![etc — EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS CLUSTER]

ETC Strategy: ETC2025

2020-2025

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2021-2025

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Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)
Global ETC
United Nations World Food Programme
www.ETCluster.org

Contents

Foreword

If the start to this decade has shown us anything, it is that we need to be adaptive and innovative in the way we face unforeseen situations. Key to this is ensuring that our focus on 'local', 'national' and 'regional' are more than just geographical references, but rather fundamental tenets of our push to be responsible and sustainable in all that we do.

The ETC2020 strategy provided the foundation, and now is the time for us to use the gains we have made as a cluster of likeminded partners. The success of the next four years will be defined by our collective actions towards the people that need us.

With your help, over the next four years, the ETC will:

1. Improve emergency response
2. Increase regional and country preparedness
3. Empower communities
4. Drive innovative and sustainable technology
5. Harness strategic partnerships

To achieve this, we need to collaborate and coordinate so that together we can deliver a world where safe and local access to reliable communications is always available for those we serve.

Brent Carbno
Global Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) Coordinator
World Food Programme

Executive Summary

The ETC2025 strategy positions the Global Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) as a provider of communication services in humanitarian settings for the period 2021 to 2025. ETC2025 is best described as *evolutionary* not revolutionary, building on the solid direction set by the ETC2020 strategy. This strategy document outlines the vision, mission, strategic pillars and associated goals of the Global ETC over the next four years.

The cluster approach aims to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian response by building partnerships. It ensures that international responses to humanitarian emergencies are predictable and accountable and have clear leadership. It aims to make the international humanitarian community better organised and more accountable and professional, so that it can be a better partner for affected people, governments, and local partners.[1]

Flowing from this strategy will be a workplan that will drive ETC2025's execution by the ETC partnership and its extensive global network. The ETC recognises that its strategy is not static, and as such it may be adapted to remain relevant in the timeframe of 2021-2025. As a global network the ETC makes a commitment to regularly reflect on its strategy to ensure the cluster is heading in a direction that best supports the people it serves – humanitarians, communities and national governments.

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[1] Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Cluster Coordination Reference Module, 2015, page 4, para 1.

Introduction

In 2015, the Global Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) fundamentally changed its value proposition under the five-year ETC2020 strategy. This was achieved by expanding beyond the ETC's traditional client base of humanitarians to also encompass communities (affected populations) and national governments. The shift under ETC2020 empowered the ETC to widen its offering into the important areas of preparedness and services for communities (S4C) which are now firmly embedded in the ETC mandate.

IASC clusters are formally activated in the context of emergencies and in the Pacific region, the ETC is formally activated on an ongoing basis in the context of preparedness. Beyond *formal* cluster activation, many of the same cluster principles are applied in support of government-led emergency or crisis sectoral coordination mechanisms.[2] Cluster activation is only recommended when there is an identified gap in the enabling environment warranting its activation. To ensure that clusters continue to operate only while they are strictly needed, plans to deactivate and transition clusters are considered from the outset. Strengthening the capacity of local partners and government are part of planning from the start. The coordination mechanism employed in response and recovery differs depending on the scenario. In the scenario where government coordination capacity is adequate and not constrained, government leads and international partners may reinforce the government's coordination capacity. In the scenario where government coordination capacity is limited or constrained, a recommendation for formal cluster activation may be put forward based on needs. In this scenario, where appropriate and possible, cluster co-leadership with government bodies and NGO partners is strongly encouraged.

Building on the vision of ETC2020, ETC2025 aims to consolidate the ETC's work in preparedness and S4C and adapt it further to today's realities. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that we need to invest more in localised response capacity, and the rapid rise in digital service delivery has taught us that data protection and privacy must be woven into the ETC's offerings balanced with the need to responsibly share data as a driver of service improvement.

Further, the ETC has seen a need to ensure its support is nuanced to meet the differing needs of sudden-onset *and* protracted crises, and ensure adequate resources are simultaneously available for both. It is incumbent upon the ETC to ensure its responses are anchored in local communities and focused on supporting regional and national institutions.

This strategy does not seek to broaden the ETC mandate but rather consolidate our offerings, mature our partnership approach, and ensure that localisation and sustainability inform our every action.

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[2] Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Cluster Coordination Reference Module, 2015, page 7, para 2

Vision

The ETC's vision is:

> A world where safe and local access to reliable communications is always available.

Mission

The ETC's mission is:

> The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster coordinates a network of partners to deliver reliable technology and services that enable resilient communication environments to meet humanitarian needs.

Strategic Pillars

1. Emergency Response
2. Regional and Country Preparedness
3. Empowered Communities
4. Innovative and Sustainable Technology
5. Strategic Partner Coordination

REF	STRATEGIC PILLAR	DESCRIPTION
1	Emergency Response	Ensure personnel, processes, and technology solutions are ready to deploy and provide communication services, as well as support local response capacities to deliver coordination and operational services in humanitarian crises.
2	Regional and Country Preparedness	Improve the resilience of regional, national, and community actors based on best-practice and mainstreaming the preparedness mindset.
3	Empowered Communities	Enable relevant and localised communication services to empower under-connected communities with the ability to communicate and access information.
4	Innovative and Sustainable Technology	Facilitate the provision of best-in-class and appropriate technology and solutions to foster a culture of innovation to deliver quality services.
5	Strategic Partner Coordination	Harness an engaged partnership network that provides outstanding coordination and support to enable better service delivery at the local level.

