MINUTES

ETC Plenary Meeting

26 – 27 April, 2015

Dubai, UAE

DAY 1

1. ETC Members only session: Welcome and review and adoption of agenda

Discussion Summary	• The Chair of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), Jakob Kern, welcomed everyone to the ETC Plenary Meeting. • The Chair presented the proposed agenda, revised to include a Global ETC Teleconference call on Nepal, which was adopted by all members.
Action Items/ Decisions	• Agenda adopted
Reference	• ETC Plenary Meeting April 2015 - Agenda

2. ETC Members only session: New membership application

Discussion Summary	• The Chair welcomed new member Oxfam GB (which became a member at the September 2014 meeting) and presented the membership application from Global VSAT Forum (GVF). The ETC members endorsed GVF's membership. GVF has been an ETC observer since October 2013 and an active participant to ETC activities and operations. GVF is a non-profit international association, whose membership represents every sector of the satellite industry, including fixed and mobile satellite operators, network operators, teleports, satellite earth station manufacturers, system integrators, value added and enhanced service providers, telecom carriers, consultants, law firms and users.
Action Items/ Decisions	• ETC members endorsed GVF application and GVF became a member of the ETC
Reference	• GVF membership application

3. Welcome to all

Discussion Summary	**Welcome from IHC** • Shaima Al Zarooni, CEO of the International Humanitarian City, welcomed all participants to Dubai, U.A.E. She spoke about the many concurrent emergencies at present, highlighting the recent earthquake in Nepal, and the increasing demands on humanitarian responders globally, as well as the role the International Humanitarian City and Government of UAE plays in supporting emergency operations. She

The ETC provides timely, predictable and effective Information Communications Technology services to support the humanitarian community in carrying-out their work efficiently, effectively and safely.

referenced the importance of connectivity in emergencies and wished the team luck for the coming two days.

Welcome from the ETC Chair

- The ETC Chair welcomed all participants. He thanked International Humanitarian City (IHC) and UAE Government for hosting the event and Yahsat and Thuraya for their sponsorship of the Humanitarian ICT week.
- The Chair welcomed standing invitees and observers:
    - Najat Abdulrahman, Executive Director Business Development, Yahsat
    - Steve Birnbaum, Chair, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response Programs, Global VSAT Forum
    - Joseph Burton, Counselor for Technology and Security Policy, US State Department
    - Albert Gembara, Technology Integration Officer, USAID
    - Ashraf Hamouda, Head Partnerships & Government Relations, WFP Dubai
    - Luc Hastir, Senior Communications Systems Engineer, SES, Luxembourg
    - Alan Kuresevic, Vice President, Engineering, SES, Luxembourg
    - Claudiu Mateescu, Head of Telecom sector, ICRC
    - Olly Parsons, Disaster Response, GSMA
    - Kyla Reid, Disaster Response, GSMA
    - Angela Rouse, Senior Programme Manager, CDAC Network
- The Chair requested help, support and insight from participants in finalising and progressing the ETC2020 strategy. Chair noted wide representation from various organisations, demonstrating incremental growth in interest, support and membership. He updated the plenary on the outcome of the members-only session, announcing GVF's acceptance into membership.
  The Chair referenced the many emergencies since the last plenary and thanked all partners and members who, with both resources and capacity, helped and supported the ETC on the ground, particularly for the Ebola Response.

Reference	• ETC Plenary Meeting April 2015 – Agenda • International Humanitarian City (IHC), Dubai: http://www.ihc.ae/

4. Global ETC Support Cell update

Discussion Summary	• Caroline Teyssier, Global ETC Cell, provided an update on action points from the last Plenary meeting: • Update on UN ICT Reference group: This group is now a standing task team under the UNDG Business Operations Working Group. The annual meeting held in March 2015 focused on the necessity to provide cloud services to one-UN offices with UNICC identified as a key partner in delivering services. Unified communication was specified as a priority, and was escalated to the ICT network level looking after UN standardisation. • Update on operational recommendations: at the ETC Plenary Meeting in March 2014, participants made recommendations on ETC operations. It was confirmed that all recommendations are either being already addressed or will be through the ETC 2020 strategy implementation. Specific updates:

- Leadership continuity, local capacity building and sustainability: the ETC is now systematically including exit strategy at the beginning of projects and ensuring proper hand-over is done during staff rotations. The cluster is aiming for minimum 3 month deployments for sudden onsets, especially for second wave staff. For long operations, a dedicated coordinator is in place. Training for at local level has increased (eg. Syria and South Sudan delivered Intro ITEMT and radio training for partners in 2014). Training will be a key component in ETC 2020 implementation.
- Customs and licensing strategy: the cluster is engaging with ITU to get information on customs and regulations, to facilitate the approach for humanitarians. ETC 2020 implementation will also promote the Tampere Convention and work closely with governments to map local regulatory environments as part of country profiles.
- Sharing information: the ETC recognises the need to increase cluster awareness and is addressing this through its NGO engagement strategy and as part of ETC 2020. This is both to manage expectations around available services and to attract partners. A joint communications team concept paper is being presented today.
- Data security: the cluster will work to improve the security of connectivity solutions in the field, ensuring data is not exposed.
- Security communications: Even with mobile phone services increasing, security communications remains a recommended service to support safety and security of humanitarian staff in common operational areas. It is also still a UN MOSS compliancy requirement in some countries. The ETC will continue working to support these needs.
- Improved connectivity solutions: As part of service improvements in line with ETC 2020, the cluster will continue to work with partners to improve connectivity solutions deployed in emergencies.

- Update on the ETC Assessment and Reporting Tool: the solution is being implemented and under development thanks to emergency.lu in partnership with WFP. After intensive review of existing solutions, an online survey form has been developed and will be soon available (planned for June 2015). In addition, the team is working on the user/role survey editor. The final solution will be compatible with Kobo standard and at first, will be rolled out on Android application.

- Eric Kiruhura, Global ETC Cell, provided an update on the ETC NGO engagement strategy: NGOs have continued to play active roles in the cluster's initiatives and operations, as demonstrated by participation in ETC 2020 and operations in C.A.R., West Africa Ebola and Vanuatu. Standby partnership with NetHope is signed, expected to ease deployability of resources in support of ETC operations. There is ongoing effort to put together an NGO roster to support ETC operations, prioritising NGO Coordinator profile and more NGOs are showing interest in joining the cluster's global membership.

- Mariko Hall, Global ETC Cell, presented the concept for ETC Joint Communication Team: There is a need to increase recognition and understanding

	of the ETC; to ensure coordinated communications; support visibility of ETC2020. The working group to be set up is seeking specialist skills in GIS, IM, mapping, media, communications and photo/story resource gathering. Participants welcomed the initiative and expressed that written guidance, resources and an 'elevator pitch' would be helpful.
Action Items/ Decisions	• ETC cell to provide more information on the joint communications team • Agencies encouraged to nominate representatives from their organisations to join the team
Reference	• Follow up on action points – presentation • ETC NGO strategy update – presentation • ETC NGO-Engagement Implementation Plan 2014-2016 • Concept Note - ETC Joint Communication Team

5. ETC website – soft launch

Discussion Summary	• Caroline Teyssier, Global ETC cell, presented the new ETC website. Website was welcomed by members with positive feedback provided. • The new website will be mobile-friendly and be open to the public with few sensitive information only accessible when logged in. • The ETC Assessment and Reporting Tool (ART) is planned to be integrated in future development as well as some more interactive content such as maps.
Reference	• ETC new website soon available at www.ETCluster.org

6. ETC2020 envisioning process

Discussion Summary	Eric Kiruhura, Global ETC Cell, presented the journey and process of envisioning ETC2020, recapping the achievements so far. He then introduced the next sessions, inviting workstream facilitators to present their processes and outcomes.
Reference	• Presentation: ETC2020 Envisioning Process

7. Workstream presentation: Services to affected populations

Discussion Summary	Mark Banbury, Plan International, presented the workstream process and outcomes for 'services to affected populations' (see presentation for specifics). Key discussion points were: • When assessments are being done, capturing communities' communications needs, and available modes of communication, is vital. • Alignment will be needed with other clusters around CwC programmes; ETC will need better understanding of services by sector (e.g. WASH). • The role of the ETC will primarily be 'brokerage', partnership and advocacy, enabling others to deliver services, but committing to provide services, within agreed parameters, as provider of last resort. • Clarification sought on limits to the number and types of services the ETC can facilitate or provide. There is a need to recognise and define 'need to have' versus 'nice to have' when it comes to CwC; assessments will show what is really needed. • There is a need to incorporate safe power solutions for infrastructure and services.

