ETC Annual Report 2018: Humanitarian Connections

Table of Contents

- Foreword
- 2018 in numbers
- The Operations
- Preparedness
- The Services
  - Capacity building
When we embarked on the ETC2020 strategy four years ago, the ETC outlined key pillars on which our collective efforts should be based: A focus on communication resilience; a decentralized approach in favour of a localized response; extended connectivity to affected communities when possible; and a greater involvement from a range of non-traditional actors and partners. Through the Cluster’s work, in 2018 we continued to cement our ETC2020 strategy implementation.

Innovation is essential. I often ask my team: how do we stay ahead of the curve, provide technology solutions that make a difference and give a voice to the most vulnerable when disaster strikes? Innovation is often more than the technology itself - it’s how we use it. In March 2018, we launched the
ETC Connect mobile application to help gather feedback from Rohingya women in Cox’s Bazar about their daily issues. A few months later during the ETC Plenary meeting in Luxembourg, the Cluster officially endorsed the use of drones as an ETC service. Keeping ourselves updated is also at the heart of innovation. The Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project was set up shortly after the Plenary to spearhead a much-needed review of our common security communications systems (SCS). Keeping our field personnel safe while improving the efficiency, cost-effectiveness and accessibility of security telecommunications is a cornerstone of our efforts to meet the growing number of emergencies.

Partnerships matter. The impact of ETC responses hinges on the strength of our partners and the Cluster’s ability to help reconnect affected communities. As the ETC operation in Dominica was coming to a close in 2018, our partners’ Hurricane Maria response and the connectivity provided through Services for Communities were both recognized with a GLOMO award at the Mobile World Congress. Shortly after, one of our ETC2020 flagship projects came to fruition during the ETC Open Day event in May 2018 when Crisis Connectivity Charter members signed their donation agreements.

Preparedness pays. In September 2018, nearly five years after Typhoon Haiyan decimated the Philippines, the country was better prepared for Typhoon Mangkhut and as a result, the ETC was not called upon to support the government’s response efforts. Throughout the year, we’ve continued to expand our emergency preparedness activities, working with governments, national disaster management agencies, the private sector and local actors including in Haiti, Madagascar, Panama and Dominica as well as across the Pacific region where the ETC marked two years of preparedness activities in November.

18 countries – 9 emergency responses and support to preparedness activities in 9 different nations in 2018. The impact of the Cluster’s efforts is being felt around the world. I am deeply moved by the dedication and tireless efforts of our ETC partners. Without them, none of our work would be possible. As we help enable technology solutions for a changing humanitarian landscape, I look forward to continuing to make our ETC2020 vision a reality.

Enrica Porcari

Chair of the ETC

Chief Information Officer and Director, World Food Programme
2018 in numbers
The ETC was active in 18 countries
Emergency operations: 9 countries
Preparedness operations: 9 countries

91% of users satisfied with ETC services – a 3% increase from 2017

7 satellite operators signed donation agreements as part of the Crisis Connectivity Charter
5 large-scale capacity building courses conducted with 95 participants from 39+ organizations

1 GSMA Global Mobile Award for best mobile innovation for supporting emergency or humanitarian situations shared with Ericsson for the 2017 Caribbean response

Social media growth: 53% increase in Facebook reach 142% increase in Twitter impressions LinkedIn channel began, gaining 250+ followers
Since 2017, hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas have fled violence from Myanmar’s Rakhine state and sought refuge in Bangladesh. Over 900,000 people are still amassed in overcrowded camps, often with little to no access to information. In 2018, the ETC continued to work with the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISGC) to identify and address information communication technology (ICT) gaps in the humanitarian response.

In addition to providing radio and Internet connectivity to humanitarians in Cox’s Bazar, the ETC implemented several Services for Communities (S4C) initiatives to help Rohingya refugees access information and improve two-way communication with humanitarian workers. The ETC Connect mobile app was launched in March 2018, with a daily average of 800 feedback and information requests from Rohingya refugees, giving a voice to the most vulnerable. In addition, an agreement with the Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh (ACLAB) was signed to formalise ETS efforts to help extend community Radio Naf’s coverage from 50 to 90% across refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar.
*In Bangladesh, all clusters are being referred to as sectors. The ETC is therefore operating as the ET Sector (ETS) with all project plans, appeals, services and deployments adhering to established procedures.

