

## Syria Crisis

### ETC Situation Report #22

Reporting period 23/03/15 to 26/04/15

**Author:** Salma Farouque, WFP

### Highlights

- Approval was granted by Turkish MOFA in late March for the renewal of UN radio frequency licenses which will be used to expand radio coverage in south-eastern Turkey. ETC has installed a UHF repeater in Gaziantep to expand radio coverage in the south.
- Approval is still pending from Syrian MOFA to import telecommunications equipment to support the humanitarian community in Syria.

### Cluster Responsibilities

- The ETC in Syria is providing emergency telecommunications support to humanitarian organizations in operational areas within Syria and surrounding countries.
- Responsibility for the provision of ETC services (voice, internet, radio network and other services) across the region is shared between WFP and UNHCR.
  - WFP is providing support to other UN agencies for common service provision as required.
  - WFP coordinates regional activities in collaboration with partners.

### Achievements

#### SYRIA

- Local procurement of items by ETC to upgrade the inter-agency radio room in Aleppo is still ongoing. Some delays have been experienced due to the difficulty registering local suppliers. The infrastructure will replace old and ailing equipment.
- A request has been received for ETC to assist with establishing services at a new temporary hub location at a hotel in Aleppo. A technical assessment of the site has been completed. The hub is being relocated from its current location due to security reasons.
- The importation of telecoms equipment to support the humanitarian community in Syria is still awaiting MOFA approval. Regular updates are being sought on the matter. This continues to be a key constraint, limiting the ability of the Cluster to expand services in Syria such as radio coverage.

## TURKEY

- Approval was granted by Turkish MOFA in late March for the renewal of UN radio frequency licenses which will be used to expand radio coverage in south-eastern Turkey.
- A new UHF repeater was installed in Gaziantep in April as part of the radio network expansion project in south-eastern Turkey. The Gaziantep repeater is now operational on Channel 2. A repeater will be installed in each of Hatay, Sanliurfa and Kilis in the coming period.
- ETC will provide radio training once the radio operators are recruited for the new radio room at the Gaziantep hub.



## LEBANON

- ETC supplied three base radios and vehicle antennas to UNDSS Lebanon in response to a request from the agency.

## JORDAN

- UNHCR have completed a full update of call-signs for handheld radios allocated to humanitarian staff working in Zaatari and Azraq camps. The call-signs were revised to align with the Jordan call-sign allocation template.
- UNHCR are progressing well with the reprogramming of VHF radios for UN agencies and NGOs working in Azraq and Zaatari camps. Radios are being re-allocated according to needs and NGO's will be requested to sign a Right-of-Use agreement for each radio issued to them.
- The JOC (radio room) in Zaatari camp keeps 26 radios available for daily distribution as required.
- WFP is working with UNDSS to refresh the HF code plug for Jordan. Information is still being collected from across the region to develop the HF code plug.
- WFP programmed an HF and VHF radio for UNMM upon request.

## Challenges and Gaps

- The volatile security situation impacts the assessment and installation of telecommunications capability for the humanitarian community in key areas within Syria.
- The lengthy processing times by government authorities to respond to requests to import critical telecommunications equipment hampers the ability of the Cluster to perform upgrades at operational areas inside Syria.
- The ETC in Syria has a funding shortfall in 2015. ETC is currently funded for only 25% of its 2015 plans.



## Planned Activities

### SYRIA

- ETC will deploy new equipment at the inter-agency radio room in Aleppo once the local procurement process is complete.
- Based on the needs of the new hub location in Aleppo, ETC is working with the local team to understand what services can be deployed at the site including installation of an internet link.
- The option of relocating the CH3 repeater to the Four Seasons Hotel in Damascus is being investigated. The relocation is expected to improve radio coverage and maintenance access to the repeater equipment.
- Importation of telecommunications equipment for use at operational locations in Syria is stalled by lack of approval from Syrian MOFA. If approval is granted an initial lot of telecoms equipment will be sent from Lebanon to Syria.

### LEBANON

- Agencies can now contact UNDSS or UNIFIL in Lebanon for radio programming assistance if they have Motorola digital radios that they would like to use on UNIFIL's VHF radio network in SLR.
- An initial lot of telecoms equipment is ready to be sent from Beirut to Damascus once approval but is held up by the lack of approval from Syrian MOFA to import equipment to the country.

