Bangladesh, CAR, Nigeria

Global ETC Teleconference

Date: 29/04/20   TIME: 12:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Prakash Muniandy	(Global ETC), UAE
ACF	Victor Yusuf	Nigeria
CORDAID	Gustave Lefrere Tshimbalanga	CAR
emergency.lu	Roland Nurenberg	Luxembourg
Ericsson Response	Lars Ruediger	Germany
GSMA	William Derban	UK
GVF	Simon Gray	France
Internews	Stijn Aelbers	UK
IOM	Ottmar Figueroa	Switzerland
NetHope	Duncan Drury	UK
OCHA	Sara Rijavec	CAR
UNHCR	Alexander Thomas	Denmark
	Min Sun	Denmark
UNICEF	Antonio Gomes	US
WFP	Habib Shashati	Bangladesh
	Ekue Ayih	Bangladesh
	Jean Claude Atassa Laouwayi	Senegal
	Mohamedou Ndiath	France
	Maria Saleh	Italy
	Luis Portatadino	Nigeria
	Khawar Ilyas	Pakistan
	Muanza Kanda	Senegal
	Haidar Baqir	Thailand
	Elizabeth Millership	UAE
	Dane Novarlic	UAE
	Gianluca Bruni	UAE
World Vision	Anthony Kimani	Kenya

Teleconference started at 12:04 UTC

Agenda

1. **Bangladesh**
    a. **Country updates**
    b. **Partner updates**
2. **Central African Republic (CAR)**
    a. **Country updates**
    b. **Partner updates**
3. **Nigeria**
    a. **Country updates**
    b. **Partner updates**
4. **UNHCR – Venezuela**
5. **AOB**

Minutes

1. **BANGLADESH**

Security situation

- As of 29 April, the total number of COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh is 6,462. The total number of confirmed cases in Cox's Bazar region is 19. In response, the authorities have enforced a countrywide lockdown that has been extended until 5 May.

Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) response

- Movement to the Cox's Bazar camp is limited to critical activities only. Most ETS activities are being carried out remotely. Two members of ETS staff are able to access the camps on rotation, where only essential ETS activity is taking place.

- The ETS continues to engage remotely with partners Cisco TacOps, Ericsson Response and NetHope to work on the design of the data connectivity project.

- In Cox's Bazar, all humanitarian staff are working remotely at a common meeting area where some staff reside. 45 users from five humanitarian agencies are using the ETS connectivity services set up at the meeting area.

- The ETS submitted its inputs for the COVID-19-specific Joint Response Plan to the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG). The ETS has proposed funding of US$230,000 to conduct activities to support the COVID-19 response, including to establish reliable data connectivity services at the Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) treatment centres in camps and to continue to provide data connectivity services for humanitarian staff at the common meeting area in Cox's Bazar where some staff reside.

- A new user management solution – which is used to manage the authentication of users on the ETS network – is being piloted at the common meeting area in Cox's Bazar. It has also been tested at the Modhu Chara hub. This solution will be deployed in the Kutupalong Registered Camp (KRC) to provide better user control of the network at that site.

2. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)

Security situation

- There are currently 50 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in CAR, all located in the capital, Bangui. The border with Cameroon remains open – at least 20 cases originate from movement across this border. There are major concerns about the impact of the virus on CAR, which does not have the health facilities to cope with the pandemic.

- There is no official countrywide lockdown in response to COVID-19, although there is a curfew for humanitarian staff and UNHAS has reduced its movement between hubs.

ETC Response

- The ETC in CAR has been allocated US$100,000 from the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) – to be received through the Logistics Cluster – for its response to COVID-19. The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) will be revised in May 2020 to reflect an increase in the budget needed to respond to COVID-19.

- The ETC in CAR finalized the set up of a dedicated COVID-19 call centre in Bangui to assist the Ministry of Health (MoH) in its response efforts. The toll-free '1212' helpline will be manned by five trained operators trained by the government who will provide critical information and official health guidelines to the population to raise awareness about the virus.

- The Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project in CAR is seeking funding to implement the remaining TESS recommendations. The ETC in CAR proposed a budget of US$404,000 to implement the remaining TESS recommendations and to cover the cost of the project to pilot remote Security Operation Centres (SOCs) in five field locations. Local cost-sharing funding sources are also being explored.

3. NIGERIA

Security situation

- Nigeria has 1,728 confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported, although the confirmed number of cases in North-East Nigeria remains very low. The government has imposed strict lockdown measures and all movement is restricted.

ETS Response

- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, one critical ETS staff is working at Maiduguri Red Roof while all other staff continue to work remotely.

- All ETS field missions and planned activities including capacity building and radio programming have been suspended due to movement restrictions and social distancing.

- The ETS continues to provide Internet connectivity in all humanitarian hubs in Borno State with security communications extended to the metropolitan cities of Borno-Adamaya-Yobe (BAY) states.

- The ETS is submitting inputs as part of the Inter Sector Working Group (ISWG) revision of the HRP to reflect changes to its 2020 activities in response to COVID-19.

4. UNHCR – VENEZUELA

Overview

- The UNHCR operation in Venezuela no longer falls under the purview of the Emergency IT Team and support has been handed back over to the Business as Usual unit. This is therefore the final input from UNHCR on Venezuela as part of the ETC Global calls.

- The refugee crisis continues in Venezuela with many humanitarians responding remotely due to restrictions caused by COVID-19. A business continuity plan has been activated in response for senior management and critical staff.

- Venezuela has reported approximately 300 confirmed cases of COVID-19, however, this number is likely to be much higher. There is concern the country's weakened health system would not cope with a widespread outbreak of the virus.

Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS) response

- Provision of basic services remains a challenge due to unstable electricity impacting on communication networks across the country. RETS continues to support five UNHCR offices in country with connectivity services.

- RETS continues to work with partners in country including NetHope to design and implement a humanitarian hub in Santa Barbara del Zulia in the west of Venezuela. The hub will enable implementing partners to access stable Internet connectivity in a secure work space to ensure the continued delivery of common services to persons of concern in-country. The design phase of the project is complete, however, implementation is on hold pending the lift of travel restrictions.

AOB

N/a

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 12:26 UTC

The next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on Wednesday 27 May 2020 12:00 UTC.

Acronyms

ACF	Action Contre Faim
CAR	Central African Republic
COVID-19	Corona Virus 2019
CHF	Common Humanitarian Fund
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISWG	Inter Sector Working Group
IT	Information Technology
MoH	Ministry of Health
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RETS	Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector
SARI	Severe Acute Respiratory Infection
SOC	Security Operations Centre
TESS	Telecommunications Security Standards
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNHAS	UN Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN International Children's Emergency Fund
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: Elizabeth Millership, WFP