*Operation supported by: TSF, IOM, BRAC, UNHCR, UNDSS

Impact Factors

- 27 organizations supported by ETS services
- 3 sites provided with Internet access
- 40 information hubs equipped with multimedia kits, Internet access and power.
- 70% funding received out of USD 1.2 million
Excerpt: *ETC Connect - Women Enabling Rohingya Women*

For the Rohingyas in Cox’s Bazar, the access to mobile phones is restricted. Women have few mechanisms to lodge complaints confidentially to aid workers. BRAC is using ETC Connect to strengthen accountability and monitoring for one of its projects with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which is made up by 90% women including Rohingya community mobilizers, who go door-to-door to disseminate lifesaving messages related to health, water sanitation and hygiene (WaSH), nutrition, protection and emergency preparedness. [Read the full story](#)

**Central African Republic: Conflict**

**December 2013 – ongoing**

Since 2013, severe violence and insecurity have led to widespread population displacement in the Central African Republic. The collapse of state, law and order as well as public services have further exacerbated the situation. The humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic remains highly volatile with 2.5 million people in urgent need of assistance. Insecurity and violence continue to hamper access to ICT network installations in priority areas.

Amidst the challenges, the ETC continued to provide security telecommunications, connectivity and power throughout 2018, helping humanitarians deliver vital aid safely and effectively to those most vulnerable.

In January 2018, the ETC carried out the first ever ICT4Gov training over the course of three days, developing the knowledge and skills to plan, implement and manage ICT solutions in support of emergency preparedness and response as well as enhance collaboration and cooperation between government stakeholders and humanitarian responders. Thirty-one participants from 25 different government departments, humanitarian and UN entities shared their experiences and learned about ICT emergency preparedness.

*Operation supported by: OCHA, UNDSS, WFP, UNICEF, IOM, Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg, Cordaid*
Impact Factors

- **55** organizations supported by ETC services
- **10** common operational sites provided with internet connectivity
- **8** common operational areas provided with security telecommunications
- **36%** funding received out of USD 1.5 million

Look closer

2 - Photo: WFP
Excerpt: First ever ICT4Gov training completed in CAR

The instructors’ experiences shared were truly inspiring. I think most of us will remember the living conditions described by Mohamedou during his deployment in the post-earthquake response in Haiti as well as Nono’s radio frequency and equipment challenges in Lebanon while supporting the Whole of Syria operation. Read the full story

Democratic Republic of Congo: Conflict

November 2017 – October 2018

While the country has known decades of political unrest, insecurity and violence, the conflict in the Kasai region of DRC escalated in April 2016, resulting in an estimated 762,000 internally displaced persons (IDP). In addition, 2 million people are internally displaced in the Kivus and Tanganyika regions. In 2017, the ETC was activated to establish vital security telecommunications services in all three regions to support humanitarian safety and security in remote areas.

In 2018, the ETC continued to provide security telecommunications, expanding the existing network and radio services in 8 common operational areas in addition to information management, coordination and radio training. In October 2018, the ETC delivered a five-day training on digital mobile radio (DMR) equipment to 21 participants from 6 UN agencies and ETC partners to enhance the expertise of their radio operators.

As the overall connectivity improved, ETC operations in DRC were officially closed in October 2018 and service ownership was transferred to the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

Operation supported by: WFP, MSB, UNDSS, UNHCR, WFP
Dominica: Natural disaster
September 2017 – March 2018

In August and September 2017, category-5 hurricanes Irma and Maria hit the Caribbean region — leaving a trail of devastation, including in Dominica. Under the leadership of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency’s (CDEMA), the ETC deployed shared internet services to government, humanitarians and affected populations where infrastructure was heavily damaged.

ETC partners joined efforts with local partners and the Ministry of Telecommunications to help restore and provide Internet connectivity in seven locations in Dominica and one location in Sint Maarten. ETC Services for Communities (S4C) were also provided in several locations including in Marigot, Wesley and Delices helping affected populations reconnect with loved ones and stay informed of the relief efforts in their communities. Throughout the operation, nearly 3000 users registered to use ETC internet in Dominica, supporting humanitarians and affected populations.
A three-day Preparedness workshop in Roseau was held in 2018 with WFP, CDEMA, NDMA, Ericsson Response, Google and Facebook. IT specialists from the Government of Dominica, UN agencies and the private sector learned about using innovative technologies – including drones and solar panels - in emergency situations.

