ANNUAL

REPORT

Team members work in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, August 2020. WFP/ETS

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A WORD FROM THE ETC CHAIR

WFP/Rein Skullerud

If 2020 has proven anything, it is the transformative power of communications technology in a world suddenly upended. The need to communicate transcends borders. For affected communities who are faced with seemingly insurmountable odds, a mobile phone becomes a lifeline.

I was often asked in 2020 how the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) was responding to the crisis. "Which one?" I would ask.

———————

While the COVID-19 pandemic shook our way of life, it was not the only crisis the cluster had to deal with — it was just an additional layer to the seven humanitarian emergencies we supported last year. Even so, ETC services earned us our highest average user satisfaction rate: 92%.

———————

How did we manage to be so effective during these unprecedented times? The first thing that comes to mind is our partners' dedication and innovative spirit. Our increasing emphasis on preparedness, resilience and localized capacity building is also part of the cluster's recipe for success.

Even with social distancing a necessity, the ETC managed to stay close to the people it serves. Working with national health authorities and medical partners on the ground, the ETC set up several health hotlines, including in Libya where an inter-agency call centre called *Tawasul* (meaning "dialogue" in Arabic), responded to over 19,000 calls in 2020. In Bangladesh and Yemen, the ETC kept those on the frontlines of the pandemic connected in over 20 isolation and quarantine centres, giving access to life-saving information.

In a year where much human interaction went online, ETC training courses followed suit. The shift in our approach proved to be overwhelmingly positive: capacity building activities will now be offered both online and in person long after the pandemic has passed.

2020 was really a story about how the ETC used the pandemic as an opportunity to approach challenges head-on by innovating, adapting, and overcoming. For that I have to thank all of the ETC's dedicated partners, who were there every step of the way, making emergency preparedness and response possible in an unprecedented year.

