

# Bangladesh, CAR, Libya, Nigeria Syria, Yemen

Global ETC Teleconference

Date: 12/01/2022 Time: 13:00 UTC

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website: [www.etcluster.org](http://www.etcluster.org)

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

[country.etc@wfp.org](mailto:country.etc@wfp.org)

## Attendance

Chair	Prakash Muniandy	UAE
Action Contre La Faim	Thomas Gerard	France
CDAC Network	Fanman Tsang	United Kingdom
NetHope	Dagbjartur Brynjarsson	Iceland
UNICEF	Jalal Tamimi	Jordan
	Yusuf Oloyede	Libya
	Haytem Elgbali	Libya
	Marta Dabbas Costello	Spain
WFP	Omar Namaoui	Algeria
	Ekue Ayih	Bangladesh
	David Pickering	Bangladesh
	Hafeez Esaqzai	Bangladesh
	Nadege Ndassimba	CAR
	Amirullah Syarif	Indonesia
	Phyza Jameel	Italy
	Burak Sezgin	Nigeria
	Mooamedoubaou Ndiath	Senegal
	Atmaja Sebiring	Syria
	Sami Alio	Syria
	Hikmat Akad	Tunisia
	Claire Roach	UAE
	Ozdzan Hadziemin	UAE
	Prakash Muniandy	UAE
	Wali Noor	Yemen

## Agenda

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

## Minutes

### 1. Bangladesh

#### *Security Situation*

- The security situation in Cox's Bazar remains generally calm.
- There are currently 18,895 active cases of COVID-19, with 2,458 new daily cases and only a 0.2% increase in new deaths.
- 50% of the population has received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and around 35% have had two doses. The government is continuing its efforts to roll out the vaccine.
- There is so far no COVID-19 lockdown in Bangladesh and no quarantine for incoming passengers if fully vaccinated, however restrictions are being reinforced due to the recent surge. All incoming passengers must now show a vaccination certificate and rapid antigen test results, and vaccination certificates are required to dine in restaurants and stay in hotels. It is compulsory to wear a face mask outside of the house and in all public places.

#### *ETC Response*

- The new ETS Coordinator was expected to travel from Haiti on 11 January, but his travel was delayed due to unexpected visa issues. He will work remotely until he is able to travel to Bangladesh.
- The recruitment process for one ETS IT Officer and one ETS Telecommunications Officer to replace WFP Fast IT & Telecommunications Emergency Support Team (FITTEST) staff is ongoing.
- On 11 January, one IT staff member from WFP Tanzania joined the ETS Bangladesh operation on a temporary assignment.
- The ETS spent US\$ 2.3 million in 2021, of which an estimated 1.5 million will be carried over into 2022 to carry on activities. A funding appeal will be launched for the ETS' 2022 budget of US\$2.7 million.
- The ETS hosted a local working group meeting on 05 January with eight participants from five organizations in attendance.
- The 2022 Joint Response Plan (JRP) is in its review phase with the Government of Bangladesh and is expected to be launched on 10 February.
- The ETS achieved a 90% user satisfaction rating in 2021.

- The ETS is providing data connectivity services to 535 humanitarian responders from 11 NGOs and five UN agencies across 40 sites, and 969 humanitarians from 11 UN agencies are utilising the ETS security telecommunications network.
- The data connectivity site in Shamlapur (Camp 23) was decommissioned in December.
- The Teknaf-South VHF network expansion is ongoing. Procurement options to get the required items to complete the project are being evaluated.
- Two fires broke out recently in the camps. The first fire broke out on 02 January in Camp 20 extension, where one ETS e-voucher outlet site is located. No damages were caused to the ETS and ISP infrastructure.
- Following the second fire that broke out on 9 January in Camp 16, the ETS is assisting users on the ground to access internet connectivity services and is providing customer support. The ETS is also coordinating with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as they provide data connectivity at the Camp in Charge (CiC) Office in Camp 16.

## 2. Libya

### *Security Situation*

- The security situation remains unstable following the postponement of the presidential elections that had been scheduled for 24 December. The new election date is still not confirmed.
- There have been demonstrations throughout the country and there is a heightened risk of hostilities between groups.
- The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) is working to bring a consensus on a unified government framework to pave the way for national elections.
- The electricity crisis continues to cause tension amongst the local population. Currently there are on average four to six hours of power outage per day.
- The official government figures on COVID-19 do not show any increases cases or deaths.
- Two million Libyans have received a first dose of COVID vaccination, and 900,000 Libyans have received two doses.
- In Tunis there is a curfew starting on 13 January from 10pm to 5pm that will last for two weeks and might be extended based on the situation. All indoor and outdoor gatherings have been cancelled. Additional entry requirements are expected to be introduced.

