Bangladesh, CAR, Nigeria

Global ETC Teleconference

Date: 30/10/19   TIME: 13:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Caroline Teyssier	(Global ETC), UAE
CORDAID	Gustave Lefrere Tshimbalanga	Central African Republic (CAR)
CRS	Dan Carr	USA
Ericsson Response	Lars Ruediger	Germany
ICRC	Boniface Ogwal	Central African Republic (CAR)
International Rescue Committee	James Mshelia	Nigeria
IOM	Timothy Anko	Nigeria
OCHA	Bachirou Hamadu Saladdine	Nigeria
UNHCR	Alexander James Thomas	Denmark
WFP	Habib Shashati	Bangladesh
	Mohamedou Ndiath	Central African Republic (CAR)
	Emma Gilson	Italy
	Maria Saleh	Italy
	Dubem Umeasiegbu	Nigeria
	Unity Oware	Nigeria
	Ahmed Yusufmaiinji	Nigeria
	Abdullahi Kabir	Nigeria
	Richard Egwangu	Nigeria
	Muanza Kanda	Senegal
	Elizabeth Millership	UAE
	Triwik Kurniasari	UAE

Teleconference started at 16:04 UTC

Agenda

1. **Bangladesh**
    a. **Country updates**
    b. **Partner updates**
2. **Central African Republic (CAR)**

Minutes

1. BANGLADESH

Security situation

- The security situation is stable. However, political tensions remain.

- As monsoon season has now passed, the government and humanitarian community are preparing for the next rainy season.

Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) response

- The ETS has submitted its inputs for the Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2020 and is expecting feedback on next steps by 7 November.

- The ETS is working with the government of Bangladesh and the humanitarian community to identify a solution to overcome the issue of data connectivity in the Cox's Bazar camps.

2. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)

Security situation

- Since 1 September, ongoing fighting between armed groups has forced more than 24,000 people in Birao – in the northeast of CAR – to flee their homes. Tensions remain in the area but have not impacted on ETC activities.

ETC Response

- A solar solution system ordered by the ETC has been shipped to Batangafo to be installed at the OCHA compound. The solution will provide power for the Government of Luxembourg satellite equipment located there, to improve the reliability of connectivity services. A deployment mission to install the solar

solution system is planned for 5–10 November alongside WFP IT staff. Ericsson Response can provide support regarding the new WIDER hard drive if needed.

Services for Communities (S4C)

- The ETC is implementing services for communities across three sites in CAR: An Information and Learning Hub in Bangassou, a dedicated phone booth in Bria and a Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) in Kaga Bandoro.

- The ETC S4C Project Manager for CAR conducted an assessment mission in Bria from 16–18 October to identify a suitable location in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp to set up the planned phone booth. IDP camp manager INTERSOS expressed interest in partnering with the ETC to support the designated phone booth services for communities' project by providing dedicated staffing and security personnel for the phone booths.

- To set up the Information and Learning Hub in Bangassou, a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is being drafted between the ETC/WFP and the Central African Committee of the Red Cross who will host the hub on their premises.

Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS)

- On 10 October, the first TESS Working Group meeting was held with various UN and NGO partners including UNDSS and OCHA to discuss TESS implementation priorities and action points across the 15 targeted sites in CAR. The TESS team was split into three groups to deal with specific tasks including call sign updates, radio programming prior to deployment, mission plan, assessments and liaison with NGOs. Based on the current needs on the ground, it was agreed to start standardizing/deploying telecommunications infrastructure in Birao starting in mid-November.

- An MoU with MINUSCA will enable the ETC to access MINUSCA's power and telecommunications resources on the ground in Birao. The ETC has shipped all equipment needed for a UN and NGO radio channel to the MINUSCA-hosted Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Birao.

- Bria is also prioritized to implement the TESS recommendations. As security communications services are already provided by the ETC in Bria, there only remains an NGO channel to set up. The ETC has shipped the required equipment to the MINUSCA-hosted site and will install it by mid-November.

- The TESS Project Manager continues to plan and work with partners on the design of the VHF network upgrade in Bangui that was included in the TESS recommendations.

- The ETC is drafting an MoU with the Logistics Cluster and their NGO partner Premiere Urgence Internationale (PUI) to formalize a space where the TESS equipment can be stored and organized before being deployed to sites.

- The ETC aims to receive all equipment to implement the TESS recommendations by early December.

3. NIGERIA

Security situation

- Movement of humanitarian assistance into key operational areas remains limited, access for humanitarian staff is restricted, and some areas remain completely inaccessible due to active hostilities.

ETS Response

- The ETS is now providing critical Internet connectivity and security telecommunications services to humanitarian responders across nine common operational areas. Since the beginning of the year, the ETS is providing Internet connectivity to 4,188 humanitarians from 111 organisations.

- In line with the MoU migrating radio operators from WFP to UNDSS, the ETS has transferred USD 216,553 to UNDSS to cover up to 31 December 2019.

- On 7 October, the ETS supported a SSAFE training activity by delivering the Security Telecommunications module to 27 staff from 11 organisations.

- The ETS programmed a total of 108 VHF portable and vehicular radios with the most updated firmware.

- The ETS Internet Access policy has been enforced. 27 user accounts have been suspended, over 500 devices blocked, and 123 users warned due to abnormal number of devices associated to their user accounts.

- The ETS User Feedback Survey was launched on 14 October, and the deadline was extended until 31 October. The results of the survey will be used to determine how the ETS can continue to improve its services in line with the evolving needs on the ground and to support the efficient implementation of humanitarian activities across North-East Nigeria.

- The ETS prepared the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) interim report for the grant of USD 883,193 received this year.

- The ETS has prepared its financial requirements for 2020 and has an estimated budget of USD 3 million.

- The ETS Coordinator attended the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) consultation workshop for Borno state led on 3 October in Maiduguri and the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) workshop on 29 October in Abuja.

- The ETS conducted maintenance missions in Monguno from 9–10 October and Damaturu from 14–19 October to ensure full operability of security communications services.

- After carrying out a mission from 4–7 October to assess the readiness of the site and to position some equipment, the ETS completed the first phase of deploying the SOC in Yola in Adamawa state from 21–25 October. One repeater is currently operational, providing coverage up to the airport.

- The ETS project to deploy solar systems to each of the nine hubs in Nigeria is ongoing. The solar kits will power the connectivity equipment, reducing reliance on generators and ensuring security communications

remains functioning in cases of security incidents. The contractor is shipping the required equipment soon and installations are planned for January 2020.

4. UNHCR – VENEZUELA

Overview

- The borders between Venezuela and Colombia and Colombia and Ecuador were closed over the past week due to local elections in Colombia. Based on the latest information, these borders are opened again.

- An International Solidarity Conference on the Venezuelan refugees and migrant crises was held earlier this week in Brussels, Belgium. The event was led by the European Union (EU), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

- It is expected that by the end of 2020, the number of Venezuelan migrants and refugees will increase from 4.5 million to 6.5 million.

Security situation

- The security situation is relatively stable but remains extremely volatile.

Power and mobile communication services

- There were reports of power blackouts in the capital on 30 October which may facilitate an increase in protests/tensions.

AOB

N/a

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 16:32 UTC

Next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on Wednesday 4 December 13:00 UTC.

Acronyms

CAR	Central African Republic
CFM	Common Feedback Mechanism
ECHO	European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector

HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information Technology
JRP	Joint Response Plan
MINUSCA	UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PUI	Premiere Urgence Internationale
RETS	Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector
S4C	Services for Communities
SSAFE	Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments
SOC	Security Operations Centre
TESS	Telecommunications Security Standards
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
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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