ETC operations were officially closed in March 2018 and the equipment was handed over to the Government of Dominica. Since then, the country has become a key player in emergency preparedness and resilience amongst the Caribbean islands in the region.

Operation supported by: Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg, NetHope, WFP

Impact Factors

- 50 organizations supported by ETC services
- 8 sites provided with internet connectivity across Dominica and Sint Maarten
- 45% funding received out of required USD 1.9 million
Excerpt: Dominica – connecting people through technology

When Dominicans realized that Wi-Fi had been restored at the airports, they gathered at the gates. The ETC team began to register these users. Just 30, 40 or 50 seconds after turning on the phones and logging in, hundreds of messages began to pour in on their phones. Then, the first Skype and WhatsApp calls came in, as did the news that the house was gone but relatives were fine.

Read the full story

Iraq: Conflict
August 2014 – March 2019

As part of its Services for Communities activities, in 2018, the ETC started to plan a project with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to provide the technical setup (ticketing system, reliable power supply and mobile phone charging station for four mobile phones) of three Community Resource Centres (CRCs) in West Mosul, East Mosul and Fallujah. With support from the ETC, the CRCs will be able to gather feedback from affected communities on the assistance and services received. The CRCs serve as coordination, information and referral hubs where all community members (IDPs, returnees and host community) can gather information on emergency, recovery and stabilization services - provided by government and humanitarian partners - to assist in their return and reintegration process.

Operation supported by: Ericsson Response, WFP, UNHCR, USAID, UNAMI, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), ACTED, Terre des Hommes (TDH), Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF), World Health Organisation (WHO), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC).
Impact Factors

- **102** organizations supported by ETC services
- **21** sites provided with ETC services
- **7,549** total Internet connectivity vouchers distributed to affected communities as part of the ETC’s first ever Services for Communities project
- **3** Community Resource Centres (CRC) supported with Internet, power and screens
- **0%** funding received out of required USD 1.9 million (operated on carryover from 2017)

Look Closer

Excerpt: *Hope Emerges in West Mosul*
The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), globally led by WFP, is preparing to install a TV screen on which awareness messages and daily session schedules can be broadcast, a generator to use as a back-up power solution, Internet connectivity and a ticketing system. This is part of the ETC’s Services for Communities (S4C) project to ensure that all those involved in the response have access to life changing—and sometimes lifesaving—communication and information. Read the full story.

Libya: Conflict
October 2018 - ongoing

Civil conflict, political unrest, insecurity and a failed economy have taken their toll on Libya since the Arab Spring uprising in 2011. Roughly 823,000 people including IDPs, host communities, refugees and migrants require humanitarian assistance. The evacuation status in Tripoli was finally lifted in February 2018. Since then, relief agencies have been re-entering into the North African country.

In 2018, the World Food Programme (WFP) was requested to lead the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) in Libya to coordinate the ICT response by providing shared connectivity and facilitate security telecommunications services in common operational areas and collaborate with inter-sector initiatives to increase accountability towards affected communities.

The ETC worked closely with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), on security telecommunications to help ensure the safety humanitarians and their operations. The ETC also conducted an ICT assessment to identify gaps and priority areas for future ETC services.

*In Libya, is operating as a sector. The ETC is therefore referred to as the ET Sector (ETS) with all project plans, appeals, services and deployments adhering to established procedures.

Operation supported by: WFP, UNSMIL, UNDSS
The conflict in North-East Nigeria continues to be one of the most severe crises in the world. In the three most affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, 7.7 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. Since its activation in November 2016, the ETS has been providing communications services to the entire response community in operational areas across North-East Nigeria where services from local providers are unreliable or non-operational.

Throughout 2018, the ETS maintained Internet connectivity and provided security telecommunications services in five humanitarian hubs in Borno State. In line with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) humanitarian hubs’ deployment plan, ETS services were set up in three additional hubs (Banki, Damasak and Monguno) during the year. In Damaturu, Yobe State, security telecommunications services were provided to help ensure reliable communications between humanitarian.
Throughout 2018, the ETS maintained Internet connectivity and provided security telecommunications services in five humanitarian hubs in Borno State.

