



Emergency Telecommunications Cluster in 2015

Year in Review

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*In humanitarian emergencies, communications means
information, connection, life.*

Communications is the Link to Survival.

Foreword

2015 was a year of transformation for the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC). The adoption of the ETC2020 Strategy in the first half of the year, radically expanding the vision, scope and approach of the cluster, set the network on a much more impactful, but challenging, trajectory. 2015 was characterised by the adoption and commenced implementation of ETC2020 as well as the most concurrent emergencies ever responded to; and the invaluable contributions of its members and partners without which, the ETC would not exist.

In addition to operations in Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan, Syria and West Africa inherited from 2014, conflict raging in Yemen, Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu and the earthquakes in Nepal added additional connectivity demands on the already stretched cluster's capacity. In all, the ETC responded to an unprecedented eight concurrent emergencies.

Across these operations, the ETC experienced a number of 'firsts', indicative of the evolving emergency landscape and which would influence the new strategy. Seeing that the community needing connectivity to respond to Ebola in West Africa was not 'just' humanitarians, the ETC expanded its scope, providing services to humanitarian, healthcare and government responders at 80+ facilities across the three affected countries. Responding at the direct request of the government in Vanuatu, the ETC was "embedded" in the Office of the Chief Information Officer, working directly with the National Disaster Management Office. In Nepal, ETC preparedness efforts had established a solid network of humanitarian, private sector and government entities which allowed a faster and more effective response after the quake.

The rapidly evolving humanitarian and technology environments shape the way the ETC responds.

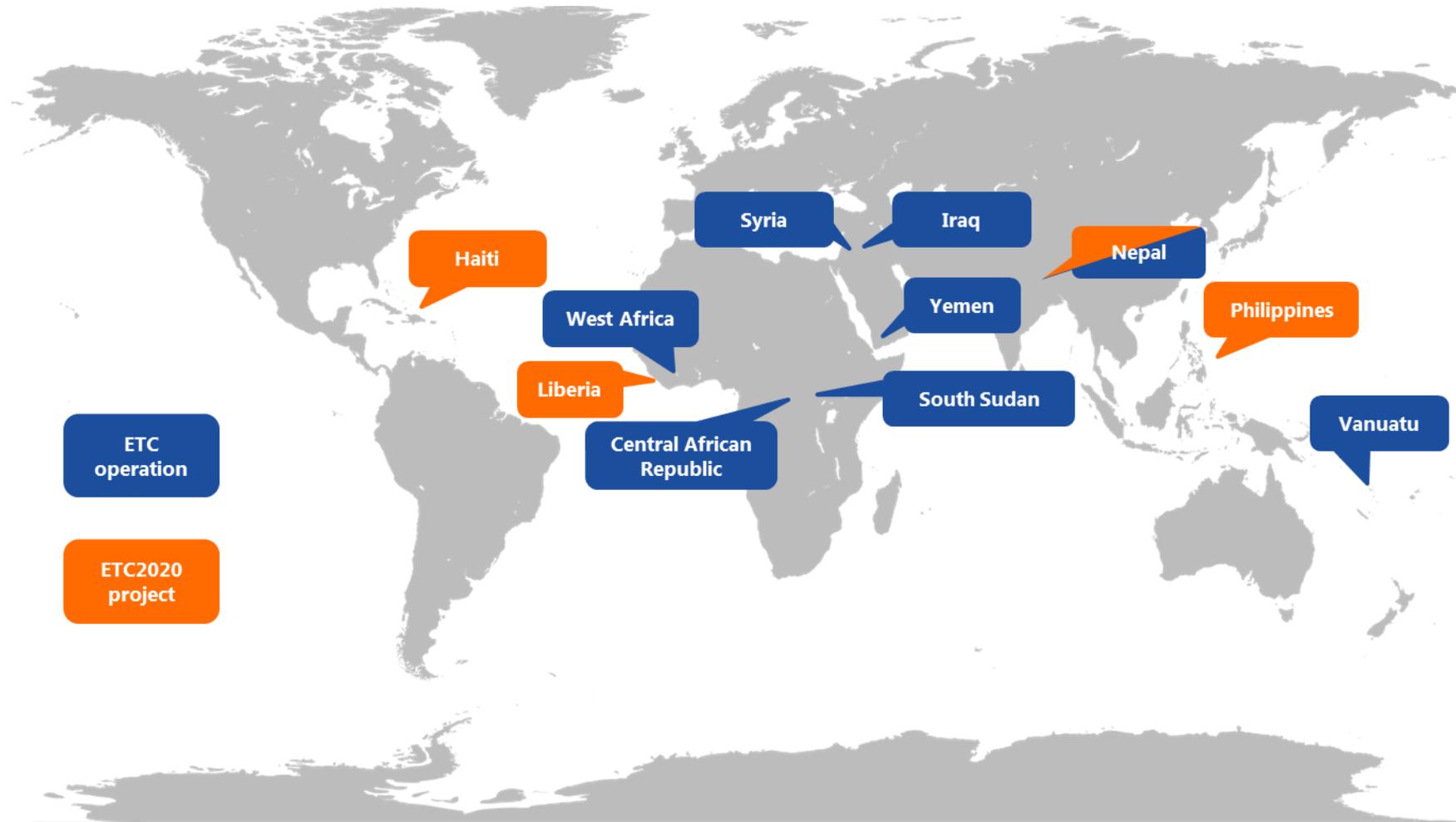
April 2015 was the turning point. Developed in close collaboration with over 40 organisations, the ambitious ETC2020 strategy builds upon the cluster's years of experience, its expertise and its network of dedicated partners. Through ETC2020, for the first time, the ETC is engaging in Communications with Communities (CwC), leveraging its network of partners and expertise to provide disaster-affected people with the ability to communicate. In recognition of communities' role in first response, ETC2020 activities seek to improve and decentralise preparedness activities. Connectivity and energy solutions will be enhanced as the ETC will continue to deliver its current mandate of providing timely, predictable, and effective emergency communications services to the humanitarian community.

