

Central African Republic - Conflict

ETC Situation Report #18

Reporting period 09/10/2017 to 02/28/2018

These Situation Reports will now be distributed approximately every two months. The next report will be issued on or around 30/04/18.

Highlights

- The ETC continues to provide shared internet connectivity services and security telecommunications to the response community in 9x sites across the country.
- The ETC carried out the first ever ICT4Gov training in Bangui to 31 participants who learned how to better support emergencies.
- The ETC started the deployment of security telecommunications and Internet services in Bria, Alindao and Bangassou with the support of Central Emergency Response Funds (CERF) funds.



Participants at the ICT4GOV training in Bangui. Photo credit: ETC C.A.R.

Situation Overview

The recent escalation of violence in Central African Republic (C.A.R.) during 2017 has brought the country towards the brink of a new, large-scale humanitarian crisis, increasing the protection risks in multiple new hotspots across the country. This recent resurgence of violence has also had an impact on the ETC's plans to provide critical communications services to humanitarians in priority areas due to damage to critical telecommunications infrastructure and lack of access to priority areas in need of new network installations.

Response

- The ETC continues to provide shared internet connectivity services and security telecommunications to the response community in 8x sites across the country: Kaga-Bandoro and Bossangoa managed by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); Zemio, managed by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); N'Dele, managed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM); and Bambari, Bangui, and Paoua, managed by the World Food Programme (WFP); Bossangoa and Bouar by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).



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- A Very High Frequency (VHF) radio repeater network was set up at the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) camp in Bria on 24 October to provide security telecommunications for the humanitarian community.
 - The ETC started the deployment of security telecommunications and Internet services in Bria, Alindao and Bangassou with the support of Central Emergency Response Funds (CERF) funds. The first site to be complete will be Bria, then Alindao and finally Bangassou.
 - The ETC is already providing security telecommunications for UN agencies at the MINUSCA compound in Bria and planned to expand the services the rest of humanitarian actors.
 - The ETC carried out the first ever ICT4Gov training in Bangui to learn how to better support humanitarian emergencies, deploy shared ICT services and strengthen collaboration among government and humanitarian actors on the ground. 31 participants from the government, international and national Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), military and United Nations (UN) agencies participated in this training. To read the full story click [here](#).
 - The ETC reprogrammed 20x VHF handheld radios for OXFAM staff so they use security telecommunications services for their safety and security.
 - The ETC installed an additional VHF repeater in Bouar to improve the existing security telecommunications services coverage. This will eliminate blind spots and ensure all humanitarians receive timely security updates.

Planned Response

- The ETC is planning the upgrade of the security telecommunications network to Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) in the country. As this project will be funded through a cost-sharing mechanism, advocacy through the Security Management Team (SMT) is needed. The ETC submitted the quotation for the upgrade in Bangui to the SMT.

Challenges

- The security situation in the country continues to deteriorate and remains a challenge for all humanitarians, including the ETC.
- Staff capacity continues to be low which is impacting the ETC's activities.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on 6 March 2018.
- The next local ETC working group meeting is planned to take place on Thursday 1st March 2018.



Information

- ICT responders operating on the ground in C.A.R. are encouraged to share their contact details with CAR.ETC@wfp.org to facilitate local coordination.
- A dedicated information-sharing space has been created on the ETC website <https://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/central-african-republic-conflict>. Organisations involved in the ICT response are encouraged to share updates with the ETC community to support the overall humanitarian response.



Shared ICT Services

DISTRICT, TOWN	LOCATION	PROVIDED BY	SERVICES	EQUIPMENT	CUSTOMER
Bambari	WFP sub-office	WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) • ICT Helpdesk • Internet 		Humanitarian community
Bangui	WFP sub-office	WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) • Radio programming • Coordination 		Humanitarian community
Bouar	WFP compound	UNDSS, WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) • Internet • ICT Helpdesk 		Humanitarian community
Bossangoa	UNICEF Compound	UNICEF, UNDSS, WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) • Internet • Radio programming • ICT Helpdesk 		Humanitarian community
Bria	MINUSCA Compound	UNHDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) 		Humanitarian community
Kaga-Bandoro	UNICEF Compound	UNICEF, WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) • ICT helpdesk • Internet 		Humanitarian community
N'Dele	IOM Compound	WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) • Internet 		Humanitarian community
Paoua	WFP compound	WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) • Internet • ICT Helpdesk 		Humanitarian community
Zemio	UNHCR compound	UNHCR, WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security telecommunications (radio) • Internet • ICT Helpdesk 		Humanitarian community

ETC Services Map: <https://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-car-services-map-march-1-2018>



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Acronyms

C.A.R.	Central African Republic
COMCEN	Communications Centre
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FITTEST	WFP Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal – satellite equipment to provide internet connectivity
WFP	World Food Programme

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the ICT Emergency website: www.ETCluster.org

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: CAR.ETC@wfp.org



Background on the emergency:

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 and public services further exacerbated the situation. Since then, the country has remained extremely volatile. Almost three years after the beginning of the conflict, the humanitarian situation remains critical leaving 2.3 million people, over half the population, in urgent need of assistance. Since December 2013, over 590,000 people are still displaced across the country and the number of refugees outside the C.A.R. is over 480,000.

The [Emergency Telecommunications Cluster](#) (ETC) was activated in December 2013 in response to the escalating crisis. Led by the World Food Programme (WFP), the ETC in C.A.R. is focusing on enhancing security telecommunications in Bangui and supporting the establishment of common ICT services in eight common operational areas, namely: Bangui, Bambari, Kaga-Bandoro, Bossangoa, Zemio, N'Dele, Paoua and Bouar.

Sources: IOM, OCHA, and Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)