Enrica Porcari

Chair of the ETC

Chief Information Officer and Director of Technology, UN World Food Programme

EMERGENCY TELECOMUNICATIONS CLUSTER

IN NUMBERS
2020

ETC WAS ACTIVE

in

18 COUNTRIES

SERVING OVER

12,420 HUMANITARIANS

across

450 ORGANIZATIONS

8 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

12 COUNTRY PREPAREDNESS OPERATIONS

92% ETC USER SATISFACTION RATE

2 CRISIS CONNECTIVITY CHARTER ACTIVATIONS

3 BLENDED LEARNING ACTIVITIES LAUNCHED

606 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PRODUCTS RELEASED

45 HUMANITARIAN STAFF

from

11 DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS

completed

THE ETC INDUCTION ONLINE COURSE

within

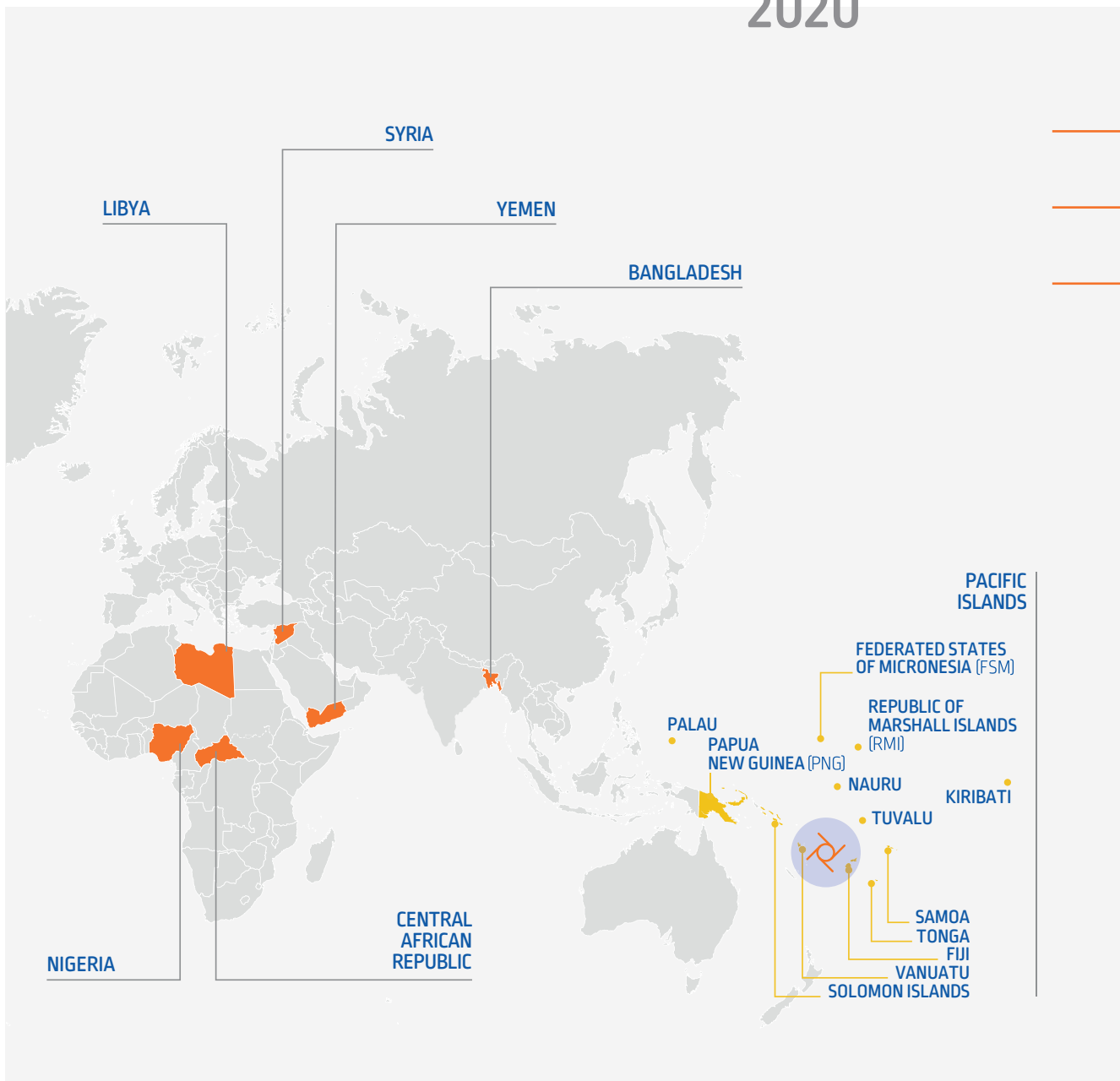**3** MONTHS OF ITS LAUNCH

70 ATTENDEES

from

28 ORGANIZATIONS

at

ETC VIRTUAL ANNUAL PLENARY

EMERGENCY TELECOMUNICATIONS CLUSTER

OPERATIONS 2020

SYRIA

LIBYA

YEMEN

BANGLADESH

PACIFIC ISLANDS

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA (FSM)

REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS (RMI)

PALAU

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNG)

NAURU

KIRIBATI

TUVALU

SAMOA
TONGA
FIJI
VANUATU

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

NIGERIA

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Members of the ETS team walk through Cox's Bazar in August 2020. Photo: WFP/ETS

BANGLADESH

Activation:
25-Aug-17

REFUGEE CRISIS
—

It has been more than three years since violence in Myanmar forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees to flee from their homes to Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

In 2020, the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) continued to provide security communications and critical connectivity in Bangladesh, enabling the work of 286 humanitarians across 34 sites.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ETS supported critical response efforts, including the provision of data connectivity services in Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) treatment centres for frontline medical teams and administrative staff.

To help mitigate the impact of power outages and reduce carbon emissions, and to ensure the continuity of data connectivity services in all operational areas, ETS partners installed solar panels in key sites. The annual ETS user survey resulted in an 89% satisfaction rate for core ETS services in Bangladesh.

89%
ETS user satisfaction rate

286
Users of data connectivity

34
Sites

767
Radio users

SUPPORTING PARTNERS
Cisco TacOps , Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia), Ericsson Response, German Federal Foreign Office, International Organization for Migration, Inter Sector Coordination Group, NetHope, Government of Thailand, UN Department of Safety and Security, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, United States Agency for International Development/Food for Peace, UN World Food Programme.

The ETC visits Bria where partner Intersos is taking calls from three sites set up in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, as part of a common feedback mechanism project led by UNICEF with technical support from the ETC. Photo: WFP/ETC

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Activation:
1-Dec-13

CONFLICT

Throughout 2020, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) in the Central African Republic (CAR) provided critical security communications and Internet connectivity services across 12 common operational areas, supporting the work of over 3,000 humanitarians from 97 organizations.

Working with the Ministry of Health, the ETC set up a toll-free COVID-19 helpline to counter misinformation surrounding the pandemic, encourage early virus detection efforts and help improve the safety of communities. Cluster partners also supported the implementation of three pilot projects in Bria and Bangassou, to help affected communities get access to critical information and communication services.

Following an inter-agency review (2019) of existing security communications infrastructure in the country, the ETC and the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project continued to implement key upgrades to security communications network across 15 sites to help ensure the safety of humanitarians in the country. Two-thirds of the TESS recommendations have been completed.

The cluster also provided satellite phones to the 10 Security Operation Centres (SOCs) and set up a dedicated radio channel for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Bria, which helped support humanitarian safety during an escalation of violence in March 2020. In addition, two training sessions were delivered by the ETC to humanitarians in Batangafo and Birao to build national technical capacity on security communications systems.

