

Central African Republic - Conflict

ETC Situation Report #21

Reporting period 01/07/2018 to 31/08/2018

These Situation Reports will now be distributed approximately every month. The next report will be issued on or around 01/10/18.

Highlights

- The ETC is focussing on enhancing the security telecommunications services in Bangui and deploying common ICT services in Bria, Alindao and Bangassou.
- The ETC continues to provide shared internet connectivity services and security telecommunications to the response community in 9x sites across the country – while the office at Zemio was closed, Alindao has been set up as a new site.
- The equipment required to start the deployment of Internet services is now being installed in Alindao at Cordaid premises.



ETC talks to interested participants about its services on World Humanitarian Day 2018

Photo credit: ETC CAR.

Situation Overview

The security situation across CAR remains unpredictable. In June, there was a major security incident in Bambari and humanitarian workers had to be evacuated. Peacekeeping forces are now controlling the situation and humanitarian workers have returned to Bambari.

Response

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) is working on setting up Internet connectivity services in Alindao and Bangassou, following the deployment of these services in Bria at the end of March.

- The ETC team is currently in Alindao to set up Internet connectivity services at Cordaid, the organisation hosting the services. ETC Internet services will be available to the entire humanitarian community and will be extended to Action Contre la Faim (ACF) offices.
 - The deployment in Bangassou has been delayed as the premises of the hosting agency, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), are not ready. Once the IOM office is set up, the ETC will deploy the services.
- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) closed its office in Zemio at the end of June. While the office used to host shared communication services for humanitarians visiting the location, ETC confirmed there was no more requirements for common ICT services in Zemio.
- While the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) discussed the possible implementation of Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) in CAR, the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and the World Food Programme (WFP), in its capacity of ETC lead, engaged the TESS (Telecoms Security Standards) team recently established. Following the initial discussion, this project is on hold to allow humanitarian organisations to further discuss the best security communications solution(s) to link Bangui with remote locations – whether by using DMR or any other technology.
 - **Note:** TESS was originally initiated by the Global ETC network and the IASMN TAG (Interagency Security Management Network Technical Advisory Group). It is a collaborative effort gathering ICT and security specialists from UN agencies, NGOs and the private sector. The project is facilitated by the World Food Programme (WFP) through Peter Casier, TESS Senior Programme Manager. The ultimate goal of the TESS project is to design and implement the formal UN security telecommunications standards.
 - The DMR project funding has already started through the cost sharing contribution from UN agencies - \$200,000 has been received out of \$500,000 budgeted.
- The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) announced that an envelope of Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) funds for underfunded projects will be allocated to CAR.
 - The ETC shared with OCHA its requirements for extra funding to extend the provision of Internet connectivity services in Bria, Alindao and Bangassou as well as to conduct a needs assessment and possibly deploy communications services in Berberati.
 - The humanitarian community has requested investigation into supporting its operations in Berberati as there is no GSM coverage in that area.
- The ETC provides shared internet connectivity services to the response community in 9x sites across the country: Bangui, Bambari, Paoua and Bouar hosted by the World Food Programme (WFP); Kaga-Bandoro and Bossangoa hosted by UN Children's Fund (UNICEF); N'Dele hosted by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM); Bria hosted by the International Medical Corps (IMC) and OCHA; and Alindao hosted by Cordaid.



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- ETC security telecommunications services are managed by the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) in all sites.

Planned Response

- The deployment in Bangassou has been delayed as the premises of the hosting agency, IOM, are not ready. The ETC plans to deploy Internet connectivity services in Bangassou at the end of August, if situation allows.
- The ETC is working on establishing security telecommunications procedures for United Nations (UN) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) as well as preparing a training course on security telecommunications for the wider humanitarian community which will be delivered in September and October.

Challenges

- The security situation in the country remains a challenge for all humanitarians, including the ETC.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on 5 September.

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
Alindao	Cordaid compound	WFP, Cordaid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment mission 		Humanitarian community
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 OCHA OXFAM	UNDSS	<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



ETC CAR Dashboard: <https://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-car-dashboard-august-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)