Achieving the ETC2020 vision will take strong engagement with an expanded and more connected network, from leading edge Information Technology (IT) companies and local telecommunications providers, to humanitarians, governments and affected communities. Partnership and collaboration are key to successful functioning of the ETC.

2015 was a year of change for the ETC, but in many ways it was not unique. More emergencies, across wider areas and affecting more people has become the new norm and one for which the entire response community must prepare.

While continuing to provide connectivity services to the response community, the ETC objective is very different now to what it was 12 months ago. And in just four years from now, through working with governments to build resilience, decentralising response readiness and strengthening the capacity of affected people to respond, the ETC will ensure that all those responding to humanitarian emergencies have access to vital communications services and digital aid.

Figure 1 ETC operations and ETC2020 projects in 2015



Snapshot of 2015

Responded to **8 concurrent Emergencies**

Internet Connectivity services provided to over **9,200 humanitarians**

51 Stand-by Partners deployed valued at **US\$2.1million**

ETC2020 strategy adopted

Humanitarian Connectivity Charter & Crisis Connectivity Charter launched

GVF became **newest ETC member**

Stand-by partnership established with **NetHope**

New website, www.ETCluster.org, launched

4 large-scale **training** courses conducted for **64 participants** from **17 organisations**

55% funding requests covered, comparing to 60% average for all clusters¹

87% of **users satisfied** with ETC services²

¹ Based on FTS for all clusters for the following operations: C.A.R., Nepal, Vanuatu, Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, and Iraq.

² Based on 309 responses to 6 surveys in: Nepal (May and September), C.A.R., Syria, Iraq and South Sudan – the outcomes ranged between 85% and 91%.

Operations

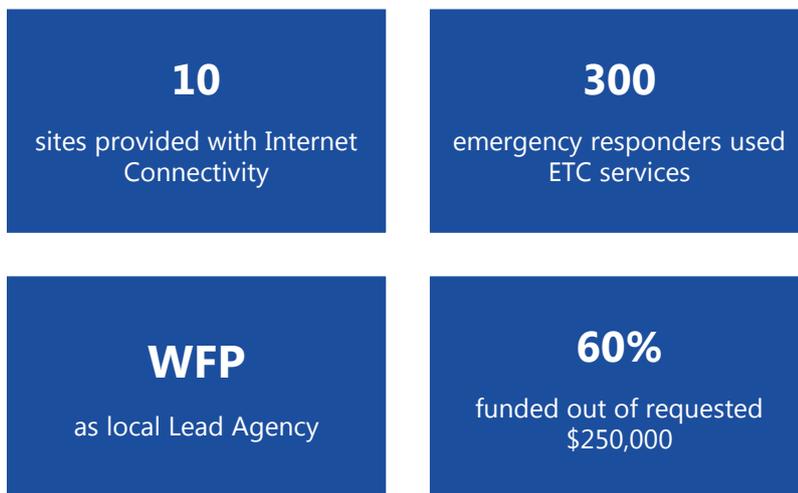
Vanuatu: Cyclone Pam

March 2015 – June 2015

Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Pam slammed into Vanuatu on 14 March 2015 with winds of up to 250 kilometres per hour, and gusts up to 350 kilometres per hour, causing widespread devastation.

With 90% of the island's infrastructure destroyed or damaged, the Government of Vanuatu requested the World Food Programme (WFP), as global lead of the ETC, to respond to the emergency. Acting as the focal point for the humanitarian community, the ETC rapidly mobilized, working closely with the National Disaster Management Office and within the Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to meet urgent communications needs and ensure an efficient and coordinated telecommunications response.

During the three-month operation, the ETC provided shared internet connectivity at ten sites across six islands to over 300 emergency responders. The ETC successfully concluded its mission in Vanuatu in June 2015.



Key partners:

Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg, NetHope and their partner, British Telecom (BT), Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF), World Food Programme (WFP).

ETC STORY SNIPPETS: The Rockstars of Vanuatu



LP Svensson and Mike Duffin from ETC member Ericsson Response work day and night to ensure the services we provide are continuous. They check the network, provide connectivity and help people – this is what they do and why they deploy. The number of requests for connectivity grows day by day and they respond. Every time.

To us, ETC, they are our trusted partners from Ericsson Response; to the people on Tanna Island in Vanuatu, they are rockstars. Mike grinned, joking that sometimes he gets tired from all the waving and autograph signing but he doesn't want to let his fans down. He clearly loves it. And with good reason. This is one of the greatest parts of the job and an aspect that isn't often talked about. But for responders on the ground, their personal interaction with those living in affected areas is a unique and special experience and one that is crystallized into memories long after the VSATs have gone.

ETC's part in the emergency response is just that – a part; a small wheel in a big machine. But in the case of Tanna, it has meant something bigger: friendship and shared stories as everybody works together to restore this island paradise.

By Suzanne Fenton, Communications Officer, IT Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch, WFP.