Reference	• Presentation – Services to Affected Populations • ETC 2020 Work Streams Outcomes v1.0

8. Workstream presentation: Services to the humanitarian community

Discussion Summary	Isaac Kwamy, WVI, and Gisli Olafsson, NetHope, presented the workstream process and outcomes for 'services to the humanitarian community' (see presentation for specifics). Key discussion points were: • The term 'response community' includes the current humanitarian community and other non-traditional actors. • Services to the response community could be endless. The ETC should prioritise and focus on coordination – how communications can best support a coordinated aid effort, rather than organisational projects in silos. • Power/electricity remains vital. • Proposed changes require vastly improved capacity. This needs to be clearly mapped as part of the 2020 implementation plan, including funding for capacity building. • Feasibility of an innovation team and digital innovation projects was discussed. There was recognition that innovation within the ETC is key – not just during preparedness phase, but also during emergency operations. There is a need for a managed innovation environment to ensure solutions and services are interoperable and practical for field deployment. Innovation need to be documented and knowledge shared. Resource constraints were however noted and will be addressed in implementation planning.
Reference	• Presentation – Services to Humanitarian Community • ETC 2020 Work Streams Outcomes v1.0

9. Workstream presentation: Enhanced connectivity

Discussion Summary	Brent Carbno, Ericsson Response, presented the workstream process and outcomes for 'enhanced connectivity' (see presentation for specifics). Key discussion points were: • Recognition that there are many new actors in this space and there will be many more. • ETC needs to be more intentional about the security of the networks it provides. • Power for technology was raised again – and a recognition that the ETC should provide power to the technology solutions and services it deploys. Powering entire responses is not within the ETC remit. • We will need more partners for alternative energy solutions. Mostly we are still using diesel generators. Existing power supply is often not used properly – and better electrical power management strategies would be a quick win. Our advocacy should also include requirements for energy/power. • Improved capacity, for enhanced connectivity, will be needed across the ETC to ensure implementation, both within the cell and the network. • Connectivity provided should have consideration for requirements for other humanitarian services (tracking, etc). • Connectivity for governments and technology capacity building will be a significant shift in approach. • Need to include infrastructure for digital aid.

Reference	• Presentation – Enhanced Connectivity • ETC 2020 Work Streams Outcomes v1.0

DAY 2

10. Workstream presentation: Response readiness

Discussion Summary	Marianne Donven, Luxembourg, Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, presented the workstream process and outcomes for 'response readiness' (see presentation for specifics). Key discussion points were: • 9 L3s, 6 concurrent, is tripling our current capacity but was considered reasonable, taking into account the existing reality of number of emergencies, and future trends projecting more emergencies. • Clarified '24 hour' proposition to mean initiating response 24 hours after an official request. • Call for breakthrough ideas on funding. Recognition that most work proposed is building on available staff and systems but this has its limits. Money will be needed for additional training and activities. • Do we just work on an element of trust for a roster system? Is there a mechanism to prevent staff poaching? • ETC Support Cell will need to be reinforced and/or restructured according to new response parameters. • Proposal for a dedicated working group on training.
Reference	• Presentation – Response Readiness • ETC 2020 Work Streams Outcomes v1.0

