Republic of South Sudan (RoSS)

ETC Situation Report #86

Reporting period 20/02/16 to 28/03/16

The next ETC RoSS Sitrep report will be issued on or around 25/04/16.

Highlights

- The Digital Mobile Radio project (DMR) will start in South Sudan now that five UN agencies, including UNICEF, UNESCO, OCHA, UN Habitat, and UNFPA have signed the Memorandum of Understanding. WFP shall initially fund the start-up awaiting shared contribution from the signatories of the agreement.

- The emergency.lu equipment in Mingkaman has been decommissioned and shipped to Juba. A plan to redeploy the equipment to Leer in Unity State to support the light-based camp managed by Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is in progress.

- The ETC (emergency telecommunications cluster) is currently working with Communication with Community (CwC) working group, supporting the effort to establish a feedback mechanism through a two-way communication platform.

Situation Overview

Since its activation in 2011 following the country's independence, the ETC has provided humanitarians across South Sudan with vital telecommunications services. The lack of vital infrastructure to support the humanitarian response in the country mean that ETC security telecommunications services are the only reliable form of communications for humanitarian actors on the ground. The ETC will migrate from analogue to DMR which is more robust and provides greater coverage and better tracking GPS (global positioning system) features.

The ETC is also supporting the response community with the development and implementation of the Humanitarian Internet Support Project (HISP), a reliable, low-cost and long-term solution to meet the internet connectivity needs of humanitarian actors in remote and hard-to-reach locations.

In 2016, ETC South Sudan plans to coordinate and conduct Lessons Learned workshops on how to better support the

Repeater for the security telecommunications supported by renewable energy solution installed. Ganyiel, South Sudan

Photo credit: WFP/ETC South Sudan

humanitarian community through the possible expansion of ETC services as part of the new global ETC2020 strategy.

ETC Response Activities

- Shifting from analogue radio to DMR, the ETC now plans to start the DMR project in South Sudan with five UN agencies, including UNICEF, UNESCO, OCHA, UN Habitat, and UNFPA having formalized the agreement. This is a co-shared endeavour where partners fund the cost of the equivalent services to be provided to them.

- The ETC continues to maintain the security telecommunications infrastructure and services, and has started programming digital radios for humanitarian partners. It is expected that Digital Mobile Communication will be implemented in Juba between January and June.

- The ETC is currently working with Communication with Communities (CwC) working group, to support efforts to establish a feedback mechanism through a two-way communication platform where beneficiaries would be able to communicate their needs and feedback to humanitarian on programs being implemented.   . This will involve identifying existing community structures to ensure access to information is extended to all, as well as to strengthen two-way flows of information working through existing community mechanism.

- emergency.lu equipment in Malakal has been decommissioned and is currently in the Juba warehouse. The other equipment in Bentiu will continue to be operational until the end of April while plans to support the CwC work stream is being finalized.

- In the HISP (Humanitarian Internet Support Project) site in Malakal, a technical team from EMC (Emerging Market Communications) are on the ground to evaluate and assess the possibility of moving to a new humanitarian site to improve connectivity coverage.

- The ETC is broadening its partnership by engaging with Castel Radio LTD which is the direct dealer with Motorola to provide easy access to the new digital radios for use by the humanitarian community.

Planned Activities

- The ETC shall conduct an assessment mission to Leer in Unity State by the end of March or early April to evaluate the communications services needed and identify appropriate solutions to the Light Based camp managed by NRC (Norwegian Refugee Council).

- Emergency.lu equipment that was decommissioned from Mingkaman shall be refurbished by emergency.lu's technical team and will be deployed to Leer based on recommendations from the assessment team.

- The ETC will conduct one technical training for humanitarian radio operators in April.

The Humanitarian Internet Support Project (HISP) is a reliable, low-cost and long-term solution to meet the internet connectivity needs of humanitarian actors in remote and hard to reach locations. The ETC is supporting the response community with development and implementation of this inter-agency project.

Connected Sites

- The Humanitarian Internet Support Project (HISP) has been deployed in four locations across South Sudan – Aweil (Northern Bahr el Ghazal State), Malakal (Upper Nile State), Bor (Jonglei State) and Mingkaman. 48 NGOs have subscribed to HISP with approximately 720 users.

- The migration of connectivity services to HISP is ongoing in Bentiu (Unity State).

Cluster Responsibilities

- The World Food Programme (WFP) is leading ETC activities in South Sudan with responsibility for coordination, implementation, overall operational support for common ICT services and driving of ETC2020.

- The ETC is supporting the response community with the development and implementation of HISP as it is an inter-agency project.

ETC Meetings

- Global ETC teleconferences are held monthly. The next teleconference will be held on Thursday 14 April 2016.

- Local ETC meetings are held monthly. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 28 April 2016.

Useful Links

- ETC South Sudan Factsheet
- ETC South Sudan Service Map
- ETC VHF Radio coverage Map
- ETC services usage Policy
- About ETC2020 vision

Acronyms

ETC   Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
HISP   Humanitarian Internet Support Project
ICT   Information and Communications Technology
NGO   Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA   Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ToT   Training of Trainers
UN   United Nations
UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA   United Nations Populations Fund
UNHAS   UN Humanitarian Air Services
UNICEF   United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VHF   Very High Frequency
WFP   World Food Programme

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

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

In December 2013, fighting between different elements of the South Sudan armed forces broke out in the capital Juba and subsequently spread to the interior of the country, especially Jonglei State, Unity State and Upper Nile State. On-going clashes between pro-government and anti-government forces continue to undermine the security situation and have had dire humanitarian consequences.

Since the onset of violence over 1.64 million people have been displaced within South Sudan while 622,400 have fled to neighbouring countries.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) has been activated in South Sudan since 2011, providing security and data telecommunications and coordination services to the humanitarian community. Following the beginning of the humanitarian crisis in December 2013, the ETC scaled up its activities and expanded to new locations in the interior of South Sudan, supporting humanitarian organizations involved in the crisis response through the provision of vital telecommunication services.

Sources: OCHA South Sudan Crisis Situation Report, Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)