Nepal: Earthquake

April 2015 – October 2015

A 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal on 25 April 2015, with the epicentre located 81 km northwest of the capital, Kathmandu. Hundreds of aftershocks were reported as well as a second major earthquake, measuring 6.7 in magnitude.

With 12 of the country's 75 districts severely impacted, the Government of Nepal requested international humanitarian support. The ETC was activated on 27 April 2015 to collaborate with national authorities; provide Internet connectivity in humanitarian hubs and common operational areas; establish security communications networks; coordinate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) activities; and build capacity. WFP and the Ministry of Information & Communications co-lead the ETC in Nepal.

During the five-month operation, more than 1,550 emergency responders from over 250 organisations registered to use ETC internet connectivity services in Nepal. The ETC delivered technical training to humanitarian staff, building the capacity of national personnel and ensuring sustainability of solutions after the emergency period.

In close collaboration with the Government of Nepal, the ETC hosted an ICT Emergency Response workshop together with the Ministry of Information & Communications in Kathmandu on 18 June. With 27 stakeholders participating, the workshop represented the first step on the road to an enhanced ICT emergency response plan for Nepal.

By October 2015, local commercial providers had fully restored services and the ETC was able to demobilise from Nepal.



Key partners:

Crisis Management Centre Finland, Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg, NetHope, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), NetHope, Plan International, RedR Australia, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), UN Department of Safety & Security (UNDSS), World Food Programme (WFP).

ETC STORY SNIPPETS: Internet as a Lifeline



Their excitement was palpable. With the internet connection established by the ETC, humanitarians responding to the Nepal earthquake in Bidur would be able to meet the urgent needs of the affected community better, faster and safer.

"Internet is the basis of all our coordination," says Daniella Malave, Programme Coordinator with Samaritan's Purse in Bidur. "It's our lifeline."

In addition to the NGO Hub in Bidur, the ETC is providing shared internet services to the response community at three sites in Kathmandu, the Humanitarian Staging Area in Deurali and Humanitarian Hub in Chautara. Over 300 users from 90 different response organisations have registered to use ETC services across the country.

"This operation is very different in that the insecurity we face cannot be controlled," says Daniella. "In conflict, you can set up barriers to separate you from the threat. But here, we are all just as vulnerable. With communications we can receive real-time information about where other humanitarian actors are responding, or if there have been any aftershocks."

"Internet keeps us informed and keeps us safe."

By Mariko Hall, deployed as ETC Nepal IM Officer

Yemen: Conflict

April 2015 – ongoing



Continuing conflict, compounded by natural disaster, has exacerbated Yemen's prolonged humanitarian crisis, rendering an estimated 21.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Collapsed social infrastructure and basic services mean that millions of people have no access to healthcare, safe water and sanitation services.

Given this context, the ETC was activated in Yemen in April 2015 to provide the humanitarian community with internet connectivity, security communications and technical training.

In 2015, the ETC provided internet connectivity and basic security telecommunications to the humanitarian community in five sites: Ibb and Sa'ada, managed by UN Children's Fund (UNICEF); Aden, managed by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); Sana'a, Al Hudaydah and the inter-agency boat travelling between Aden and Djibouti, managed by WFP. Two Communications Centres (COMCEN) were installed in Sana'a and the ETC conducted radio training for over 90 humanitarian emergency responders. To reduce the impact of power cuts and fuel shortages on operations, 126 portable solar power charging stations were provided to humanitarian personnel and Communications Centres.



Key partners: Government of Luxembourg, UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)

Central African Republic: Conflict

December 2013 – ongoing



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 as well as public services further exacerbated the situation. Since then, the country has remained extremely volatile.

The ETC was re-activated in C.A.R. in December 2013 in response to the escalating crisis. Led by WFP, the ETC in C.A.R. focused on enhancing security telecommunications in Bangui and supporting the establishment of common ICT services in seven common operating areas: Kaga-Bandoro and Bossangoa, managed by UNICEF; Zemio, managed by UNHCR; N'Dele, managed by UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); and Bambari, Bangui, Bouar and Paoua, managed by WFP. 245 humanitarian personnel were provided with radio user training.

Despite limited international attention and low visibility of the protection crisis, through its network of partners the ETC is providing shared internet connectivity and radio communications services in eight sites across the country.

8
sites provided with Internet
Connectivity and Security
Communications services

WFP
as local Lead Agency

0%
funded out of requested
\$3,000,000
*ETC maintained activities in
2015 with carry-over of
\$330,624.88 from 2014 funds

Key partners: Danish Refugee Council (DRC), NetHope, OCHA, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP

Iraq: Conflict

July 2014 – ongoing

On 7 June 2014, heavy fighting between the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and 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. The conflict continued to spread with further cities seized by Armed Opposition Groups. Within the first week of fighting, an estimated 500,000 Iraqis had been displaced in northern Iraq.

The ETC in Iraq was activated in July 2014. Since then, the ETC has been providing security communications, internet connectivity, user support, and coordination services to the humanitarian community in Iraq.

In 2015, the ETC deployed new generation Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) networks across Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah. Critical for humanitarian operations, security communications networks deployed by the ETC allow personnel to communicate on a secure and independent network, owned and operated by the United Nations.

The ETC works closely with the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) utilising their security telecommunications network in Baghdad, Basra and Kirkuk. The ETC manages two COMCENs: Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah. The COMCEN in Erbil is shared with UNAMI. The ETC funded seven radio operators in the Sulaymaniyah and Dohuk Communication Centres.

