

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

Global ETC Teleconference #21

Date: 10/08/16 TIME: 12:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Caroline Teyssier	(Global ETC), United Arab Emirates
CRS	Daniel Carr	United States
	Kingstone Njari	Kenya
Ericsson Response	Brent Carbno	Canada
Oxfam	Tauseef Ansari	United Kingdom
UNICEF	Ghassan Al Ammari	United States
Save the Children	Moayyed Fares	Jordan
WFP	Ruby Senin	Kenya
	Edisher Giorgadze	United Arab Emirates
	Karén Barsamian	United Arab Emirates
	Solomon Welle	South Sudan
	Richard Egwangu	South Sudan
	Rami Shakra	Iraq
	Shahan Araquadir	Egypt
	Varughese Matthew	Lebanon

Teleconference started at 12:06 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 Aden and Al Hudaydah.
- There are reports of a deterioration in the security situation and staff movements are very limited.

ETC Response

- The ETC got approval to extend all its staff involved in the Yemen operation until the end of the year. This includes: 1x Coordinator, 1x Information Management Officer (remote), 2x data responders, 1x project support and 1x telecommunications specialist.
- The pre-clearance requests for the two shipments going to Aden – one from Dubai and one from Djibouti - were sent to the logistics focal point in Aden.
- The team is still following up on the shipment of the emergency.lu VSAT from Djibouti to Luxembourg with Logistics.
- The equipment purchase request from WFP IT and ETC was approved by senior management.
 - The ETC requested US\$300,000-worth of equipment, including WIDER and telecommunications equipment.
- A new UN compound is being built in Hadda area in Sana'a. This compound will replace the Diplomatic Transit Facility (DTF) which is current UN accommodation in the old Sheraton hotel, as a residential building for UN staff and it is expected to be ready by the end of 2016. High-speed internet connectivity will be installed in this new building. It is not yet clear who will pay for this.
 - The ETC will move all its equipment and services from the DTF to the new UN compound.

2. SOUTH SUDAN

Security Update

- The situation in Juba is very unpredictable.
- Violence against aid workers has increased over the past weeks drastically limiting movements of staff. .

ETC Response

- The ETC suspended the planned missions to Leer and Koch due to security concerns. The wireless satellite equipment from emergency.lu was brought to United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) compound in Leer for safekeeping, while other emergency.lu equipment is still in the humanitarian hub in Koch.
- The ETC completed the installation and activation of satellite equipment at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) compound in Wau County, providing internet connectivity for the rapid emergency response team deployed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

- The Internet service provided by the Humanitarian Internet Service Provider (HISP) is working as normal in the sites where it is operational and interference issues have been resolved following regular maintenance.
- The Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) project has now received its tax exemption from the government to acquire the equipment. Shipment of equipment is expected to commence by third week of August.

3. IRAQ

Security update

- Over the last few weeks, the humanitarian community has adjusted its plans to respond to the Mosul offensive.
 - Four quadrants have been identified – North, South, East and West – where an estimated 1.2 million displaced people are likely to head towards. East is towards Kurdistan where most ETC operations are and a mass movement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) is expected.

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 from the Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST).
- 2x additional FITTEST deployments are expected in August; one to focus on the Connectivity for Communities project and one to focus on the Mosul operations. Information Management (IM) is provided remotely from Dubai.

ETC Response

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.

Security telecommunications

- 1x analogue repeater has been installed on Zwerges mountain in Sulaymaniyah to improve radio coverage.
- 2x digital repeaters will be relocated to Zwerges mountain from Arbat camp to further improve coverage.
- 1x analogue repeater will be installed in Dohuk for the use of NGOs in Domiz camp and Domiz.
 - Training and radio programming services will now be provided to UN agencies and NGOs.

