

Central African Republic (CAR) – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #57

Reporting period: 01/09/2022 to 30/09/2022

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

Highlights

- The ETC is preparing to set up a cyber café and learning centre in Bangassou. The Central African Red Cross will manage the daily operations of the centre, while INTERSOS will oversee the construction work.
- The ETC is supporting the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) with the installation of VHF and HF equipment for their main office in Bangui and four sub-offices in Bangassou, Ippy, Dimbi, and Zemio.
- A new emergency.lu VSAT terminal arrived in CAR on 27 September to replace their equipment that has been in service in Batangafo since 2019.

Currently, Batangafo is the only site in CAR provided with ETC connectivity after internet services were disconnected in 10 other sites in August due to a shortfall in funding.



The ETC meets with stakeholders to discuss services for communities in the camp for internally displaced people in Bria. Photo: WFP/ETC Nadege Ndassimba

Activities

Coordination

The ETC is planning to establish a cyber café and learning and information centre to serve the community in Bangassou. On 9 September, the ETC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Central African Red Cross, who will manage the daily operation of the centre. The ETC met with the Central African Red Cross and implementing partner INTERSOS on 30 September to prepare for the start of the construction work, which will be managed by INTERSOS.

The ETC met with prospective internet service providers (ISPs) on 16 September to plan for the implementation of services for communities projects in multiple locations, including the centre in Bangassou.

Internet connectivity

The ETC continues its efforts to raise the necessary funds to reactivate internet connectivity services in 10 sites—Alindao, Bambari, Bouar, Bria, Bossangoa, Bangassou, Birao, Kaga Bandoro, Paoua, and Zemio. The ETC connectivity services were disconnected in the 10 sites on 1 August due to a persistent shortfall in funding.

ETC connectivity services continue to be provided to seven users in Batangafo through the emergency.lu VSAT terminal. The Government of Luxembourg shipped a new VSAT to replace the existing equipment, which has been in service since 2019. The VSAT arrived in CAR on 27 September and will be installed by emergency.lu technicians during a planned mission in mid-October.

Security communications

The ETC is supporting the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) with the installation of VHF and HF equipment for their main office in Bangui and four sub-offices in Bangassou, Ippy, Dimbi, and Zemio.

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 190,544 calls. In September, an average of 3,737 calls were taken per week, of which 20 percent related to information on measures to control COVID-19; 17 percent related to COVID-19 vaccinations; nine percent related to COVID-19 alerts; two percent related to COVID symptoms; one percent related to the COVID-19 pass; and 51 percent related to other concerns such as domestic violence and road accidents.

Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM)

A total of 3,278 cases have been registered via the CFM in Bria since it launched for the first time in September 2021. An average of 58 cases per week were registered throughout September.

The ETC hosted a workshop with attendance from OCHA and WFP Programme staff to discuss updates to the parameters for data collection in the CFM database software. The ETC is procuring 27 additional licenses for the software to allow CFM operators in more sites in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Bria to directly input complaints into the system. A training session will be held with the CFM operators and interagency staff from OCHA, UNICEF, and WFP in October.

The CFM enables people living in the 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.

The ETC is developing an MoU and budget with INTERSOS to expand the CFM service to a further five sites in Bambari, Batangafo, Bossangoa, Kaga Bandoro, and Paoua.

Phone booths

The ETC and implementing partner INTERSOS are planning to upgrade the facilities at the free phone booth service in the IDP camp in Bria. The upgrades will include an expansion of the operations room, the addition of a waiting room, and repairs to the perimeter wall.

In September, an average of 41 calls were made using the ETC's free-of-charge phone booth service per week. 40 percent of calls were made by men, 22 percent by women, and the remaining 38 percent of calls were made by children. A total of 3,296 calls have been made using the ETC phone booth service in Bria since it opened in September 2021.

Charging station

In September, an average of 539 devices were charged at the ETC's free charging facilities in Bria each week. 35 percent of users were men, 26 percent women, and the remaining 39 percent children. Since the service was launched in September 2021, 21,628 devices have been powered up used the charging station, including mobile phones, radio receivers and flashlights.

Dashboard

See the [ETC Dashboard](#) for an overview of service locations.

Funding

The ETC in CAR is 23 percent funded thanks to a contribution of US\$450,000 from the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) managed by OCHA, which funds the CFM project in collaboration with UNICEF.

A further US\$1.5 million is required to fund the ETC's provision of critical communications services to humanitarians and the affected population in 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 **12 October 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

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