85%
ETC user satisfaction rate

3,000
Humanitarians

97
Organizations supported

10
Sites connected

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Central African Red Cross, Cordaid, Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg, International Organization for Migration, Intersos, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UN Department of Safety and Security, United Nations Children's Fund, UN World Food Programme.
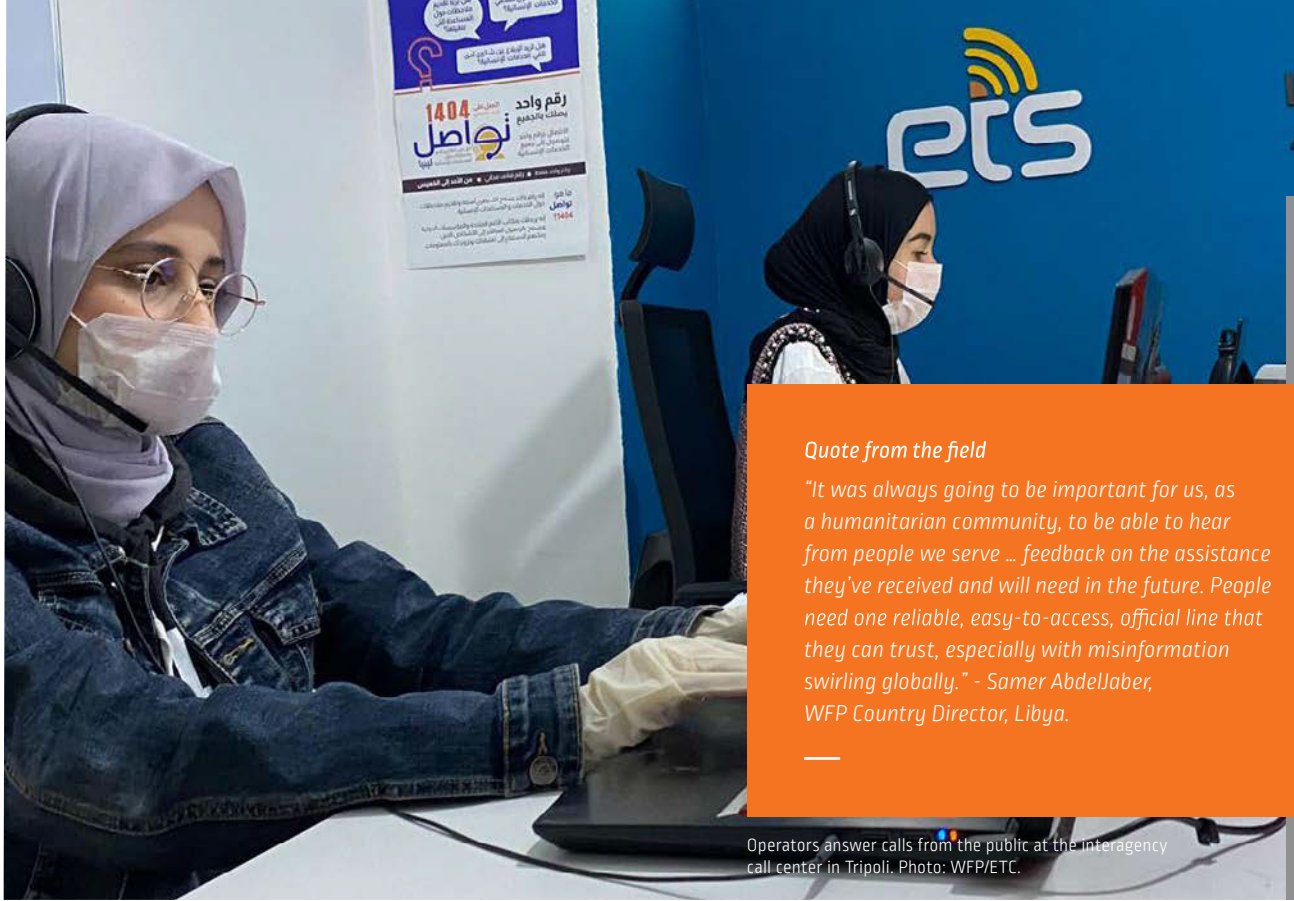
Operators answer calls from the public at the interagency call center in Tripoli. Photo: WFP/ETC.
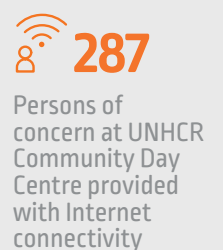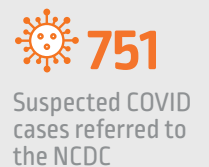
LIBYA

Activation:
Oct-18

CONFLICT

Amidst continued security challenges and instability, 2020 was a watershed year for the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) in the country as it established the ETC's first Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) project in the form of an inter-agency call centre in Tripoli. It enables two-way communication between affected communities and humanitarians, and a mechanism for people to provide feedback on the assistance they receive and will need in the future. Shortly after opening in February, the Ministry of Health's National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) requested the call centre be used as the official national COVID-19 information line in the government's fight against the pandemic. Throughout the year, operators answered more than 19,160 calls, of which 68% were COVID-related and 751 suspected cases of the virus were referred to the NCDC.

