and other partners.

#### **Achievements:**

- The upgrade of the UNDSS SIOC in northern Lebanon has been completed.
- The WFP VSAT is now operational in the Four Seasons hotel providing common data connectivity services.
- The mapping of regional telecommunications infrastructure has been completed.
- The SHARP has been completed and indicates that ETC funding is now separate from the Logistics Cluster.
- Ivan Thomas has replaced Oscar Caleman as ETC Coordinator in Amman. He will remain only until the end of June. A replacement Coordinator is currently being identified. The priority is still to deploy to Damascus, though Amman will remain

as an alternate location until access is granted.

- Support is being provided to UNHCR for the establishment of a joint operational centre in Zaatari refugee camp, Jordan.

### **Challenges and Gaps:**

- The volatile security situation remains a challenge to deployment in the field.
- Internet connectivity is unreliable and was shut off completely on 07/05/13. This was the first time internet disruption had occurred nationwide.
- Licensing and importation of telecommunications equipment into Damascus remains a challenge. ITU have offered to assist in facilitating this process, however they require a comprehensive list of equipment that will be imported in order to liaise with the appropriate government authorities.

### **Planned Activities:**

- The ICT team is reviewing its procurement plan to align it with new procedures being implemented for procuring items from outside Syria.
- ETC equipment in Beirut is being prepared for delivery into Syria.
- The ETC is looking into a request from UNHCR to provide radio training to radio room staff in Zaatari refugee camp, Jordan.
- ETC is working closely with the Logistics Cluster to source warehouse space in Lebanon for the storage of ETC and ICT equipment.
- There are plans to ship equipment to Lebanon that will be used to upgrade radio rooms in Tripoli and Beirut.

### **Meetings:**

The next Global ETC teleconference on Syria will be held on Thursday 11 July 2013 at:

0900 New York  
1300 UTC  
1500 Rome/Geneva  
1600 Damascus  
1600 Amman  
1700 Dubai

Regular updates will continue to be shared through SitReps available on the ICT Emergency website.

The next ETC Working Group meeting in Amman will be held on 23/06/13.

### **ICT Emergency website:**

All information related to the ETC response in Syria, including meeting minutes and contact lists, can be found on the ICT Emergency website:

<http://ictemergency.wfp.org/web/ictopr/countries/syria>

**Syria ETC e-mail address:** [Syria.ETC@wfp.org](mailto:Syria.ETC@wfp.org)

## Principal ETC Contacts:

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## Status Matrix:

LOCATION	AGENCY	REPEATER	DATA	VOICE	RADIO ROOM	ICT SUPPORT STAFF	SHARED SERVICES
Damascus	DSS	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Radio Room
	WFP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	VHF repeater only
	UNDP	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Helpdesk to UNDSS
	UNICEF	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
	WHO	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes IT	No
	UNFPA	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Generator with OCHA
	OCHA	No			No	Yes	Generator with UNFPA
	UNHCR	Yes, one installed and licensed One not installed and not licensed	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

	FAO	No	Yes		No	Yes	No
	UNRWA	No, one in stock but not licensed	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

## Acronyms:

EMC	Emerging Markets Communications
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
HF	High Frequency
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SHARP	Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (CAP)
SIOC	Security Information and Operations Centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
VHF	Very High Frequency
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal (Satellite ground station)
WFP	UN World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization