

Central African Republic – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #35

Reporting period 01/05/2020 to 31/05/2020

These Situation Reports will be distributed approximately every month. The next report will be issued on or around 30/06/20.

Highlights

- The ETC in CAR has secured US\$100,000 from the UN Reform Critical Corporate Initiative (CCI) to support the response to COVID-19.
- For the first time, a solution that can record the number of users of ETC connectivity services is being rolled out across all ETC sites in CAR. In May, the solution was installed in Paoua and Bambari.
- The implementation of the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) recommendation to enable access to satellite phones in each of the 10 Security Operation Centres (SOC) has started with installation in Bambari.



The ETC installs satellite phone equipment at a Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Bambari, for use by responders operating there.

Photo credit: ETC/WFP

ETC Activities

Funding

- The ETC in CAR has secured US\$100,000 from the UN Reform Critical Corporate Initiative (CCI) and has been allocated a further US\$100,000 from the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF). The funding will be used to support the response to COVID-19. The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for CAR is being revised to reflect an increase in the budget needed to respond to COVID-19. Currently, the ETC remains at eight per cent funded out of the required US\$1.3 million for its 2020 activities.

COVID-19

- The ETC is supporting the recruitment of five operators and a call centre manager to run the dedicated COVID-19 call centre set up by the ETC in Bangui in April, to assist the Ministry of Health (MoH) in its response efforts. The operators will provide critical information and official health guidelines to the population to raise awareness about the virus using the toll-free '1212' helpline.
- A chatbot solution that will provide informative and country-specific information related to COVID-19 is being developed with the Global ETC. The CCI funding will be used to support this initiative.

Connectivity services

- Two joint WFP/ETC missions took place to Bossangoa and Paoua to restore data connectivity services for humanitarians in these locations.
- The ETC in CAR is deploying cloud management capabilities and a new solution that can record the number of users of ETC connectivity services. This is the first solution of its kind to be used by the ETC in CAR. In May, the solution was installed in Paoua and Bambari and will be rolled out across all other ETC sites in due course.

Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS)

- There is a need for reliable communication channels in N'Dele, where the security situation has escalated. A TESS mission carried out in early May finalized the implementation of the Security Operations Centre (SOC) there. The ETC also repaired the NGO VHF radio channel in N'Dele. Both UN and NGO agencies will use the channel until the UN VHF radio channel can be repaired during the next ETC mission.
- Satellite phone devices have been dispatched to 10 SOCs across CAR to implement the recommendation issued by the TESS project that responders have access to at least one satellite phone in each location. The first installation took place in Bambari on 20 May at the UNDSS-managed SOC.
- Due to a lack of ETC capacity on the ground, technicians from WFP, UNDSS and the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) carried out TESS missions on behalf of the ETC, with guidance and oversight provided by the ETC.



Challenges

- The funding shortfall to support ETC services in 2020 is significantly impacting on staffing capacity and the delivery of connectivity services.
- The volatile security situation in the country remains a challenge for all humanitarians.
- Rules on the importation of satellite phone equipment impacts on the ETC's capacity to strengthen CAR's telecommunications infrastructure and complete implementation of the TESS recommendations.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on **2 June 2020**.

Information

- ICT responders operating on the ground in CAR are encouraged to share their contact details with CAR.ETC@wfp.org to facilitate local coordination.
- All the information related to the ETC response in CAR can be found on the [dedicated emergency page](#) on the ETC website.
- ETC CAR [Factsheet](#) | ETC CAR [Dashboard](#) | ETC CAR [Infographic](#)

Contacts

CAR.ETC@wfp.org

Mohamedou Ndiath, ETC Coordinator

mohamedou.ndiath@wfp.org

Phone: +23 672 187 655

Lalou Yavoucko, Acting ETC Coordinator

lalou.yavoucko@wfp.org

Phone: +23 621 619 905

Elizabeth Millership, ETC Information Management Officer

elizabeth.millership@wfp.org