As part of its support to affected communities, the ETS also started a joint project with with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to provide Internet connectivity to 287 persons of concern (PoCs), including refugees and asylum seekers, in a UNHCR Community Day Centre in Tripoli. In parallel, the ETS continued to plan the installation of a Security Operations Centre (SOC) at the UN hub in Benghazi to help bolster humanitarian safety in the country.

The ETS conducted its annual user survey in December, resulting in an overall satisfaction rate of 95.6% for its core services.

96%
ETS user satisfaction rate

19,160
Calls answered at the call centre

751
Suspected COVID cases referred to the NCDC

287
Persons of concern at UNHCR Community Day Centre provided with Internet connectivity

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Government of Luxembourg, National Centre for Disease Control, UN Department of Safety and Security, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UN Population Fund, UN Support Mission in Libya, UN Women, UN World Food Programme.

Quote from the field

"Rolling out webinars on ETS services this year has made it easy for us to continue to share knowledge with the humanitarian community, while maintaining social distancing."
Unity Oware, ETS Telecommunications Associate.
—

An ETS telecommunications specialist delivers training to responders on using satellite phones to stay safe in the field, while taking safety measures to protect themselves and each other from COVID-19. Photo: WFP/Oyintare Kalama.

NIGERIA

Activation:
23-Nov-16

PROTECTION CRISIS
—

Since it was first activated in November 2016, the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) in North-East Nigeria has played a critical role in delivering security communications and data connectivity services for humanitarians. Throughout 2020, the ETS continued to provide reliable Internet connectivity services, helping to keep 4,559 humanitarians from 115 organizations connected across North-East Nigeria and in the process, achieving an overall 96% user satisfaction rate for its services.

The ETS played a vital part in upgrading satellite connectivity equipment across multiple sites in North-East Nigeria to improve the quality of connectivity services for humanitarians. Following more than two years of planning, preparation and development, the ETS also began the installation of a solar-powered hybrid system that will support connectivity equipment in humanitarian hubs across eight locations, providing a more reliable and sustainable power solution than traditional fossil-fuel generators.

A total of 35 technical training sessions were delivered by the ETS to 262 humanitarians. A new set of ETS webinar modules were rolled out including VHF radio communication procedures and the use of satellite phones for humanitarians, to help minimize potential exposure to COVID-19 while working in deep field locations.

96%
ETS user satisfaction rate

262
Responders trained

4,559
Users of ETS services

115
Organizations supported

8
Sites connected

SUPPORTING PARTNERS
Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Ericsson Response, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, Federal Republic of Germany Foreign Office, Government of Luxembourg, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norwegian Refugee Council, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, Swedish International Development Cooperation, Trade and Development, UN World Food Programme, United States Agency for International Development.

Quote from the field

"It's encouraging to see results in such challenging times – the boost in ETC user satisfaction since last year is attributable to the major upgrades to the security communications services made in cities and towns across Syria throughout 2020."
Geronimo Turgo, ETC Coordinator.
—

Radio network coverage now extends more than 70km across the city of Homs, helping to keep humanitarians safe while they respond to the crisis in Syria. Photo: WFP/ETC

SYRIA

Activation:
14-Jan-13

CONFLICT
—

The safety and security of humanitarians in Syria were key priorities for the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) throughout 2020. In coordination with the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project, the ETC initiated country-wide upgrades of the humanitarian security communications infrastructure across the country including in Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and Qamishli. The second phase is set to commence in 2021.

Despite significant delays related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ETC conducted multiple missions to support and strengthen the communication network of the humanitarian community. In March, the ETC deployed to Tartous to improve VHF radio services. In June, the ETC finalized the installation of a fibre link at the UN hub in

Aleppo, significantly improving connectivity services. The Cluster also worked with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to install telecommunications equipment in their vehicles to support the safe movement of personnel. A TESS mission gave hands-on support to the ETC in Damascus, delivering crucial technical training on VHF telecommunications to 14 key technical UN staff.

The ETC provided shared security communication and Internet connectivity services across eight common operational areas in Syria and supported cross-border operations in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. The Cluster also helped 500 humanitarians from 15 partner organizations stay connected. In 2020, ETC user satisfaction rates shot up by 10% from the previous year to 95.6%.

SUPPORTING PARTNERS
UN Department of Safety and Security, UN Development Programme, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, UN World Food Programme, United Nations Children's Fund.

96.6%
ETC user satisfaction rate

500+
Users of ETC services

15
Organizations supported

6
Sites connected

Quote from the field

"Every year comes with its own challenges. 2020 was very different. But despite COVID-19 restricitons and challenges, the ETC continued to support the humanitarian operation and lifesaving activities in Yemen. I believe there will be much more ahead of us in 2021." - Wali Noor, ETC Coordinator.

CONFLICT

YEMEN

Activation:
1-Apr-15

2020 was another challenging year in Yemen as the country was hit by severe flooding while armed conflict persisted. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) continued to facilitate the emergency response in Yemen by providing connectivity to 703 humanitarians and security communications services to 2,309 responders, ensuring their security. The ETC helpdesk received and resolved 20,021 issues from responders.

The cluster provided connectivity to frontline medical personnel in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in isolation and treatment centres in Aden, Al Hodeidah and Sana'a.
To bolster access to reliable information for affected communities, the ETC also received funding to upgrade a dedicated COVID-19 call centre in Sana'a and establish a new one in Aden for the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP).

The ETC supported the implementation of three World Health Organization (WHO)-funded connectivity projects including the rehabilitation of IT infrastructure in Aden University and the upgrade of the Ameen Nasher Higher Institute for Health Sciences to encourage online learning. The third project at the Ministry of Health is aimed at raising public awareness of the COVID-19 pandemic and disseminating prevention messages.

The cluster also provided connectivity services in a new Emergency Operations Centre (SOC) on the remote Socotra Island. Plans to provide critical connectivity to passengers at Aden International Airport were put on hold due to an attack in December. That same month, the Cluster delivered a virtual project management and practitioner capacity building session to 20 partners from 14 humanitarian organizations.

91%
ETC user
satisfaction rate

20,021
Issues resolved by
the ETC helpdesk

703
Users of ETC
connectivity

2,309
Users of security
communications

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Action Against Hunger, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development, All-Girls Foundation, CARE International, Danish Refugee Council, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Handicap International, Humanitarian Aid and Development, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Labour Organization, International Medical Corps, International Organization for Migration, International Rescue Committee, Islamic Relief Yemen, Mercy Corps, Médecins Sans Frontières International - Genve, Médecins Sans Frontières International - Spain, Norwegian Refugee Council, OXFAM, Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for Yemen, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Partner premiere Urgency - Aide Medicale Internationale, Relief International, Save the Children International, Solidarities International, Supreme Council for the Administration & Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, UN Department of Safety and Security, UN Development Programme, UN Family Planning Agency, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Information Centres, UN Office for Project Services, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UN Volunteers, UN Women, UN World Food Programme, United Nations Children's Fund, Vision Hope International, World Health Organization, Yemen Family Care Association.

The ETC delivers training on the use of emergency satellite terminals to Fiji's response community during the aftermath of Cyclone Yasa, which struck in December. Photo: Fiji's National Disaster Management Office (NDMO)

PACIFIC

Activation:
30-Nov-16

P R E P A R E D N E S S & E M E R G E N C Y R E S P O N S E
—

PREPAREDNESS

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) started the year by facilitating two national emergency preparedness workshops in the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), which led to the creation of new national emergency telecommunications coordination mechanisms.

Throughout 2020, the ETC supported 89 partners by identifying and addressing gaps in telecommunications services across the Pacific Island Countries (PICs). As the COVID-19 pandemic hit the Pacific region, the ETC worked with the Joint Incident Management Team (JIMT) to develop interim guidance for health ministries on the use of digital tools and platforms to deliver healthcare services and help minimize exposure. This involved supporting 17 PICs to plan and launch national COVID-19 helplines, including Fiji's '158' toll-free number call centre. The ETC also provided technical support to equip Health Emergency Operations Centres (HEOCs).

A user satisfaction survey to evaluate ETC preparedness efforts provided in the Pacific resulted in an overall user satisfaction rate of 60%. The COVID-19 pandemic presented particular challenges to the movement of ETC personnel in the Pacific region, restricting opportunities to deliver in-person activities such as training and simulations, technical assessments and the reinforcement of infrastructure. Further, the response to COVID-19 saw a surge in the need to provide emergency communication support to up to 21 PICs while the ETC had previously supported 12 PICs as part of its preparedness activities. The survey was used as a feedback tool to highlight gaps and the lack of an ETC presence across the PICs, specifically in support of the COVID-19 response. The ETC in the Pacific will continue to build its capacity through national, regional, and international networks.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In April, Cyclone Harold swept through Fiji and Vanuatu, causing severe damage to telecommunications infrastructure, and disrupting services across several islands. The Cluster worked with local partners to restore Radio Vanuatu, the primary information channel for affected communities. It also activated the Crisis Connectivity Charter (CCC) to prioritize access to mobile connectivity bandwidth and support the provision of emergency Internet connectivity services in the three worst-hit locations in Vanuatu. An overall satisfaction rate of 85% was given by partners for the ETC activities and services provided during the response.

