



# Emergency Telecommunications Cluster in 2016

## Year in Review



*In humanitarian emergencies, communications means  
**information, connection, life.***

**Communications is the Link to Survival.**

# CONTENTS

Foreword	4		
Snapshot of 2016	5		
Operations	7		
Fiji: Tropical Cyclone Winston	7		
Haiti: Hurricane Matthew	8		
Nigeria: Crisis	10	ETC2020	21
Pacific: Preparedness	11	ETC2020 Working Groups	21
Central African Republic: Conflict	12	ETC2020 Projects	24
Iraq: Conflict	13	Connectivity Charters	26
South Sudan: Conflict	15	Training	28
Syria: Conflict	17	Global ETC	31
Yemen: Conflict	19	List of Acronyms	32

# FOREWORD

Today's global challenges continue to grow. We currently have five ongoing emergencies ranked at the highest level of operational complexity and urgency in Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan, in the Syria region and Yemen. While the majority of these are conflict emergencies, the frequency of natural disasters is also on the rise – with Cyclone Winston hitting Fiji in February 2016 and Hurricane Matthew striking Haiti last October. The need to strengthen preparedness and resilience is becoming more and more critical.

On behalf of the entire humanitarian community, participants at the launch of the UN's One Humanity: Shared Responsibility report at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016 called for a commitment to empower affected people as the driving force of humanitarian response. The need for a unified approach in crises is needed now more than ever before. This ties in directly with the mandate of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC): to ensure that all those responding to humanitarian emergencies - including affected communities - have access to vital communications services.

2016 was the year that showed great progress towards this goal!

Over a year into the ETC2020 strategy, it is clear we are headed in the right direction. With the ETC activated for preparedness activities for the very first time in the Pacific region in December 2016, our work on improved and decentralized response readiness, as well as increased communications resilience, is now becoming a standard of operation.

In the spirit of One Humanity, the ETC also launched its first ever Services for Communities (S4C) project – providing Internet connectivity directly to Syrian refugees in Domiz camp in Iraq in cooperation with UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The project aimed to connect Syrian refugees to the world, enabling them to contact their families scattered by war, look for job opportunities and also use the Internet as a learning tool.

We paved the way for innovative cooperation to underpin better humanitarian response through strengthened collaboration - bringing both the Crisis and Humanitarian Connectivity Charters closer to operationalisation - and new partnerships - Action Contre la Faim becoming the twenty-fourth cluster member.

Our continued strong commitment to the cluster members, investing in new partnerships and together learning from our experiences will help us achieve our ETC2020 strategy in the coming years, ensuring that those affected by disasters are at the centre of our response.

Enrica Porcari,  
Chief Information Officer of WFP & Chair of the ETC

# SNAPSHOT OF 2016

Responded to **8 Emergencies** throughout the year

The ETC was **activated** for **preparedness** for the first time

**Internet Connectivity services** provided to over **2,500** humanitarians at **78** sites

**13 Stand-by Partners** deployed valued at **US\$ 1 million**

**ETC2020** activities were conducted in **9 countries**

**ACF** became the **newest ETC member**

**Stand-by partnership** established with **the Government of Luxembourg**

**8** large-scale **training** courses conducted for **126** participants from **17** organisations

**42% funding** requests covered, comparing to 46% average for all clusters<sup>1</sup>

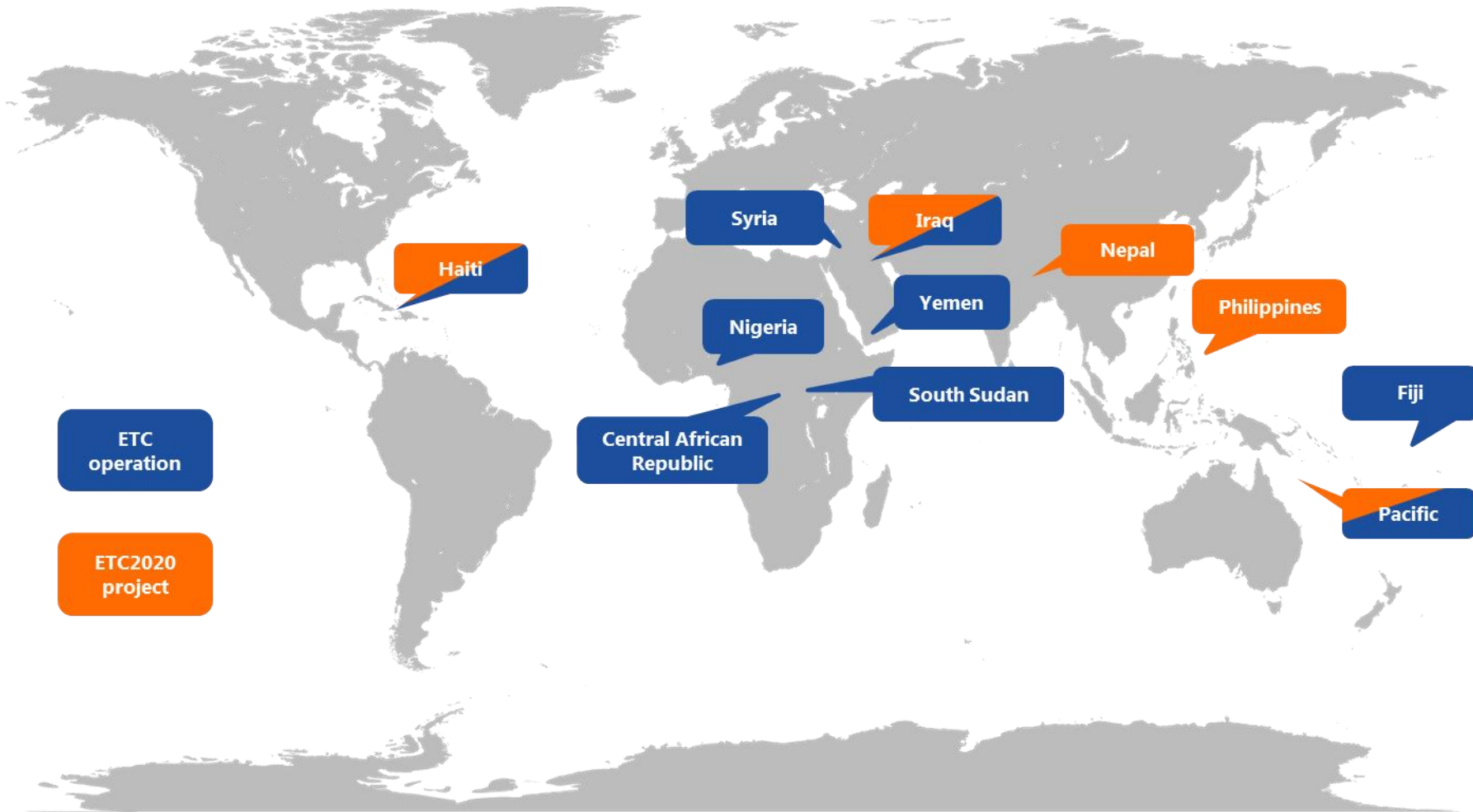
**86%** of **users satisfied** with ETC services<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Based on FTS for all clusters for the following operations: C.A.R., Fiji, Haiti, Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

