Bangladesh, Iraq, Syria, Yemen
Global ETC Teleconference
Date: 14/11/18    TIME: 13:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair  Caroline Teyssier  (Global ETC), UAE

Ericsson Response  Lars Ruediger  Germany
International Medical Corps  Daniel Wu  Bangladesh
UNHCR  Alexander Thomas  Denmark
       Hafedh Al Juboori  Iraq
       Arthemon  Jordan
       Nizar Zeidan  Switzerland
       Jonathan Kirunda  Bangladesh
WFP  Mark Maulit  Bangladesh
     Min Sun  Bangladesh
     John Bursa  Bangladesh
     Habib Shashati  UAE
     Ozdzan Hadziemin  UAE
     Shahan Ara Quadir  Egypt
     Phyza Jameel  Italy
     Sebastien Pierrel  UAE
World Vision  Mac Esmilla  Lebanon
             Hrvoie Jurcevic  Lebanon
             Antoine Karam  Lebanon

Teleconference started at 13:05 UTC

Agenda

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

The ETC is a global network of organizations that work together to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies.
Minutes

1. BANGLADESH

General Overview

- While the current cyclone season will end in a few weeks, further cyclones are expected at the end of the year.
- Bangladesh will hold a general election on 30 December 2018. WFP is monitoring the situation for any potential impact on ETS operations.

ETS Response

- The newly-created IT Emergency Coordinator role has been filled by a WFP staff member for two months until a long-term candidate is recruited.
- The ETS has handed over ICT equipment to 29 information hubs hosted by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Terre des Hommes and Radio Naf so that humanitarians can access and display critical information about the response to refugees. The equipment will also enable the ETS to gather key information from refugees using the ETC Connect app on their concerns and refer these concerns to the appropriate actors.
- The ETS has requested US$1.2 million in the Joint Response Plan for 2019 to cover the expansion of VHF services, the IT network in camps, cyclone preparedness activities, support to information hubs and the ETC Connect app.

2. IRAQ

Security situation

- The security situation is in the south of the country is tense. Several demonstrations took place in recent weeks. In Mosul, the situation remains volatile.

ETC Response

- The ETC programmed 42 handheld radios and two base stations in preparation for the Logistics Response Training (LRT) that took place in the second week of November. The ETC also participated in the training as facilitators as part of the Communications Centre (COMCEN) scenario.
- The ETC is exploring additional options to improve its Internet connectivity in 18x camps around Mosul. A vendor was successfully identified to create a registration page for users in camps where ETC provides internet services. This will enhance secure access to the network as well as enable the team to track number of users and manage the Internet traffic in a better way, ultimately offering a better experience to users.
- The ETC is planning on transitioning its activities by the end of March 2019.
- The ETC team visited the Community Resource Centres (CRCs) in West Mosul and Fallujah to assess the technical needs of the centres and to conduct communications activities about the CRCs impact on affected communities. Three generators were donated by ETC to IOM to be used in these CRCs. CRCs will be used
by affected communities to find out information about what assistance is available to them and attend awareness sessions and workshops about CV writing, job opportunities, English classes and web design.

3. SYRIA AND SURROUNDING COUNTRIES

Security situation
- The security situation remains tense across the country.

ETC Response
- The ETC Coordinator in Syria is on mission in Aleppo to evaluate the communications needs of humanitarian on the ground. There is a need to strengthen the security telecommunications network, deliver end user radio training, conduct radio programming and upgrade the current Internet connectivity at the UN hub.
- Following the ban on the use of Motorola radios in Syria, the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project manager has advised the ETC to use Ikon radios using the UNHCR Long-term Agreement (LTA). The ETC is exploring the feasibility of this.
- The ETC is planning to conduct an IT emergency management training for inter-agency staff in Syria in the beginning of January 2019.

Whole of Syria

Turkey
- The ETC Coordinator for the surrounding countries is in Ankara preparing to travel to the UN hub in Gazientep to assess the provision of ETC services.

4. YEMEN

Security situation
- The security situation continues to deteriorate across Yemen, especially in Al Hudaydah. Aden is being significantly impacted as the demand for connectivity and IT support is increasing rapidly.

ETC Response
- Following the success of the inter-agency capacity building session conducted in Aden in September, the ETC team conducted a second session in Sana’a from 4 to 9 November. More than 30 participants from 22 humanitarian organizations were trained on a wide range of topics including practical technical exercises and IT emergency management.
- From 18 to 22 November, WFP IT and ETC will host a Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) mission to Aden to engage with UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). The idea is to identify and develop an inter-agency security communications plan for the country.
- The ETC is now providing Internet connectivity for staff in two new hubs in Al Hudaydah: the international staff guesthouse and the national staff accommodation.
• The ETC is preparing to establish a new Communications Centre (COMCEN) in Mukalla to support increasing humanitarian operations in that area.

AOB

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 12:43 UTC

Next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on Wednesday 19 December at 13:00 UTC.

Acronyms

ACF  Action Contre la Faim / Action Against Hunger
ACLAB  Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh
BTRC  Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission
CiC  Camp in Charge
COMCEN  Communications Centre
CRC  Community Resource Centre
DC  Deputy Commissioner
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
HC  Humanitarian Coordinator
HF  High Frequency
ICCG  Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
ICT  Information and Communications Technology
IDP  Internally Displaced People
IHP  International Humanitarian Partnership
IM  Information Management
IMO  Information Management Officer
IOM  International Organization for Migration
ISCG  Inter-Sector Coordination Group
ISP  Internet Service Provider
IT  Information Technology
JRP  Joint Response Plan
LoA  Letter of Agreement
MoDMR  Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
NGO  Non-Government Organisations
OCHA  Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RETS  Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector
SMT  Security Management Team
S4C  Services for Communities
TESS  Telecommunications Security Standards
UN  United Nations
UNCAF  UN Common Accommodation Facility
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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Minutes: Suzanne Fenton, WFP