In December, cyclone Yasa battered Fiji, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake. Within 24 hours, the ETC activated the CCC for the second time in 2020, providing free satellite calls and Internet connectivity to support Fiji's National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) damage assessments. ETC personnel deployed to northern Fiji to assess networks across multiple cyclone-affected sites, focusing on humanitarian assistance distribution centres and providing recommendations to the island's NDMO.

85%
ETC user satisfaction in Cyclone Harold response

89
Partners supported

Up to **21**
Pacific Island Countries supported in COVID-19 pandemic

Partner organizations supporting the ETC Pacific response to cyclone Harold: International Telecommunication Union, Inmarsat, Intelsat, Wantok Vanuatu, Gilat Australia, Av-Comm, Vanuatu's Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO), Vanuatu Broadcasting & Television Corporation (VBTC), Pacific Group.

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

THE EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS CLUSTER ENABLED HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS TO COMMUNICATE WITH AND PROVIDE LIFE-SAVING INFORMATION TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY COVID-19.

The solutions implemented have been packaged for future use by the ETC and partners.

LIBYA

A Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) initiative in the form of a single, toll-free, country-wide hotline, *Tawasul*, was established in February 2020.

Operators have answered more than 19,000 calls from people requesting information or assistance, captured their feedback and given referrals to the humanitarian organizations that are best-suited to handle their issue(s).

In collaboration with the Libyan Ministry of Health's National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), the CFM was used as the nationwide COVID-19 information channel.

Trained operators and volunteer doctors provided information, raised awareness of the virus, reviewed symptoms using NCDC guidelines and referred potential cases to the NCDC.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the ETC established a toll-free COVID-19 hotline to combat misinformation surrounding the pandemic, encourage early detection of the virus and ultimately improve the safety of communities and the effectiveness of responders.

FIJI

The ETC implemented a short code helpline (158) and established a dedicated call centre in Suva in collaboration with with the World Health Organization (WHO). The Cluster also helped to facilitate training for call centre personnel preparing to staff the dedicated COVID-19 helpline.

The Hlekiwe Kachali, former ETC Pacific Coordinator, attends an emergency communications planning meeting with the Fiji National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) to discuss southern Lau and Kadavu, two Fiji islands that suffered severe damage when Cyclone Harold hit Fiji on 8 April. Photo: ETC/WFP

CONNECTIVITY & OTHER SUPPORT

BANGLADESH

Provided connectivity to 22 Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) treatment centres and Isolation and Treatment Centres (ITC) in collaboration with UNHCR, IOM and MSF.

YEMEN

Provided connectivity in quarantine centres in Aden and Al Hodeidah, as well as in isolation apartments in Sana'a.

PACIFIC / NAURU

Working with Nauru's National Emergency Services (NES) taskforce to enhance security communications networks to strengthen the response in future emergencies and post-disaster situations.

PACIFIC / VANUATU

A new teleconferencing system to facilitate remote working for Vanuatu's Ministry of Health (MoH) staff was developed.

PACIFIC / TUVALU

Working with regional partners to plan a data collection project in Tuvalu to collect and extrapolate data in support of the COVID-19 pandemic response in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), the ICT Department of the Tuvalu Government and the Tuvalu Communications Corporation.

CHATBOT

The ETC developed a chatbot solution to support Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) services in the field. The service will also broaden outreach, enabling communities to access critical information and improve the efficiency of humanitarian response.

The chatbot integrates machine learning to automatically answer questions, providing factual, country-specific information on COVID–19 to the affected population.

The goal is to give affected communities reliable information on COVID-19, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in their native languages.

The chatbot will be deployed in Libya with English and Arabic language capacity in early 2021, with plans to also deliver it to Iraq in English, Arabic and Kurdish.

The ETC also began developing a Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) Service Package featuring the chatbot solution.

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development, All-Girls Foundation, CARE International, Danish Refugee Council, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Handicap International, Humanitarian Aid and Development, International Committee of the Red Cross

EMERGENCY TELECOMUNICATIONS CLUSTER

ACTIVITIES
2020

CAPACITY
BUILDING

———

GLOBAL
ENGAGEMENTS

———

PARTNERSHIP
DEVELOPMENTS

———

Rob Burrveld and Priya Arora create an ETC blended learning course in February 2020.
Photo: ETC/WFP

CAPACITY BUILDING

In 2020, the Global ETC began working to strengthen its online learning presence. The COVID-19 pandemic sped up these plans while also impacting the delivery of all in-person courses and simulations.