Data

- The team is now one month into Phase 1 of the three-month Connectivity for Communities project in Domiz camp which is going very well so far.
- Phase 1 covers the ETC providing Internet connectivity to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Youth Centre.
 - More than 200x vouchers have been distributed to the community, each voucher giving 3x hours daily Internet usage.
 - There is an average of 35-45 daily users.
 - UNFPA staff are supporting with the distribution of the vouchers.
 - The main challenge has been the bandwidth limitations but the ETC team has now increased this from 2MB to 4MB.
 - As the support demands are increasing, these will be address with the additional FITTEST staff deployment.
- Phase 2 involves establishing an Internet café in Domiz camp. The team has identified a UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) computer lab as the site for this.
 - The ETC is working with UNHCR to provide ETC Internet services to the lab.
 - The ETC is also working on a solar power solution for this site and also the UNFPA Youth Centre.
 - ETC IM Officer will visit Domiz camp in the first week of September to cover the project. A mini-communications plan has been developed which covers:
 - Writing stories for various platforms about the project
 - Designing and procuring specially-designed t-shirts to raise visibility and awareness
 - Liaising with regional and international media to cover the story, including Al Jazeera
 - Developing story for Dubai-based magazine *Global Citizen*.
 - Drafting social media posts

Assessments

- As noted in the previous Global ETC Joint teleconference, it is unlikely that Ameriyat Al Fallujah will be approved as a common operational hub.
 - Radio and IT equipment pre-configured and prepositioned for this site is ready for immediate deployment elsewhere.
- The ETC has ordered equipment for 2x new operational areas – Zummar and Tikrit.
 - An assessment mission to Zummar is being carried out today.
 - An assessment mission to Tikrit will take place on 17 August

- The team is working on surge staff deployments.
- The Intermediate Data Training is scheduled for 18-22 September. Participants include all WFP IT and FITTEST staff on the ground, 1x UNHCR staff, 1x UNICEF staff and 1x WFP staff from Yemen.

4. SYRIA

Whole of Syria

- The ETC Syria update is provided in line with the Whole of Syria 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.

ETC Response

SYRIA

- 3x VSATs and other equipment are at the border and expected to reach Damascus by the end of next week,
- The COMCEN in Damascus has been relocated to the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) building.
- VHF antenna and repeaters are programmed. There are three VHF duplex channels so most of Damascus and the surrounding area is covered.
- The ETC has scheduled an inter-agency Let's Comm Analogue training in Damascus in the first week of October. 24x staff members will be trained over two sessions.

TURKEY

- The repeater in Sanliurfa has been relocated to the Hilton Garden Hotel.

JORDAN

- The team has gathered all VHF radios for Syria and is waiting for protocol to ship them to Syria via Lebanon.

LEBANON

- The team in Lebanon is actively involved in shipping all equipment to Syria and is currently waiting for clearance.

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

Security update

- The security situation remains calm in Bangui with some small incidents reported over last few weeks.
- The curfew for UN staff is being adjusted depending on the security incidents.

ETC Response

- The new ETC project was submitted and approved. The changes has been reflected in the revision of the humanitarian response plan this year.
- Funding remains critical for the ETC operation in C.A.R. Provision of Internet connectivity and security telecommunications through HF and VHF services in the 8x common operational areas are secured until the end of the year but dedicated coordination could not be continued this month and was handed over to the local team.
- ETC is looking for funding and will resubmit a request for CERF in mid-sept. Due to the situation, the ETC is looking at different ways to continue supporting requirements beyond 2017. Transition and discussion will need first to be held at the HCT.
- The ETC project to deploy four telecommunications towers in different common areas and maintenance of two existing (installed in 2009) is half way through its completion. This will extend the radio network and have point-to-point link for NGOs. Paperwork is being finalized to proceed with a partial payment to the provider that will build the new towers.
- The building hosting the VHF repeaters in Bangui by the government free of charge is going through rehabilitation. The team do not foresee any disruption at this stage and is just monitoring and ready to intervene if required.
- NetHope equipment has been distributed to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) - handsets radio and repeaters. The ETC continues following up on the remaining equipment with NGOs so they can submit their request directly to NetHope.
- The ETC continues to provide support for radio programming and information-sharing to the humanitarian community.

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 12:35 UTC

Next Joint Global ETC Teleconference will be held on Wednesday 07 September at 12:00 UTC.

Acronyms

ALE	Automatic Link Establishment
ART	Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (CAR)
C.A.R.	Central African Republic
COMCEN	Communications Centre
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
DMR	Digital Mobile Radio
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
FITTEST	Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HISP	Humanitarian Internet Service Provider



ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
SO	Special Operation
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	UN Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNFAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organisation
UNHAS	UN Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNMISS	UN Mission in South Sudan
VHF	Very High Frequency
VSAT	Very small aperture terminal
WFP	World Food Programme

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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