

Ukraine, conflict

Global ETC Teleconference #18

Date: 02/03/2023 Time: 14:00 UTC

Further information related to the ETC Ukraine operation can be found on the website:

www.etcluster.org/emergency/ukraine-conflict

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact:

Ukraine.ETC@wfp.org

Attendance

Chair (ETC) **Komi Amedjonekou**

Cisco Matt Runyan

GSMA Bryce David Hartley

World Vision Dragan Rajevic

OCHA Predrag Milicevic

Andrew Linehan

WFP Leopold Happy
Mohamedoua Ndiath

Ahmad Al-Mehdi

Aramais Alojants

Roman Aptykaiev

Angel Buitrago

Adi Dzanovic

Agenda

1. ETC Ukraine update
2. Partner updates
3. AOB

Minutes

1. ETC Ukraine update

Security communications

- The Remote Security Operations Centre (RSOC) has been deployed in Ukraine, connecting the three VHF networks established in Dnipro, Odesa, and Kyiv to the UNDSS Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Mukachevo via satellite internet communication (Starlink and BGAN). UNDSS SOC in Mukachevo are not able to monitor and communicate with UN staff via VHF network.
- Lviv will also be connected via the RSOC system once the VHF network is established there. The location for the installation of the repeater is yet to be decided, pending final discussions with the Broadcast and Radio Telecommunications (BRT) tower operators in Lviv.
- The team is planning an expansion of the VHF coverage to other areas in the front-lines where humanitarian operations are currently ongoing. In these locations, only voice communication via GSM exists in very few areas, and there have been recent reports of Iridium satellite phone services being jammed.
- As a result of the need to expand the VHF network, the team is requesting a VHF license for the planned expansion on areas where UN have presence and in areas close to the frontline where humanitarian convoys to deliver aids are recurrent.
- The ETC is seeking collocation arrangements with the BRT tower operators in Ukraine in an attempt to improve and optimize VHF signals in the locations where VHF networks have already been installed. This arrangement is also very important for the close front-line locations where tall buildings are not available.
- The team is also planning VHF installations in other locations outside of the front-lines with UN staff presence.

Data connectivity

- The ETC is continuing to provide secure connectivity services at the inter-agency workspaces in Dnipro and Odesa.
- The ETC has not identified any need for the expansion of data connectivity beyond these locations. The ETC is reinforcing its connectivity with Starlink satellite services as a back-up. Five out of the 10 Starlink VSAT terminals that the ETC has in stock in Ukraine have been installed to provide a back-up for ETC connectivity services and the RSOC system.
- The ETC, with the support of its partner Cisco, reviewed the authentication rule for the users at the Odesa UN Common hub to address the issue of redundant authentication with permanent users.

Services for Communities

- In cooperation with Clear Global, the organization providing translation and content revision for the ETC Chatbot, the ETC organized a 'plain language' training for members of the Accountability to Affected Populations Working Group and other interagency staff. The two-day training provided practical materials and resources to assist staff in communicating clearly with the affected population in the Ukrainian language. 38 participants from UN agencies and NGOs were selected out of 240 applications received to participate in the training, which was held on 16 and 21 February. Feedback provided by participants in the post-training survey indicated that the large majority found that the training was useful and relevant to their work.
- Clear Global is also working on implementing changes to improve the performance of the ETC Chatbot, (known in Ukraine as vBezpetsi, meaning safe spaces). The changes, which are based on the recommendations from ETC Chatbot experts, will include the use of plain language for Chatbot content among other improvements. These changes are expected to be completed by 31 March.
- ETC is planning a CFM project for the Ternopil Oblast Administration, to be based in Ternopil, in western Ukraine, and to be managed by a local NGO. The call centre will serve six oblasts in western Ukraine where several displaced persons are residing. This project and its budget have been approved by the WFP Management in Ukraine.

The next teleconference will be held on 06 April 2023 at 13:00 UTC

13:00 UTC
15:00 Rome/Cairo
16:00 Kyiv
17:00 Dubai

Acronyms

SOC	Security I Operations Centre
RSOC	Remote Security Operations Centre
VHF	Very High Frequency
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
UN	United Nations
CFM	Complain Feedback Mechanism
BRT	Broadcasting Radio and Television Concern
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications

Minutes: Kehinde Adewara, ETC Information Management Officer