Bangladesh, CAR, Libya, Nigeria, Syria, Yemen

Global ETC Teleconference

Date: 16/09/2020   TIME: 12:00 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Prakash Muniandy	(Global ETC), UAE
UNICEF	Ike Uzoegwu	USA
	Mazen Shwikany	Syria
	Awsan Almamari	Yemen
	Jalal Tamimi	Jordan
UNRWA	Moayad Ayoub	Syria
WFP	Habib Shashati	Bangladesh
	Nusrat Jahan	Bangladesh
	Mohammed Dabdab	Bangladesh
	Josiah Kiiza	Bangladesh
	Ahmed ElSheikh	Libya
	Khawar Ilyas	Pakistan
	Geronimo Turgo	Philippines
	Marta Dabbas	Tunisia
	Wali Noor	UK

Teleconference started at 12:02 UTC

Agenda

1. **Bangladesh update**
2. **Central African Republic (CAR) update**
3. **Libya update**
4. **Nigeria update**
5. **Syria update**
6. **Yemen update**
7. **AOB**

Minutes

1. BANGLADESH

ETS Response

- Two new team members joined the ETS during the last few weeks.
- The ETS is providing data connectivity in 26 sites, including 17 e-voucher outlets, logistics and residential hubs and Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) treatment to support the COVID response. The ETS is providing connectivity in two sites so far out of 22 planned.
- There are currently 196 users of ETS data connectivity.
- 709 people from UN agencies are using security telecommunications services. However, not all UN agencies have radios due to importation restrictions.
- On 28 August, the Government of Bangladesh announced that 3G/4G services were available again in the camps, a year since the services were shut down. However, the services are not meeting the operational needs.

2. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

ETC Response

- The ETC is actively seeking funding to continue its activities in CAR. Due to these funding challenges, there is no ETC coordinator for CAR.
- ETC connectivity services at all sites are still running including the call centre that continues to take calls from members of the affected community.

3. LIBYA

Security

- The ceasefire announced across all Libyan territories in August continues to be in effect although some minor incidents continue to make the situation tense.

ETS Response

- The ETS Libya User Satisfaction and Needs Assessment Survey was closed and the results are under analysis.
- The team is planning to conduct a survey to map-out the coverage and reliability of voice and data services inside the country. The ETS has initiated discussions with REACH to conduct the survey.
- The ETS-managed call centre in Tripoli continues to serve as a nationwide COVID-19 information channel. To date, operators have answered more than 12,030 calls.
- The ETS is now providing WiFi Internet connectivity to people of concern (POC) in UNHCR's Community Day Centre (CDC) in Tripoli to enable them to communicate with their families. The team has finalized a user guide to assist members of the affected population to get online. The ETS has agreed with the ISP to extract data from the system for analysis, monitoring and feedback.
- The team received approval this week to clear the import of equipment for UNHCR. Other agencies will now be able to follow the same procedure to import devices.

4. NIGERIA

Security situation

- The ETS team has shared its plan for 2021 with the Global ETC team to ensure it can fulfil the needs on the ground.
- The ETS Coordinator thanks global ETC partner, the Government of Luxembourg for its support in providing the connectivity solution and hopes the collaboration continues into 2021.

ETS Response

- The implementation of the countrywide telecommunications infrastructure migration continues. So far, field engineers have completed the process in humanitarian hubs in Bama, Banki and Gwoza. The migration will now continue in Ngala, Damasak and Monguno.
- Once the migration is complete, the team will start the long-awaited project to deploy solar power kits to provide a more sustainable power supply at all humanitarian hubs to ensure the provision of ETS services 24/7.
- The ETS plans to launch its annual user satisfaction survey by the end of September.
- All other activities continue as usual including maintaining critical data (eight sites) and security communications (11 sites) services.

5. SYRIA AND SURROUNDING COUNTRIES

ETC Response

- The new WFP Head of IT is now on the ground and is also responsible for ETC activities.
- The ETC provides services to six humanitarian organisations in 13 common locations. The ETC has five partner organisations in Syria.
- The ETC is 100% funded for 2020.
- The team is finalizing the installation of the repeater in Qamishli to improve communications services.
- The team is planning to advertise the ETC coordinator position as soon as possible.
- The ETC has finalised and drafted its inputs for the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for 2021.
- The ETC is following up with ETC partner NetHope on the data connectivity capacity building training that was initially planned to take place in Dubai but is now on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Due to frequent power cuts during the day, the ETC will review the current infrastructure at inter-agency sites to identify where the team can supplement and improve the availability of services.

6. YEMEN

Security situation

- The security situation remains volatile and unpredictable with airstrikes reported in Marib and Al Hudaydah.
- On 9 September, the authorities announced the closure of Sana'a airport to UN and NGO flights due to the shortage of fuel to run facilities. However, the airport is expected to reopen on 24 September. Due to the closure of Sana'a airport and the subsequent cancellation of flights, the ETC coordinator remains out of the country and plans to return on 27 September.

ETC Response

- The number of COVID-19 cases continues to increase although at a slower rate. The total confirmed number of cases is 2,003 with 570 dead.
- UN offices are accessible only to a limited number of staff according to COVID-19 protocol.
- The ETC continues to provide connectivity in isolation centres in Sana'a, Al Hudaydah and Aden.
- The ETC is working with WHO and the Ministry of Public Health and Population to upgrade a hotline in Sana'a and establish a new hotline in Aden for the COVID-19 response.
- ETC activities and the provision of its services continue in 11 sites with eight Security Operations Centres (SOC) and 661 users of ETC internet connectivity.
- On 7 September, the ETC conducted a quick survey to gather feedback on the quality of connectivity services. Based on the outcome, the ETC will now upgrade the link in the next week.
- The ETC still plans to provide communications services in new UN hubs in Hajjah (south) and in Marib (north).
- Due to restrictions on importing satellite terminals, particularly in the north, the ETC is assessing the feasibility of using alternative connections such as ADSL in Hajjah and Al Hudaydah. The ETC will explore this option until approval is received to deploy satellite terminals.
- The Yemen Humanitarian Funding (YHF) grant is extended until the end of December which enables the ETC to continue its activities and services.

Teleconference/Meeting ended at 12:26 UTC

Next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on 14 October.

Acronyms

CIC	Camp-in-Charge
CO	Country Office
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
SOC	Security Operations Centre
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website: www.ETCluster.org

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: Global.ETC@wfp.org

Minutes: Suzanne Fenton, WFP