### *ETC Response*

- Humanitarian activities have been reduced over the past month due to the security situation surrounding the postponement of the election.
- The report from the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) mission that took place in November has been shared with the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) for their review and endorsement. Once endorsed, the ETS will work with UNDSS to implement the recommendations.
- The ETS is preparing a financial proposal for a long-term solution to improve the capacity of the radio network in Benghazi.

- The ETS continues to facilitate the provision of internet connectivity and customer support at the hub in Benghazi.
- The ETS is working with the Libyan Ministry of Telecommunications to facilitate the provision of training to build the capacity of their personnel in the field of spectrum management.
- The 2021 ETS user satisfaction survey found an 83% satisfaction rate amongst users of ETS services in Libya. Some of the responses to the survey indicated that there was a lack of awareness of the ETS' role. A presentation is being prepared for the inter-sector coordination group to explain what the ETS does and how it supports humanitarian operations in Libya.
- The ETS is supporting the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in their application to the Ministry of Telecommunications for a license for the importation of a BGAN satellite device.
- The UNHCR has decided to permanently shut down its Community Day Centre in Tripoli, following its closure for the past month due to security concerns. The ETS has dismantled the equipment for the internet service it had been providing to the affected population at the centre and is working with UNHCR to plan for new services if the centre is re-established in another location.
- The Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) hotline continues to receive calls requesting assistance and information on humanitarian services, including Protection, Cash Assistance, Shelter and NFIs, and COVID-19. A Chatbot is now available on Telegram to complement the phone line.
- The ETS has developed a new dashboard for the CFM which will serve as a live dataset that can be used by partner organisations to support their decision-making.
- The ETS is still short on funding, having only received 18% of the funds required to cover ETS operations until June 2022. The ETS is engaging with OCHA to identify additional sources of funding.

### 3. Central African Republic (CAR)

#### *Security Situation*

- The security situation in CAR has been relatively calm but remains volatile.
- There has been an alarming increase in COVID-19 cases and deaths; for the first time since the beginning of pandemic there have been seven deaths in one week.

#### *ETC Response*

- To support the expansion of the CFM in five additional locations in 2022, OCHA has committed US \$450,000.
- The ETS is still struggling to implement TESS recommendations due to a lack of funds to purchase equipment.
- The ETS in CAR achieved a 77% user satisfaction rating in 2021.
- The ETS is providing connectivity to 616 humanitarians from 12 UN agencies and 56 NGOs across 11 sites.
- A total of 62,200 calls have been registered since the opening of the 24/7 COVID-19 call centre in Bangui. The majority of calls related to COVID-19 vaccinations, while others inquired about the

COVID pass, COVID alerts, and measures to control the spread of the virus. The call centre has also been receiving calls related to other issues such as domestic violence and traffic accidents.

- A total of 3,554 people have used the ETS charging service in Bria since it opened in September 2021.
- A total of 1,441 cases have been registered on the SugarCRM platform since the launch of the Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) in Bria in September 2021.

## 4. Nigeria

### *Security Situation*

- Overall, the security situation is volatile. During the visit of the president to Maiduguri over Christmas and the New Year there were some minor security incidents, however no casualties were reported.
- Some scheduled flights have been changed due to the security situation and the harmattan season, which has caused joint missions with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and UNDSS to Damasak and Dikwa to be postponed.
- In order to prevent the spread of COVID, a UN-wide decision was made that only the head of unit plus two staff can work from the office at one time. The ETS has identified one specialist, one IT officer, and one TC assistant who will work from the office.

### *ETC Response*

- ETS Nigeria has US \$1.6M available for 2022, which is expected to cover operations until August.
- The ETS Coordinator is expected to arrive in Nigeria in January after some delays related to visa issues. Bhawana Upadhyay, with assistance from Mithilesh Chaudrey, continues to act as ETS Coordinator in the interim.
- A new IT Operations Assistant position is being recruited.
- A proposal has been prepared for a services for communities project to provide one-way communications in the camp through either a Public Announcement (PA) system or radio broadcasting.
- A joint mission with IOM and UNDSS is planned for next week to check on the Remote Security Operations Centre (RSOC) system in Damasak before the reopening of the hub.
- IOM completed the construction of the hub in Dikwa and are currently performing the electrical installation. Equipment such as cables, batteries, and telescopic masts were sent, and the VSAT equipment is expected to be shipped in January. Marlink connectivity will be reactivated on the first of February, which will allow some time for testing before the hub opens.
- A procurement is planned for a quick deployment kit to test Ku-band connectivity in the northeast. If successful, a permanent Ku-band set-up will be purchased for use in the deep field as a primary solution or a backup in addition to C-band.
- The team has conducted a further update of all wireless equipment across the hubs after fixing some glitches.
- The team is working on updating the disaster recovery plans (DRP) and installing redundant router equipment in all hubs according to the DRP process.

