



Issue No. 4
January – April 2016

IT Responders in Action

Emergencies currently supported:

Level 3

- Yemen
- Iraq
- Syria
- Republic of South Sudan

Level 2

- Central African Republic

Introduction

Time flies in the IT emergency preparedness and response world. Here we are in May, with the second edition of IT Emergency Responders in Action newsletter of the year.

Throughout the last quarter, our team has displayed two of the most important qualities needed for life in the field and successful emergency response.

Our first story describes innovation and quick thinking in Yemen where our guys on the ground have made the most of the available equipment. The second story celebrates collaboration between FITTEST and the SCOPE team who are working to ensure that SCOPE becomes a standard solution deployed in emergencies.

The last quarter has also seen our colleagues in Geneva and Rome being integrated back into the RMTF fold. This is great news for all of us and an opportunity to be one team again.

FITTEST January - April 2016



Participants trained by FITTEST

100+

Missions

15



Shipments of equipment

99



L2 and L3 emergencies supported

4



New countries with LESS mobile connectivity kits

10+



Thinking Outside the Box

Emergency responders from FITTEST, WFP's IT emergency response team, have been in Yemen under the

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) umbrella since April 2015 getting the job done.

Their main challenge? There is not enough equipment to go around. Importing security telecommunications is a major issue in Yemen, as is purchasing it locally. And

when challenges do not have obvious solutions, our resourceful team resorts to thinking outside the box.

Christer Wessberg, a FITTEST telecommunications expert, deployed to Yemen with the aim of improving the safety of humanitarians by augmenting existing radio telecommunication networks. His immediate challenge was to actually find the equipment to build a radio room.

Under the experienced guidance of Michael Dirksen, an IT emergency response veteran, Christer may possibly uninstall equipment not currently in use in Sa'ada, some 320 km away, and reinstall it in the new location. This same equipment had previously been uninstalled from another office so it continues its tour of the country!

CBT Training

What did three FITTEST technical experts and one FITTEST training specialist do for a week in Johannesburg?

Moving towards more effective ways to deliver food assistance, Cash-Based Transfers (CBT) is one of WFP's most innovative programmes.

To learn more about CBT and how it ties in with their work in emergencies, three experienced FITTEST responders, Habib Shashati, Khawar Ilyas and Ekue Ayih, and FITTEST training specialist, Angelique Favor, travelled to Johannesburg in April to take part in the multi-functional CBT training.

In particular, they were interested in learning more about one particular thread of CBT: SCOPE, WFP's beneficiary and transfer management platform. SCOPE allows WFP to get to know the people it serves better, enabling more personal and helpful assistance. In emergencies, WFP staff register beneficiaries through an offline smartphone and give a **SCOPECARD** to each household that can be used immediately to purchase food. All of this in the same day.

WFP's IT Preparedness and Response Branch is collaborating closely with the Beneficiary IT Solutions Service unit to ensure that all the necessary training, procedures, budgets and equipment are finalized and approved to enable the deployment of SCOPE in emergencies.

During the 5-day course, participants learned that ICT

provides much more than just data and telecommunications support during the CBT intervention and set-up phase. In fact, the ICT aspect of CBT is the foundation of different functional areas as it is directly involved in beneficiary registration, service desk support and more. Procurement, programme, finance and logistics all rely on SCOPE and the infrastructure required to keep it up and running.

Gathering people from different units and countries in one room enriched the learning experience. "As the training days passed by," Habib said, "I started to understand how CBT, especially SCOPE, works not only from the ICT side but from all the other units' point of view."

"There's definitely more to learn, and mistakes will be made," Angelique explains, "however, I do feel I've a broader understanding now of CBT and aim to contribute in the planning and preparation of CBT response in emergencies. At least, that's my plan."



The next IT Responders in Action newsletter will be issued in July 2016.

If you would like to provide us with your feedback or suggest topics for later issues, please contact us at: wfp.fittest@wfp.org

For enquiries about equipment and services, please contact: wfp.ghs@wfp.org
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