IRAQ

ETC Situation Report # 13

Reporting period 19/12/14 to 08/01/15

Author: Chris Szpak, WFP

Highlights

- A telecommunications team has installed a digital radio network in Sulaymaniyah for the use of UN agencies operating there.

- Repeaters supplied by UNAMI in Sulaymaniyah were re-configured to provide increased analogue radio coverage to the humanitarian community.

Cluster Responsibilities

- WFP is leading ETC activities in Iraq. The ETC is responsible for providing emergency telecommunications support to humanitarian organizations on the ground.

Achievements

- Using additional radio frequencies provided by UNAMI, a telecommunications team has established a digital radio network in Sulaymaniyah for use by UN agencies operating there. The network will become operational once licences for the installed repeater equipment are obtained.

- The UNAMI repeater in Sulaymaniyah was re-configured to provide increased analogue radio coverage to the humanitarian community.

- Radio training is being delivered by the ETC to UN and NGO staff on an ongoing basis. This is to ensure that correct radio protocol is consistently followed by all humanitarian organizations to ensure the safety of staff. To date, the ETC has trained approximately 100 staff from various humanitarian organizations.

- The ETC continues to configure radios for UN agencies and NGOs with a standard program compatible with both digital and analogue radio networks. To date, over 245 individual radios have been processed.

- ETC wireless internet connectivity is available to all humanitarian organizations in three key operational areas: Domiz and Arbat camps, as well as a transit camp 7 kms from Arbat. To date, there are 146 registered users in the Arbat area, and 34 in Domiz.

- All UN agencies are encouraged to compile call-sign lists according to a common ETC format. This will ensure radio rooms can track staff more effectively, hence improving security.

- The new ETC Coordinator, John Bursa, arrived on 23/12/14.

Connectivity to Save Lives

Challenges and Gaps

- Flight options for the importation of equipment remain limited. This can delay the deployment of humanitarian ICT services.

- Additional radio frequencies are required to expand the capacity of the digital network in Erbil. UNAMI has requested these frequencies and government approval is pending.

- Any staff wishing to travel outside of Erbil must attend SAIT training, which takes four days. In addition, several days may be needed to apply and receive residency status thus delaying further deployment to the field.

- There have been occasions when internet services have being disrupted by faulty wireless links which are managed by local ISPs. The ETC has been following up with the respective ISPs to improve their services.

Planned Activities

- An ETC team will be deployed to Dohuk in early 2015 to upgrade the emergency telecommunications infrastructure between Dohuk and the nearby Domiz camp. Tasks to be completed by the team include:

  o Relocating the radio room from Domiz camp to Dohuk

  o Setting up microwave links between Dohuk and Domiz camp to support a DMR network

  o Re-configuring the UNAMI analogue repeater for better coverage in Dohuk and Domiz camp.

  o Reprograming of VHF radios and radio training.

- To enhance inter-agency radio services in Erbil in order to provide better security for staff and vehicle movement, ETC will be providing additional staffing and equipment to the UNAMI radio room.

Meetings

Global ETC teleconference

The next Global ETC teleconference will be held on 14/01/15.

Local ETC meeting

The next Local ETC meeting will be held on 12/01/15.

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the ICT Emergency website: http://ictemergency.wfp.org

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: Iraq.ETC@wfp.org

Services Available

CITY	LEAD AGENCY	ETC SERVICES
Erbil	WFP	• Coordination • Information Management • ICT Helpdesk • Logistics Hub • Radio Programming • Training • VHF radio coverage
Sulamaniyah	WFP	• Radio Programming • Training • VHF radio coverage
Arbat Camp	WFP	• Internet connectivity • Radio Programming • Training • VHF radio coverage
Dohuk	WFP	• Radio Programming • Training • VHF radio coverage
Domiz Camp	WFP	• Internet connectivity • Radio Programming • Training • VHF radio coverage
Basra	WFP	• *Planned Assessment mission*

ETC Iraq Focal Points

TITLE	AGENCY	NAME	EMAIL	MOBILE PHONE

IT Emergency/ETC Coordinator	WFP	John Bursa	john.bursa@wfp.org	+964 780 915 0954
ICT Specialist	WFP FITTEST	Khawar Ilyas	Khawar.ilyas@wfp.org	+964 750 851 3118
Telecommunications Specialist	WFP FITTEST	Christer Wessberg	christer.wessberg@wfp.org	
Information Management Officer	WFP	Chris Szpak	christopher.szpak@wfp.org	+964 751 213 5476

Acronyms

DMR	Digital Mobile Network
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FITTEST	Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
SAIT	Security Awareness and Induction Training
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq
VHF	Very High Frequency
WFP	World Food Programme