

Central African Republic (CAR) – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #48

Reporting period: 01/12/2021 to 31/12/2021

The ETC was activated in C.A.R. in December 2013 in response to the conflict crisis. Situation Reports are distributed every month. The next report will be issued on or around 31/01/2022.

Highlights

- Hundreds of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) per week are using the ETC’s free-of-charge phone booth service in Bria to call family and to request assistance. Read the story [here](#).
- ETC service users gave an overall user satisfaction rate of 77 percent across the core ETC services and activities provided in CAR. There is a need to ramp up support provided to humanitarian users using ETC services.
- An increasing number of calls to the 24/7 COVID-19 call centre concern wider health and welfare issues, expanding the scope of the helpline to include multifaceted issues beyond the initial COVID-19 objective.



A registration at the ETC services centre in Bria. Photo: WFP/Elizabeth Millership

Activities

Coordination

The 2021 survey to assess user satisfaction rates of ETC services and activities closed on 5 December with 175 responses. ETC service users gave an overall user satisfaction rate of 77 percent across the core ETC services and activities provided in CAR. There is a need to ramp up support provided to humanitarian users using ETC services, including in the areas of coordination, service maintenance and upgrades to internet connectivity and security communications services, and capacity building on the ground. At just 37 percent funded, funding shortfalls as well as the escalation of violence in early 2021 directly impacted on planned ETC activities for this year.

Internet connectivity

In December, the ETC provided internet connectivity services to an average of 624 users across 11 sites in CAR to facilitate the humanitarian response, including for 12 UN agencies and 56 I/NGOs. Services in Batangafo remain down.

Security communications

Due to funding issues, the ETC has been unable to complete implementation of vital upgrades to the security communications network in the remaining six sites across the country, as recommended by Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS). Recommendations have so far been carried out in eight sites.

COVID-19 call centre

Since the re-launch of the 24/7 toll-free '1212' COVID-19 helpline in June, led by the Ministry of Health, operators have registered a total of 55,547 calls. In December, an increased average of 3,501 calls were taken per week, of which 66 percent related to the vaccine and its secondary effects while eight percent were requests for information about measures to control COVID-19. The remaining 26 percent of calls were related to other health and welfare concerns.

An increasing number of calls are being received in the call centre relating to wider health and welfare issues, such as polio, traffic accidents and domestic violence. The scope of the helpline is therefore expanding to include multifaceted issues beyond the initial COVID-19 objective.

Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM)

A total of 1,365 cases have been registered via the Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) for communities in Bria since it was launched in September. An increasing average of 151 cases per week was registered in December. The CFM enables people to explain their needs and to request assistance. Feedback is channelled to humanitarian partners to address via a feedback and complaints system automated by the ETC.

Phone booths

In December, an increased average of 139 Internally Displaced People (IDPs) per week used the ETC's free-of-charge phone booth service in Bria's IDP camp, of which 49 percent were men, 33 percent were women, and the remaining 18 percent were children and young people. Since the service was launched in September, a total of 6,000 hours of call time has been made to contact family and request assistance.

Charging station

In December, an average of 184 IDPs per week used the ETC's free-of-charge charging facilities in Bria, of which 62 percent were men, 20 percent were women, and the remaining 18 percent were children and young people. Since the service was launched in September, over 3,250 people have used the charging station to power up their devices, including mobile phones, radio receivers and flashlights.

Planned activities

The ETC is planning to expand implementation of the CFM service to a further five locations – Bambari, Batangafoa, Bossangoa, Kaga Bandoro, and Paoua. The cluster has applied for funding of US\$450,000 from the OCHA Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) to expand this service in 2022.

Funding

In 2021, the ETC was just 37 percent funded out of a required total of US\$870,000, received from the OCHA Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF). In 2022, the ETC will require urgent funding out of a required US\$1.95 million. In the context of CAR, the provision of communications services is vital to connect displaced communities with family members and enable humanitarians to deliver assistance.

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 be held on **12 January 2022**.

Contacts

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All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website:

<https://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/central-african-republic-conflict>

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

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