<sup>2</sup>Based on responses from 195 users to the surveys conducted in Haiti, South Sudan and Yemen.

# ETC operations and ETC2020 projects in 2016



# OPERATIONS

## Fiji: Tropical Cyclone Winston

February – April 2016

On Saturday February 20 2016, 06:30 GMT category-5 Tropical Cyclone Winston struck the Pacific island of Fiji bringing winds of over 320km/h and torrential rain. The cyclone was estimated to be one of the most severe to hit the South Pacific. The Government of Fiji estimated that almost 350,000 people living in the cyclone's path were affected. Thousands of homes were destroyed and entire villages were impacted.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) was activated on 15 March with the World Food Programme (WFP) as lead agency, working in close collaboration with Fiji Ministry of Communications, who declared the state of natural disaster for 60 days.

WFP as co-lead agency of the national Communications Cluster together with the Government of Fiji, in particular National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), evaluated the Tropical Cyclone Winston response through a national lessons-learnt process. The objective of this was to improve the effectiveness of future response operations with respect to emergency telecommunications.

### Under the leadership of



**3** sites assessed (Vanua Balavu, Koro Island and the north coast of Viti Levu)



**6%** funded out of requested \$700,000



**12** laptops donated to the National Disaster Management Office

### Supported by



# Haiti: Hurricane Matthew

October – December 2016

On the morning of 5 October, Hurricane Matthew, the Caribbean's worst storm in nearly a decade hit parts of the Bahamas, Haiti and Cuba. Hurricane Matthew caused significant damage in the three countries, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. It affected 1.4million people in Haiti, and caused 336 deaths in seven departments from southeast to northwest of the country.

On 10 October 2016, the humanitarian community, in coordination with the Government of Haiti, launched a three-month Flash Appeal aiming to provide life-saving assistance to 750,000 people. The appeal requests \$120 million to implement the activities.

The ETC was not activated in response to Hurricane Matthew. As global lead of the ETC, WFP convened the Haiti Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Working Group, collaborating with government, private sector and humanitarian partners on the ground to ensure a coordinated response.

As part of the ETC commitment to providing services to affected populations (Services to Communities [S4C]), WFP, as lead of the ETC, together with Internews conducted communication needs assessments among disaster-affected community. Due to great needs, WFP and Internews launched the community radio station project in some of the most remote areas. This project was completed early 2017 – restoring four radio stations with solar power, towers, studio and radio equipment.

## Under the leadership of



## Supported by



**16** sites provided with Internet connectivity



**65.5%** funded out of requested \$720,000



**1,000** emergency responders from 220 organisations used common ICT services



**S4C** needs assessment & community radio restoration project launched



## ETC STORY SNIPPETS: My experience with Ericsson Response in Haiti



It's amazing to see first-hand the difference that communication can make to communities in crisis, and what a vital role it plays in saving lives. Ericsson Response is a volunteer initiative that deploys employees and telecom equipment to support the United Nations (UN) agencies and other humanitarian organizations in times of disaster. I recently had the opportunity to participate in a mission to Haiti, where WFP, lead of the ETC, coordinates the Haiti ICT Working Group, providing access to vital communication services that enable swift assistance to people affected by Hurricane Matthew.

Within days of the UN's request for communications support, the first Ericsson Response volunteers arrived in the disaster zone. They quickly set about identifying the best location for a satellite dish and Wi-Fi access points, and finding a power source to enable Internet connectivity. Once they established the Wi-Fi network for the main UN camps, they extended it to the compounds

of the other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The creativity and ingenuity of these first responders is amazing: I saw access points attached to coconut trees, makeshift car battery UPSs, and Ethernet cables patched through destroyed buildings – whatever it took to get the job done.

I landed in Port-au-Prince on 5 December, two months after the hurricane struck, where I met Gilles Philippe Gregoire, the Canadian Ericsson Response volunteer who was deploying with me. The next morning we boarded a UN helicopter heading to Jérémie. As we flew, a familiar feeling came over me. Almost three years ago to the day, I had been on an Ericsson Response mission to the Philippines, sitting on a helicopter headed to a disaster zone that had been struck by Typhoon Haiyan. The familiar feeling was a mixture of nerves, adrenalin, an eagerness to help and some small worry that something might go wrong that I wouldn't be able to fix.

I spent most of my month-long deployment in Les Cayes. I was happy to find that the network set up there by the first volunteer team was quite stable. On top of keeping the network running, I helped out in any other way I could. One day, I might be helping to set up printers and get new users registered on the Wi-Fi network, and the next, I'd be heading out to the Save the Children compound to help restore their satellite connection.

---

By Michael Hanrahan, Ericsson Response Volunteer

# Nigeria: Crisis

November 2016 - ongoing

Since the start of the violent conflict in North-Eastern Nigeria in 2009, more than 1.8 million people have been displaced and a further 200,000 have been seeking refuge in the neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger. As of 2016 seven million people were in need of life-saving assistance in the three worst-affected states: Adamawa, Borno and Yobe.