In May 2020, the ETC officially adopted a blended approach where online, self-paced learning will provide a foundation to be supplemented with classroom training.

Given the nature of the ETC's work, physical training and classroom delivery are both essential for participants to practice and apply their learning, as well as to network and share experiences.

The ETC Learning Channel is hosted on WFP's WeLearn platform. More online courses will launch in 2021, starting with the ETC Country Preparedness course.

In just 3 months, 45 humanitarians from 11 organizations completed the new ETC Induction online course. Over 100 staff have accessed the ETC learning platform so far.

The team also fed its monitoring and evaluation framework by conducting evaluations with past trainees.

Where possible, the ETC plans to resume live courses and simulations in 2021.

45 HUMANITARIANS
from
11 ORGANIZATIONS
completed
THE ETC INDUCTION ONLINE COURSE
in just
3 MONTHS

100+ STAFF ACCESSED
the
ETC LEARNING PLATFORM

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Global ETC was well represented at an array of virtual events, collaborations, and consultations in 2020.

MARCH

LAUNCH EVENT FOR THE ETC-ITU EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS TABLETOP SIMULATION GUIDE

This publication is a milestone for the emergency technology field because when a disaster hits, it's too late to start preparing. Simulations are a chance for the emergency telecom sector and governments:

| **to learn lessons and share best practice** before they are needed

| **to build the resilience** of citizens and infrastructure when there is still time

| **and to test themselves** in private, before the real-world tests them in public.

AUGUST

THE ETC-ITU REPORT, "WOMEN, ICT AND EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS"

Launched at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) 2020.

OCTOBER

COMMUNICATING WITH DISASTER AFFECTED COMMUNITIES (CDAC) GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

NETHOPE GLOBAL SUMMIT 2020

The Global ETC led two sessions at the Summit, one on "Women, ICT and Emergency Telecommunications" *(with ITU, Save the Children and Cisco)* and the other on *"Shaping the future of technology response to humanitarian crises"* (with NetHope). The second was used as a consultation to help shape the ETC strategy.

ITU VIRTUAL WORKSHOP FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

Co-facilitated by the Global ETC Team, this event was also a chance to deliver a table-top simulation exercise using the **Emergency Telecommunications Table-Top Simulation Guide** released in March.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENTS

ETC VIRTUAL PLENARY 2020

The ETC's first virtual plenary drew 70 registered participants from 23 organizations. The ETC Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Coordination Model was endorsed, along with an updated ETC Service Catalogue reflecting new services incorporated since 2015.

Notably, the user segment of the service catalogue now includes new user groups: National and Local authorities, and the Affected Population in addition to Humanitarian responders.

Partners presented innovative technology including renewable energy solutions, disaster connectivity maps and the future of the Ericsson Response WIDER and emergency.lu solutions.

The Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project provided an update covering its support in the field and the standardisation of VHF and Vehicle Tracking Systems (VTS). It also provided a long-term standard plan looking at using personal devices and new technologies.

The project also announced its transition to a sustainable solution to be known as {TESS+}.

70
REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS

from

23
ORGANIZATIONS

Partners presented innovative technology solutions including renewable energy, disaster connectivity maps and the future of the Ericsson Response WIDER and emergency.lu solutions.

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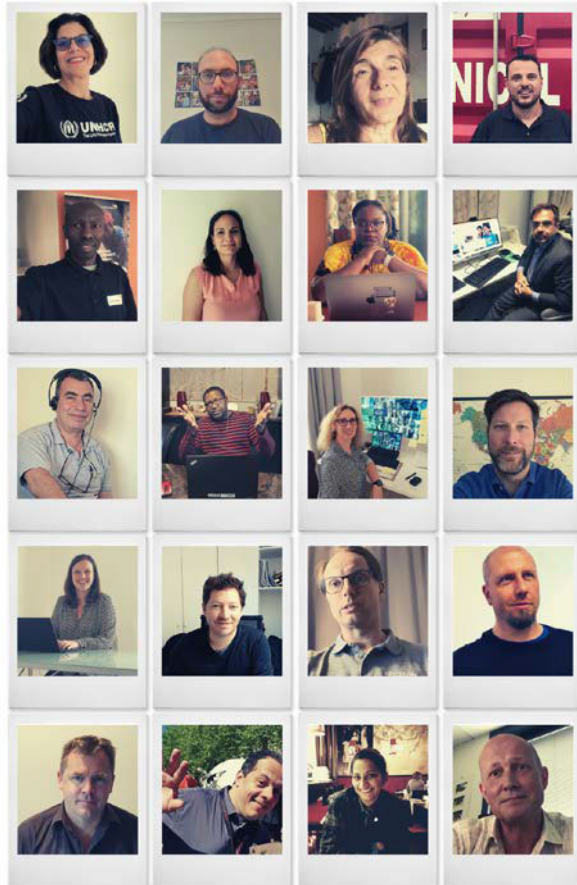
Participants of the Virtual ETC Plenary 2020.