Basic radio training was delivered to more than 400 humanitarian personnel, to strengthen the safety and security of staff and missions in the field. Technical training was delivered to 14 radio operators in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Dohuk.

The ETC also provided internet connectivity services for the humanitarian community in Arbat and Domiz camps.

With violence and conflict raging across much of Iraq, the humanitarian situation continued to worsen and so the ETC Iraq operation continued into 2016.



Key partners: Ericsson Response, MSB, RedR Australia, UNAMI, UNHCR

South Sudan: Conflict

August 2011 – ongoing



Following the country's independence in 2011, the ETC was activated in South Sudan with WFP as lead agency, to provide security communications, internet connectivity and coordination services to the humanitarian community. Since then, the humanitarian needs across South Sudan have continued to be immense, with the country suffering from multiple threats from conflict and inter-communal violence, to economic decline, disease, and natural disaster.

The situation in South Sudan continues to be fluid, and the ETC operation must meet the constantly changing needs. At the end of 2015, ETC South Sudan was providing shared communications services at 25 sites across the conflicted country.

The ETC remit covers provision of shared communications services in emergencies only – as soon as national commercial providers are back on-line, the ETC demobilises.

The situation in South Sudan is exceptional, however, in that the emergency is ongoing for four years, and no other reliable means of connectivity is available. Acting in its capacity as 'Provider of Last Resort', WFP has developed and implemented the *Humanitarian Internet Support Project* (HISP), a reliable, low-cost and long-term solution to meet the connectivity needs of humanitarian actors in remote and hard-to-reach locations. In 2015, HISP was finalised in four (out of five planned) provinces – Aweil (Northern Bahr el Ghazal State), Malakal (Upper Nile State), Bor (Jonglei State) and Mingkaman (Lakes state).

24

sites provided with Internet Connectivity

150

organisations using HISP at 4 sites

4

HISP sites accomplished

78%

funded out of requested \$1,536,726

WFP

as local Lead Agency

Key partners:

Department for International Development UK (DFID), Government of Luxembourg, Ericsson **Response**, UNHCR, UNICEF

ETC STORY SNIPPETS: An Invisible Service for a Tangible Mission: Saving Lives



Activated in 2011 to provide essential communication services to the humanitarian community, ETC South Sudan has since become much more than this. It has evolved into a dedicated team of ICT experts committed to providing their colleagues with the best possible frontline ICT services, including security telecommunications, internet connectivity services, renewable power, technical support and training. When every second counts, as is the case in challenging environments, reliable ICT and telecommunications services save lives.

There is a backstage to the humanitarian response, where the strings are pulled to make this complex machine work. Being a service cluster means acting behind the scenes; it means pulling these strings. You may see an ETC technician climbing a radio tower in a conflict-affected area or installing internet connectivity equipment or renewable energy solutions in remote and harsh environments – this is how the ETC operates – behind the scenes.

The ETC provides communications to save lives, balancing the needs for rapid response and long-term sustainable solutions. This is the commitment to humanitarians in South Sudan today and to the people of South Sudan today and tomorrow. To do this, the ETC is investing in services that will not simply vanish once the humanitarian response reduces or leaves South Sudan but will be our legacy long into the future. The new Humanitarian Internet Support Project (HISP) is a case in point. HISP is a reliable, low-cost and, more importantly, long-term solution to meet the internet connectivity needs of humanitarians in remote and hard-to-reach locations in the country.

The old saying goes 'Out of sight, out of mind.' Well, although ETC's dedicated work in the field may remain in the shadows this year, the results of working towards enduring change in South Sudan will allow ETC to have its moment in the sun and ensure it remains in sight and in mind.