With telecommunications infrastructure severely damaged by the conflict, provision and restoration of communications services are required to support the response community. As global lead of the ETC, WFP was requested to convene the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS)\* in Nigeria to meet vital communications needs, responding with government, private sector and humanitarian organisations to ensure a coordinated response.

In 2016 the ETS in Nigeria prioritised the following activities: a) upgrade of the existing security communications system to UN standards, b) provision of security communications services in two common operational areas—Maiduguri and Damaturu as well as c) coordination and information management services.

\*In Nigeria, all clusters are being referred to as sectors. The ETC is therefore operating as the ET Sector (ETS) with all project plans, appeals, services and deployments adhering to established procedures.

## Under the leadership of



## Supported by



**2** sites provided with security communications services



**96%** funded out of requested \$1,250,000

## Pacific: Preparedness

November 2016—ongoing

WFP, global lead of the ETC, was actively working on ETC preparedness activities in the Pacific region since 2015. In September 2015, WFP opened an office in Suva, Fiji, to support emergency preparedness in three sectors— Food Security, Logistics, and Emergency Telecommunications— across the Pacific Islands. On 30 November 2016, the ETC for the Pacific was officially activated under the structure of the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT).

In 2016, WFP prioritised the following Pacific Island Countries for national engagement for ETC preparedness: Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. In 2017, WFP will look to expand its engagement into North Pacific Island countries such as the Marshall Islands (RMI), Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Palau, Kiribati, and Tuvalu.

The ETC Pacific Preparedness project in 2016 received funding from the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID / OFDA) as well support from the ETC standby partner— RedR Australia (personnel).

### Under the leadership of



### Supported by



**5** countries supported (Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu)



**\$500,000** received from USAID/OFDA for the ETC and Logistics Cluster\*

\* covering the period from March 2016 to June 2017

### TIMELINE

<b>FEB-APR</b>	Response to Tropical Cyclone Winston, Fiji.
<b>APR</b>	Joint assessment with the NDMO across Viti Levu, Fiji.
<b>JUL</b>	First Regional ETC Pacific Workshop, Samoa.
<b>AUG</b>	Upgrade of the NDMO radio network, Fiji.
<b>OCT</b>	National Disaster Awareness Week, Fiji.
<b>NOV</b>	Assessment mission in collaboration with the NDMO, Tonga.
<b>NOV</b>	Formal activation of the ETC Pacific.
<b>NOV - DEC</b>	Mission to assess emergency telecommunication resources and to restore a NDMO radio station in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

# Central African Republic: Conflict

*December 2013—ongoing*

A protection crisis erupted in the Central African Republic (C.A.R.) at the end of 2013 resulting in severe violence and widespread displacement. The collapse of state, law and order as well as public services further exacerbated the situation. Since then, the country has remained extremely volatile. The ETC was re-activated in C.A.R. in December 2013 in response to the escalating crisis.

In 2016, the ETC in C.A.R. focused on enhancing common ICT services (security telecommunications and Internet connectivity) in eight common operating areas: Kaga-Bandoro and Bossangoa, managed by UN Children's Fund (UNICEF); Zemio, managed by UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); N'Dele, managed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM); and Bambari, Bangui, Bouar and Paoua, managed by WFP. Over 300 humanitarian personnel have received radio user training, supporting their safety while carrying out their life-saving work in this complex and insecure environment.

After months of funding challenges, the ETC received financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) at the end of the year, which allowed the continuation of services.

## Under the leadership of



## Supported by



**8** sites provided with Internet connectivity and security communications services



**26%** funded out of requested \$1,600,000



**300** humanitarians trained on radio usage

# Iraq: Conflict

July 2014 – ongoing

The current conflict in Iraq started when the surge in violence between armed groups and government forces broke out in June 2014. It has resulted in over 3 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) across Iraq and left more than 11 million in need of humanitarian assistance. The ETC in Iraq was activated in July 2014, working closely with the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to provide security communications, Internet connectivity, user support, and coordination services to the humanitarian community in Iraq.

In 2016 the humanitarian needs increased due to the ongoing Mosul Offensive. To support humanitarian response related to the Mosul operation the ETC carried out seven assessment missions to key sites and deployed shared services in a Mercy Hands office in Qayyarah town.

For the first time in its history, the ETC provided Internet connectivity services for the affected community in Domiz camp in cooperation with UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

## Under the leadership of



## Supported by



**11** sites provided with security communications services  
**3** sites provided with Internet connectivity



**50%** funded out of requested \$,200,000



**14** radio training sessions held in Dohuk and Sulimaniyah



**S4C** first time provision of services to affected people



## ETC STORY SNIPPETS: ETC provides Internet to the community for the first time in its history



Under the grey skies of Domiz camp, the oldest and largest of Iraq's refugee camps home to more than 31,000 Syrians, the mood was celebratory. A band, Sardam, made up of Syrian guys living in Domiz, played Kurdish songs as people poured into the tiny UNFPA Youth Centre. Groups of children drifting to and from school stopped to have their photos taken; two small boys enthusiastically started helping to offload boxes of juice from a truck. One girl with freckles across her nose asked us, "What is the party for?"

The party – which it was in the end with traditional dancing, singing and a cake, complete with ETC logo perfectly iced on – was to celebrate a key milestone. For the first time in its history, the WFP-led ETC is now providing Internet connectivity to the affected community. The excitement that had built up in the days and weeks leading up to the event didn't prepare anyone for the energy and volume of people who came to participate. Everyone from

locally-based humanitarian staff, national media, UN Country Directors, including Sally Haydock, WFP Iraq Country Director, and the Assistant Governor of Dohuk came to visit this project that had been quietly operating under the radar since the project kicked off in July.

### What Connectivity Means to Syrian Refugees

While the air outside was thick with smoke blowing in from the fields of Mosul, the camp residents themselves took control of preparations, a real sense of pride in what they were part of. Two young Syrians, Jumana and Mohammed, spoke to the crowd about what this connectivity means to them. Accessing the Internet helps improve their English – through online classes or YouTube videos – look for job opportunities, interact on social media to tell their stories, share information about humanitarian assistance distribution schedules, and to try and forge a sense of community within the camp. The heart of the project is, of course, that the Internet allows them to keep in touch with family and friends who have been scattered by war.

