Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen

Global ETC Teleconference

Date: 17/04/19   TIME: 12:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Caroline Teyssier	(Global ETC), UAE
CRS	Dan Carr	USA
ICRC	Sami Alio	Syria
UNHCR	Hafedh Aljuboori	Iraq
UNICEF	Ali Al Dhayani	Yemen
	Haytem Elgbali	
	Mazen Shwikany	Syria
WFP	Ahmed Elsheikh	Libya
	Balamine Ouattara	Syria
	Christopher Alagna	Tunisia
	Erika Iglesias	UAE
	Habib Shashati	Iraq
	Ozdzan Hadziemin	UAE
	Prakash Muniandy	UAE

Teleconference started at 14:03 UTC

Agenda

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

Minutes

1. IRAQ

ETC Response

- The ETC operation in Iraq was officially closed on 31 March. In line with the ETC exit strategy, communications equipment has been handed over to the lead humanitarian organization on the ground in terms of security communications.
- The management security communications infrastructure has been handed over to the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI).

2. LIBYA

Security situation

- Since 6 April, the conflict has escalated in Tripoli. WFP International staff have been evaluated to Tunisia on 10 April. The UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) has also scaled down the number of international staff in country.
- There are reports that indicate interruption of communications services in the southern outskirts of Tripoli.

ETS Response

- In Tripoli, the only GPS-tracking solution available is Novacom currently installed on WFP and UNHCR vehicles. The UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) implemented on 17 April "e-track", a smartphone application for humanitarians in Tunisia and Libya with tracking features.
- The Communications Centre (COMCEN) in Tripoli is tracking humanitarians to ensure their safety on the ground.
- The Flash Appeal has been finalised in response to the escalation of violence in Tripoli. The ETS included security communications and Services for Communities (S4C) components.
- The ETC S4C Adviser conducted an assessment mission in October 2018 to identify potential S4C initiatives to be rolled out. The ETS Coordinator is looking into implementing S4C initiatives in Libya.
- The Humanitarian Community does not have licences to operate security communications equipment and services in country. The ETS is engaging with the local authorities to facility access to licences by humanitarian organisations.
- UNSMIL and the ETS are working closely to obtain radio licences for the UN hub in Benghazi. A back-up connectivity solution has been deployed. To expand the radio coverage, the ETS will procure TETRA bases and UNSMIL will install the equipment in additional sites in Benghazi.

3. SYRIA AND SURROUNDING COUNTRIES

Security situation

- Serious security incidents have been reported in Aleppo and Deir ez-Zor.

- Syria is suffering severe shortage of fuel and cooking gas.

ETC Response

- In regard to the establishment of an UN hub in Deir ez-Zor, 1x WFP IT staff members is currently in Deir ez-Zor to conduct a technical assessment for the deployment of radio communications and identification of a local connectivity provider.
- The ETC is upgrading the Internet connectivity services to fibre link at the UN hub in Aleppo and Homs. Installation and equipment will be covered by the ETC. The ETC can expand these services to humanitarian organisations, which will have to cover the cost of the bandwidth they require for their operations.
- In Tartous, the ETC has identified a suitable location to deploy a radio repeater and replace the currently non-functional repeater.
- The ETC ordered communications equipment which is under customs clearance in Beirut. Part of this equipment are repeaters to be installed in Tartous and Deir ez-Zor.
- The ETC is planning to assist a humanitarian convoy of 50-70 UN staff to assist 70,000 Internally Displaced People (IDP) in the north of Deir ez-Zor with connectivity services and power solutions. The ETC has identified the connectivity solution to be provided and will send the request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) before proceeding with the procurement of the solution.

4. **YEMEN**

ETC Response

- The ETC received communications equipment to upgrade the UNDSS-managed COMCENs across Yemen, namely in Aden, Sa'adah, Al Hudaydah and Ibb. The ETC team in engaging with UNDSS to deploy this equipment.
- The ETC expanded connectivity services at the UN Common Accommodation Facility (UNCAF) facility in Sana'a to cover staff residences.
- Given the increasing needs, the ETC is seeking further funding opportunities to expand connectivity services especially in Sana'a.
- A VHF base station has been installed by the ETC at the UN guest house in Al Hudaydah to support humanitarian operations.

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 12:32 UTC

Next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on Wednesday 15 May 2019 at 12:00 UTC.

Acronyms

COMCEN	Communications Centre
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector

IDP	Internally Displaced People
IT	Information Technology
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
S4C	Services for Communities
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	UN Assistance Mission in Iraq
UNCAF	UN Common Accommodation Facility
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNSMIL	UN Support Mission in Libya
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