

Central African Republic, Iraq, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Syria, Yemen

Global ETC Teleconference #32

Date: 31/10/17 TIME: 12:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Caroline Teyssier	(Global ETC), U.A.E.
Ericsson Response	Brent Carbno	Canada
IOM	Belal Zedan	Syria
UNHCR	Nizar Zeidan	Switzerland
UNICEF	Runar Holen	USA
WFP	Mohamedou Ndiath	C.A.R.
	Shahan Ara Quadir	Egypt
	Ekue Ayih	Nigeria
	Mohammad Ameen	Syria
	Tue Nielsen	Kenya
	Prakash Muniandy	Iraq
	Ozdzan Hadziemin	UAE
	Moussa Sana	Senegal
	Wali Noor	Yemen
World Vision Int.	Antoine Karam	United States

Teleconference started at 13:04 UTC

Agenda

1. **RETS update**
2. **Central African Republic update**
3. **Syria update**
4. **Yemen update**
5. **Iraq update**
6. **Nigeria update**
7. **AOB**

Minutes

1. REFUGEE EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR (RETS)

- A user feedback survey has been shared with registered users of Internet services provided by the RETS in Uganda.
- A RETS Coordinator will be deployed to Uganda in the first week of November to work on extending RETS services in 2018 and expanding services in northern Uganda.
- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is experiencing contractual challenges with the local Internet Service Provider (ISP) in Dundo, Angola. There are 3x staff from the World Food Programme (WFP) and 3x from the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) using UNHCR's satellite kit in Dundo.

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

ETC Response

- Given the increasing Information and Communications Technology (ICT) needs in the south-eastern part of the country, the ETC is planning to deploy shared connectivity services in Zemio, Bangassou and Bria. As the security situation remains volatile in Zemio, the ETC will meet with the humanitarian community to assess the situation.
- The ETC started the setup of a Very High Frequency (VHF) network in Bria. In the first week of November, the ETC will finalise it and install a Communications Centre (COMCEN). This setup will be replicated in Zemio and Bangassou.
- The ETC is working with the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) on the deployment of the Inter-Agency Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) project in the country. The ETC and UNDSS will engage with humanitarian organisations to ensure their needs are met and to seek funding for this project.
- The ETC received funds from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to deploy common ICT services in three new operational areas.

3. SYRIA

ETC Response

- The ETC deployed solar panels to power the VHF repeaters in Damascus and Aleppo. Solar panels will be deployed in Homs and Qamishli in the coming weeks.
- New High Frequency (HF) radio frequencies from the Government of Syria have been granted to the ETC to overcome the interferences in the existing frequencies.
- A Let's Comm Digital training for inter-agency staff supporting ETC operations in Syria and surrounding countries will take place from 12 to 18 November in Dubai.

Whole of Syria

Turkey:



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- An ICT assistant who will provide helpdesk support to users, will join the ETC operation in Gaziantep in the week of 20 November.

Jordan:

- The ETC continues to provide common ICT services in two camps (Azraq and Za'atari) and is expected to extend services in the North- East part of the country (Berm area). As the authorisation from local authorities to extend services in the Berm area is taking longer than expected, the ETC might have to review its deployment plans.

Lebanon:

- The ETC equipment for Syria is kept in Lebanon and it is currently being inventoried. In 2018, the need for these storage facilities will be reviewed.
- UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided an update on the Emergency Telecommunications Training (ETT) that they conducted in Beirut for over 50+ Inter-Agency participants.

4. YEMEN

Security Update

- The security situation remains volatile and unpredictable across the county.

ETC Response

- The ETC continues to provide shared connectivity services in five operational areas across Yemen. These services will be extended until the end of 2018.
- The ETC was requested to oversee the Information Technology (IT) setup at the new UN compound in Haddah, Sana'a. The ETC will move its existing Internet connectivity and security telecommunications services and equipment, including UNDSS COMCEN, from the Diplomatic Transit Facility (DTF) in Sana'a to Haddah before 5 November.
- The ETC plans to open a service desk at the Haddah compound given the increasing demand for these services.
- The ETC has identified a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), Première Urgence Internationale, willing to host back-up ETC services for the NGO community in Al Hudeydah.
- As part of the EOC project, the ETC team is supporting the Cholera outbreak response. The third EOC was opened in Sana'a in the third week of October. The ETC team is focusing deploying the next six priority EOC, which are expected to be operational by the end of November.
- The ETC plans to conduct an Inter-Agency IT capacity building training in Sana'a in early 2018. Participants of this training will provide customer support at the three service desks, which will be opened to support operations at WFP, Haddah compound and the EOC project.
- The ETC participated in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) cluster coordination meeting. The ETC discussed its support to the community feedback mechanism, which OCHA would like to implement.
- The ETC Coordinator enquired about the link capacity and geofencing features of DMR. The deputy Global ETC Cell coordinator will address this bilaterally with the ETC Coordinator.

5. IRAQ

Security Update

- Since 16 October, the security situation remains fluid around Erbil and it had had an impact on planning ETC missions.

ETC Response

- The ETC team will carry out a deployment mission in Hajja Ali on 1 November.
- The ETC has engaged with a local ISP to provide Internet connectivity services in 11x camps.
- The ETC in Iraq is looking for qualified Services for Communities (S4C) candidates to support the implementation of S4C in the country.

6. NIGERIA

Security Update

- The security situation in Nigeria remains volatile and some areas are inaccessible to humanitarians. Security incidents took place recently in Bama, Gwoza and in the outskirts of Maiduguri.

ETC Response

- ETS services are currently operational in six of these areas across Borno and Yobe state.
- The ETS is deploying shared Internet connectivity and security telecommunications services at the fifth humanitarian hub in North-East Nigeria in Dikwa. The team is currently finalising the installation of the COMCEN.
- The ETS continues providing regular radio training and reprogramming activities to the humanitarian community. Frequency field visits are carried out for maintenance in Damboa, Ngala and Gwoza.
- The ETS extended the wireless connectivity network coverage to OCHA's Humanitarian Coordination Centre at the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP) base camp in Maiduguri.
- The ETS launched a user satisfaction survey on the Iridium Push-To-Talk services the ETS is offering to the humanitarian community in North-East Nigeria www.surveymonkey.com/r/ETSIridiumPTT
- The ETS engaged with the local Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to gather their recovery plans for services in North-East Nigeria and elaborate a coverage map of existing services.
- The ETS will support the preparation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on radio check for North-East Nigeria and will continue to follow up with the relevant authorities on additional radio licenses.
- The ETS will conduct a training for the radio operators currently being recruited to operate the Communications Centres (COMCENS) in Maiduguri, Damaturu and four humanitarian hubs.



- The existing Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) network in Maiduguri and Damaturu will be upgraded to offer tracking over the VHF radio network to the humanitarian community.
- The ETS is exploring possibilities to deploy services in Monguno, Banki, Damasak and Damboa before the hubs are established at these locations in early 2018.

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 12:46 UTC

Next Joint Global ETC Teleconference will be held on Wednesday 29 November 12:00 UTC.

Acronyms

C.A.R.	Central African Republic
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
COMCEN	Communications Centre
DMR	Digital Mobile Radio
DTF	Diplomatic Transit Facility
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
HF	High Frequency
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IHP	International Humanitarian Partnership
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RETS	Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector
S4C	Services for Communities
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety & Security
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
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:

Global.ETC@wfp.org

Minutes: Erika Iglesias, WFP