### First Time ETC Provides Services for Communities

Rami Shakra, ETC Coordinator in Iraq and the force behind the project, said that getting to this point required building relationships with the community, with UNFPA – who agreed to host the ETC Internet service – and establishing credibility: "You need someone on the frontline, going from camp to camp, meeting the community and creating the connections. And that is not a technical solution."

---

By Suzanne Fenton, Information Management Officer, ETC Iraq

# South Sudan: Conflict

August 2011 - December 2016

Following the country's independence in 2011, the ETC was activated in South Sudan with WFP as lead agency, to provide security communications, Internet connectivity and coordination services to the humanitarian community. Since then, the humanitarian needs across South Sudan continued to be immense, with the country suffering from multiple threats—from conflict and inter-communal violence, to economic decline, disease, and natural disaster.

In 2016 the ETC was providing shared communications services at 23 sites across the country, working in close collaboration with partners to establish a reliable, low-cost and long-term solutions to meet the Internet connectivity needs of humanitarian actors in remote and hard to reach locations. HISP—the Humanitarian Internet Support Project – was implemented in Aweil, Malakal, Mingkaman, Bor and Bentiu, operating on a cost-sharing model. Security telecommunications services were also being cost-shared.

With these solutions and a solid ICT Working Group in place, after six years, ETC South Sudan demobilised on 31 December, but the ETC team will be working with humanitarian partners to support transition to alternative solutions, with full demobilisation and deactivation of the ETC by 31 March 2017.

## Under the leadership of



## Supported by



THE GOVERNMENT  
OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG  
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

Directorate for Development Cooperation  
and Humanitarian Affairs



**23** sites provided with telecommunications services



**100%** funded out of requested \$663,060



**65** organisations using Humanitarian Internet Support Project (HISP) at **5** sites

## ETC STORY SNIPPETS: End of an Era in South Sudan

Beach ball satellite terminals and precariously mounted access points have become iconic of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) over the years. The maiden deployment of the then named 'ETC Response Solution' was five years ago in South Sudan and since then this combo of equipment has been deployed to provide high-speed internet connectivity to thousands of humanitarians responding to emergencies across the globe.



### Demobilising from South Sudan

Last month the ETC's longest running activation – South Sudan – was officially demobilised despite the country facing severe food insecurity and no commercial providers being available. The ETC was activated in South Sudan in September 2011, with World Food Programme (WFP) as lead agency, to support the world's newest country battle the hunger, insecurity, displacement, natural disasters and disease that faced it following its independence.



Since activation, ETC South Sudan has provided shared communications services at 23 sites; trained over 1200 humanitarians on security telecommunications; and implemented long-term internet connectivity in five

state capitals - Aweil, Malakal, Bor, Bentiu and Mingkaman - serving 65 humanitarian organizations and more than 720 users.

Having established a local pool of trained personnel, and provisioned a cost-effective and reliable internet solution for humanitarians in key areas, the ETC was able to demobilise while ensuring continued support to the current crisis.



### New Era

Six years ago when ETC South Sudan was first activated, it was a remarkable feat to provide internet connectivity to hundreds of humanitarians in the world's most remote locations. Now, that's not enough. In emergencies, humanitarians aren't the only ones who need to communicate - what about national disaster management agencies? Hospitals? Government? People?!

Understanding that alongside food, water, shelter and health that communications is the fifth basic human need, the ETC2020 vision seeks to ensure all those responding to emergencies – including disaster affected people – have access to vital communications. ETC Services for Communities projects have already been delivered in Iraq providing Syrian refugees with connectivity, and in Haiti rehabilitating radio stations damaged by Hurricane Matthew.

---

By Mariko Hall, Head of Communications, Global ETC & WFP IT Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch



## Syria: Conflict

*January 2013 - ongoing*

The ETC was activated in Syria on 14 January 2013 to provide shared security telecommunications and Internet connectivity services to the humanitarian community responding to the crisis. The ETC is operating under the Whole of Syria (WoS) approach which comprises activities in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, for an effective humanitarian response inside Syria.

The situation remained tense in 2016, with eastern Aleppo inaccessible for humanitarian organizations. The ETC continued to provide vital services across four countries – providing security telecommunications in 13 sites and Internet connectivity in 3 sites. In 2016, the ETC supported three locations in Jordan, one in Lebanon, five in Turkey, and four inside of Syria. The ETC also delivered two sessions of Let's Comm training in October 2016 to 28 inter-agency participants in Damascus.

Under the leadership of



Supported by



**13** sites provided with security communications services  
**3** sites provided with Internet connectivity



**43%** funded out of requested  
\$1,310,060



**Whole of Syria** approach, covering Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey



**28** humanitarian responders trained on radio inside of Syria

## ETC STORY SNIPPETS: Damascus offers unique ETC training opportunity

Every year, the ETC carries out an average of 10 training sessions, covering a range of skills, including IT, telecoms and coordination, and across a wide range of countries. Because the guys who conduct the training are not only experts in their respective fields, but do them so frequently, it can often be difficult for a particular training session to stand out.



Until Syria. In October, Rob Buurveld and Chris Alagna from WFP's Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST) travelled to Syria to facilitate an ETC Let's Comm training for humanitarian workers in Damascus. As usual, Rob was raring to go but for the participants it was a long-awaited, and much celebrated event. "It was a great training. In general, the people here are not really exposed to radio as it is very restricted in Syria, so they were very motivated to get into it," said Rob.

Some participants, such as Mazen Shwikany, ICT Officer at UNICEF, who has supported humanitarian operations in Iraq and Syria, has been waiting a mere 14 years for exactly this kind of opportunity. "Yes, I've waited a very long time to attend this training! In emergencies, especially armed conflict, GSM mobile network and other communications means become unreliable so radio

*communications is an important tool for both humanitarian operations and coordination, and for the security of the humanitarian workers themselves."*

Other participants may not have waited quite so long, but were just as enthusiastic about the opportunity. Rita Deeb, telecommunications coordinator with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) is one. "I really enjoyed the training as it focused on practical issues that we face in the field in our job. As SARC, we have the biggest radio network in Syria and rely on it heavily in our humanitarian work. Maybe in the future, the training could expand to include more on best practices. It's always great to share the experience with other organisations."



