Bangladesh, Iraq, Yemen, Syria

Global ETC Teleconference

Date: 20/06/18   TIME: 12:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Jalal Shah	(Global ETC), Italy
UNHCR	Abdalla Khalil	Egypt
UNICEF	Wojciech Koprowicz	Nepal
WFP	Mark Maulit	Bangladesh
	Colince Menel	Bangladesh
	Prakash Muniandy	Iraq
	Habib Shashati	Iraq
	Phyza Jameel	Italy
	Salma Farouque	Italy
	Balamine Outtara	Syria
	Saeed Hassan	Yemen

Teleconference started at 12:03 UTC

Agenda

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

Minutes

1. BANGLADESH

Staffing

- The Information Technology (IT) Specialist and the new Emergency Telecommunications Specialist (ETS) Information Management Officer joined the ETS coordination team in May.
- The telecommunications specialist mission is ending in late June. A Stand-by Partner request to replace him is in progress.

ETS Response

- The ETS is currently upgrading and expanding the coverage of the UN common Very High Frequency (VHF) security telecommunication network in Cox's Bazar. The project will allow humanitarians to use handheld and mobile radios in more areas of Cox's Bazar.
    - o Deployment in all five field sites is now complete. The ETS is in the process of procuring an additional repeater for Sadar district in the Cox's Bazar operational area. The UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) Communications Centre (COMCEN) is now reachable using handheld radios in Kutupalong and Balukhali camps.
    - o The ETS prepared a letter which was sent to the Government of Bangladesh through the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) and the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) to request that Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) partners working in the camps are able to use the upgraded security telecommunications network and to allow the ETS to import radio equipment accordingly.
- In preparation for the monsoon season, the ETS will support the government in enhancing its telecommunications capacity through the Cox's Bazar District Disaster Management Committee, the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) and the RRRC's Camp in Charge (CiC) offices.
    - o The ETS is also coordinating with ISCG and the Deputy Commissioner to provide technical advice on the establishment of emergency operations centres (EOCs) in one office in Teknaf and two offices in Cox's Bazar. Technical specifications of the recommended equipment required have been drafted and sent to the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), World Food Programme (WFP), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and ISCG.
    - o The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with RRRC regarding the ETS providing internet connectivity and solar power solutions for CiC offices was signed. The equipment and services procurement process has started.
- The ETS in consultation with the Communicating with Communities (CwC) Information Hubs sub-working group will provide Internet connectivity, multimedia kits and dual power solutions to 40 information hubs implemented by six organizations (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), IOM, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), Terre des Hommes and the Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid (ACLAB)/Radio Naf.
    - o The MoUs have been signed by ACLAB/Radio NAF, Terre des Hommes and UNHCR. Signatures are pending for IFRC, UNICEF and IOM.
    - o BBC Media Action and Danish Refugee Council are also interested in ETS support for their information hubs.

- In collaboration with the CwC group, ETS has deployed the ETC Connect mobile app for humanitarian organizations. The aim of the app is to provide effective, two-way communications channels between humanitarians and affected communities.
  - o The process for hosting and maintaining the ETC Connect mobile application for the use of humanitarians is ongoing with WFP Country Office in Dhaka.
  - o The field level agreement (FLA) with Internews is soon to be finalized.
- With the financial support of the ETS, Radio NAF is upgrading their radio station to expand its coverage of the refugee camps. This project will improve the broadcast of key messages to the affected communities. The procurement of equipment is ongoing.
- The ETS is deploying internet connectivity in two logistics hubs in Madhu Chara and Teknaf.

2. IRAQ

- The UN Development Programme (UNDP) has now received the funds from the ETC to cover the management of the three COMCENs which became effective on 1 April.
- Ericsson Response equipment will be picked up on 25 June and sent to Sweden.
- The ETC is collaborating with IOM on three Community Resource Centres (CRC) to provide Internet connectivity with Internet connectivity, hardware (ticketing and monitoring systems) and solar charging stations. The MoU will be signed shortly.
- A new ETC IT assistant joined the team on 1 June.
- Vacancy announcements have been launched for a Services for Communities (S4C) associate and an Information Management (IM) associate. Both positions are expected to be confirmed by August.
- No new funds have been received in 2018 and the ETC in Iraq is operating on carryover from 2017.

3. SYRIA

ETC Response

- The security situation in Damascus has significantly improved.
- It has been confirmed that three inter-agency UN hubs will open in Raqqa, Hama and Deir ez-Zour. A WFP-led mission went to Deir ez-Zour and once that report has been shared, the ETC will conduct an ICT assessment to identify what services will be required. The hub in Deir ez-Zour will be led by WFP.
- The issue of the planned migration from analogue to digital mobile radio (DMR) network in Syria has been discussed at the Security Management Team (SMT) meeting. The head of UNDSS in Syria has spoken wit the government authorities and the outcome of that discussion will be relayed to all agencies.
- The ETC is planning to hold an IT training session for inter-agency staff in Syria.

Whole of Syria
Lebanon:
- UNDSS is coordinating the migration from analogue radio to digital in 13 sites. To date, seven sites have been completed. The migration will be finalised by the end of June and both analogue and digital radio networks will remain operational until November. The ETC will support this activity by offering training to end users on standard security telecommunications procedures.

4. YEMEN

ETC Response

- The security situation remains tense, particularly in Al Hudaydah where intense fighting continues.
- ETC services are still operational in Al Hudaydah with one IT staff present.
- OCHA requested all clusters to provide a contingency plan based on worst case scenario. The ETC submitted their plan with funding requirements and received US$700,000 from the Yemen Country-Based Pooled Fund (CBPF).
- Following the impact of Cyclone Mekunu on Socotra island, the ETC provided two satellite phones for rapid responders.
- The ETC continues to support the World Health Organisation (WHO) Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) project and hopes to have installed equipment in all EOCs by end of July. ETC support construction by end July for EOCs.
- The ETC has requested equipment from Dubai to construct three offices if needed around Al Hudaydah. This shipment is ready to be shipped to Aden from Dubai.

5. UNHCR Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS)

- In close consultation with the concerned bureau, UNHCR's Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS) has reviewed all active emergency declarations as of today. In line with the results of that review, the following emergency declarations have been deactivated:
  - **Level 3 (L3)** declaration for South Sudan covering South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda country operations.
  - **L3** Declaration for **Iraq** covering Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey.
  - **L3** declaration for **Syria** covering Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Lebanon. The declaration remains active for Syria itself.
  - **L1, L2 and L3** declarations the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** covering Angola, DRC and Republic of Congo. The L2 declaration for this same situation remains active for Uganda while the L1 declaration covering Zambia also remains active.
  - **L2** declaration for **Burundi** covering Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda, DRC and Uganda.

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 12: UTC

Next Joint Global ETC Teleconference will be held on 18 July at 13:00 UTC.

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 Medicale 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

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