Central African Republic – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #45

Reporting period 01/07/2021 to 31/08/2021

These Situation Reports will be distributed every two months. The next report will be issued on or around 31/10/21.

Highlights

- The ETC received US$160,000 from the OCHA Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) to provide vital communications services for humanitarians and affected communities. The ETC is now 37 percent funded in 2021.

- Data connectivity services have been restored in Bossangoa, disrupted since late 2020. The migration of satellite equipment to improve data connectivity services has also been finalized in Bossangoa, as part of a large-scale national and global project.

- In Kaga Bandoro, the ETC implemented improvements to services provided by the Security Operations Centre (SOC) as part of Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) recommendations, including restoring two VHF radio channels.

An ETC technician adjusts equipment for improved connectivity in Batangafo,

Photo credit: WFP/ETC

ETC Activities

Internet connectivity

- Throughout July and August, the ETC provided Internet connectivity services to an average of 649 users across 11 sites in CAR to facilitate the humanitarian response. The number of weekly average users of ETC connectivity services has increased by a third over the reporting period, partly due to the restoration of services in Bossangoa, which had been disrupted since late 2020.

- The ETC deployed to Kaga Bandoro from 5-9 August to resolve issues with satellite connectivity equipment and restore services in the hub.

The ETC is a global network of organizations that work together to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies

- A mission was carried out in Batangafo from 8–15 July to assess the performance of Internet connectivity services. The findings of the mission included the need to increase the availability of the power solution to better support connectivity services and to further improve access to the services by activating longer log-in times. While in Batangafo, the ETC extended connectivity services to local partner Oxfam and is exploring the option of extending services to more I/NGOs. This mission followed earlier activities carried out by ETC partner, Ericsson Response, who made remote adjusts to the equipment to increase the availability of services for humanitarians. The ETC is now monitoring the performance of the data connectivity services and compiling an equipment inventory to complete the optimization of the services.

- The migration of satellite equipment to improve data connectivity services has been finalized in Bouar and Bossangoa. This migration is part of a large-scale national and global project.

- The ETC added humanitarian users of its connectivity services in Alindao to the cloud sharing system to improve access to services and better manage bandwidth for users. Alindao is the ninth site in CAR to be integrated into the system.

Security communications

- In Kaga Bandoro, the ETC restored two United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) VHF radio channels as part of ongoing improvements to security communications services in the Security Operations Centre (SOC), as per Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) recommendations. The ETC has also initiated the replacement of VHF radios with new versions to further improve services.

- The ETC has also finalized activities to restore and maintain VHF radio channels in Bouar and Bria.

- The ETC conducted a range of activities to support its NGO/INGO partners in CAR, including World Vision to evaluate their HF security communications systems, the NRC to relocate their SOC, a data connectivity optimization mission at the offices of Oxfam, testing the VHF/HF equipment of the Alliance for International Medical Action (ALIMA), and providing technical guidance to Fondation Luthérienne Mondiale (FLM) and Triangle Génération Humanitaire (Triangle GH) on purchasing a radio system.

- The ETC programmed a total of 33 radios for the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and six radios for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the reporting period.

Services for communities' projects

- The ETC is planning to conduct training in Bria on the use of the customer relationship management platform used as part of the Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) project, managed by UNICEF. The training will be delivered to agents receiving beneficiary complaints and focal points from different agencies responsible for providing feedback to complaints received and registered on the system.

COVID-19 call centre

- The ETC continues to support the Ministry of Health-managed COVID-19 call centre in Bangui, which is recording over 2,000 calls per week. A large majority of callers inquire about the vaccine and its side

effects. ETC-trained operators provide information on vaccinations, infection prevention and control measures, and other information related to COVID-19.

Funding

- The ETC has received funding of US$160,000 from the OCHA Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) to provide vital communications services for humanitarians and affected communities. The ETC is now 37 percent funded out of a required total of US$870,000 to carry out planned activities in 2021. A further US$550,000 is needed.

Challenges

- Funding constraints remain a critical element in enabling the team to move forward with several ongoing ETC activities in CAR.

- The volatile security situation in the country remains a challenge for all humanitarians.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on **8 September 2021.**

Information

- ICT responders operating on the ground in CAR are encouraged to share their contact details with **CAR.ETC@wfp.org** to facilitate local coordination.

- All the information related to the ETC response in CAR can be found on the **dedicated emergency page** on the ETC website.

Contacts

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