In June 2018, the Nigerian Ministry of Communications granted the ETS the required radio licences to implement the full security telecommunications plan across North-East Nigeria and help bolster the safety of the humanitarians on the ground. In parallel, over 450 humanitarians were trained from 31 organizations on security communications procedures.

The ETS hosted a Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project mission in November 2018 to review the Emergency Communications Systems (ECS) in place. Following the recommendations from the mission a plan was finalised to strengthen the ECS in North-East Nigeria. Additional ETS services are planned for expansion in addition to 3 new operational areas.

*In Nigeria, all clusters are being referred to as sectors. The ETC is therefore operating as the ET Sector (ETS) with all project plans, appeals, services and deployments adhering to established procedures.

Operation supported by: SIDA, Norwegian MOFA, Ericsson, the Government of Luxembourg, German Foreign Office, MSB, USAID, WFP

http://twitter.com/statuses/1051489948489146368
Impact Factors

- 9 common operational areas identified for provision of ETS services
- 106 organisations supported by ETS services
- 2931 humanitarian users
- 44% funding received out of required USD 5.5 million

Look Closer

5 - Photo: WFP / Erika Iglesias
**Excerpt: Voices from north east Nigeria**

Although based in Abuja, Miriam Kpanaki from Christian Aid UK spends extended periods in Maiduguri. This Humanitarian Programme Officer is the coordinator of the Emergency Humanitarian Response project funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), a key ETS donor. She helps some of the most vulnerable populations affected by the conflict in Konduga, close to Maiduguri. When I asked her about the Internet services provided by the ETS, she replied firmly: “The most reliable services in Maiduguri. Every night I have to coordinate activities, organise partners and write reports. I know I can count on the ETS connectivity services to finalise my tasks on time.” Read the full story

**Syria: Conflict**
January 2013 – ongoing

Syria is one of the most complex and dynamic humanitarian crises in the world today. Years of civil conflict have devastated the country and forced over half of the population to flee their homes. 13.1 million people, often in hard to reach areas, require humanitarian assistance. Since its activation in 2013, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) has been operating under the Whole of Syria (WoS) approach, which comprises activities in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

In 2018, the ETC in Syria continued to provide Internet connectivity and security telecommunications services to the response community across eleven common operational areas. Security telecommunications, radio programming and training are essential ETC services that enable humanitarians to operate safely under extremely harsh working conditions. Reliable Internet connectivity is sparse across the country. Four additional locations are planned to extend the ETC network for relief aid organizations.

*Operation supported by: UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDSS, OCHA*
Impact Factors

- 11 common operational areas provided with security telecommunications
- 2 common operational areas provided with Internet connectivity
- 69% funding received out of required USD 0.8 million

Look Closer
Excerpt: Connectivity sparks hope in Syria

The ETC is entering its sixth year of operations in Syria, a country torn apart by nearly eight years of brutal conflict. To date, 13.5 million people require humanitarian assistance and over half the population have been forced from their homes. Amid the complexities of this operation, Balamine reflects on the one-year milestone since he took on the post of ETC Coordinator in Syria. Having previously worked in Niger, and Zimbabwe, Balamine is no stranger to emergencies. He admits, though, that “Not everyone can do this job. I’m still learning, and I am very proud to be entrusted with this role. Read the full story.

Yemen: Conflict
April 2015 – ongoing

Following years of conflict and compounded by economic decline, large scale famine and the collapse of public institutions, Yemen has become the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. 80 per cent of the entire population requires some form of humanitarian assistance and protection. 20 million Yemenis need help securing food and a staggering 14 million people are in acute humanitarian need.

A UN-brokered ceasefire in Al Hudaydah was agreed to during peace talks in Sweden on 13 December 2018 and came into effect on 18 December.

To support humanitarian operations on the ground, the ETC continues to operate in Yemen, providing emergency coordination, basic security telecommunications and connectivity services in five sites across the country, namely Sana’a, Sa’ada, Al Hudaydah, Ibb and Aden.

80 per cent of the entire population requires some form of humanitarian assistance and protection.