11. Workstream presentation: Working with Governments to build resilience

Discussion Summary	Joseph Burton, U.S. Department of State, presented the workstream process and outcomes for 'working with Governments to build resilience' (see presentation for specifics). Key discussion points were: • Need for an ETC 'elevator pitch' (also reflected across several workstreams) will be important for implementation of resilience strategy. • Working group will be needed to focus on resilience. • Knowledge management is key to resilience. It will be a huge undertaking that will take significant funding. • Is there a case for communication as DRR? This may need to be clarified and discussed during implementation planning. • We should prioritise training with governments, initially, regarding ways to work with ETC and improve their responses, as a practical step or a 'quick win'.
Reference	• Presentation – Working with Governments to Build Resilience • ETC 2020 Work Streams Outcomes v1.0

12. Workstream presentation: Partnerships

Discussion Summary	Frank Schott, NetHope, presented the workstream process and outcomes for 'partnerships' (see presentation for specifics). Key discussion points were: • Clarity is required to differentiate between members and partners. • Partners – particularly if from a broad base – have knowledge that NGOs/humanitarian agencies would never get on their own. We must harness this. • A more diverse stakeholder network is essential. • The ETC needs to invest in partnership outreach, satisfaction and troubleshooting. • We need geographic diversity in partnerships and should be intentional about this. • Inclusion of CwC/community engagement highlights the need for local representation in partnerships. • More is not necessarily better – we might need to identify 5 or 6 key partners – tripling in size is not an indicator of success. • Partners/business community are often keen to assist but don't necessarily understand what we need – we need to get better at communicating clear needs and ways to engage. Partners should be matched properly with needs. • We need to be savvy and agile with partnerships. Long term commitments might not apply to all partners, so there should be openness to explore short term partnerships e.g. at project level.
Reference	• Presentation – Partnerships • ETC 2020 Work Streams Outcomes v1.0

13. ETC2020 Strategy presentation

Discussion Summary	• Meg Sattler, Global ETC Cell, presented the draft ETC 2020 strategy.
	• Summary of discussions following strategy presentation:
	  - In general the strategy is clear.
	  - Clarification on affected populations being "at the centre" of the strategy: affected populations have always been at the heart of ETC because the ETC exists to facilitate effective humanitarian assistance. The ETC needs to progressively improve the way we work to enable us to do this better. This does not mean that all of our work will now be about providing services to affected populations.
	  - Suggestion and agreement for wording change of "responding within 24 hours" to "initiate response within 24 hours of official request".
	  - Recognition that including 20 high risk countries for resilience work might be too ambitious to achieve within 5 years, considering the funding requirements. Suggestion and agreement to remove the target of 20 and just focus on 'key high risk countries".
	  - Wording change for communications as aid section to capture communication "with and among" affected communities.
	  - Clarity was requested on joint capacity to reach targets by 2020, and whether we are looking at deliverables for 2020 or aspirations. Agreement that minimum deliverables will be key if we are to be accountable to the objectives. Need indicators to measure our progress in the implementation stage.
	• The ETC Chair opened the floor for any objections or suggestions for final changes. No further changes were requested.

Action Items/ Decisions	• Chair requested agreed changes to draft strategy document updated before adoption and shared with members over lunch.
References	• ETC 2020 Strategy DRAFT v0.7 • ETC 2020 presentation

14. Strategy validation and adoption

Discussion Summary	• Jakob Kern, Chair of ETC, showed the revised version and asked for final feedback. • Additional request to change wording in vision statement was declined as the vision had been adopted by official process in the September 2014 plenary meeting, and no objections has been raised at earlier session. • Decision was made to separate 'flagship projects' into annex, so that it could be refined independently of strategy adoption. • Strategy was unanimously adopted by the plenary.
Action Items/ Decisions	• ETC2020 strategy officially adopted with full endorsement of the ETC
References	• ETC 2020 Strategy v1.0