By Sofia Grivet, ETC IM Officer in South Sudan

Syria: Conflict

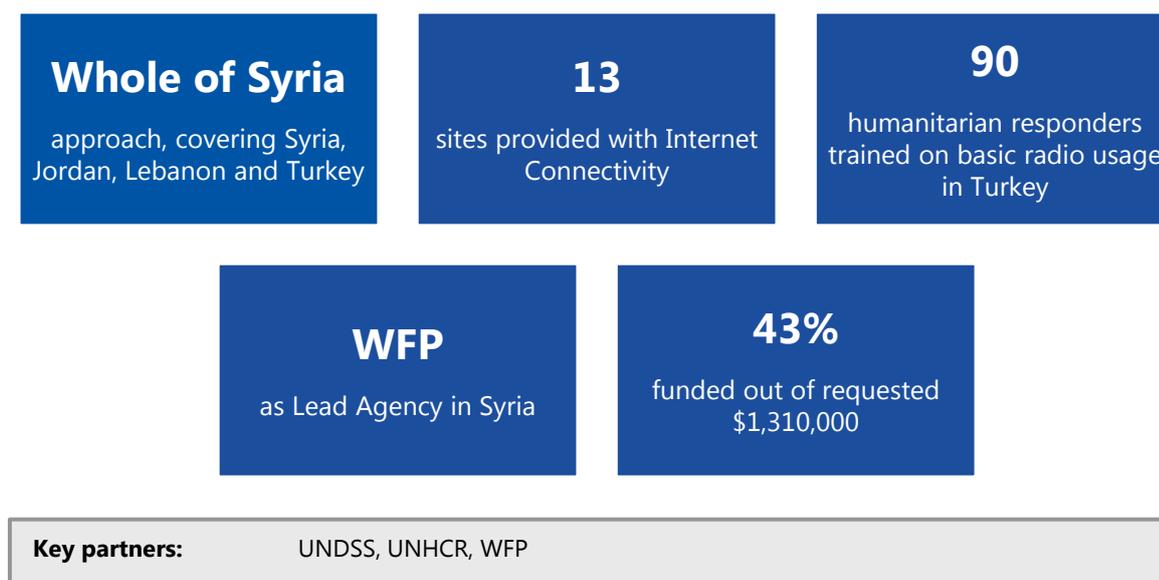
January 2013 – ongoing

The Arab Spring which swept across the Middle East in 2011 left few countries in its path unaffected. What started as civil unrest in Syria, quickly deteriorated into a violent civil war causing a large-scale humanitarian conflict. According to OCHA, by the end of 2015 a total of 6.6 million people had been displaced within Syria and 4.3 million Syrians were registered as refugees.

The ETC was activated in Syria on 14 January 2013 to provide shared security communications and internet connectivity services to support the humanitarian community. As global and local ETC lead, WFP works in collaboration with partner agencies to deliver shared services including UNHCR and UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

To facilitate a more effective, coordinated response, the ETC adopted the Whole of Syria approach in 2014, to incorporate the humanitarian operations led from the neighbouring countries of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

In 2015, WFP led ETC activities in Syria and Turkey, providing services and support to humanitarian hubs as well as coordination across the region. Given the critical refugee situation in Jordan, UNHCR, a member of the ETC, provided telecommunications services to humanitarian personnel in Zaatari and Azraq camps on the border with Syria. The ETC engaged with UNDSS in Syria, Lebanon and Turkey for the provision of inter-agency security telecommunications services and training.



ETC STORY SNIPPETS: Expanding the Emergency Communications System in Turkey



Want to hear an alarming stat? Since 2011, an average of 50 Syrian families have been displaced every hour of every day. Entering a sixth year of conflict, it was estimated that 13.5 million people in Syria need protection and some form of humanitarian assistance.

Since the first Syrian refugee camp was established in Turkey in May 2011, an estimated 2 million people have crossed the border into Turkey.

Through the 'Whole of Syria (WoS) approach', activities are coordinated from multiple hubs across Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey ensuring a unified response to the crisis. From Turkey, humanitarian assistance is delivered both across the border to Syria as well as inside Turkey itself.

In early 2015, the ETC launched a project to strengthen the security communications network across operational locations in south-eastern Turkey, close to the Syrian border. The project scope included expansion of UHF radio network coverage, deployment of an inter-agency radio and radio training for humanitarian staff.

As part of the project, the ETC offered two types of radio training to humanitarians. Basic user training was delivered to humanitarian staff on how to use a handheld radio, and radio protocol for safety and security. Advanced training was provided for radio operators who work in the radio room. In total, 86 humanitarian staff from 12 organisations were trained in Ankara and Gaziantep on the use of radio communications.

This project was driven by ETC Syria lead agency, World Food Programme (WFP), in close collaboration with UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), supported by UN Development Programme (UNDP). The collaborative culture of organisations responding to this crisis enables effective delivery of essential communications services that support the entire humanitarian community with their emergency operations.

By Salma Farouque, ETC Syria Focal Point

West Africa: Ebola Outbreak

September 2014 – December 2015



An outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease was first reported in Guinea in March 2014 and rapidly spread to neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone, causing a regional crisis within months. The epidemic was unprecedented in scale and geographical coverage and is the worst outbreak of the virus in history.

While the ETC was not officially activated in response to the Ebola outbreak, because there were clear needs across the three affected countries for telecommunications services, the UN Mission for Ebola

Emergency Response (UNMEER) mandated WFP, as global ETC lead, to respond as if the cluster was activated. The ETC, its membership and partners responded together for a coordinated response.

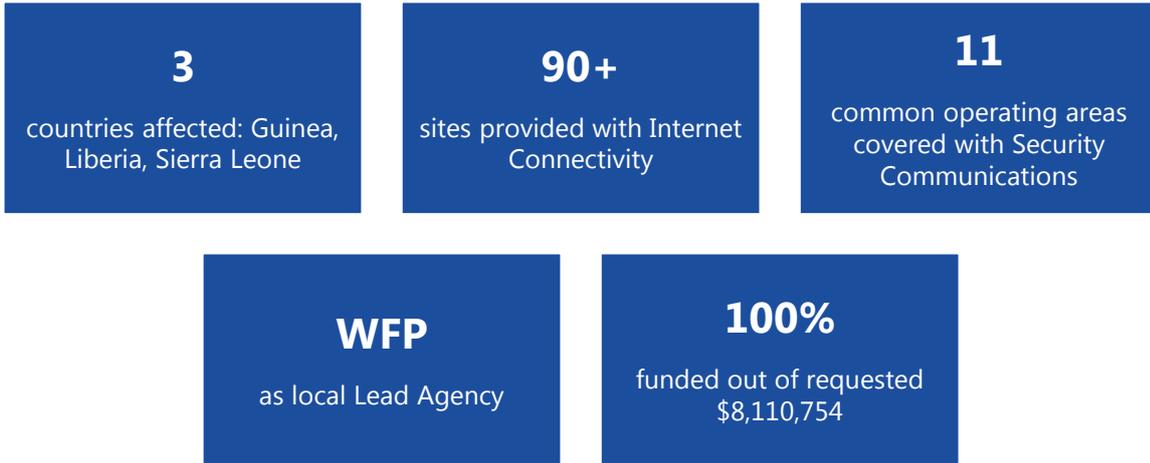
The ETC response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa was based on three pillars:

- i) Communications Support for Ebola Treatment Units
- ii) Shared humanitarian IT Services in common operating areas
- iii) Communications for Communities - in partnership with healthcare providers, establish technology services to allow patients to communicate with their families.