In other areas, ETC internet connectivity was a literal lifeline for humanitarians particularly in volatile areas, such as Hodeidah.

In Aden, the ETC provided its first ever inter-agency training to humanitarians in Yemen, building local capacity on Training of Trainers, Information Management, radio programming, IT networking, VSAT satellite training, IT Emergency Management to ensure a strengthened response in 2019. This capacity building enabled participants, as local staff, to better support the provision of lifesaving IT services in areas which are inaccessible to international staff, and enable them to conduct capacity building in their own organisations as well as give them the opportunity to learn about new technologies. Due to the success of the capacity building, a second one was held later in the year in Sana’a.

Operation supported by: UNDSS, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP
Impact Factors

- 6 new hubs opened with provision of ETC internet connectivity
- 2 inter-agency capacity building sessions conducted with 52 staff trained from 23 organisations
- 25 Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) installed with IT equipment to support cholera response
- 1,352 calls received and resolved in ETC Helpdesk
- 5 Communications Centres (COMCECs) upgraded

Look Closer

Excerpt: Wali Noor – *Knowledge will remain*

“Being among those helping out millions of people is a great honour, especially when you hear positive feedback,” says Wali. “It helps to keep this in mind amid an airstrike hitting or a day which is particularly hard. These days always make you think of your own family.”

Read the full story

http://twitter.com/statuses/1070244312691195905

Preparedness

The Pacific Islands

Since its activation at the end of 2016, the ETC has been leading the preparedness activities in the Pacific Island region, one of the most disaster-prone areas in the world. In 2018, the ETC continued to engage
National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) and organisations involved in emergency preparedness to enhance their response systems and mechanisms as well as to build resilience to future disasters.

The ETC conducted an ICT Capacity Assessments (ICA) in four north Pacific Island Countries (PICs), namely Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), Republic of Palau and Nauru. These missions evaluated the current communications systems and provided recommendations as part of the governments’ readiness plans.

In addition, the ETC convened a local ETC meeting in Tonga with key stakeholders where a Lessons Learned exercise was held following the onset of Severe Tropical Cyclone Gita that struck Tonga in February 2018. WFP, in partnership with the Fijian Government, hosted the third annual Pacific Regional ETC workshop with a focus on localizing and adapting regional initiatives to the country level. The workshop brought together over 40 stakeholders from countries across the South and North Pacific, including National Disaster Management Offices, government ministries, regulators, NGOs, the Red Cross, the private sector, academics and UN agencies.

Panama

In February 2018, an ETC meeting gathered regional stakeholders involved in emergency telecommunications, including the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency’s (CDEMA) to strengthen links between the government, private sector and humanitarian organizations. Collaborative opportunities with CDEMA will help strengthen ETC preparedness in the Caribbean region and form part of preparedness activities throughout 2019.

Haiti

In March 2018, the ETC conducted a preparedness mission with the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSMA), which resulted in the launch a country-led emergency telecommunications coordination group and the initiation of a project to deploy a platform for public early warning alerts using mobile networks.

Madagascar

In August 2018, the government of Madagascar inaugurated a new Telecommunications Operations Centre for Risk and Disaster Management with the support of the ETC to facilitate access to information, improve decision-making and response efficiency in emergencies. In addition, support was provided to the national disaster management agency (BNGRC) to establish a country-led emergency telecommunications coordination group (TICGRC), to help develop strategic efforts in emergency preparedness and response activities.
Capacity building

The ability to rapidly and effectively deploy vital technology solutions when disaster strikes depends on partners being ready – technically, physically and mentally. Training and large-scale simulations are essential to emergency preparedness. In 2018, WFP and its ETC partners trained closely together to make sure people with the right technical skill-sets were ready to deploy.

Overall training figures
Services for Communities workshop

21 participants trained

10 organizations attended

The first-ever ETC Services for Communities (S4C) training was held at World Food Programme HQ in Rome to help ETC coordinators and partners improve their knowledge of S4C requirements and considerations in future projects.

Supported by: Government of Luxembourg, WFP

Let's Net

12 participants trained

7 organizations attended
Participants were trained on deployment scenarios for ETC data and voice solutions, implementing different types of connectivity and providing ETC services to end-users.

