

Sudan, conflict

Global ETC Teleconference #12

Date: 04/06/2024 Time: 12:00 UTC

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

www.etcluster.org/emergency/sudan-conflict.

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

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Attendance

| Chair | Komi Amedjonekou |
|---------------------------|---|
| CDAC Network | Liz Hendry |
| Ericsson | Lars Ruediger |
| ETC | Brent Carbno Habib Shashati Maria Saleh Rita Oneissi Yousif Mirza |
| Government of Luxembourg | Alain Lang |
| Humanity & Inclusion (HI) | Soukeye Raymond |
| Internews | Asad Jan Asia Kambal Omnia Abbas |
| IOM | Arvin Malapo Newton Muli |
| MSB | Daniel Hjarne |
| UNHCR | Hussein Al Sayed John Warnes |
| UNICEF | Marc Dieng |
| WFP | Arthur Sawmadal Dane Novarlic Elizabeth Bourke Ernest Wambari Gilles Cimetiere Kesi Kalama Sylvestre Ngoh |

Agenda

1. Situation Update
2. ETC Sudan Update
3. ETC Partners Update
4. AOB

Minutes

1. Situation update

- The security situation remains tense overall. However, in Port Sudan, Kassala, El Gadaref, Damazine, and Kosti, the situation is relatively calm though people are still moving with caution.
- There are reports of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) regaining control from the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Khartoum. Clashes are occurring intermittently with some incidents occurring in Darfur and Al Fasher where a major incident took place recently.
- In the eastern part of the country, a curfew remains in effect from 23:00 to 05:00. Reports from Port Sudan and Kassala indicate that checkpoints are very strict during curfew hours.
- The health system is severely overstretched, and no medical supplies are reaching the conflict-affected locations.
- There is a significant challenge in terms of telecommunications, impacting not only humanitarian assistance but also daily life. People heavily rely on Mobile banking through an application called 'Bangkok', but without network access, transactions are impossible.

2. ETC Sudan update

Coordination

- The ETC continues to work with humanitarian actors from UN agencies and NGOs in Port Sudan, Kassala, and Kosti to strengthen efforts and avoid duplication in the new operational hubs emerging in response to the famine prevention initiative. The ETC is currently focused on seven confirmed locations, with the possibility of adding two more in Darfur. The confirmed locations are Kassala, Kosti, and Kadugli (which is covering Kurdufan). The team is also assessing additional locations in Darfur and other parts of the country.
- The team will start an assessment mission in Kassala on 08 June, then proceed to Kosti and Kadugli once permissions are obtained. Staff names for the assessments will be submitted accordingly.

Data connectivity

- The ETC provides internet connectivity in Port Sudan, Kassala, and Kosti, with limited presence in El Gedaref. Port Sudan has the largest coverage with 32 connected sites and Kassala has eight sites connected. In Kosti, due to security reasons, partners access ETC services directly WFP premises.
- The ETC met with Sudan's National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) on 16 May to discuss several topics, including the importation of equipment such as radios and network infrastructure. It was noted that instead of importing large batches (e.g. 250 radios at once), equipment is to be brought in smaller batches. The ETC has already started receiving shipments without issues by breaking down the imports into smaller batches.
- WFP secured a three-month special waiver to ensure the continuity of connectivity services with a local Internet Service Provider (ISP). The WFP Deputy Executive Director (DED) received government approval, ensuring to extend coverage to other UN and humanitarian organizations under WFP's umbrella. With this approval, more opportunities will open for the ETC to expand into hard-to-reach areas.
- The national authorities requested resubmission of documents for approval to import a further five advanced connectivity kits into Sudan, and the ETC expects a response by the end of June.

Security communications services

- The four Security Operations Centres (SOCs) in Port Sudan, Kassala, El Gedaref, and Damazine are fully operational. The SOC in Port Sudan operates 24/7, and there is a plan to extend 24/7 operations to the other SOCs. Currently, all SOCs are connected to a remote SOC in Nairobi, but the team is exploring options to relocate operations to Port Sudan and put the Nairobi SOC on hold.
- The ETC plans to move radio equipment to the new UNDSS office in Port Sudan.

Services for communities

- The ETC is planning a services for communities' pilot project at the Alashy Camp in Port Sudan to serve around 600 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The ETC is collaborating on this project along with the Global ETC, WFP, UNICEF, and IOM. The plan is to replicate the project in other parts of the country, starting with Wadi Halfa, where there is a high demand for a Community Service Centre.

Funding

- The remainder of the US\$2 million Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) grant issued in 2023 has been extended until 01 August 2024.
- The remainder of the US\$2 million grant from the US Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) in 2023 is on a no-cost extension until 01 October 2024.
- So far, only the UK Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) has allocated 2024 funding to the ETC in Sudan of GBP 240,385 (equivalent to US\$307,000). This contribution means that the ETC is 5% funded out of the required US\$6.3 million.

3. ETC Partners Update

- N/a

4. AoB

- N/a

The next Sudan ETC Global Partners teleconference will be held on 02 July at 12:00 UTC.

Acronyms

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| BHA | Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance |
| CERF | Central Emergency Relief Fund |
| ETC | Emergency Telecommunications Cluster |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| ICT | Information and Communications Technology |
| IOM | International Organisation for Migration |
| MNO | Mobile Network Operators |
| OCHA | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| RSF | Rapid Support Forces |
| SAF | Sudanese Armed Forces |
| SOC | Security Operations Centre |
| UNDSS | United Nations Department for Safety and Security |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UNICEF | United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund |
| UNRCO | United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office |
| UTC | Coordinated Universal Time |
| WFP | World Food Programme |

Minutes: Rita Oneissi, Global ETC, Information Management and Performance Reporting Officer