

### Highlights

In Iraq, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) was activated in August 2014 in response to the deteriorating security situation. Since then the ETC, under the leadership of the World Food Programme, has been delivering vital technology services to UN agencies and international NGO's. The achievements of the ETC in Iraq in the past 12 months are summarized in this document.

### Emergency Coordination

The ETC plays a central role in the inter-agency coordination of all ICT activities in Iraq, including the provision of security telecommunications. Only when communication systems are in place and operational, can humanitarian responders effectively distribute aid and help those most in need.

Inter-agency collaboration is critical in ensuring that WFP fulfils its mandate of ETC lead, and to ensure that humanitarian workers perform their work and, ultimately, save lives.

The ETC holds monthly local working group meetings in Erbil, where operational activities are planned and reviewed and also participates in monthly global ETC meetings. Regular situation reports, meeting minutes and service maps are circulated by the Cluster to facilitate decision-making and resource mobilization.



### Essential support from donors and partners:

- Support from donors and partners with funding and in-kind support is essential to ensure the ETC can support the humanitarian community in Iraq with technology services. The Iraq ETC has been supported by the governments of USA, Kuwait, UK, Canada, Sweden, Japan as well as partners including Ericsson Response.
- UNHRD assisted the ETC with a chartered plane to deliver technical equipment procured through Global Humanitarian Services (GHS).



### People of ETC

The ETC Iraq team comprises responders from the WFP Fast IT & Telecommunications Emergency & Support Team (FITTEST), Ericsson Response and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB).

Locally-recruited IT staff also support critical activities. The ETC is currently funding four radio operators who work at the inter-agency communication centre in Erbil.

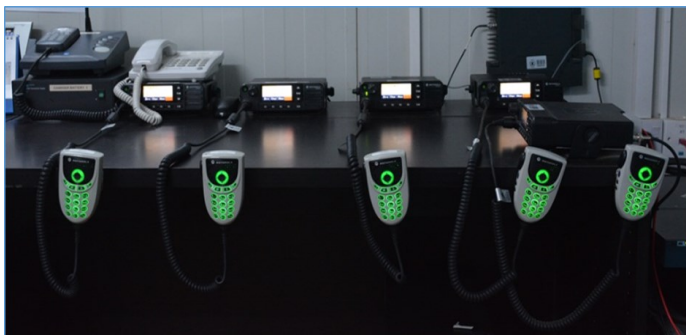
### Internet Connectivity

In Arbat and Domiz camps, humanitarian workers have been utilizing wireless internet services provided by Ericsson Response in collaboration with ETC. More than 150 users currently benefit from the service and the expansion plans of internet connectivity services to new operational locations are ongoing.



### Security Telecommunications

Radio networks are critical to communicate key information in emergency situations. The ETC has built radio networks, used by UN agencies and INGOs in a number of operational locations in Iraq, allowing humanitarian staff to communicate on an independent network, owned and operated by the United Nations. The ETC works closely with the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to utilise their security telecoms radio network in areas including Baghdad, Basra and Kirkuk. UNHCR is hosting the inter-agency communication centre (COMCEN) in Sulaymaniyah and funding seven radio operators in the Sulaymaniyah and Dahuk COMCENS.



The ETC set up communication centres in Dahuk and Sulaymaniyah to strengthen the safety and security of staff and missions in the field with equipment procured from overseas suppliers and shipped to Iraq for installation.

Additionally, new generation digital radio networks in Dahuk, Sulaymaniyah, Domiz and Arbat camps have been established. The ETC is preparing to expand the ETC digital network in other locations including Erbil.

Configuration of radio handsets for humanitarian workers is essential to give staff access to radio networks. The ETC has programmed more than 460 radios for UN and INGO staff in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Dahuk and is working closely with UNAMI, providing programming support in locations where the ETC is not present.



### Training

Radio training is essential to ensure humanitarian workers can communicate through radio networks, ensure compliance with procedures and, ultimately, protect the lives of humanitarians. ETC achievements are:

- Basic radio training provided to more than 400 humanitarian workers in Iraq.
- Training provided to ICT staff from WFP, UNHCR, OCHA, IRC, acting focal points at sub-regional level to support UN and INGO staff.
- Technical training delivered to 14 radio operators in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Dahuk.



The ETC Iraq team can be contacted by email at [iraq.etc@wfp.org](mailto:iraq.etc@wfp.org).

Regular ETC Iraq updates are shared on the web portal [www.ETCluster.org](http://www.ETCluster.org).