

## Sudan, conflict

Global ETC Teleconference #16

Date: 03/10/2024 Time: 12:00 UTC

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

[www.etcluster.org/emergency/sudan-conflict](http://www.etcluster.org/emergency/sudan-conflict).

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: [Global.ETC@wfp.org](mailto:Global.ETC@wfp.org)

## Attendance

Chair	<b>Komi Amedjonekou</b>
ETC	Richard Egwangu Habib Shashati Mufaro Masuka
Humanity & Inclusion	Marion Attanasio
Internews	Omnia Abbas
SES Techcom	Alan Kuresevic
IOM	Malapo Arvin
UNHCR	Ekue Ayih
WFP	Brent Carbano Sylvestre Ngoh Yousif Mirza

## Agenda

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

## Minutes

### 1. Situation update

- The current situation in Sudan is complex, with the country effectively divided into two areas of control: one dominated by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), particularly in Darfur and the West of the country, and the other under the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF). In Darfur, the RSF maintains nearly total control.
- SAF forces have recently advanced into the outskirts of Khartoum which has led to celebrations and boosted morale of citizens in major cities.

### 2. ETC Sudan update

#### Data connectivity

- **GSM Coverage:** GSM coverage only remains active in government-controlled areas. There is coverage in Port Sudan and Kassala, and intermittent coverage in Gedaref and Kosti. There is also some very limited GSM coverage in Khartoum. There is no longer GSM coverage in RSF-controlled areas in the West of Sudan.
- **Advanced Connectivity Kits:** One of the main communication services being leveraged by ETC in West Darfur is Starlink – known as ‘advanced connectivity’ – due to its availability and efficacy. The availability of advanced connectivity kits will help facilitate the scale up of Cash-Based Transfer (CBT) operations to assist the affected population in the West of Darfur for UN agencies, cooperating partners, and NGOs.
  - Use of advanced connectivity kits is not permitted in the government-controlled Eastern parts of the country, however there are some advanced connectivity kits active in Khartoum.
- **Undersea Cable:** In the East of the country ETC is working with the government entity, Sudatel, to expand the coverage of the one Gigabit (GB) dedicated undersea cable. There is now active connectivity from the undersea cable in Port Sudan as well as Atbara, where the initiative had been piloted. The aim is to expand coverage to Kassala and Al-Gedaref. ETC will then explore the possibility of expanding connectivity to the North up to Dongola.
- In coordination with OCHA, the cluster has established an overall target of reaching 19 locations with ETC connectivity services. ETC will begin by prioritising seven locations and will continue to review the viability of additional locations as the situation progresses.

#### Services for communities

- Services for communities have not been expanded from original plans. As connectivity equipment arrives and additional locations are reached with ETC connectivity services, the cluster plans to expand services for communities and make the impact more visible. ETC is exploring the potential of supporting the implementation of CBT in West Darfur by ensuring that retailers have the connectivity required to sell goods to communities in the region.

#### Coordination

- In areas covered by the one GB undersea cable connectivity in eastern Sudan, ETC is collaborating with other agencies to help manage equipment shortages and challenges related to the importation of additional equipment. The equipment importation situation is highly complex and slow.

#### Staffing

- John Aylieff will join the Sudan operation as WFP's new Country Director. He is currently in Nairobi awaiting accreditation.
- A new Information Management Officer (IMO) has joined the ETC team and will be onboarded this week.
- The upcoming ETC training workshops for the Cambium Network equipment are due to begin in mid-October in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The invitations have been sent to all agencies in Sudan and neighbouring countries, with 50 participants from RBN, RBC, IOM, UNFPA, FAO, NRC, and WFP Yemen confirmed. The Cambium training will enhance participants skills to install, configure, maintain, and optimize their network solutions. The workshops will be conducted across five batches of 10 participants each. .

### 3. ETC Partners Update

- N/a

### 4. AOB

- N/a

The next Sudan ETC Global Partners teleconference will be held on **4 November** at 12:00 UTC.

## Acronyms

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: Covi Franklin, Sudan ETC, Information Management and Performance Reporting Officer