Libya, Mozambique, Syria, Yemen

Global ETC Teleconference

Date: 17/07/19   TIME: 12:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Prakash Muniandy	(Global ETC), UAE
ACF	Thomas Gerard	France
Ericsson Response	Mark Armstrong	Canada
	Lars Ruediger	Germany
ICRC	Sami Alio	Syria
Internews	Stijn Aelbers	UK
IOM	Ottmar Figueroa	Switzerland
OICT, UN Secretariat	John Linehan	USA
UNHCR	Ghaith	Amman
	Alexander Thomas	Venezuela
	Abdalla Khalil	Denmark
UNICEF	Mazen Shwaikany	Syria
	Haytem Elgbali	Libya
	Albert Kiruki	Jordan
	Ike Uzoegwu	USA
UNRWA	Moayed Ayoub	Syria
WVI	Anthony Kimani	Kenya
WFP	Omar Namaoui	Italy
	Maria Saleh	Italy
	Luis Alvarado	Italy
	Balamine Ouattara	Syria
	Wali Noor	Yemen

Teleconference started at 12:04 UTC

Agenda

1. **Yemen update**
2. **Syria update**
3. **Mozambique update**
4. **AOB**

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

Minutes

1. YEMEN

Security situation

- The situation in Yemen remains volatile and unpredictable. Confrontations have been reported across north and south Yemen which impacts access to beneficiaries and impedes the overall humanitarian response.

ETC Response

- A new ETC coordinator for Al Hodeidah has been appointed to support the scale up of the humanitarian response.
    - The ETC is still waiting to receive importation clearance of equipment deployment for Al Hodeidah response.
- A dedicated local ETC Information Management Officer (IMO) has now joined the team in Sana'a.
- The ETC has completed the set-up of the new Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Al Mukalla together with the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP).
- The team has opened a new ETC hub in Al Mokha in the south hosted by PU-AMI which is fully operational.
- The ETC plans to open new hubs in Tourbah, Hajjah and Marib.
- The ETC completed a technical assessment of the IT infrastructure for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Sana'a.
- In 2018, the ETC assisted the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) to assess their IT infrastructure and has now been requested to assist in the second phase which focuses on solar power.
    - The ETC received a request from ACF in Sana'a to conduct an IT assessment.
- ETC secure WiFi services will be extended to the heads of security of all agencies in the UN Common Accommodation Facility (UNCAF) in Sana'a as approved by the Security Management Team (SMT) and the Operations Management Team (OMT).
- As the demand for ETC services continues to evolve rapidly across the country, the ETC is planning to host a mid-year review in early August with all partners.
- In response to IT capacity building needs of UN agencies and INGOs, the ETC has conducted a quick survey to determine the exact technical needs. Now, the team has analysed the data and is planning to hold a specialized capacity building exercise later this year.

2. SYRIA AND SURROUNDING COUNTRIES

Security situation

- The security situation in Damascus is calm compared to 10 days ago when explosions were still ongoing.

- Unknown rebel groups continue to be active in the cities of Dara'a and Sweida with an increase in targeted assassinations.
- Intense air strikes in Idlib continue as the government army tries to regain control.
- In the coastal areas, rebel groups are using drones to launch attacks.
- Heavy mortar shelling of the city of Aleppo occurred on 14 July.
- There have been many security incidents in Raqqa and Deir ez-Zour including two IED attacks.

ETC Response

- Internet Service Provider (ISP), SyriaTel completed the first site assessment at the UN hub in Aleppo with the aim to implement a new point-to-point microwave link to improve connectivity. MoFA approval for the project has been received so next steps are to plan the implementation and acquire the necessary equipment.

- The specialized radio training is confirmed for 10-12 September in Toulouse. As UNHCR are no longer planning to send 5x participants the slots were made available to other agencies and have now all been filled.

- In Deir ez-Zor, SyriaTel has finalized the installation of a new ISP link for the UN hub, funded by the ETC. This solution will provide reliable Internet connectivity services for the humanitarian community.
    - The ETC has also handed over a new satellite terminal relocation kit to UNICEF that was in stock as UNICEF received MoFA approval to move their satellite terminal in Homs to Deir ez-Zor
    - UNICEF confirms that the satellite terminal will be installed in Deir ez-Zour and the team is currently waiting for the visa to be issued to the site engineer. UNICEF has also requested a mission for 2x local IT staff who are trained to install the satellite terminal and will proceed with the relocation with whichever option is approved first.

- The ETC has completed the installation of a new telecommunications tower at the UNDSS Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Damascus to improve radio services performance and coverage. The team then moved all radio antenna from the old to the new tower and all channels are operating again.

- The ETC is still waiting for MoFA approval to order the equipment needed to migrate radio equipment to the new infrastructure.

- The ETC has received approval from senior management to support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) in the evacuation of IDPs from Rukban camp on the border with Jordan and to support UN convoys. The ETC will purchase 2x portable connectivity solutions and laptops, printers and copiers which SARC will hold when not in use.

- The recruitment of an IT Associate to be based in Deir ez-Zour has been finalized with HR in the final stages.

3. MOZAMBIQUE

Cyclone Kenneth

- The ETC has demobilized all connectivity services in Pemba, Ibo island and Macomia as part of its response to Cyclone Kenneth as local services are restored. ETC partner equipment has been shipped from Pemba to Beira and from there it will be shipped back to partners by sea.

- The ETC successfully installed a Security Operations Centre (SOC) for Very High Frequency (VHF) and High Frequency (HF) radios in Macomia and radio operators have been hired and are currently being trained.
    - Radio programming and training services are available in Pemba and Macomia.
    - The ETC conducted an assessment in Mucojo to verify the feasibility to install a repeater to increase the coverage of the security telecommunications network.

Cyclone Idai

- The ETC conducted an assessment mission ahead of the planned two-day workshop in Maputo, led by the National Institute of Communications of Mozambique (ARECOM) and the National Institute of Disaster Management (INCG), and facilitated by WFP as the global lead of the ETC. The workshop will be held in Portuguese and English. During the workshop participants will:
    - Review the overall country disasters scenario including potential impacts on the telecommunications structure;
    - Strengthen partnerships and coordination among all key stakeholders;
    - Achieve consensus amongst all stakeholders on the next steps, workplans and action points;
    - Define key immediate needs.
- Regarding the Services for Communities (S4C) activities, the ETC continues to deploy the equipment needed to rehabilitate the 6x community radio stations as planned.
- The outgoing ETC Coordinator for Cyclone Kenneth has handed over to the ETC Coordinator for Cyclone Idai who is also the IT Emergency Coordinator.

UNHCR

- UNHCR are undertaking an After-Action Review of the ETC response of both cyclone responses and thanks all partners who engaged in the review.
- One area in Zimbabwe which was affected by Cyclone Idai is Tongogara refugee camp so the UNHCR response is concentrated there. UNHCR was already providing connectivity to all partners there through a satellite terminal. Last week, an ISP installed a microwave link to the area and this week UNHCR hopes to continue distributing connectivity to all partners and the humanitarian community. Abdalla Khalil will share details of the contact person in that camp in the event any partner is travelling there and requires connectivity.

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 12:24 UTC

Next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on Wednesday 18 September 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
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:
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