The impact of training like this is great. In an emergency as complex as the one in Syria, the ability to program radios and install radio equipment means that humanitarian workers can stay in touch with each other and coordinate better which, ultimately, can save lives. For Syrians, it means that they will receive vital humanitarian assistance faster.

Dragan Mocevic, ETC Coordinator in Syria, summed it up well: "Developing local capacity in Syria will positively impact ongoing ETC operations within the country. Having trained people from different operational hubs and different agencies, ETC will be able to quickly deliver new services in the areas which are sometimes hard to reach from Damascus."

---

By Suzanne Fenton, Information Management Officer, WFP IT Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch

# Yemen: Conflict

April 2015 - ongoing

Since conflict escalated in March 2015, an estimated 18 million people have been left in need of some kind of assistance or protection. To support humanitarian operations on the ground, the ETC has operated in Yemen since April 2015, providing emergency coordination, basic security telecommunications and Internet connectivity services.

In 2016, the ETC led the deployment of vital communication services in five sites—Sana'a, Sa'ada, Hodeidah, Ibb and Aden, and managed the IT operations in collaboration with the lead agencies on the ground: UNICEF in Ibb and Sa'ada, OCHA in Aden, ACTED in Ibb, ACF in Sana'a and WHO in Al Hudaydah. In addition, the ETC is working with UNDSS on the planning, deployment, upgrade and maintenance of security communications services in Yemen.

Additionally, Ta'izz and Al Mukalla were identified as common operational areas where the ETC would deployed services, but due to the security situation, these remained inaccessible to humanitarians.

## Under the leadership of



## Supported by



**5** sites provided with security communications services and Internet connectivity



**100%** funded out of requested \$1,820,000



**10** capacity building activities, including training on radio usage

## ETC STORY SNIPPETS: Roger that! COMCEN in Aden becomes operational

Since the beginning of the conflict in Yemen in 2015, Aden, the fourth largest city in the country, has been severely affected. The ongoing war has had an impact on a large number of facilities in the city, including World Food Programme's premises, as well as on infrastructure. Aden is one of the six locations identified by the WFP-led Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) as a priority for the deployment of live-saving communications services in the country.



Hani Mohammed, ETC's focal point in Aden, has seen first-hand how all the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure they worked so hard to build in the WFP Office was buried under rubble after an airstrike struck the building next to the field office in mid-2015.

*"Vital IT equipment, such as satellite terminals and generators were unusable," Hani explains. "Most of the communications devices in the Communications Centre (COMCEN) such as High Frequency (HF) and Very High Frequency (VHF) base stations and the telephone system were inoperative."*

This COMCEN was used mainly by the security officer to communicate with humanitarians carrying out field missions but the war left staff without any reliable means of communication.

So at the start of May 2016, during a slight improvement in the security situation in this coastal city, Hani and the ETC team worked around the clock to restore the ICT infrastructure in the office. This would allow ETC colleagues to resume their work from the office again as they had been working from home.

The ETC in Aden then focused on refurbishing the COMCEN equipment itself, as they understood the importance of security telecommunications when it comes to staff security and safety. After putting their lives on the line commuting from home to work as the situation on the streets was still fragile, the team successfully activated the COMCEN at the WFP Office in Aden in July. This is good news for the ETC in Yemen, as it will be used as an ETC security telecommunications back-up in case the inter-agency UNDSS COMCEN stops being functional.

---

By Erika Iglesias, Information Management Officer, WFP IT Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch



# ETC2020

Adopted in 2015, the ETC2020 Strategy states that the ETC will continue facilitating connectivity services for humanitarian responders, but it will also expand both the types and recipients of those services, in particular government and affected populations. ETC2020 focuses on four strategic priorities:

- Communications as aid to enable communities to access connectivity when they need it most – in times of crisis.
- Improved and decentralized response readiness to ensure local people, processes and equipment solutions are ready to activate rapid communications responses to disasters.
- Increased communications resilience to disasters to help affected governments safeguard systems and prepare for responses when disasters strike
- Enhanced communications and energy to enable a wider group of traditional and non-traditional humanitarian responders to save and improve lives.

In 2016, ETC concluded and transitioned to local entities some of its ETC2020 activities – for example by phasing out the ETC2020 Tactical Working Groups and pilot projects – while adopting new activities and integrating others in the standard operations, both now captured in the ETC2020 Roadmap for 2017-18. In 2016 partnerships were put at the centre of successful implementation of these activities by forming new global collaborations as well as identifying and working with local entities.

## ETC2020 Working Groups

### Solutions Tactical Working Group

The Solutions Tactical Working Group was launched in May 2016 to support identification, development, testing and implementation of innovative IT solutions in support of ETC2020 strategy. The group had limited results due to its dependency on other working groups. It was agreed that to define solutions, there is a need for clear requirements of other Working Groups— Communications as Aid, Preparedness and Training. During the ETC Plenary meeting in October, the membership decided that the Solutions Working Group will be discontinued in this form but the discussion around solutions shall be carried over into future work of the ETC.

### Resilience Tactical Working Group

In 2016 Resilience Tactical Working Group was merged with the Response Readiness Working Group under the label of Preparedness Working Group. All ETC2020 Working Groups have since transitioned into a more consultative type role, carrying forward activities that emerged from discussions. Further commitment from members is required to move the preparedness activities forward.

### Response Readiness Tactical Working Group

The Response Readiness Tactical Working Group was merged with the Resilience Working Group under the name Preparedness Working Group, which was launched in 2016 to support ETC network efforts in assisting the response community and governments to be better prepared to respond to, and recover from, emergencies.

#### Led by



#### Supported by



## Training Working Group

The Training Working Group was launched in December 2015 to advise and support the ETC network in building capacity and expertise that will drive implementation of ETC2020 strategy.

In 2016, a two-day workshop was hosted by the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW) in Germany to identify key training gaps, explore training case studies and agree on a format for a work plan. The delivery of training cuts across all thematic areas of the ETC2020 strategy with all other working groups identifying training requirements.

