



## **Bangladesh, Iraq, Yemen, Syria**

### **Global ETC Teleconference**

**Date: 25/04/18**

**TIME: 12:00 UTC**

#### **Attendance**

Chair	Phyza Jameel	(Global ETC), Italy
CRS	Dan Carr	US
ICRC	Sami Olio	Damascus
UNHCR	Arthemon Nkunzumwami	Jordan
	Nizar Zeidan	Switzerland
	Hafedh Al Juboori	Iraq
WFP	Pastor Lovo	Bangladesh
	Michael Dirksen	Bangladesh
	Sekou Traore	Bangladesh
	Shahan Ara Quadir	Egypt
	Prakash Muniandy	Iraq
	Karén Barsamian	Italy
	Balamine Outtara	Syria

Teleconference started at 12:05 UTC

#### **Agenda**

- 1. Bangladesh update**
- 2. Iraq update**
- 3. Syria and surrounding countries update**
- 4. Yemen update**
- 5. AOB**

## Minutes

### 1. BANGLADESH

#### Staffing

- The new Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) Coordinator is in Cox's Bazar.
- The Global ETC Coordinator, Jalal Shah, joined the team in Cox's Bazar for two days to participate in the handover between coordinators. He also met with WFP's Head of IT in Dhaka to evaluate the project implementation and get feedback and recommendations from partners on the ground.
- The dedicated ETS Information Management Officer (IMO) joined the team on 9 April.
- The ETS is expecting a new team member to lead the IT-related projects who is expected to arrive in Cox's Bazar in the first week of May.
- The mission of the ETS telecommunications specialist has been extended until mid-June.

#### ETS Response

- The Communication with Communities (CwC) Working Group endorsed the inter-sector collaboration project during the meeting held on 11 April. 40 information hubs will be serviced by ETS in line with the concept note. The number of information hubs per organizations is as follows: International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (13), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (9), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) (9), International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) (3), Terre des Homes (3) and Radio Naf (3). A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been sent to each organization for their approval. In the meantime, ETS has started the procurement of the equipment.
- The ETS and Internews are working on a project to improve communication with communities in Bangladesh by improving data collecting and data sharing across agencies and sectors. Internews will support these activities with providing training to end-users, managing the web portal as well as producing documentation.
- The ETS met with the Country Director of the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) as well as the Country Director of the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) to explore ways to collaborate in terms of enhancing CPP's telecommunications capacity.
  - CPP will share the mapping of their current telecommunications network. ETS will then use this mapping to identify the needs and define the scope of the ETS collaboration.
- The equipment needed for the upgrade and expansion of the coverage of the common security network has been in Cox's Bazar since the third week of April. ETS is working on the configuration of the equipment in preparation for its deployment in five sites across Cox's Bazar: Cox's Bazar, Dumduniah, Kanjarpara, Kutupalong/Ukiya and Shamlapur/Marine Drive.
- Six radio training sessions were held for users from six UN agencies: IOM, UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). A total of 38 drivers and six radio operators received training in April.



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- The process for renting tower space and getting additional equipment is ongoing and the tender was submitted.
  - The ETS is providing telecommunications support to UNHCR and IOM to install a Very High Frequency (VHF) base station in the UNDSS Communications Centre (COMCEN).
  - The ETS is also providing telecommunications support to IOM with radio programming.

## **2. IRAQ**

- The ETC is now focusing on Services for Communities (S4C) projects and will be hiring a local S4C focal point to oversee this.
- The ETC will remove Internet connectivity services in Domiz and Arbat camps as there are local Internet Service Providers (ISPs) available. Partners are aware of this.
- The ETC will continue to provide Internet connectivity to humanitarians in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps around Mosul until June or August depending on funding.
- As per the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), no new funding has been received and the ETC will have a funding shortfall after August. Last year, the cluster received funding from Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP) and the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) grant.
- No new requirements for security telecommunications so any future activities will be done on an ad hoc basis.
- Interviews for the IT associate and IM associate will be done this week.
- The ETC is finalising two possible S4C project proposals. More information will be shared once the concept notes are finalised.

## **3. SYRIA**

### **ETC Response**

- The security situation remains extremely volatile. Military operations continue in Damascus. In Douma, eastern Ghouta, evacuation of families continues to Idlib and Tartous.
- A joint UN assessment mission went to Raqqa recently and decided not consider opening office in Raqqa yet due to security and numerous mines across the city. A UNDSS assessment will go to Deir Al Zour this week to possibly reopen a UN office there so the ETC needs to be prepared.
- In Qamishli, the ETC is working to relocate the WFP office and shared ISP link to the new premises.
- An Inter-agency WG meeting took place to determine how to best reactivate the group.
- The team is submitting to the UN Country Team (UNCT) some project proposals for common ISP contract and common cell phone contract with a closed user group.
- Finalised recruitment of new staff for Qamishli.
- Planning mission to Beirut in coordination with regional bureau in Cairo to clear some backlog in terms of equipment.



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- Government is putting a ban on the importation of Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) equipment into Syria. This is a concern for the ETC. Migration to a DMR hasn't taken place as no approvals were received from the government so the ETC plans to talk with the government to see if can migrate this year. The ETC will also talk to UNDSS about alternative solution.

#### *Whole of Syria*

#### *Turkey*

- An assessment is planned to the common hub in Gazientep to extend Internet connectivity through fibre optics or alternative options.
- WFP has a new IT officer in Turkey and he will be involved in exploring possible S4C projects in Turkey.

#### *Jordan:*

- The ETC continues to provide services in 2x camps- Al Za'atari and Azraq in close collaboration with UNHCR.

#### *Lebanon:*

- A mission will take place from 6-12 May to Beirut to see what to do with the obsolete equipment.
- The ETC plans to extend the radio network with UNDSS in some locations around Beirut.

#### **4. YEMEN** (*updates provided after the call*)

##### **ETC Response**

- The ETC together with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) organised a half-day workshop to explore ways to establish a Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM). Following the workshop, a joint proposal is being drafted.
- The ETC and all other clusters are in the process of preparing a contingency plan based on the worst-case scenario.
- The ETC has conducted an assessment following a request from Sana'a University to install solar equipment, Internet connectivity and computer labs for its students.
- The visa application process is ongoing for the planned Information Management/Communications mission.
- Five staff from an outsourced contractor have been deployed to five Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) in Dhamar, Aden, Sana'a governorate, Ibb and Al Hudaydah.
  - The ETC is currently installing solar energy and IT networks in the remaining 17x EOCs.
  - 7x EOCs are now fully operational.

#### **5. AOB**

n/a

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 13:36 UTC

**Next Joint Global ETC Teleconference will be held on 20 June at 13:00 UTC. There will be no meeting in May due to the ETC Plenary.**



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## Acronyms

ACF	Action Contre la Faim / Action Against Hunger
BTRC	Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission
CwC	Communicating with Communities
DMR	Digital Mobile Radio
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
FITTEST	WFP's Fast IT, Telecommunications and Coordination Support Services Team
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
JRP	Joint Response Plan
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PU-AMI	Première Urgence Internationale – Aide Médicale Internationale
S4C	Services for Communities
SEG	Security Executive Group
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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:  
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