## 5. Syria

### *Security Situation*

- The overall security situation remains unchanged.
- The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) reported that an airstrike affected the Arshani water station that it supports, rendering it out of service and cutting off water supply to over 241,000 people in Idlib City.
- The UN Security Council Resolution authorising UN agencies and partners to use cross-border routes to deliver humanitarian assistance has been extended for six months after expiring on 10 January.
- The deteriorating socio-economic situation across the country has caused food and fuel prices to soar and has impacted the availability of electricity.
- The Syrian Government has received 1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine from China and is expecting to receive 3.1 million more doses of Johnson & Johnson vaccine in January. 5% of the population is fully vaccinated while 13% have received their first dose.
- WFP is still applying alternate work modalities according to the colour-coded COVID phases system. From 9-15 January inclusive, Tartous and Latakia are the orange phase, Damascus is yellow, and Deir Ez-Zor, Homs, Hama, Aleppo, and Qamishli are green.
- There are currently nine confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst WFP staff, of which three are out of country.

### *ETC Response*

- The ETC is following up with ICOM France to conduct advanced ICOM VHF training in 2022. This training has been on-hold due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.
- The ETC is working to significantly improve internet connectivity services in the humanitarian hub in Deir Ez-Zor. The Internet Service Provider (ISP) has enhanced the primary microwave link which is supported by a new power back-up system. A second back-up fibre connectivity link is awaiting activation pending approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The ISP has also installed a tower for 4G connectivity on the roof of the humanitarian hub, which is available for all residents in Deir Ez-Zor to use.
- The ETC plans to conduct maintenance on the ETC equipment in all common operational hubs in the first quarter of 2022.
- The ETC is regularly following up with the authorities to clear various shipments of equipment through customs. A second confirmation letter was sent to the authorities to agree with all the conditions for using PTT devices in country. Other equipment, including radios and satphones for UNDSS are still under security inspection.
- The ETC plans to upgrade the data infrastructure in all common operational hubs. The delivery from the manufacturer is delayed further to the end of March 2022 due to the global shortage of semiconductor chips.
- The first ICT Working Group meeting of 2022 is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 19 January.

- The ETC is participating in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) process and has submitted the ETC Syria chapter and log frame for 2022-2023 with an indicative cost of US\$ 1 million.

## 6. Yemen

### *Security Situation*

- The security situation in Yemen remains volatile.
- The Sana'a airport was closed from 18-27 December due to technical and political reasons. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) resumed regular flights on 27 December.
- COVID cases are rising within the UN community, with many staff in isolation and quarantine in December.

### *ETC Response*

- While the HRP process remains on hold for technical reasons, the ETC submitted its funding requirements of US \$3.8 million.
- The Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF) non-cost extension to the end of June was approved, allowing the ETC to support the government with the implementation of IT projects.
- The ETC has allocated US \$100,000 to improve its services in the UN compound managed by IOM in Marib.
- The ETC has recently opened two new sites, one hosted by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in Hodaydah, and another in Sana'a at the new United Nations Common Accommodation Facility (UNCAF) guest house.
- The development of a cloud-based guest access system for the UNCAF in Sana'a has been completed and handed over to UNDSS.
- The ETC supported the relocation of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) funded by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Socotra.
- The ETC is also conducting assessments for the relocation of the INGO site in Al Mokha.
- The procurement has been finalised with the supplier for the 5km fibre extension from Aden city to serve International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) in 90 District.
- NYC Medics got approval to import the equipment for the establishment of a VHF network for ambulances in Aden with the support of the ETC. The WFP FITTEST team will begin the procurement.
- The importation of a shipment of ETC equipment from Djibouti is awaiting national security approval.
- The ETC is looking at different options for the licensing of VSAT stations and will share the options with WFP management for a final decision.
- The handover of the existing UN hub in Al Turbah from UNHCR to WFP is in progress.
- A one-day retreat will be held with partners to conduct work planning for 2022 with a focus on capacity building.

- In December the ETC help desk received 1,300 tickets, bringing the total to 13,700 tickets in 2021.

## 7. AOB

**Teleconference/Meeting ended at 13:50 UTC**

**The next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on 16 February 2022.**

## Acronyms

ACF	Action Contre la Faim
BGAN	Broadband Global Area Network
CFM	Common Feedback Mechanism
CO	Country Office
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
LTA	Long-Term Agreement
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Syria)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RSOC	Remote Security Operations Centre
SOC	Security Operations Centre
TESS	Telecommunications Security Standards
UNCAF	United Nations Common Accommodation Facility
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission for Libya
VHF	Very High Frequency
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Minutes: Masa Sabbah, WFP TECF