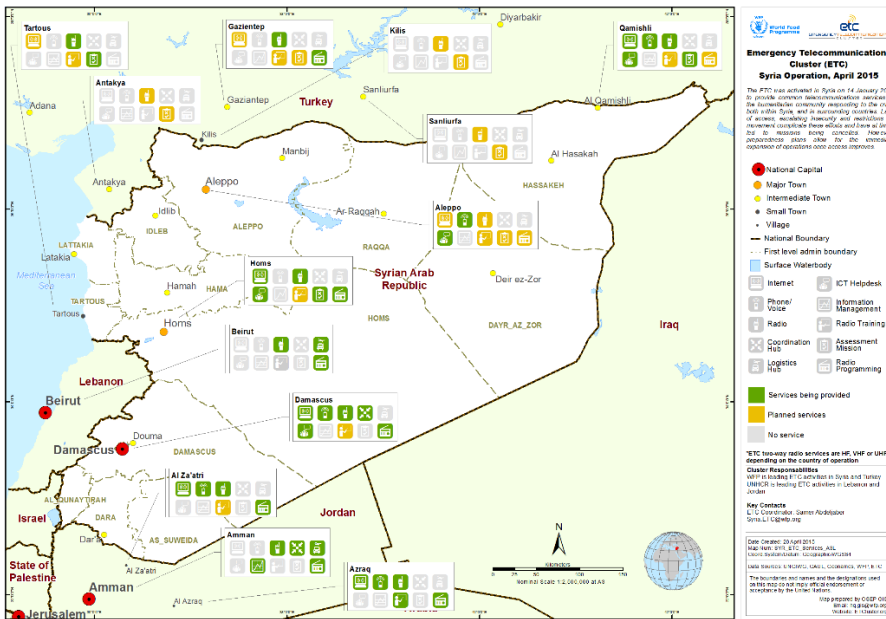
### JORDAN

- An upgrade of UNHCR's VHF radio network to digital infrastructure is planned at five locations in Jordan, including Zaatari and Azraq camps. The arrival of equipment in-country is pending.
- WFP will start development of a new HF code plug for Jordan incorporating HF network settings sourced from across the region.

### TURKEY

- Testing of Channel 2 coverage of the new UHF repeater in Gaziantep will be completed following the installation of the repeater at that location. Installation of UHF repeaters in Hatay, Sanliurfa and Kilis are planned next.
- Recruitment and training of radio operators for the Gaziantep radio room.

## ETC Service Map



## Meetings

### Global ETC Teleconference

The next Global ETC teleconference will be held on Tuesday 20 May 2015 at:

- 0800 New York
- 1200 UTC
- 1400 Rome / Geneva
- 1500 Damascus / Amman
- 1600 Dubai

## Acronyms

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ETC    | Emergency Telecommunications Cluster             |
| HF     | High Frequency                                   |
| ICT    | Information and Communications Technology        |
| MOFA   | Ministry of Foreign Affairs                      |
| SHARP  | Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan      |
| UHF    | Ultra High Frequency                             |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Programme             |
| UNDSS  | United Nations Department of Safety and Security |
| UNHCR  | United Nations Refugee Agency                    |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund                   |
| UNIFIL | United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon          |
| UNMM   | United Nations Monitoring Mechanism              |
| UTC    | Universal Coordinated Time                       |
| VHF    | Very High Frequency                              |
| WFP    | World Food Programme                             |



## Key ETC Contacts

The list below shows the key people involved in providing and supporting inter-agency ICT services in the Syria operation:

| LOCATION | AGENCY | NAME              | TITLE   | EMAIL  | MOBILE PHONE      |
|----------|--------|-------------------|---|--|-------------------|
| Cairo    | WFP    | Samer AbdelJaber  | Regional IT Officer & IT/ETC Coordinator for Syria Crises | <a href="mailto:samer.abdeljaber@wfp.org">samer.abdeljaber@wfp.org</a>   | + 201 0 6661 6603 |
| Damascus | WFP    | Edisher Giorgadze | ICT Officer   | <a href="mailto:edisher.giorgadze@wfp.org">edisher.giorgadze@wfp.org</a> | + 963 9 9119 9643 |
| Amman    | WFP    | Salma Farouque    | ETC IM Officer  | <a href="mailto:salma.farouque@wfp.org">salma.farouque@wfp.org</a>       | + 962 7 9867 4633 |

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website: [www.ETCluster.org](http://www.ETCluster.org)

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: [Syria.ETC@wfp.org](mailto:Syria.ETC@wfp.org)

### Background on the crisis:

Humanitarian needs in Syria have increased twelve-fold since the beginning of the crisis, with 12.2 million now in need of humanitarian assistance, including more than 5.6 million children. More than half of all Syrians have been forced to leave their homes, often multiple times, making Syria the largest displacement crisis in the world. An estimated 4.8 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in hard-to-reach and besieged locations. Palestine refugees are particularly affected, with 560,000 in need of assistance.

In 2014, four out of every five Syrians were living in poverty, and almost two-thirds were living in extreme poverty. 9.8 million People are considered food insecure, including 6.8 million in high priority districts. Water availability has decreased to less than 50 per cent of its pre-crisis levels, and 11.6 million people are in urgent need of access to clean water and sanitation. More than half of Syria's hospitals have been destroyed or badly damaged and, it is estimated that only 43 per cent of hospitals are fully functional. An estimated 1,480 women give birth in dire conditions every day due to the weakening of the healthcare system. Outbreaks of communicable and vaccine-preventable diseases (including polio and measles) have increased. Roughly one-quarter of schools have been damaged, destroyed or are used as collective shelters or for purposes other than education. An estimated 1.2 million houses have been damaged or destroyed and more than 1.6 million people are in need of shelter. Due to multiple displacements, 9.9 million are in need of life saving and essential NFIs.