

Yemen, South Sudan, Iraq, Syria, Central African Republic

Global ETC Teleconference #19

Date: 15/06/16 TIME: 12:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Haidar Baqir	(Global ETC), Italy
emergency.lu	Gilles Hoffmann	Luxembourg
Ericsson Response	Brent Carbno	Canada
	Lars Ruediger	Germany
IOM	Belal Zedan	Syria
MSB	Jeremie Bedje	Côte d'Ivoire
UNICEF	Runar Holen	United States
	Antonio Gomes	Senegal
WFP	Geoffrey Okao	Nairobi
	Ruby Senin	South Sudan
	Solomon Welle	South Sudan
	Richard Egwangu	South Sudan
	Rami Shakra	Iraq
	Shahan Araquadir	Egypt
	Khawar Ilyas	Yemen
	Neil Murphy-Dewar	Italy
	Komi Amedjonekou	Central African Republic
	Karén Barsamian	Armenia
	Niko Vuorenmaa	Jordan

Teleconference started at 12:05 UTC

Agenda

1. Yemen update
2. South Sudan update
3. Iraq update
4. Syria update
5. Central African Republic update

Minutes

1. YEMEN

Security Update

- The security situation remains unstable in Al Hudaydah and World Food Programme (WFP), lead of the ETC in Yemen, staff needs 72 hours pre-clearance if they want to move out of Sana'a. However, staff are now able to go to the office in Aden.

ETC Response

- Two members of WFP's Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST) have now joined the ETC team in Sana'a, including a Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) specialist and telecommunications specialist.
- The telecommunications specialist recently completed a mission to Sa'ada where he relocated a Communications Centre (COMCEN) within a building. An assessment was also carried out in the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) office to set up an ETC Internet hub for the Non-Government Organisation (NGO) community.
- The ETC data specialist went on mission to Al Hudaydah to work on the World Health Organisation (WHO) building project, the common UN building. Most of the necessary work has been done and all access points have been tested and are functioning well. There is Wi-Fi connectivity available through YahClick and the ETC is providing Internet connectivity as back-up for all agencies in the WHO building.
- The ETC Coordinator has spoken with UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) to get an overview of the situation in Sana'a and to follow up on the radio operators' recruitment and training. The hiring process is underway.
- The ETC team on the ground is waiting for the complete packing list of equipment to be shipped from Dubai to Aden. The equipment is in Dubai pending clearance as all equipment entering Yemen must be pre-cleared.

2. SOUTH SUDAN

Security Update

- The overall security situation is relatively calm across the country.

ETC Response

- Two emergency.lu wireless mobile satellite crisis communication systems have been delivered to Koch and Leer counties. Installation of the equipment will be scheduled pending the delivery of renewable power systems. The equipment is expected to improve the communications system and facilitate the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian operations in those areas.



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- The ETC has completed the Let's Comm Digital training for 25 technicians from different humanitarian organizations and government agencies.
 - As part of capacity-building efforts in the country, the ETC is planning to conduct training on renewable energy in 2016.

3. IRAQ

Security update

- The security situation in Iraq remains dire and violence is expected to escalate. However, the ETC is currently operating in safe locations. The main focus is the operation on Fallujah with the concern being the number of civilians now trying to escape the city. Humanitarians, including the ETC, are preparing their response.
- The assault on Mosul has also started and the ETC has a contingency plan in place

Staffing

- The core ETC team that will be in place until the end of the year includes: the ETC Coordinator, a security telecommunications specialist and a data specialist. Information Management (IM) is provided remotely from Dubai. A member of FITTEST is on the ground to support the Communicating for Communities (CwC) project.

Existing Services

- The ETC provides security telecommunications in 5x sites and manages COMCEN in 3x of those sites, one of which is shared with UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). Internet connectivity is provided in 2x sites.