Supported by: WFP, Government of Luxembourg, Ericsson Response

"My main takeaway from Let’s Net is understanding the importance of having the right team with the right set of skills and experience to successfully provide vital communication services to humanitarians on tight schedules. Let’s Net was also the perfect opportunity for me to learn new practical skills and meet other IT humanitarians with different experiences and exposure to emergencies." - Ahmed Yusuf

Let’s Comm Digital

11 participants trained
8 organizations attended

Participants gathered in Luxembourg for 5 days of training in digital mobile radio (DMR). The objective was to learn how to operate DMR networks to help make humanitarians safer in the field.

Supported by: Government of Luxembourg, WFP

Gear.Up

20 participants trained
9 organizations attended

Telecommunications specialists and logisticians descended on Neuhausen, Germany for the joint ETC and Logistics Cluster simulation training, gear.UP. Participants operated in near-field conditions to test quick decision-making, problem-solving and intensive teamwork.

Supported by: THW, WFP, Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg

Services for Communities

Throughout 2018, the ETC continued when possible to help affected communities reconnect with loved ones and access information, helping them make better informed decisions. Providing power to mobile phone recharging stations and Internet connectivity for community resource centres helped internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returning communities better understand the help available.

Here are notable highlights from ETC Services for Communities (S4C) in 2018:

Bangladesh

Information needs assessment

ETC' S4C contributed to the information needs assessment, led by Internews, which identified gaps and challenges affected communities face when trying to access Internet connectivity and telecommunications services.

40 Information Hubs

In collaboration with the UN's Communicating with Communities (CwC) Working Group, 40 Information Hubs with Internet connectivity services, multimedia kits and electrical equipment were set up in Cox's Bazar camps, Bangladesh.

Radio Naf

Vital information about basic services such as food distribution, health and hygiene activities is now reaching 90% of the settlements in the camp through Radio Naf, a community radio station set up by ETC S4C partners. In addition to programming about essential services, there are news programs, special programming for children, and time set aside for questions from the community.

Radio Naf is just one of the services offered, along with multimedia projectors, sound systems, petrol and solar power, as well as 3G mobile Internet connectivity covering 29 information hubs across the area.

ETC Connect

In consultation with Internews, ETC S4C coordinated and developed a mobile app called ETC Connect which is designed to collect feedback from affected populations and humanitarian partners. The S4C programme followed up with ETC Connect training for partners including WFP, MedAir, BBC Media and CwC WG.

http://twitter.com/statuses/1064879815235383296
In May 2018 during the annual ETC Plenary meeting in Luxembourg, ETC partners unanimously adopted the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), or drones, as an ETC service to develop and integrate the safe coordination of the technology in humanitarian operations. WFP, as global lead agency of the ETC, continued to develop the use drones in humanitarian operations with the support of the Belgium government through capacity building training, flight and safety regulations as well as procuring and pre-positioning drone equipment in regional bureaux.

Throughout the year, WFP conducted a series of UAS training including in Mozambique, Madagascar, Colombia and Bolivia composed of three modules – Let’s COORDINATE, Let’s FLY and Let’s MAP – to help regional, national and local stakeholders develop, integrate and coordinate the requirements for the safe, ethical and efficient use of drones and the data captured for emergency preparedness and response activities.

Because of the UAS training activities in Mozambique, a south south collaboration with Madagascar was initiated between the two countries to share lessons learned, best practices and strengthen ties in future emergencies.

*Supported by: The Government of Belgium, WFP*
Impact factors

- **200** participants trained
- **60** organizations and agencies attended
- **5** high risk regions with pre-positioned UAS equipment

Look closer

9 - Photo: WFP / Katarzyna Chojnacka
Excerpt: A South-South collaboration takes flight: Madagascar and Mozambique launch advanced drone training

The sun was out for the first day of spring in the Southern hemisphere as the Advanced Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) training, Let’s FLY, took to the warm skies above Antananarivo, Madagascar on 23 September. The World Food Programme (WFP) practical training was the first inter-state, South-South collaboration of its kind, pairing facilitators and participants from governmental disaster management offices of Mozambique (INGC) and Madagascar (BNGRC).

Read the full story.

