

Iraq - Conflict

ETC Situation Report #30

Reporting period 11/03/2016 to 21/04/2016

These Situation Reports are distributed monthly. The next report will be issued on or around 19/05/16.

Highlights

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) continues to provide services to the humanitarian community in five sites across the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).
- The ETC has completed the scope of work for a project to extend Internet services to refugees in two centres, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Youth Centre and International Rescue Committee (IRC) Library, in Domiz camp, Dohuk. This will be carried out in three stages.
- The ETC has secured the necessary funding to ensure the provision of ETC services and staff in Iraq until the end of the year.
- The contingency plan for the potential breach of Mosul Dam is being finalised and will be distributed to partners.

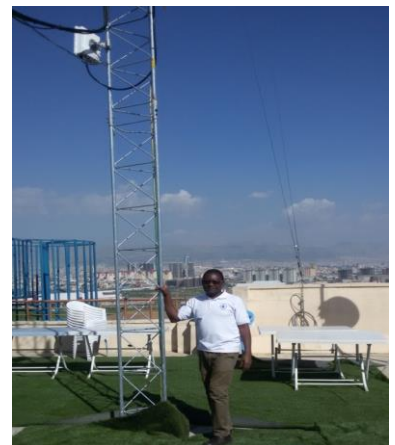
Situation Overview

Over the last month, the ETC team in Iraq has been focusing on a project to extend its Internet connectivity services refugees in Domiz camp. The project will be carried out in three stages, starting in May, and will see Internet services being provided in two centres within the camp.

This expansion of connectivity services to affected populations is part of the ETC strategy to ensure that, by 2020, all those responding to humanitarian emergencies have access to communications. The plan has been fully embraced by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and all ETC partners on the ground.

Response

- The ETC team continues to upgrade all code plugs and reprogramme radios in line with UNAMI's upgraded telecommunications infrastructure.
- 2x radio operators have been hired for the Dohuk Communications Centre (COMCEN) bringing the total to 5x operators in that site.



WFP's Michael Ngisiro configuring the microwave link, Arbat camp.

Photo credit: WFP Iraq

- The ETC submitted a contingency plan to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to explain how the ETC would respond in case of new sites or escalation of the current emergency. The main preparation activity will be to pre-stock equipment in Erbil for two new sites.
- With equipment from ETC member, Ericsson Response, shared Internet connectivity services continue to be provided at Arbat camp and Domiz camp.
 - 2x Ericsson Response WIDER kits, for the distribution and management of internet connectivity, are installed in both camps.
- Security telecommunications services (radio) are provided at three sites: the United Nations (UN) compound in Erbil, the WFP office in Dohuk and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Sulaymaniyah.

Planned Response

- The ETC is planning to conduct an assessment in a new area in the province of Anbar, particularly in Ramadi, as humanitarian organisations are planning to start their activities in this area.
- A data expert from World Food Programme (WFP) Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST) will travel to Iraq in the next month to support the project to provide Internet connectivity to refugees in Domiz camp.
- A second FITTEST expert will arrive in Iraq to support ETC security telecommunications infrastructure and work closely with United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). Together with the ETC Coordinator, he will also kick start the Local ETC Working Group meetings to further boost coordination efforts on the ground.
- A FITTEST telecommunications expert will join the team in the last week of April to focus on security telecommunications. To further improve coordination, he will also work on re-establishing the Local ETC Working Group and will manage those meetings.
- The team is working with FITTEST Training Services in Dubai to deliver a bespoke Let's Net-style training course to WFP and UNHCR staff in Dohuk as there is such huge demand. Called 'Intermediate Data Training in Iraq', participants will learn how to support existing ETC data solutions in the country. It will be held in September.

Challenges

- A main challenge is the length of time it takes to import equipment due to customs clearance processes which can take up to three weeks.
- It also takes a minimum of two weeks to deploy staff due to medical clearance procedures and the visa process which involves a trip to Amman to collect the visa.



Meetings

- The next Joint Global ETC teleconference will take place on Wednesday 18 May.
- The next Local ETC Working Group meeting will take place on Thursday 28 April in the WFP office in Erbil UN compound.

Information

- ICT responders operating on the ground in Iraq are encouraged to share their contact details with Iraq.ETC@wfp.org to facilitate local coordination.
- A dedicated information-sharing space has been created on the ETC website <https://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/iraq-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
Dohuk	Domiz camp	emergency.lu, Ericsson Response, WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet connectivity 	VSAT, WIDER	Humanitarian community
		UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security telecommunications (radio) 		Humanitarian community
	WFP sub-office	WFP, UNAMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security telecommunications Radio programming Radio training ICT helpdesk Assessments 		Humanitarian community
Sulaymaniyah	Arbat camp	emergency.lu, Ericsson Response, WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet connectivity 	VSAT, WIDER	Humanitarian community
		WFP, UNAMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security telecommunications (radio) ICT helpdesk 		Humanitarian community
	WFP sub-office	WFP, UNAMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security telecommunications (radio) Radio programming Radio training Assessments 		Humanitarian community
Erbil	WFP Country Office	WFP, UNAMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security telecommunications Radio programming Radio training Coordination ICT helpdesk Assessments 		Humanitarian community

ETC Services Map: <https://www.etcluster.org/document/iraq-etc-service-map-1>



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Acronyms

BGAN	Broadband Global Area Network – <i>portable global satellite internet network with telephony</i>
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
GSM	Global System for Mobile communications
HSA	Humanitarian Staging Area
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISP	Internet Services Provider
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OSOCC	On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal – <i>satellite equipment to provide internet connectivity</i>
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: Iraq.ETC@wfp.org



Background on the emergency:

On 7 June 2014, heavy fighting between the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Armed Opposition Groups erupted in Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq. The violence resulted in numerous casualties and the takeover of the entire city by Armed Opposition Groups, including government buildings, Mosul International Airport, and all police and military bases. Tikrit was seized on 11 June by the Armed Opposition Groups. An estimated 500,000 Iraqis had been displaced in northern Iraq within the first week. With violence and conflict raging across much of Iraq, the humanitarian situation continues to worsen. Relief organisations are deploying emergency response teams and mobilizing resources to meet the urgent needs of the affected people.

WFP is leading ETC activities in Iraq in collaboration with UNAMI.

Sources: IOM, Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)