ETC Response

- Last week, the ETC Coordinator took part in a United Nations (UN) joint assessment mission to Ameriyat al Fallujah compound, 30km south of Fallujah. The UN is planning to set up the first operational hub in Anbar province.
 - The ETC Coordinator carried out an assessment in that site and wrote a report that details his suggestions for ETC services. If approved, the ETC will provide VSAT, Very High Frequency (VHF), analogue and digital services for UN agencies and NGOs.
 - He is also working on a plan to deploy a remote radio room in this site as it is a high-risk area.
- The ETC is working on a CwC project to provide Internet to communities. This is a three-month pilot project in Domiz refugee camp in Dohuk.
 - The idea is to provide free Internet connectivity to the community in two centres in Domiz camp: the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) youth centre and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) library.
 - The team is currently testing the possible solutions and finalising agreements with IRC and UNFPA.
- The ETC is ordering equipment to be prepositioned in Erbil for immediate deployment in 2x new sites where necessary.



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- This equipment can also be used in case there is a breach of Mosul dam. There are 3x FITTEST members on the ground who can be deployed immediately.
 - Some of the equipment is from Ericsson Response, including 2x WIDER kits. Ericsson Response is also supporting the pilot project to determine how the ETC data solution can be fully maximised.

4. SYRIA

Whole of Syria

- The ETC Syria update is provided in line with the Whole of Syria (WOS) approach. Therefore, Syria and surrounding countries (Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon) are mentioned in the update.

Security Update

- The situation remains volatile and dangerous inside Syria with limited movement outside Damascus. Now that the new ICT Officer is on the ground, he will work closely with the ETC Coordinator on the ETC plan and budget status.

ETC Response

SYRIA

- Most equipment, including 3x new VSATs, will be moved from Lebanon to Syria on the permit that has been approved by the government.

TURKEY

- A new IT assistant for the UN hub in Gazientep joined the team on 1 June and will soon revive the ETC services.

JORDAN

The team is planning to implement automatic link establishment (ALE) for Codan.

LEBANON

- UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) is looking at how to strengthen the VHF network as the GSM network went down during a blast last week. They are also preparing to ship equipment to Syria.

5. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (C.A.R.)

Security update



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- The security situation remains calm in Bangui with some small incidents reported over last few weeks.

ETC Response

- A local ETC meeting was held on 8 June in the WFP compound. The ETC is collaborating with ART, the telecommunications regulatory authority in the Central African Republic. The ETC will discuss with ART the lack of equality in the charging of frequency utilization for NGOs.
- The ETC project to install towers in different common areas has started. As of today, the ETC will start installing towers in Bossangoa, Bambari and Paoua. This will allow the team to extend the radio network and have point-to-point link for NGOs.
- The project funding expired on 30 April. The ETC submitted a new project proposal in March and the approval process is ongoing. The approval is expected by the end of June.
- The ETC is discussing the possibility of having an alternative radio room for the country. The ETC is supporting the government in rehabilitating the building on the hill in order to secure equipment that is deployed.
- An colleague from the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) will go on mission on Friday to Kaga-Bandoro to activate the ETC data link to UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) VSAT. This will give Internet access to humanitarians on the ground.
- The ETC continues radio programming for NGOs.
- NetHope equipment: a list of 4x selected NGOs was sent to NetHope and a handover process is yet to be established.

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 12:38 UTC

Next Joint Global ETC Teleconference will be held on Wednesday 13 July at 12:00 UTC.

Acronyms

ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
ART	Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (CAR)
C.A.R.	Central African Republic
CBT	Cash-Based Transfers
COMCEN	Communications Centre
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CwC	Communication with Communities
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
DMR	Digital Mobile Radio
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FITTEST	Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications



HF	High Frequency
HISP	Humanitarian Internet Support Project
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IT	Information Technology
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSB	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PBX	Private Branch Exchange
POC	Protection of Civilians
SO	Special Operation
UHF	Ultra High Frequency
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	UN Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
VSAT	Very small aperture terminal
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
WOS	Whole of Syria

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website: www.ETCluster.org

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact:

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