

Bangladesh, Nigeria, Syria, Yemen

Global ETC Teleconference

Date: 23/02/2023 Time: 12:00 UTC

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:

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Attendance

Chair	Komi Amedjonekou	Italy
CDAC Network	FanMan Tsang	United Kingdom
ERICSSON Response	Lars Ruediger	Germany
UNICEF	Marc Dieng	USA
WFP	Brent Carbno	Italy
	Marian Mgbemena	Nigeria
	Muhammad Khaled	Syria
	Mufaro Masuka	United Arab Emirates
	Paul Wungko	Bangladesh
	Sarah Eshaq	Yemen
	Sussana Cenciarelli	Italy

Agenda

1. Bangladesh update
2. Nigeria update
3. Syria update
4. Yemen update
5. AOB

Minutes

1. Bangladesh

Security situation

- The security situation in Cox's Bazar remains calm.

ETS response

- The VHF radio network expansion equipment arrived in Bashan Char on 21 February. Installation is scheduled for the week running from 27 February to 3 March. The network expansion will improve signal strength and enhance radio security communications.
- One new site has been connected to the ETS data connectivity network within the Bashan Char camp area. Most work has been concentrated on routine maintenance of the existing sites for the past two months.
- The password for the ETS network used for mobile point-of-sale (mPOS) devices in e-voucher shops in the camps was leaked, leading to over 100 devices connected to the ETS network, thereby consuming a significant bandwidth that subsequently affected daily operations at some sites. The same network is being used at all WFP e-vouchers shop outlets. The ETS resolved the issued the issue without impacting e-voucher shops and is putting measures in place to ensure that this does not happen again.
- The WFP CO has requested that the ETS move their data centre from the Bashan Char hub to Cox's Bazar. Plans for the transfer are being implemented.
- The ETS Coordinator (Patrick Midy) is away on a contract break. He is expected to return to the operation by end of March. The ETS currently has only two national staff on the ground.

2. Nigeria

Security situation

- There is high security concern due to the currently ongoing political campaigns running up to Presidential elections scheduled for 25 February. The situation will continue to be monitored.
- The ETS, in collaboration with UNDSS is planning to provide support through secure radio communications in any area of need that may arise.

ETS response

- In February, the ETS provided internet connectivity to 1,477 users from 91 organizations (14 UN and 77 NGOs).
- The ETS received and resolved 49 helpdesk tickets.
- The ETS installed a back-up solar power system at Red Roof in Maiduguri to provide uninterrupted power for all users.
- Training was conducted by the ETS IT team to managers from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and functionality of the radio teleconferencing kit that was installed in the Red Roof Hub.

- The ETS programmed 18 handheld VHF radios for UNMAS, UNHCR, ZOA International and Malteser International. The ETS further trained two staff from Malteser International on basic handheld VHF radio use.
- The ETS plans to add Starlink to its current pool of data connectivity network provider in 2023. The ETS is engaging with Marlink to pilot Starlink connectivity in selected operational locations in northeast Nigeria.
- The ETS has started the procurement process for a telecommunications tower for Yola and Damaturu. The tower will host external radio antennas to enhance network coverage and connectivity signal strength.
- The ETS plans to relocate the Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Damaturu.
- The ETS Coordinator (Elmueiz Babikir) is currently on a contract break and is expected to return to the operation at the beginning of March.
- The ETS requires US\$2 million in funding for its 2023 activities.
- The ETS submitted a proposal to the 2023 European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP). The ETS is appealing for US\$1 million to cover nine months of operations.

3. Syria

Security situation

- The overall security situation across the country remains volatile. Various security incidents have occurred in the past few weeks. On midnight of 19 February a missile attack happened in a suburb of Damascus. Five people died, 15 were injured and several building were damaged.
- The 6 February double earthquake strike in Turkiye also affected several places in northwest Syria. Syria also experiences damages to internet connectivity infrastructure.

ETC response

- The ETC continues to provide internet connectivity services to 350 humanitarians from 11 UN agencies, and security communications services to 660 users from 14 UN agencies across eight sites in Syria.
- The ETC plans to establish an additional VHF repeater in Hama to extend radio coverage area and improve signal strength. The ETC has already obtained clearance from the building management. The approval to install the VHF repeater has been granted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).
- UNDSS has obtained the licenses to install the new satellite phones with docking stations in several UNDSS-managed Security Operations Centres (SOCs). The ETC has so far successfully installed the devices in Aleppo, Deir Ezzor, Damascus, Tartous, and Qamishli SOCs.

- Based on recommendations from the Syrian Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (SyTRA), a new Note Verbale (NV) has been submitted to MoFA to request for VSAT licenses. The ETC is still awaiting MoFA approval for VSAT license.
- The ETC has gotten verbal approval from MoFA to import five VHF repeaters. The ETC is now awaiting the official written approval.
- Muhammad Khaled (ICT officer) from the Syria CO deployed for one month on 13 February to support Syria field offices based on the Turkish side of the border.
- The ETC participated in the 2023 HRP, and identified a funding requirement of US\$500,000. The remaining balance of cluster funding can support the operation until mid-2023.

4. Yemen

Security situation

- The security situation is currently calm but remains unpredictable.
- UNHAS and Yemen Airways flights continue to operate.

ETC response

- In January, the ETC provided data connectivity services to 1,000 humanitarians and security communications services to a total of 2,000 responders across 20 sites.
- The internet connectivity services for humanitarian agencies and other passengers at Aden Airport was reactivated on 1 February.
- Routine preventative maintenance on internet connectivity was conducted in the UN guesthouse and INGO hub in Aden.
- The ETC capacity building working group was launched on 15 February. Two trainings on the use of MicroTek and PowerBI are ongoing.
- iMMAP conducted a training session on 13 February covering the use of Structured Query Language (SQL) in information management (IM) for humanitarian interventions. The training will improve the IM activities in Yemen. 58 participants took part on the training.
- The ETC provided a series of IT technical training courses for staff at the emergency operations centre in the north. The training was conducted from 21 to 23 February. 14 participants undertook the courses.
- ETC Yemen's funding appeal for 2023 is US\$3.6 million. No funding has been received yet. The ETC is currently exploring internal WFP funding opportunities. The ETC in Yemen is expecting the extension of existing funding of US\$700,000 until the end of March 2023. An additional cost sharing allocation of US\$200,000 from UN agencies has been approved by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) to cover the ETC's network upgrade costs.

- The ETC coordinator (Wali Noor) will attend a technical training workshop from 27 February to 2 March in Bangkok.

5. AOB

- N/a

The teleconference meeting ended at 12:33 UTC

Next meeting

The next Global ETC Joint Teleconference will be held on **Thursday 23 March 2023**.

Acronyms

ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
HIP	Humanitarian Implementation Plan
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IM	Information Management
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information Technology
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NRF	Notes for the Record
NV	Note Verbale
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
SOC	Security Operations Centre
{TESS+}	Telecommunications Security Standards
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Minutes: Mufaro Masuka, Global ETC Information Management Officer