As the first global health emergency of this scale for the international community, the Ebola response in West Africa was unique in many ways. For the ETC, this was the first operation in which the users of telecommunications services extended beyond traditional humanitarians to include healthcare workers, civil society and government-led national emergency response organisations. This reality shift influenced the scope of the ETC2020 strategy.

The ETC provided communications services to over 1,900 emergency responders at more than 90 facilities across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, including Ebola Treatment Units, Community Care Centres, Ebola Holding Centres and National and District Ebola Response Centres. Security telecommunications networks were upgraded and established to meet the demands of the operation in 11 common operating areas across the three Ebola Affected countries.

After one and a half years of presence in the three Ebola-affected countries, the ETC demobilised on 31 December 2015, transitioning to local commercial service providers.



Key partners: BT, Canadem, the Crisis Management Centre (CMC) Finland, Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA), the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), emergency.lu, Ericsson Response, the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW), NetHope, Plan International, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), SOS Childrens' Villages, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNMEER, OCHA, and WFP

ETC TORY SNIPPETS: Internet: A Game Changer In The Fight Against Ebola

Working every day in an ETU is mentally draining for even the most experienced health workers. How do you cope with the sight of so many lifeless bodies on a daily basis? We are all human and sometimes we need to distract ourselves.

Sitting with a group of health workers on their lunch break this became clear to me; they complained about the referee's call during the latest football match or listened to their favorite Nicki Minaj song, life must go on. To help ease their minds in the simplest means possible we invited our Facebook and Twitter communities to send messages of support and motivation. We then posted these around the ETU.

The ET Cluster is helping to resolve this situation across the region so that ETUs can offer the high standards of care needed to save the lives of Ebola victims.

The ETU's admin room was filled with stacks of papers and sticky notes which lined the walls. All that could be easily organized with simple Internet tools like Dropbox, Google docs, and email accessible through connectivity provided by the ET Cluster.

Health workers in the "red zone" – where Ebola patients are cordoned off from the rest of the camps – had to yell to their colleagues in the "green zone" to ask for supplies and provide updates on patient statuses. In an environment where miscommunication can mean the difference between life and death, bringing in these vital services can reduce fatal errors.

ET Cluster, together with our member NetHope who provided both staff and equipment, installed the Internet network that helps health workers do their jobs and save lives.

The ET Cluster is a service provider but we also solve complex problems in which no two are ever the same. This requires not only ingenuity, creativity, and close collaboration from our network, but also a whole lot of heart.

By Michael Redante, ETC West Africa

Trainings

In 2015, four large-scale inter-agency ICT training courses were delivered to the humanitarian community:

IT Emergency Management Training

- The IT Emergency Management Training is an intensive 12-day training course focusing on developing IT and telecommunications experts capable of managing the ICT response to humanitarian emergency operations. Prepared in close collaboration with a range of humanitarian partners, including UNICEF, the 2015 training was held in Pisa, Italy, at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna.

20 participants from 10 humanitarian organisations attended IT EMT in 2015.

Let's Comm Digital

- Let's Comm Digital is a five-day training course which equips humanitarian ICT staff with the skills and competencies needed to deploy VHF Digital Mobile Radio infrastructure. The 2015 session was hosted by Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) in Revinge, Sweden.

11 participants from 8 humanitarian organisations participated in Let's Comm Digital in 2015.

Let's Net

- Let's Net is an eight-day hands-on training course which teaches participants to deploy, manage and support ETC data and voice services and solutions. In 2015, two sessions of Let's Net were held – in Schimpach, Luxembourg hosted by the Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs of the Luxembourg Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs, and Dubai, United Arab Emirates hosted by the World Food Programme.

23 participants from 7 humanitarian organisations participated in Let's Net in 2015.

OpEx Bravo

- OpEx Bravo is a seven-day large-scale inter-agency operational exercise designed to further advance the emergency response capabilities of the global ICT humanitarian community. The 2015 session was hosted by the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW) in Neuhausen, Germany, with the support of exercise staff from THW, Save the Children, MSB, Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg, Oxfam and WFP.

20 participants from 15 humanitarian organisations participated in the exercise.

Global ETC

ETC Members

In 2015, the ETC welcomed Global VSAT Forum (GVF) as the 23rd member of the cluster. The GVF application was voted for and accepted by the membership at the spring ETC Plenary Meeting in Dubai.

International NGO, Action Contre la Faim (ACF), submitted an application for membership at the autumn ETC Plenary Meeting in Geneva, for voting on in 2016.

United Nations agencies and programmes, NGOs, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Government, private sector and other organisations partner with the ETC to fulfil its mandate and objectives.

ETC membership is open to all Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) associated organisations. Non-IASC associated organisations that can make a positive contribution to the functioning of the ETC can become a member upon invitation of the existing membership.

To be an ETC member the organisation must:

- Have an interest in humanitarian assistance
- Support the achievement of the mandate of the ETC
- Commit to making a positive contribution to the ETC by actively participating in or contributing to ETC activities at the global and local levels.

Global Meetings

ETC Members and key partners meet twice each year to discuss ongoing operations in which the cluster is activated, ETC2020 developments and other pertinent issues relating to technology in humanitarian emergency response.