ACTIVITIES

Wantok Vanuatu personnel preconfigure VSAT satellite equipment donated by CCC signatory Intelsat for deployment to the worst affected islands in Vanuatu. Photo: WFP/ETC

GOVERNMENT OF LUXEMBOURG

The Global ETC team confirmed multi-year support from the Government of Luxembourg for a Services for Communities project to be rolled out in the Sahel region of Africa. Initial activities will begin in the first half of 2021. In addition, the Government of Luxembourg worked on extending the emergency.lu program until 2026 while developing frontier technologies leveraging artificial intelligence, while ensuring future solutions are more robust, offering higher capacity and optimal security.

ETC CYBERSECURITY TASK FORCE

Comprised of Ericsson Response, the Government of Luxembourg, International Telecommunication Union, United Nations Children's Fund, UN World Food Programme, and World Vision International, the Task Force was formed in April. It will work to enforce best practices in cybersecurity across ETC operations and ensure the responsible use of data in all interactions with humanitarians, affected populations and national governments.

SWEDISH CIVIL CONTINGENCIES AGENCY (MSB)

The Global ETC participated in the annual partnership consultation between WFP and MSB, led by the Augmented Logistics Intervention Team for Emergencies. It confirmed the delivery of the Helpdesk Module factsheet/distribution and the MSB Services for Communities roster to support field projects. MSB also reiterated their interest in supporting security communications and energy solutions in the future.

REACH

The ETC adopted REACH as the newest Cluster partner in November 2020. REACH will support the ETC through needs assessments, and monitoring indicator tools that will help the Cluster facilitate evidence-based humanitarian coordination throughout the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC).

etc

GLOBAL ETC PARTNERS CALL

Partners came together in December to take stock of the challenges and success stories of a difficult pandemic year with an eye on the Cluster's 2021 strategy. The new ETC blended learning pathway, the ETC Chatbot and key operational updates were presented.

PARTNER DEPLOYMENTS & ENGAGEMENTS

Deployments were limited in 2020 with international travel restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but ETC partners continued to support Cluster activities in the field and remotely:

CRISIS CONNECTIVITY CHARTER (CCC) operators and newest signatory, the International Telecommunication Union, came together to support Fiji and Vanuatu remotely with bandwidth capacity, using local equipment in response to cyclones Harold and Yasa. Intelsat and Inmarsat supported critical access to connectivity in the Pacific region. Another CCC signatory, Hispasat, trained ICT personnel on their satellite equipment in Panama.

ERICSSON RESPONSE
Identified three staff with e-authoring expertise to help the ETC develop online learning content, particularly soft skills training, in the coming year.

THE GOVERNMENT OF LUXEMBOURG supplied one staff member to help develop the Let's Comm course alongside a radio communications expert.

MSB STAFF
Continued to support Country Preparedness activities on the ground in Mozambique for 48 days in early 2020.

ERICSSON RESPONSE, NETHOPE, CISCO TACOPS engaged closely with the ETS team in Bangladesh to support the design of the data connectivity network providing critical field information and technical expertise.

Ericsson Response, the Government of Luxembourg, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Organization for Migration, ITU, NetHope, Save The Children, Telecommunications Security Standards project, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children's Fund, WFP and World Vision International engaged in capacity building discussions and reviewed online learning modules.

GLOBAL SYSTEM FOR MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS (GSMA) AND REACH, with support from the Global ETC team, developed the Connectivity, Needs and Usage Assessment (CoNUA) Toolkit. This resource will be used for Multi Sectoral Needs Assessments (MSNA) in the field, often led by REACH, to inform the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) by including a set of emergency communications questions for local populations.

ETC PARTNERS
Stepped up to provide information on their local/regional capacity worldwide during a resource mapping exercise conducted by the Global ETC team. This exercise was to prepare for a potential scale-up or response to COVID-19, while factoring in travel and in-country pandemic related restrictions. Action Contre la Faim, Ericsson Response, the Government of Luxembourg, MSB, Save the Children, Télécoms Sans Frontières, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, World Vision International, and WFP resources have been mapped. NetHope, ITU, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Organization for Migration, Plan International and the U.S. Department of State confirmed enthusiastic support.

ACTIVITIES

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