Central African Republic (CAR)
Conflict

2021

Operation overview

The conflict crisis in CAR has forced a million people to flee their homes and left over half the population in need of humanitarian assistance. ETC communications services support 1,500 responders from 68 humanitarian agencies across the country to assist the humanitarian response.

Services provided in **13 COMMON OPERATIONAL AREAS**

At just **37 PERCENT FUNDED,** the ETC in CAR requires a further **US$550,000** to maintain and expand services in 2021

11 SECURITY OPERATION CENTRES (SOCs) supported by the ETC

ETC was activated in **DECEMBER 2013**

Communication needs in CAR

Humanitarians work in unstable and insecure areas throughout CAR. To assist affected communities, responders require reliable and effective means of communication to work, stay safe and communicate with colleagues. The ETC in CAR responds to severe gaps in the country's data and security telecommunications infrastructure caused by the conflict. Across 13 common operational areas of the country – Alindao, Bambari, Bangassou, Bangui, Batangafo, Birao, Bossangoa, Bouar, Bria, Kaga-Bandoro, N'Dele, Paoua and Zemio – the ETC provides communication services to over 1,500 humanitarian workers from 12 UN agencies and 56 I/NGO partner organizations.

Affected communities

COVID-19 response — In CAR, free and rapid access to information on COVID-19 could mean the difference between life and death. The ETC has supported the Ministry of Health to re-open a dedicated COVID-19 call centre in Bangui, where operators take calls from the population on symptoms, vaccines, national health guidelines and referrals through the short code helpline number '1212'.

Communication services in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps — Communication is a basic human need. For over half a million people displaced within CAR, access to communications services and information can provide a lifeline. The ETC has set up phone booths in the large Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Bria to enable affected populations to communicate with their families and contact humanitarian helplines free of charge. The ETC is also supporting the UNICEF-led Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) in Bria to enable affected communities to contact humanitarians to explain their needs and to request assistance. Following the success of the pilot in Bria, the ETC is planning to expand CFM services to a further five locations in 2022 – Bambari, Batangafo, Bossangoa, Kaga Bandoro and Paoua.

Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS)

The ETC is working with TESS and UNDSS to strengthen and augment the capacity/coverage of VHF and HF radio networks across 15 sites in CAR, in line with UN Security Communications System standards to ensure staff can communicate safely and securely.

During the escalation of violence in Bria in 2020, NGOs operating in the area depended heavily on a dedicated radio channel set up for them by the ETC as part of the TESS project. Access to security channels gave humanitarians real and immediate support in the field and assisted them to stay safe.

CAR.ETC@wfp.org | www.etcluster.org/emergencies/central-african-republic-conflict