

Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C.) – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #1

Reporting period 20/11/17 to 05/12/17

As the global lead of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), the World Food Programme (WFP) is convening the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETC) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, responding with government, the private sector and humanitarian partners on the ground to ensure a coordinated response. ETC SitReps are issued every 2 weeks approximately.

Highlights

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) was activated on 20 November 2017 under the leadership of the World Food Program (WFP) to provide shared Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services in the Kasai, Tanganyika and South Kivu regions.
- The ETC conducted an initial ICT assessment, which stresses the urgent need in Kasai for security telecommunications and Internet connectivity for humanitarian staff conducting activities outside of urban areas.
- An estimated USD\$1.4 million is required to enable the ETC to provide coordination, information management and delivery of shared ICT services for 6 months for the common operational areas identified.



Enrica Porcari, WFP CIO and Chair of the global ETC (middle), ETC Coordinator, Ivan Thomas (right), and RICTO Catherine Boyle (left), visited Kasai region following the ETC activation in D.R.C.
Photo: James Masudi/WFP.

Situation Overview

Since April 2016, the conflict in the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C.) has been escalating, causing widespread displacements and the loss of livelihoods. An estimated 3.2 million people are severely food insecure in the Kasai region and 762,000 people are internally displaced. Due to the conflict in Kasai, 33,500 people have fled to neighboring Angola and Zambia as refugees, and an estimated 2 million people are internally displaced in the Kivus and Tanganyika regions.

As the global lead of the ETC, the WFP is coordinating the ETC in D.R.C. to provide vital common ICT services including reliable security telecommunications and Internet connectivity.



ETC Response

- The ETC was activated on 20 November 2017 under the global leadership of WFP to provide shared ICT services in the Kasai, Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces.
- The ETC has deployed a dedicated ETC Coordinator to establish vital common ICT services including reliable security communications and data connectivity in 5x common operational areas for an initial 6-month period.
 - The current 5x priority locations for ICT services identified by the humanitarian community and local ICT working group are Kananga, Tshikapa, Mbuji-Mayi (in Kasai region), Kalemie (in Tanganyika region) and Uvira (in South Kivu region).
- The ETC conducted an initial ICT assessment in Kasai, which stresses the urgent need for security telecommunications and Internet connectivity for humanitarian staff conducting activities outside of urban areas.
 - Needs assessments in South Kivu and Tanganyika will be conducted within the following weeks.
- The ETC has installed radio rooms in Kananga, Mbuji-Mayi and Tshikapa which will be managed by the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

Planned Response

- Following its activation, the ETC is planning to establish common ICT services for all humanitarian organizations operating in Kasai, South Kivu, and Tanganyika where gaps are identified.
- The initial focus of the ETC will be to deploy security telecommunications services for humanitarian staff conducting activities outside of urban areas.
- The ETC is planning on deploying stand-by partners and utilizing in-kind contributions such as connectivity equipment and staffing.
- The ETC will work with local Internet service providers (ISPs) and partners to identify the best long term solution should services be required longer than the initial 6 months. The ETC will also look at building local capacity to support longer term efforts.
- The ETC is planning to assess community needs and different ways of enabling two-way communications with communities.
- The ETC is leveraging its expertise to explore the potential of deploying an Iridium Push-to-Talk (PTT) solution to provide secure communications for staff. The Iridium PTT solution would provide a dynamic, cost-effective and sustainable solution, which could be integrated into existing Communication Centers (COMCEN).

Challenges

- No funding has yet been received for ETC activities in D.R.C. The ETC is continuing to work on obtaining the necessary funds to cover its operations in Kasai, Tanganyika, and South Kivu.



- Road access to various locations has been challenging as the ETC team conducts ICT needs assessments.

Funding

- An estimated USD\$1.4 million is required to enable the ETC to provide coordination, information management and delivery of shared ICT services for 6 months in the common operational areas identified.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC teleconference is scheduled for 20 December.
- The next IT Task Force is scheduled for 11 December.

Information

- ETC D.R.C. information can be found at <https://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/democratic-republic-congo-drc-complex-emergencys>.

Key ETC Contacts

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Acronyms

COMCEN	Communications Centre
DMR	Digital Mobile Radio
D.R.C.	Democratic Republic of Congo
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IHP	International Humanitarian Partnership
IT	Information Technology
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISP	Internet Service Providers
LGA	Local Government Area
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PTT	Push-to-talk
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
VHF	Very High Frequency
WFP	UN World Food Programme

The ETC is a global network of organizations that work together to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies



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

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