Sudan ETC Working Group

Working Group Meeting #9
Date: 18/12/2023 **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

For more information or to be added or deleted from the mailing list please contact:
Sudan.ETC@wfp.org

Attendance

Chair	Yousif Mirza	ETC Security Comms Lead	Port Sudan

Organization	Name		Location
IOM	Amina Ahmed		Port Sudan
WFP	Habib Shashati		Port Sudan
WFP	Bright Ocokdhogu		Nairobi
WVI	Daniel Mwanzau		Port Sudan

Agenda

1. ETC Update
2. ETC Partners Update
3. AOB

Minutes

1. ETC Update

Coordination

- Regular ETC activities in all operational areas has been normal except in Wad Madani when fighting between Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) escalated there from 15 December. Thousands of displaced people continued to move towards Gedaref and other locations, and humanitarian organisations evacuated their staff from Wad Madani.
- The National Telecommunications Corporation (NTC)—the government entity responsible for regulation and clearance of telecommunication equipment and services—started operating in Port Sudan from 16 November. The ETC met with them to clarify and understand the formalities and requirements for importation of telecommunications equipment into the country. The NTC lost most of their operational systems and are starting to recover and rebuild them. The ETC provided the NTC with all the documents they requested; the NTC pledged to expedite all the requests and get back to the cluster soon. The NTC want all UN agencies and humanitarian organisations to apply individually for telecommunications equipment importation clearance. The ETC will continue to follow up on this matter with NTC in early January. A proper checklist of the exact requirements would clear the uncertainty on what is needed to import the different equipment. When the NTC shares the list with the cluster, the ETC will share it with all the partners and stakeholders.

Data connectivity

- Although the ETC has plans to expand its connectivity services to partners in various locations, the lack of equipment has caused the cluster to halt the plan. The cluster remains optimistic that this shortcoming will be resolved in January 2024 and scale up of services in Kassala, Gedaref, Wad Madani, and Kosti will proceed as planned.

Security communications

- Discussion is ongoing between the ETC and the new UNDSS management to establish a new security communications system plan for Sudan. UNDSS proposed some innovative ideas and how to repurpose the role of the Security Operations Centres (SOCs) in the country.
- Difficulty in obtaining government clearance for the importation of security communications equipment including radios and repeaters remains one of the key challenges to date. The procedure for the importation of telecommunications equipment remains unclear to humanitarian partners.

Services for communities

- The ETC is still in the scoping and planning phase with partners on the provision of services to communities (covered more in the IOM update below).

2. ETC Partners Update

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- IOM updated the participants on the ETC proposal to establish a services for communities' project in Wadi Halfa, pending full establishment of the IOM Wadi Halfa

office there. IOM is expecting the generator and other equipment to be deployed in Wadi Halfa by the end of December or beginning of 2024. When IOM has set up the office, then they will inform the ETC to start the processes in Wadi Halfa accordingly.

World Vision International (WVI)

- WVI scaled down operations in most part of the country due to the unpredictable security situation; the staff on ground have been on the move with the dynamic security situation.

The next Local ETC Working Group meeting will be held on Monday 15 January 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