

Central African Republic - Conflict

ETC Situation Report #19

Reporting period 01/03/2018 to 01/05/2018

These Situation Reports will now be distributed approximately every two months. The next report will be issued on or around 01/07/18.

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 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 deteriorating security situation is hampering ETC response efforts in CAR.



Sam Okudi, ETC telecommunications specialist installs a satellite kit at the IMC office to provide shared internet connectivity to humanitarian in Bria. Photo credit : ETC CAR.

Situation Overview

On 1 May, CAR witnessed one of the bloodiest attacks in recent times with 15 people including a priest killed in Bangui when gunmen attacked a church. The attack occurred on the border of the predominantly Muslim PK 5 neighbourhood where 21 people were killed last month when a joint mission by UN peacekeepers and local security forces to disarm criminal gangs descended into open fighting.

Due to the escalating violence and increasing insecurity, the ETC's response has been severely hampered.

Response

- The ETC has completed the installation of shared Internet connectivity for International Medical Corps (IMC), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and OXFAM in Bria and is planning to extend Internet connectivity services to MINUSCA base. Equipment is hosted at International Medical Corps (IMC) office.

- The team expanded the coverage of the Very High Frequency (VHF) radio network to cover the whole of Bria. The United Nations (UN) VHF channel is fully operational.
 - The next plan is to install another repeater for NGOs. The ETC is also in contact with local GSM provider tower to enter an agreement to install an NGO repeater on their tower.
- The ETC is working on a transition plan for the Internet and security telecommunications services in the country.
- The maintenance of equipment and the Very High Frequency (VHF) network at the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) Communications Centre (COMCEN) hosted at the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA) in C.A.R is now complete.
- The ETC installed a new base station at the UNDSS COMCEN in Bria. The team will train users and radio operators on this new system. The implementation of the DMR project in Bangui was approved by the HCT but the ETC has not received any funds as part of the cost-sharing mechanism. Due to the deteriorating security situation, the GSM network has been brought down in all the locations where humanitarians are operating. DMR could facilitate communications among humanitarians across the country.
- 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).

Planned Response

- Plans to extend the Internet connectivity services to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in C.A.R. (MINUSCA) base for WFP and UNHCR in Bria has been delayed due to the deteriorating security situation as have plans to begin deployments in Bangassou and Alindao.
 - In Bangassou, the security situation is deteriorating so deployment will begin only when security situation allows.
 - It is not possible to established shared services at the IOM office in Bangassou as it does not have power currently.
 - In Alindao, voice and Internet connectivity services will be set up, hosted by Cordaid.
- Upgrade of the security telecommunications network to Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) in the country is still being discussed at the Security Management Team (SMT) level. Organizations would need to opt for a cost-sharing arrangement and a quotation for the upgrade in Bangui is being submitted to the SMT. Due to the critical security situation in Bangui, the ETC plans to deploy additional repeaters in the capital to increase the current network coverage.



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 ETC activities.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on TBC.

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	IMC MINUSCA Compound	UNHDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet • 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
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ETC Services Map: <https://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-car-services-map-may-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)