ETC2025 in Summary

Bringing the ETC2025 together as a value constellation:

ETC2025

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Our vision:
A world where safe and local access to reliable communications is always available.

How we do it:

ETC's mission is to **coordinate** a network of partners to **deliver** reliable technology and services that **enable** resilient communication environments to meet humanitarian needs.

Strategic pillars:

Emergency Response ▶ Empowered Communities

Regional and Country Preparedness

Innovative and Sustainable Technology

Strategic Partner Coordination

Who we engage:

Humanitarian responders

Governments and regional institutions

Communities

Global and local partners

Pillars & Goals

ETC Strategic Pillar 1: Emergency Response

Ensure personnel, processes and technology solutions are ready to deploy and provide communication services, as well as support local response capacities to deliver coordination and operational services in humanitarian crises.

	PILLAR	GOALS
1	Emergency Response	ETC is positioned to coordinate and adapt to dynamic responses.
		Responders are equipped to conduct thorough emergency needs assessments to inform response actions.
		Capacity is in place to support sudden-onset and protracted crises.
		Responders are trained to provide ETC services.
		ETC resources are strategically positioned to ensure rapid response.
		ETC processes are well defined across the disaster management cycle.
		Leverage established ETC tools and partnerships to support local actors

ETC Strategic Pillar 2: Regional and Country Preparedness

Improve the resilience of regional, national and community actors based on best-practice and mainstreaming the preparedness mindset.

	PILLAR	GOALS
2	Regional and Country Preparedness	Build capacity and develop the skill base of stakeholders through training and knowledge exchange, including access to remote learning opportunities.
		Enable coordination between governments, humanitarians, and the private sector by supporting development of joint preparedness plans prior to a disaster including the ability to call upon global ETC capacity to augment local response capacity if needed.
		Support localised response by strengthening the capacity of telecommunication regulators, line ministries, NDMOs and regional institutions.
		Support access to early warning systems for communities and national governments.

ETC Strategic Pillar 3: Empowered Communities

Enable relevant and localised communication services to empower under-connected communities with the ability to communicate and access information.

	PILLAR	GOALS
3	Empowered Communities	Improve the understanding of community preferences in relation to technology and how they would like to be connected to communicate and access information.
		Enable two-way communication between humanitarians and populations, with each other and ensure timely access to information for people in humanitarian crises.
		Deliver robust and safe communication services for vulnerable and under-connected communities before, during and after disaster.
		Deliver services that are adapted to local needs based on affordability, accessibility, and usability and endeavour to close the digital divide.

ETC Strategic Pillar 4: Innovative and Sustainable Technology

Facilitate the provision of best-in-class and appropriate technology and solutions to foster a culture of innovation to deliver quality services.

	PILLAR	GOALS
4	Innovative and Sustainable Technology	Provide technology services that aid localised approaches and meet the needs of humanitarians, governments and affected populations.
		Design technology services that are locally sustainable and allow for smooth transition from response to recovery.
		Develop ETC data protection and privacy standards in accordance with the "do no digital harm" approach.
		Ensure ETC technology solutions are accompanied by appropriate training support and knowledge transfer.
		Harness the potential of new and emerging technologies that improve the impact of humanitarian action.

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ETC Strategic Pillar 5: Strategic Partner Coordination

Harness an engaged partnership network that provides outstanding coordination and support to enable better service delivery at the local level.

	PILLAR	GOALS
5	Strategic Partner Coordination	Assemble partners to ensure the ETC can respond to the evolving needs of humanitarian crises.
		Global partner capacity is ready to rapidly deploy ETC services in coordination with local stakeholders.
		Improve the transparency of decision making through good governance and communications.
		Measure the impact of interventions to inform future actions.

Conclusion

ETC2025 charts the strategic pathway for the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster over the next four years, up to 2025. ETC2025 has been written in the midst of the generation-defining Covid-19 global pandemic that has and continues to impart many lessons, much of which has informed this strategy. ETC2025 focuses on supporting local response with sustainable technology services, empowering communities, working with national and regional counterparts on preparedness, and providing surge capacity based on needs. All of this is enabled through a network of highly engaged partners working towards common goals.

In devising ETC2025, the World Food Programme – lead agency of the ETC – convened multiple consultations and dialogues with its stakeholders. We believe that ETC2025 propels the ETC partnership in the best direction to support the people we serve. We invite you to join us on this journey.

Acknowledgements

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) wishes to acknowledge the contributions of our partners and subject matter experts for their efforts in developing the ETC2025 Strategy. A special mention goes to the WFP Innovation Accelerator (INCA) for their support to help us envision our new ETC2025 vision and mission.

Acronyms

ACF	Action Contre la Faim
CDAC	Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
MSB	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UN	United Nations
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
WFP	World Food Programme

ETC partners (as of July 2021)

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LEADERSHIP OF