It was agreed that the task of mapping courses and qualifications, keeping the training directory up-to-date and ensuring that all other agreed work plan outputs will require a full time person in the Global ETC to keep the momentum. The desired outcome is to establish a permanent training committee to provide training oversight and to provide general direction to this new training role.

As with all ETC2020 Tactical Working Groups, activities and outcomes will be carried over and the group itself was discontinued in this form.

### Led by



### Supported by



## Communications with Communities Working Group

The Communications with Communities (CwC) Working Group was launched in July 2015 to drive the ETC's strategic expansion into this area, ensuring that the ETC plays a substantial role in humanitarian CwC coordination from now until 2020 and beyond.

The Working Group became more of a network— focusing on using partnerships, advocacy and pilot projects. Like all ETC2020 Working Groups, the working group structure was revised to serve more as an informal network, with relevant members meeting on a project-by-project basis.

The group raised awareness ETC2020 strategy and new priorities, expanding the ETC network to include many new non-traditional ETC partners and participating in key multi-agency initiatives (common services; training; crisis innovations initiative; CDAC strategy). A deployment profile and ETC 'Services for Communities' training were developed with content from various organisations, for membership and network capacity building.

A strategic decision was taken in May 2016 to rename this activity into Services for Communities (S4C), as the ETC work in this area falls under the umbrellas of Community Engagement, and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP).

### Led by



### Supported by



## Awareness and Branding Tactical Working Group

Awareness and Branding Tactical Working Group (known as Joint ETC Communication Team) was launched in July 2015 with the aim of leveraging capacity and expertise within ETC member organisations, to enhance visibility of the Cluster in support of ETC2020. The concept of a joint team to support communications for the ETC preceded development of the ETC2020 strategy and hence also included activities not strictly ETC2020-focused.

All ETC2020 Working Groups have since transitioned into a more consultative type, carrying forward activities that emerged from discussions. Participants from the Joint ETC Communications Team continue to consult and provide input on ETC communication and advocacy activities when required.

In 2016, thanks to support from this group, a *International Girls in ICT Day* campaign was successfully conducted. This initiative created by International Telecommunications Union (ITU) celebrates inspiring women who dedicate their lives to the increasingly important field of ICT, aiming to enable a global environment that empowers and encourages girls and young women to consider careers in this sector.

### Led by



### Supported by



## Governance Tactical Working Group

The Governance Tactical Working Group was launched in December 2015 to support open and transparent decision making for projects developed under the ETC2020 Strategy. The group was to ensure that the projects and activities outlined under the strategy and the implementation plan developed in 2015 are properly monitored, reviewed and supported. In addition, the Governance Working Group was tasked with developing a range of short-term to long-term strategies and actions designed to remove impediments to the execution of the ETC2020 strategy and build capacity for its execution.

All ETC2020 Working Groups have since transitioned into a more consultative role, carrying forward activities that emerged from discussions. Though ETC members expressed the need to maintain a governance or steering committee to support ETC2020 implementation.

### Led by



### Supported by



## ETC2020 Projects

### Haiti: Improved and Decentralized Response Readiness

Launched at the end of 2015 to support Improved and Decentralized Response Readiness and Increased Communications Resilience to Disasters the ETC2020 project in Haiti focused on: i) developing a country ICT profile to be used as a template for all high-risk priority countries; and ii) identifying any potential gaps where support might be required in communications resilience.

The project included mapping policies, regulations, actors, contacts, capacities, networks and initiatives to develop a model that could be replicated in other high risk countries. Gaps identified from the country profile mapping exercise were to be addressed, in partnership with the government and other key stakeholders, in support of building better communications resilience.

A mission to Haiti was conducted in July 2016 to collect information about the communication landscape, validate information collected for the ICT profile, engage with local partners and government stakeholders, and gauge partner and stakeholder commitment to owning or supporting resilience efforts. The mission also helped to identify gaps or already existing areas that could be further supported by the ETC.

#### Led by



World Vision



#### Supported by



### Iraq: Services for Communities

On 1 November, 2016 the ETC launched its first ever Services for Communities (S4C) project in Domiz camp, home to almost 31,000 Syrian refugees. Internet access allows refugees to obtain information, maintain contact with the outside world, continue education online and make informed decisions about their own lives. Most importantly, it allows them to keep in touch with their families back home in Syria, connecting Syrian refugees in the northern Iraqi camp with their families. Refugees can access the ETC's Internet service in the UNFPA Youth Centre in Domiz and also in an Internet café that the ETC established in a UNHCR site.

In 2016, 800 users accounts were created, enabling the local community to access Internet.

#### Led by



#### Supported by





## Nepal: Communication with Communities project

The project in Nepal started in September 2015 with the aim of supporting government, humanitarian, media and private sector actors in Nepal to be better prepared for an ICT response to future disasters, with a specific focus on enabling faster and better communication among communities, and between communities and relevant aid actors, in times of disaster.

The project team worked with the Government of Nepal on ICT capacity mapping with a focus on community communication infrastructure. Two missions were conducted in Nepal to: i) assess the requirements, ii) launch the in-country project.

The lessons learnt from the earthquake response and from the project were launched during INET Conference in Kathmandu in March 2016.

### Led by



### Supported by



## Philippines: Resilience and Response Readiness Project

The project in the Philippines focused on three ETC strategic priorities— Increased Communications Resilience to Disasters; Improved and Decentralised Response Readiness; and Enhanced Communications and Energy. The aim was to empower Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) in the Philippines with the ability to recover connectivity and communication services as quickly as possible to serve affected populations, government and the humanitarian response community, especially after a disaster.

The project started with an initial mission to Manila to meet local actors— government, private sector, humanitarians. The initial assessment suggested creation of a detailed country profile and lessons learned report which are expected by mid-year 2017.

