Télécoms Sans Frontières

- Number 1 Humanitarian NGO specialized in Emergency Telecoms
- Since creation in 1998: missions in over 40 countries
- Emergency telecommunication available to the entire humanitarian community
- 3 minute-call for each affected family
- More than 350 NGOs and UN agencies helped
- Supported by some of the biggest companies from the telecoms industry
- Partner of the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO)
- Partner of UNICEF and OCHA
- 2005: deployment in 10 countries to the benefit of 50,000 people and more than 250 NGOs and UN agencies
How it all started

The idea for Télécoms Sans Frontières was the result of a simple observation made after many years’ experience with general humanitarian charities, based on listening to those in need. During missions responding to the crisis in the Balkans and in Kurdistan during the 1st Gulf War, TSF’s founders realized that, in addition to medical and food aid, there was a critical need for reliable emergency telecommunications services. Conflicts and emergencies often led to massive civilian displacement and separated families. And affected populations are often left with no communications infrastructure in place to find assistance and loved ones.

During early missions, TSF’s founders were often approached by refugees with scraps of paper asking them, for example:

“When you go home, please call my family at this number, tell them I’m alive, uncle has been killed but I’m alive and I’m at the refugee camp in Stenkovac.”

To address the need for communications services, TSF bought its first satellite phone and the organization was born. Since this time, on every TSF mission we have offered a 3-minute call to any affected family.

TSF soon found that the international response teams that deploy to emergencies also had a critical need for reliable telecommunications services in the first days after an emergency. TSF therefore expanded its operations, improved its technology, and began to establish rapidly deployable emergency telecommunications centers to serve UN, government, and NGO humanitarian workers, and developed a reputation for being among the first to arrive after disasters.
Humanitarian call service

*Communicate*: a universal expectation

- TSF offers a 3 minute call per affected family
- Each family can call anywhere in the world
  - Allows personalized assistance
  - Facilitates *family reunion*
  - Offers *mental support*
  - Reassures *family abroad* left without any news since the disaster
Rescue and relief coordination

Telecommunications indispensable in emergencies to save lives

Emergency Telecom Centres offer:
- Broadband Internet wireless connections
- Phone and fax lines
- Visio conference service
- Technical assistance
- Information on the disaster (UNOSAT maps, coordination meetings minutes...)

Communication means facilitate:
- Exchange of information, assessment and needs transmission between field crews and headquarters
- Coordination of rescue teams in the field
Satellite Equipment

- Mini M: phone, fax, low speed Internet
- BGan: phone, fax, broadband Internet
- GAN M4: phone, fax, Internet
- RB-Gan: Broadband Internet
- Thuraya and Iridium phone
Inmarsat Mini M

*Worldwide coverage*

- Very Light: 4kg
- Phone
- Fax (2400 bit/s)
- Data transmission (2400 bit/s)
- Can be installed on a car or ship
GAN M4

Worldwide Coverage

Offers the following services:

- High speed RNIS service (64 kbts/s)
- Data 56 kbts/s (North America)
- High quality sound
- MPDS (Mobil Packet Data service)
- Mini M Voice
- Mini M Fax
Regional BGan

- Very Light:
- 10 PCs connected to broadband Internet (144 kbit/s)
- Communication cost based on volume transfered
The BGAN terminal

*MSS top class performance*

- Weights only 2.5 kg
- Broadband Internet (492 kbit/s)
- Wifi connection integrated
- 10 PC connected to Broadband Internet
- 7 simultaneous phone lines
Our Partners
Number of missions

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Human resources

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First Responder of the ETC and IHP

Emergency Telecoms Cluster:
- OCHA is the process owner
- UNICEF leads data comms
- WFP leads security comms

International Humanitarian Partners:
- UNDAC support

Deployments in 2006 within the partnership:
- Suriname (UNDAC support)
- Indonesia-Java (UNDAC support and ETC)
- Lebanon (ETC)
- Democratic Republic of Congo (ETC)
The Recognition of the United Nations

“As demonstrated recently in Suriname and Indonesia, this programme will provide reliable telecom services so responders can more effectively do their jobs and save lives in the first days of an emergency.”

He continued, “This is the kind of successful public-private partnership we need as we confront increasingly challenging emergencies around the world.”

Jan Egeland, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, on the partnership between the UN and TSF. (New York 2006).
How does TSF deploy?

Capacity to deploy in the disaster area within 24h

- Worldwide 24h monitoring (news, specialized monitoring web sites, earthquake notifications, sms, email and RSS alerts, reliefweb, Virtual OSOCC...)
- Emergency crisis with communication problems
- Departure of one or several teams from TSF’s 3 bases (commercial flight)
- TSF coordinates with OCHA and UNICEF’s regional offices
- Telecom Common Services within 24 hours for all emergency actors
- Light and mobile satellite equipment deployable within minutes (max 200kg) network covering 98% of the Globe
- Service provided from D+1 to D+30 or until
  1) Re-establishment of telecom infrastructures
  2) UN agencies and relief organisations to set up own comms
  3) Handover to Phase II in ETC
TSF in Asia and the Pacific

Base created in January 2004

Objectives:
- Deploy faster in emergencies
- Coordinate with local and regional emergency response agencies

Partnerships:
- Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC)
- Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)

TSF deployments in Asia since January 2004:

Java – Indonesia: Earthquake – May - June 2006
Pakistan: Earthquake – Oct - Nov 2005
The Philippines: Typhoon - Jan 2004
Large Mudslide on Leyte Island - Feb 2006
Typhoon Durian & Utor - Dec 2006
Indonesia: Tsunami – Dec 04 Feb 05
Sri Lanka: Tsunami - Dec 2004 to June 2006
Iran: Bam earthquake - Jan 2004
TSF’s deployment to the Philippines
*Typhoon Durian – Catanduanes Island*

- TSF is on alert as Durian approaches the Philippines
- Typhoon strikes. Damages to telecommunications are reported
- TSF Asia contacts OCHA and UNICEF in Bangkok
- TSF Asia contacts NDCC in Manila and offers support
- UNDAC team on stand by
- No international assistance requested (except inkind donations and funds)
- UNDAC team stands down
- NDCC requests TSF to deploy to Catanduanes
- TSF deploys to Manila on a commercial flight and is airlifted to Catanduanes on an NDCC flight
- TSF deploys a telecom centre for relief teams in Virac and starts calling operations for survivors
Prevention and Solidarity

Our projects outside emergencies

Early Warning and Food Crisis Prevention

Education:
Computing and Internet courses for children in developing countries

Sustainable Development:
Telecommunications & IT support for local NGOs and farmers associations
Télécoms Sans Frontières

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