

Central African Republic (CAR) – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #55

Reporting period: 01/07/2022 to 31/07/2022

The ETC was activated in C.A.R. in December 2013 in response to the conflict crisis. Situation Reports are distributed every month.

Highlights

- In July, the ETC provided internet connectivity services to 548 humanitarians across 11 sites in CAR serving 12 UN agencies and 56 I/NGOs to facilitate the humanitarian response.
- Although several funding solutions were explored by the ETC, the cluster was unable to raise the US\$170,000 required to continue the provision of ETC connectivity services. As a result, these services will be disconnected in 10 out of 11 connectivity sites, starting from 1 August.
- The ETC delivered a series of training sessions in July to 17 radio operators from Premiere Urgence Internationale (PUI) in Bangui on security communications procedures.



CFM services at the IDP camp in Bria were re-launched in July. Photo: WFP/ETC

Activities

Coordination

The ETC is planning with partners to expand services for communities in CAR. Two Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) documents are being drafted with local partners INTERSOS and the Central African Red Cross (CRCA) to set up an ETC Cyber Cafe and Learning and Information Centre in Bangassou. The centre will empower affected communities to develop digital skills, provide employment opportunities, and help them connect with humanitarians.

Internet connectivity

The ETC in CAR has faced major challenges in raising the funds required to pay the Internet Service Provider (ISP) for the continued provision of internet connectivity services in 10 sites. As a result of a US\$170,000 funding shortfall, the ETC will disconnect its connectivity services in Alindao, Bambari, Bouar, Bria, Bossangoa, Bangassou, Birao, Kaga

Bandoro, Paoua, and Zemio as of 1 August. A notification of the impending closure was shared with interagency partners on 30 July.

The ETC is continuing its efforts to raise the necessary funds to reactivate the services in these sites, which were used by 523 humanitarians in July.

The ETC will continue to provide connectivity services via the emergency.lu VSAT and Ericsson Response WIDER solution in Batangafo, which served 25 users in July.

Security communications

The ETC delivered training sessions on security communications procedures to radio operators from Première Urgence Internationale (PUI) in Bangui. A total of 17 PUI staff were trained over a series of sessions.

COVID-19 call centre

Since the re-launch of the 24/7 toll-free '1212' COVID-19 helpline led by the Ministry of Health in June 2021, operators have registered a total of 160,567 calls. In July, an average of 2,861 calls were taken per week, of which 59 percent related to COVID-19 vaccinations; three percent related to the COVID-19 pass; two percent related to COVID-19 alerts; 12 percent related to information on measures to control COVID-19; and 24 percent related to other concerns such as domestic violence and road accidents.

Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM)

The Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) service in Bria was re-operationalized by the ETC and implementing partner UNICEF and INTERSOS in early July. The service had been suspended since March 2022, following the conclusion of the planned six-month pilot phase.

A total of 2,692 cases have been registered via the CFM in Bria since it launched for the first time in September 2021. An average of 120 cases per week were registered throughout July.

The ETC is planning to expand the CFM service to a further five sites in Bambari, Batangafo, Bossangoa, Kaga Bandoro, and Paoua.

The CFM enables displaced people living in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp to explain their needs and to request assistance. Feedback is channeled to humanitarian partners to address via a feedback and complaints system automated by the ETC.

Phone booths

Due to high demand of the phone booth service in Bria, all available credits were consumed by the final week of July. The ETC is following up with the ISP to recharge the phone booth credit –the service is expected to resume operations in the first week of August.

In the first three weeks of July, an average of 47 calls were made using the ETC's free-of-charge phone booth service per week. 40 percent of calls were made by men, 21 percent by women, and the remaining 39 percent of calls were made by children and young people. A total of 2,956 calls have been made using the ETC phone booth service in Bria since it opened in September 2021.

Charging station

In July, an average of 780 devices were charged at the ETC’s free charging facilities in Bria each week. 34 percent of users were men, 23 percent women, and the remaining 43 percent children and young people. Since the service was launched in September 2021, 17,403 devices have been powered up used the charging station, including mobile phones, radio receivers and flashlights.

Funding

The ETC in CAR is 23 percent funded thanks to a contribution from the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) managed by OCHA of US\$450,000, to be used for to the CFM project in collaboration with UNICEF. A further US\$1.95 million is required to fund the ETC’s provision of critical communications services to humanitarians and the affected population in 2022.

Due to a critical funding shortfall, the ETC will discontinue internet services in 10 sites, effective from 1 August 2022.

Additional funding is also required to procure the equipment needed to complete the upgrades to the security communications network recommended by Telecommunications Security Standards {TESS+} in six remaining sites across the country.

Challenges

Funding constraints remain a critical challenge to the ETC’s continuation of ongoing activities and expansion of ETC services 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 **7 September 2022**.

Contacts

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

[**www.etcluster.org/emergencies/central-african-republic-conflict**](http://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/central-african-republic-conflict)

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

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