### Led by



### Supported by



## Connectivity Charters

### Crisis Connectivity Charter

The Crisis Connectivity Charter is a set of commitments by the satellite community to enhance connectivity in times of crises, facilitating communications between –to –from –and across all those responding to humanitarian emergencies, including affected communities. Established by the EMEA Satellite Operator's Association (ESOA) and Global VSAT Forum (GVF), the Charter was launched at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) Global Consultation in Geneva in October 2015, signed on behalf of the humanitarian community by WFP, as global lead of the ETC, and OCHA. In 2016, the Crisis Connectivity Charter entered the operationalisation phase, with a training by satellite companies held in Dubai and signing of the in-kind contribution agreements with nine signatories (to be finalised in 2017).

#### Satellite training in Dubai

The pilot session of a 5-day technical training course on satellite technologies for humanitarian ICT responders was held in Dubai, from 29 May to 2 June 2016. This course was the very first activity emanating from the Crisis Connectivity Charter.

The training course was facilitated by WFP and partners from the satellite industry and its purpose was to prepare participants to deploy, manage and support satellite solutions facilitated through the Crisis Connectivity Charter during humanitarian emergency operations.

12 participants from WFP FITTEST and Ericsson Response were trained on technical solutions provided by the following Charter signatories: Arabsat, Eutelsat, Inmarsat, Thuraya and Yahsat with the support of examiners from GVF.

### Humanitarian Connectivity Charter

2016 saw an increased number of projects and initiatives supporting the implementation of the Humanitarian Connectivity Charter. Through workshops as well as pilot projects (especially the ETC2020 project in the Philippines), GSM Association (GSMA), together with Charter signatories and its humanitarian supporters, reached out to MNOs worldwide to enhance the cooperation, prepare for disasters and effectively move towards the implementation of the ETC2020 strategy.

The Charter was discussed during the Mobile World Congress held in Barcelona in February 2016, highlighting the important role that MNOs play in providing access to information for the affected communities. Also two GSMA regional working groups and workshops, both supported by the ETC, took place in 2016 – in Myanmar and Jordan.

#### GSMA Regional Workshops

##### **GSMA APAC Working Group and Workshop in Myanmar**

The APAC regional working group meeting took place in Yangon, Myanmar in September 2016. Signatories from across the region including: Axiata, KDDI, KT, MPT, Ncell, NTT, Ooredoo, SK Telecom, Smart, Globe, and Telenor joined the meeting. Humanitarian partners from Ericsson, ETC, Myanmar National Red Cross Society and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) also attended the meeting.

##### **GSMA MENA Working Group and Workshop in Jordan**

Organisations that attended the GSMA MENA Working Group meeting included: Department for International Development (DFID), Ericsson, ETC, Jawwal, Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies of Jordan, OCHA, Ooredoo Kuwait, Orange Jordan, Turkcell, Umniah Jordan, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, Zain Group, and Zain Jordan.

## ETC STORY SNIPPETS: ETC pilots new training for emergency responders



In the barely-tolerable heat of the blazing Dubai sun, 12 members of World Food Programme's (WFP) IT emergency response capacity, the Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST), and Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) member, Ericsson Response stood outside the WFP warehouses, patiently waiting for a pilot technical training to begin.

As the very first activity of the Crisis Connectivity Charter – a set of commitments agreed upon by world-leading satellite operators and integrators to enhance connectivity in humanitarian crises – that was signed last October, these participants were essentially guinea pigs, albeit very cooperative ones!

The satellite operator training was aimed at equipping ETC responders with the skills and experience needed to deploy and maintain the variety of satellite

solutions facilitated through the Crisis Connectivity Charter, in humanitarian emergencies.

Martin Falebrand from Ericsson Response and a veteran ETC responder, said: *"As a responder to emergencies, you often find yourself forced to use equipment you've never used before. This is a challenge and of course, not optimal. So to get the opportunity to do hands-on training in advance on systems you possibly will deploy in a future emergency one day is really good. It enables us to provide even better, faster services when it is critical."*



By Suzanne Fenton, Information Management Officer, WFP IT Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch

# TRAINING

In 2016, eight large-scale, inter-agency ICT training courses (both global and regional) were delivered to the humanitarian community, ranging from technical courses to large-scale emergency simulations.

## Intermediate Data Training (IDT) Training

The first IDT Iraq training, based on Let's Net, took place in Dohuk in Iraq between the 18 and 22 September 2016. The 5-day activity based training course allowed participants to learn to deploy, manage and support the ETC Internet services (data and voice) during emergency operations. IDT participants were all selected-on merit and at the point of need from UN agencies – 12 responders from the region from WFP, and UNHCR participated.

*12 participants from 2 humanitarian organisations attended IDT in 2016.*

## OpEx Bravo

OpEx Bravo is a seven-day large-scale inter-agency operational exercise designed to further advance the emergency response capabilities of the global ICT humanitarian community. The 2016 session was hosted by the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW) in Neuhausen, Germany, with the support of exercise staff from THW, Save the Children, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg, and WFP. Participants worked in teams to deploy ICT services and equipment under challenging conditions and timeframes. This exercise allowed participants to gain practical experience with the technical solutions adopted by the ETC for emergency response.

*20 participants from 11 humanitarian organisations participated in the exercise.*

## Intro to IT Emergency Management Training

An Introduction to IT Emergency Management Training (Intro to ITEM) course to support the internal capacity building initiative in Sudan was delivered through professional development of UN agencies and NGO staff. The Intro to ITEM course was delivered in the WFP office in Khartoum between the 16 and 18 May 2016 and used the ETC Intro to ITEM training syllabus, which was identified as an effective training tool to reinforce regional IT emergency management capability in Sudan.

*16 participants from 7 humanitarian organisations attended Intro to IT EMT.*

## Let's Comm

Let's Comm is a 7-day course that equips inter-agency participants with the skills and knowledge to be able to design, implement and maintain VHF and HF radio infrastructure to UN standards. ETC in Syria conducted two consecutive 5-day Let's Comm training modules which took place between the 2 to 6 October and 9 to 12 October 2016 in Damascus.

*18 participants from 5 humanitarian organisations participated in Let's Comm.*

## Let's Net

Let's Net is an nine-day hands-on training course which teaches participants to deploy, manage and support ETC data and voice services and solutions. The 2016 session was held in Schimpach, Luxembourg hosted by the Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs of the Luxembourg Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs.