Security telecommunications

Since May 2018, the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) project has been actively working on recommendations for future UN security telecommunications systems (connectivity, applications and procedures) as well as support UNSMS decision making to streamline operational requirements and investments in the field. TESS, which is mandated by UNDSS, was requested and initiated by the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN) Technology Advisory Group (TAG) and the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC). Throughout 2018, TESS worked in collaboration with the ETC, IASMN, NGOs and UN agencies to standardize the current technologies in use and the long-term security communications standards while providing active onsite and remote support to field operations. The ETC nominated two representatives in the TESS Interagency Steering Group, which provides the overall technical guidance to the project in addition to being involved in all TESS working groups.

The latest UNDSS Communiqué (July 30, 2018) recognized the possible use of public mobile phone networks as a security communications tool. VHF radio networks are now to be considered mainly as a fallback emergency communication system (ECS) in most of the field operations where mobile phone networks are dependable/redundant enough to be used as the prime ECS.

‘With this project, we all, each of us, can contribute, can make this project work, and leave our mark on field staff safety. Even if in the process, we only save one single field staff’s life, it will be worth it.’ – Peter Casier, TESS Project Manager Read more in this interview
Impact factors

- 13 technical support missions conducted in-country
- 40 countries supported remotely
Partnerships in action

A look back at collaborations and accomplishments in the ETC community over the past twelve months.

**Ericsson Response** and the **World Food Programme** jointly accepted the 2018 GSMA Global Mobile Award for Best Mobile Innovation Supporting Emergency or Humanitarian Situations for their work during the 2017 Caribbean response.

As of late 2018, approximately 50,000+ Venezuelans had fled to Brazil to escape socioeconomic collapse. An estimated 800 more crossed the border each day making it the largest migration crisis in South American history. ETC Partners **UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency** and **Télécoms Sans Frontières - TSF** supported connectivity at humanitarian call centres, putting migrants in touch with loved ones. TSF also marked its 20th anniversary in 2018.

**The International Organization for Migration (IOM)** worked closely with ETC Services for Communities to plan Community Resource Centres (CRCs) in Iraq. The centres will be invaluable for Iraqis returning home after years of war.
The ETC joined the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** initiative, Girls in ICT Day, to inspire more females to choose technology careers.

“We are humanitarians, not technologists - sometimes the best recipe for success is not to replicate something sub optimally but to partner with a technical expert” said Chair of the ETC, Enrica Porcari, at the GSMA Mobile 360 Series in Kigali, Rwanda on innovative approaches and partnerships for delivering digital humanitarian assistance. Engaging with private sector stakeholders that can bring cutting-edge expertise is key to implementing the ETC’s humanitarian technology agenda.

The **GSMA** Humanitarian Connectivity Workshop for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region looked at bridging the information-communication gaps between humanitarians and mobile network operators. The ETC’s Preparedness and Resilience Officer, Salma Farouque, spoke on the value of information and communication technologies for disaster preparedness and response.

The **NetHope** Summit 2018 drew out productive discussions about the responsibilities inherent in managing big data as well as the impact of strong data partnerships. Gabriela Alvarado, Chief of IT Emergency Preparedness and Response for WFP, spoke about the added value of data in emergency operations.

On 17 May 2018, Crisis Connectivity Charter signatories, **Arabsat**, **Eutelsat**, **Inmarsat**, **Intelsat**, **Global Eagle / EMC**, **Hispasat** and **SES**, turned their commitments into reality. The seven charter signatories made their donation agreements official in Luxembourg City during a signing ceremony with WFP, on behalf of the ETC. The in-kind donation agreements include equipment, practical training and three months of free airtime in each country where the charter will be activated. These will help improve access to life-saving connectivity in future emergencies for both humanitarians and affected communities.

The **Government of Luxembourg** hosted the 2018 ETC Annual Plenary in May, welcoming 40 participants from 20 organizations. Key outcomes from the plenary: clarifying the ETC partnership model, adopting drones as an ETC service and an agreement to enhance collaboration on Services for Communities. Partners indicated a desire to develop more projects in energy and connectivity as well as the area of preparedness. The ETC launched its first Open Day in Luxembourg City, on the heels of the Plenary, to publicly showcase humanitarian technology solutions deployed by the cluster.
Stand-by partner activity in 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Operation(s)</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Mission days</th>
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