

## Sudan ETC Working Group

### Working Group Meeting #6

Date: 25/09/2023 Time: 14:00 GMT+2 (Sudan)

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:

[Sudan.etc@wfp.org](mailto:Sudan.etc@wfp.org)

## Attendance

Organization	Name	Title	Location
	Chair Omar Namaoui [ON]	ETC Coordinator	Port Sudan
ACTED	Afra Elkhair [AE]		Port Sudan
FAO	Abdalla AbdallaAhmed [AA]	ICT Assistant	Port Sudan
IOM	Amina Ahmed [AA]	ICT Officer	Port Sudan
	Faith Roberts [FR]		
	Isabelle Wunder [IW]		
UNDP	Luai Egaimi [LE]	ICT Officer	Port Sudan
UNDP	Shiraz Elsaid [SE]		
OHCHR	Salma Elmedani [SE]		
WFP	Peter Mindila [PM]	ICT Officer	Port Sudan
WFP	Bright Ocokdhogu [BO]	ETC Information Management Officer	Nairobi
WFP	Kesi Kalama [KK]	WFP IT Operations	Port Sudan

## Agenda

1. General Update
2. Data Connectivity
3. Security Communications
4. Services for Communities (S4C)
5. AOB

## Minutes

### General Update

- In the week ending 23 September, the ETC discussed areas of collaboration with the Internet Service Provider (ISP), Sudatel. The company is establishing a new network hub in Port Sudan to replace the Khartoum network and can provide ISP services in Port Sudan and other cities. Sudatel claim that reliability of their services in other states and cities will be established. The cluster will continue to look for partners' experience with their services. WFP already has several lease lines with the company and many partners work with them.
- The local market is still struggling with equipment availability. The main IT equipment in the market are laptops, printers, and basic IT equipment such as switches and Wi-Fi devices. Telecommunications equipment (radio and satellite) are missing in the market.
- The importation of equipment also remains challenging. Authorities in Port Sudan are not able to authorize the importation of new telecommunications equipment<sup>1</sup>. However, telecommunications equipment that partners already have in country can be used.
- The ETC is working with the UN Integrated Operations Management Team (IOMT) to advocate for a blanket authorization for telecommunications equipment.

### Data connectivity

- In Port Sudan, the ETC is providing connectivity at 12 sites to 18 UN agencies and 13 NGOs, serving 489 humanitarian users. Two additional partners have requested the cluster to extend services to their premises.
- In Kassala, ETC connectivity services are extended to the UNHCR office. A further three partners requested for connectivity. With the newly received equipment in country and available staff, the cluster will prioritize expansion of ETC services in Kassala and Wad Madani, where services are also in demand.
- In Kosti, the ETC is providing free Guest Wi-Fi at the WFP office where humanitarians can access internet services.
- The ETC requests all partners to share their user experience with ETC connectivity services or flag issues with the system so that it can be fixed in a timely manner. On 23 September, the cluster received and fixed some connectivity issues that partners in Port Sudan experienced during the week.
- The ETC is visiting with partners from 01 October to encourage shared spaces in offices to maximize the availability of connectivity services.
- To ensure efficient user tracking and management systems, the ETC is implementing a bi/weekly reporting system with partners to obtain accurate and regular user numbers of its connectivity services.

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<sup>1</sup> Thuraya and radio equipment

- As equipment remains difficult to obtain, the ETC is requesting partners in Port Sudan to identify any basic equipment they may already have in their offices (e.g., access points) to use to expand connectivity services.
- The ETC is planning to re-design the radio network with the expertise of cluster specialists based in Port Sudan.

### Security communications

- Most agencies or partners still face difficulties with importing radio equipment. Those who need to import replacement equipment following the theft of devices are required by the local authorities to produce necessary documentation that prove the loss of equipment to the National Communication Authority (NCA) as part of supporting documentation to facilitate importation approval.
- The Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Damazine experienced service interruptions. The problem was resolved on 22 September and the SOC is operational again. When personnel in Damazine require support, the UNDSS-managed Nairobi Remote Security Operations Centre (RSOC) can receive their call.
- The ETC plans to establish new telecommunications towers in Port Sudan and other key common operational areas. The installed towers will ensure better radio coverage and network, as well as point-to-point data connectivity. The procurement of the tower installation is in process with the vendor.

### Services for Communities

- The ETC is engaging with IOM to identify the need for services for communities at Wadi Halfa in the northern state of Sudan on the border with Egypt, where many transit across the border. Reports claim that there are currently limited telecommunications services provided at the site. An assessment mission is being discussed.
- WFP is finalizing its Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) and will coordinate with other UN agencies to create a unique CFM under the ETC mandate. This option may take more time.

## Partner updates

- UNDP provided feedback on the newly extended ETC connectivity services in their Port Sudan office. The service was set up quickly and the connection is good.
- The ETC urges partners to proactively report issues with ETC connectivity services to ensure a quick response to the issues.

## AOB

- N/a

**The next ETC/ICT Working Group meeting will be on Monday 23 October at 14:00 Sudan time.**

## Acronyms

AOB	Any Other Business
BGAN	Broadband Global Area Network
CFM	Common Feedback Mechanism
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
IASMN	Inter-Agency Security Management Network
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PTT	Push-to-Talk
SOC	Security Operations Centre
TESS	Telecommunications Security Standards
UHF	Ultra High Frequency
UNDOS	United Nations Department of Operational Services
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department for Safety and Security
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
WFP	World Food Programme

Minutes: Bright Ocokdhogu, ETC Information Management Officer