*12 participants from 6 humanitarian organisations participated in Let's Net in 2016.*

## TRIPLEX

The ETC was invited to contribute and participate in TRIPLEX 2016, full-scale, civilian-led humanitarian field exercise, which was held in Lista in Norway between 23 and 30 September 2016. The exercise closely simulated a humanitarian response during a real-life sudden onset emergency. It allowed the ETC responders to practice the necessary standard operational procedures and technical skills required to deliver the mandated ETC services. ETC Location Services provided a positive contribution when deployed with the Internet connectivity. 50 people were registered in the ETC Reporter App in a short time and it was clear that the ETC Location Services is a valuable tool for the humanitarian community.

*10 ETC representative from 4 humanitarian organisations took part in the TRIPLEX exercise in 2016.*

## Let's Comm Digital (LCD)

Let's Comm Digital is a five-day training course which equips humanitarian ICT staff with the skills and competencies needed to deploy Digital Mobile Radio infrastructure. The 2016 global session was hosted by MSB in Revinge, Sweden. 11 participants from 5 humanitarian organisations participated in this session.

The ETC in South Sudan delivered two consecutive Let's Comm Digital (LCD) training courses in Juba in May. This formed part of the continued commitment to providing training and capacity building opportunities to national and international responders from UN agencies, NGOs and the governmental organisations in South Sudan.

*11 participants from 5 organisations took part in LCD 2016 in Sweden & 25 participants from 5 organisations participated in LCD 2016 in South Sudan.*



## ETC STORY SNIPPETS: OpEx Bravo: It is all about teamwork

During this year's edition of OpEx Bravo training, 20 participants from 11 organisations worked together to respond to the devastating - but thankfully fictional - earthquake in 'Tukastan'. Humanitarian hubs were set up with tents and telecommunications equipment, including the inflatable emergency.lu rapid deployment kit, Ericsson Responses's WIDER for Internet management and distribution, as well as three 45-metre THW towers. Participants moved between hubs, operating at maximum energy levels (and instant coffee), as if lives were at stake.



With new equipment and tools being introduced to the ETC toolbox, this year's OpEx Bravo was particularly interesting. ETC Location Services, allowing track of staff and equipment, was deployed for the first time in a training environment. Ericsson Response also tested a new configuration of its WIDER system.



Of course, it is about more than just the equipment. Gilles Hoffmann, emergency.lu Coordinator from the Government of Luxembourg, admits that the technicians would not need to travel to Germany to train deploying VSAT

or Wi-Fi systems alone. *"It's all about partnership, teamwork and personal relationships, for both, participants and exercise staff,"* he says.



This year, participants were quick in setting up the equipment, but also thought of additional components that have never been covered before – included services for affected populations. While not yet included in the ETC Services Catalogue, is very much in line with the ETC2020 strategy that is soon to become the standard way of ETC response.



While participants' learning experience in terms of ETC-used technologies and soft skills are key objectives, it is the personal interactions and networking that add significant value to such a course, as these shared experiences create bonds between the participants

By Katarzyna Chojnacka, Communication Officer, WFP IT Emergency Management branch

# GLOBAL ETC



Became the **24<sup>th</sup>**  
member of the ETC



THE GOVERNMENT  
OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG  
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

Directorate for Development Cooperation  
and Humanitarian Affairs

*Signed standby  
partnership  
agreement*

## Global Meetings

*Held twice each year, ETC Plenary Meetings provide a forum for the membership to discuss ongoing operations, key developments and initiatives within the humanitarian ICT sector and other pertinent issues relating to the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster.*

### ETC Plenary Meeting: Washington D.C., May 2016

Gathering **30 participants from 20** ETC member organisations, the Spring 2016 session of the ETC plenary meeting focused on the ongoing operations, key developments and initiatives within the humanitarian ICT sector. The ETC members discussed the outcomes of the Tactical Working Groups established in 2015.

### ETC Connect Day, Washington D.C., May 2016

The ETC Connect Day brought the ETC membership together with new private sector partners to tackle the cluster's 2020 strategy, developing pilot projects, garnering further commitment and de-fining the way forward for technology in humanitarian response. **63 participants from 48 organizations** took part in this meeting.

### ETC Plenary Meeting: Rome, October 2016

**47 participants from 22 humanitarian and governmental organizations** attended the 2-day meeting and successfully revised the ongoing ETC2020 Roadmap and set up the new activities and priorities ETC2020 Roadmap for 2017-18. For the first time, WFP Regional IT Officers attended the ETC Plenary Meeting to share updates and activities from their respective regions, as well as contribute to the development of the next ETC2020 Roadmap.

# LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAP	Accountability to Affected Population	LCD	Let's Comm Digital
ACF	Action Contre la Faim	MNO	Mobile Network Operator
C.A.R.	Central African Republic	MSB	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
COMCEN	Communications Centre	NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
CwC	Communication with Communities	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
DFID	Department for International Development	OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
DMR	Digital Mobile Radio	PHT	Pacific Humanitarian Team
ESOA	EMEA Satellite Operator's Association	S4C	Services for Communities
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster	SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
FITTEST	WFP's Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team	THW	German Federal Agency for Technical Relief
GVF	Global VSAT Forum	UN	United Nations
HF	High Frequency	UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
HISP	Humanitarian Internet Support Project	UNDFS	UN Department of Field Support
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	UNDP	UN Development Programme
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross	UNDSS	UN Department of Safety & Security
ICT	Information and Communications Technology	UNFPA	UN Population Fund
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
IDT	Intermediate Data Training	UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration	VHF	Very High Frequency
IT	Information Technology	WFP	World Food Programme
ITU	International Telecommunications Union	WHS	World Humanitarian Summit





**etc**  
EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
CLUSTER

www.ETC

**etc**  
EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
CLUSTER

**etc**  
EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
CLUSTER

**etc**  
EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
CLUSTER

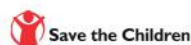
# Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)

[Global.ETC@wfp.org](mailto:Global.ETC@wfp.org)

[www.ETCcluster.org](http://www.ETCcluster.org)

## MEMBERS

---



---

UNDER THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP OF