ETC Plenary Meeting: Dubai, April 2015

The spring 2015 ETC Plenary Meeting was held 26 - 28 April in Dubai, hosted by International Humanitarian City. The Plenary Meeting was held in conjunction with ETC Partners' Day.

The key outcomes of the spring 2015 ETC Plenary Meeting and Partner's day were:

- Endorsement of GVF's membership application
- Adoption of ETC2020 Strategy
- Introduction of ETC2020 Tactical Working Groups on Branding & Visibility, Resilience, Response Readiness, Enhanced Connectivity and Services to Affected Populations
- Identification of pilot projects in Haiti, Liberia, Nepal and Philippines
- Presentation of the new ETC website: www.ETCluster.org.

ETC Plenary Meeting: Geneva, October 2015



The autumn 2015 ETC Plenary Meeting was held 12 - 13 October in Geneva, hosted by UNHCR.

The key outcomes of the autumn 2015 ETC Plenary Meeting were:

- First-time participation of ACF as observer and submission of membership application
- Discussion of progress and way forward for ETC2020 projects in Haiti, Liberia, Nepal and the Philippines
- Presentation of the ETC2020 Strategy implementation roadmap 2015-2017
- First reports of the established ETC2020 Working Groups on CwC and Branding & Visibility team
- Presentation of Satellite Community "Crisis Connectivity Charter" to the ETC membership, which was then officially signed the day after the Plenary meeting at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) Global Consultation held in Geneva on 14 October 2015.

ETC2020

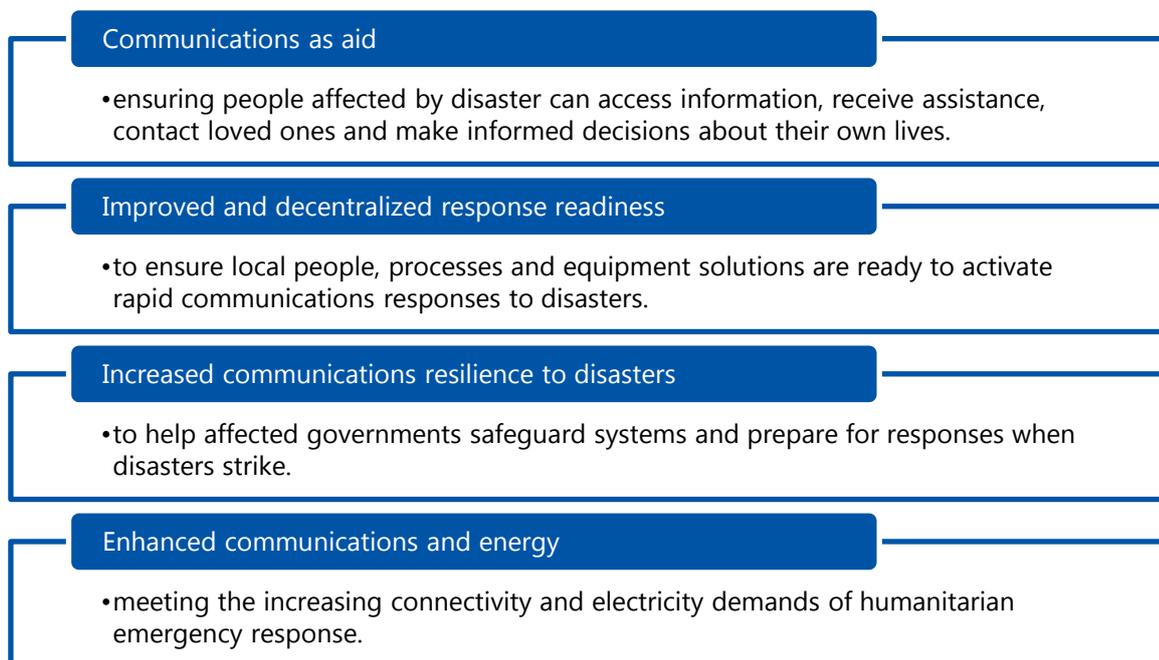
Communications technology is playing a fundamental role in human life, and changing the way humanitarian assistance is designed and delivered. It can mobilize thousands of people to assist and save lives within hours. It can reduce dependencies of people, societies and countries on international assistance, and help local communities, markets, farmers and families to re-engage and rebuild.

Local communities are the core of humanitarian action and this year the ETC expanded its scope to focus on further strengthening their capacity to respond to emergencies. Developed and adopted in 2015, 'ETC2020' is the cluster's five-year strategy which seeks to ensure that all those responding to humanitarian emergencies – included disaster-affected people – have access to vital communications services.

Through ETC2020, the cluster is working with local communities, humanitarians, private sector and governments to build national networks, equipment and expertise, supporting disaster-affected people in leading response efforts in a more accountable humanitarian environment. ETC2020 enables a faster response and connects all those responding to humanitarian emergencies.

The ETC2020 strategy was developed in consultation with ETC members, partners and stakeholders, and successful realization relies on partnership and collaboration with the entire response community.

ETC2020 focuses on four strategic priorities:



The ETC network has commenced a number of initiatives, projects and activities to progressively work towards achieving its 2020 objectives. Implementation of ETC2020 is a collaborative effort, involving the entire ETC network, including humanitarian, private sector and government organisations.