15. Strategy implementation: Next steps, high level planning and working groups

Discussion Summary	• Eric Kiruhura, Global ETC cell, outlined the process for finalisation of strategy document and the next phase – tactical/implementation planning. This included high level planning at the plenary, piloting planning during Partners Day and implementation planning in May-June 2015. • The plenary shifted into group work focussed on defining objectives, roles and responsibilities and governance of tactical working groups, as a key mechanism for strategy implementation. • Further group work on reviewing flagship projects annex was undertaken and suggested changes to be incorporated in the next strategy document revision.
Action Items/ Decisions	• Global ETC cell to consolidate the output from the tactical working groups brainstorming session and engage the ETC network on commitments and participation • Global ETC cell to share updated flagship projects annex with ETC members for feedback • ETC network to be involved in the tactical/implementation planning phase
References	• Presentation - ETC 2020 Strategy Way Forward • Group Work Output – Tactical Working Groups Brainstorming Notes

16. Meeting closure

Discussion Summary	• The Chair thanked all for participating and IHC for hosting and supporting the event. He thanked Thuraya and Yahsat for their sponsorship. He encouraged all members to begin working immediately to realise the new strategy.
Action Items/ Decisions	• UNHCR kindly proposed to host the next ETC Plenary meeting. The next ETC Plenary meeting will be held the week of 12 to 16 October in Geneva.

Acronyms

CDAC	Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities
CwC	Communication with Communities
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETC ART	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Assessment and Reporting Tool
ER	Ericsson Response
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GSMA	GSM Association
GVF	Global VSAT Forum
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IHC	International Humanitarian City
IM	Information Management
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
LUX	Directorate for Development and Cooperation, Luxembourg
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TSS	Technical Support Services
UN	United Nations
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNICC	United Nations International Computing Centre
UNICEF	United Nation Children's Fund
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

Annex: List of Participants

CDAC Network: Angela Rouse, Senior Programme Manager
Ericsson Response: Brent Carbno, Program Director
GSMA: Olly Parsons, Disaster Response; Kyla Reid, Disaster Response
Global VSAT Forum: Steve Birnbaum, Chair, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response Programs
ICRC: Claudiu Mateescu, Head of Telecom sector
IFRC: Edward Happ, Global CIO
ITU: Orhan Osmani, Emergency Telecommunications Officer
Luxembourg, Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs: Marianne Donven, Desk Action Humanitaire, Coordination; Gilles Hoffmann, Desk Action Humanitaire, Coordination
MSB: Hazme Akyol, Strategic Coordinator; Lina Eliasson, Project Manager; Cege Forsberg, ICT Officer
NetHope: Gisli Olafsson, Emergency Response Director; Frank Schott, Managing Director of Global Programs
OXFAM GB: Phil Paul, ISD Service Delivery Manager; Ian Pinnock, Service Support Manager
Plan International: Mark Banbury, Global CIO
Save the Children: Elaine Burroughs, IT Programme Manager; Mark Hawkins, Global Field Technology Manager; Moustapha Sall, Regional IT Manager WCA
SES Luxembourg: Luc Hastir, Senior Communications Systems Engineer; Alan Kuresevic, Vice President, Engineering
UNDP: Gerald Demeules, Global ICT Advisor
UN FAO: Deborah Fuxa, IT Officer for Decentralised Offices
UNHCR: Doug Greene, CIO; Nizar Zeidan, ICT Emergency Coordinator
UNICEF: Runar Holen, Manager Emergency Telecoms; Hani Shannak, Chief, Operations & Services
UN OCHA: Patrick Gordon, Senior Adviser, Technology Partnerships; Alexandra Sicotte-Levesque, Global Coordinator, Communications with Communities
UN WFP: Alpha Bah, Chief, IT Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch; Karen Barsamian, Head of FITTEST Operations; Ashraf Hamouda, Head Partnerships & Government Relations
UN WHO: Marc Touitou, CIO / Global IT Director
USAID: Albert Gembara, Technology Integration Officer
US Department of State: Joseph Burton, Counselor for Technology and Security Policy
World Vision International: Isaac Kwamy, Head of Humanitarian Information Systems & Emergency Telecommunications,
Yahsat: Najat Abdulrahman, Executive Director Business Development

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Cell: Jakob Kern, Chair; Antoine Bertout, Projects Management Officer; Mariko Hall, Cluster Communication Officer; Eric Kiruhura, Global NGO-Engagement Manager; Meg Sattler, Communication with Communities Officer; Caroline Teyssier, Global ETC Coordinator