ETC2020 Tactical Working Groups

Tactical Working Groups support implementation of ETC2020 through providing domain expertise. In 2015, ETC2020 Tactical Working Groups have been launched for:

- Preparedness
- Governance
- Communication with Communities (CwC)
- Training
- Branding & Visibility.

ETC2020 Projects

In achieving ETC2020, the ETC will experiment and explore pilot ideas. These will be conducted in diverse field operating and simulated environments. The outcomes and lessons from these projects will inform the strategy, ensuring it remains relevant for the contexts in which the ETC operates.

In 2015, ETC2020 projects were launched in four countries:

- **Nepal**, focusing on Communications as Aid. The project aims to support government, humanitarian, media and private sector actors in Nepal in developing a preparedness plan for an ICT response to future disasters, with a specific focus on enabling faster and better communication among communities in times of disaster.
- **Philippines**, focusing on Increased Communications Resilience to Disasters, Improved and Decentralised Response Readiness and Enhanced Communications and Energy. The project aims

to empower mobile network operators with the ability to recover connectivity and communication services as quickly as possible after a disaster to serve affected populations, government and the humanitarian response community.

- **Haiti**, focusing on Improved and Decentralised Response Readiness. The project aims to enable a high risk country to coordinate its disaster relief efforts by ensuring resilient communications capability that supports better communication and coordination following a disaster.
- **Liberia**, aiming at increasing communications and resilience to disaster by focusing on building a HF radio network to enable the government to coordinate their response nationally and to communicate with remote communities – *Note: The team leading this project revised its decision and informed the Global ETC that the project will not go ahead.*

Connectivity Charters

The ETC2020 strategy outlines a number of Flagship Projects which are intended to underpin realisation of its objectives, setting the pace and generating momentum for the cluster's new way of working. One of these Flagship Projects is 'Partnership Charters', *for the management of mutually-beneficial and committed partnerships between humanitarian, government, private sector, academic and other stakeholder organisations.*

In collaboration with its networks of members and partners, two pioneering charters were signed in 2015.

GSMA Humanitarian Connectivity Charter

With mobile networks and the connectivity they provide being lifelines for disaster-affected people, the GSMA Humanitarian Connectivity Charter supports Mobile Network Operators in improving preparedness and resilience to emergencies. The GSMA Humanitarian Connectivity Charter was launched at Mobile World Congress, on 2 March 2015 in Barcelona, Spain.

Through this charter mobile network operators (MNOs) demonstrate their commitment to support humanitarian responders during the emergencies, but also helping them prepare for upcoming crises, with the aim to enable a more predictable, measured response to disasters.

The principles, objectives and aspirational activities of the Humanitarian Connectivity Charter are supported by the Global ETC, OCHA, and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Crisis Connectivity Charter

The Crisis Connectivity Charter is a set of commitments by the satellite community to enhance connectivity in times of crises, facilitating communications between – to – from – and across all those responding to humanitarian emergencies, including affected communities.

Principles of the charter include strengthening partnership between satellite industry, government and humanitarian sector; enhanced coordination to enable prioritization of humanitarian internet traffic during disaster operations; prepositioned satellite equipment; as well as training and capacity building.

Established by the EMEA Satellite Operator's Association (ESOA) and Global VSAT Forum, the Crisis Connectivity Charter is a direct outcome of a WHS Business Consultation hosted by the Government of Luxembourg and ETC in June 2015. The Crisis Connectivity Charter was launched at the WHS Global Consultation in Geneva, 14 October 2015, signed on behalf of the humanitarian community by WFP, as global lead of the ETC, and OCHA.

"The Charter seeks to ensure improved access to communications services in humanitarian emergencies, and with satellite services we can save lives. Through the Crisis Connectivity Charter and the ETC network, we endeavour to ensure that by 2020 all those responding to disasters, including affected people, can communicate to respond, recover and redevelop. Mobilising their members in this way, ESOA and GVF are supporting the ETC in making this vision a reality."

Jakob Kern, Chair of the ETC and Chief Information Officer of the World Food Programme (WFP), 2015

Dedicated ETC Website

Equipped with better design, better functionality and better navigation, in 2015 the ETC launched its new website – www.ETCcluster.org - providing a cohesive, focused and user-friendly platform to facilitate effective and efficient humanitarian ICT emergency response.

The new website aimed to provide: operational support for ICT responders in emergencies; information about the ETC, its services, activities and impact; and a channel for Global ETC Coordination as the network strives towards ETC2020.

New functionalities, including the Discussion Forum, allow users to more easily interact with the site and the community. A search function enables users to quickly find the information needed to support their emergency operations. Instant User-Registration for more than 70 humanitarian, private sector and government organisations that already frequently use the ETC website, allows faster access - especially important in emergencies.

List of acronyms

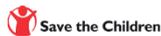
ACF	Action Contre la Faim
C.A.R.	Central African Republic
CCC	Community Care Centre
CIO	Chief Information Officer
COMCEN	Communications Centre
CwC	Communication with Communities
DFID	Department for International Development
DMR	Digital Mobile Radio
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ESOA	EMEA Satellite Operator's Association
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETU	Ebola Treatment Unit
FAO	Food & Agriculture Organization
GVF	Global VSAT Forum
HISP	Humanitarian Internet Support Project
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
IT	Information Technology
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
MSB	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
THW	German Federal Agency for Technical Relief
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNDFS	UN Department of Field Support
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety & Security
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNMEER	UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response
VHF	Very High Frequency
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
WoS	Whole of Syria

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MEMBERS



UNDER THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP OF

