

YEMEN – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #18

Reporting period 01/07/17 to 31/08/17

These ETC Situation Reports are issued every other month. The next report will be published on or around 31/10/17.

Highlights

- Following a Service Level Agreement between the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Food Programme (WFP), the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) team on the ground is assisting in setting up 26x Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) across the country in response to cholera outbreak.
- The ETC is assessing the technical and operational status of the telecommunications equipment deployed at the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) Communications Centres (COMCENs) in Yemen.



WFP's Executive Director, David Beasley, visiting the EOC deployed in Sana'a at the end of July
Photo: WFP/ Khalid Alzaba

Situation Overview

The cholera outbreak in Yemen has claimed almost 2,000 lives in less than four months and more than 5,000 people are falling ill every day with symptoms of Acute Watery Diarrhea/cholera. All governorates have been affected, except Socotra.

More than two years of conflict have severely degraded sanitation systems, health services and other public institutions. More than half of all health facilities have closed or are only partially functional, leaving 14.8 million people without adequate access to healthcare. Some 15.7 million people can no longer access clean water and sanitation because infrastructure is disrupted or damaged.



The outbreak is currently the worst in the world. It has significantly worsened what was already one of the world's largest humanitarian crisis: more than 60 per cent of the population are facing the threat of food insecurity, seven million people are severely food insecure and two million children are acutely malnourished.

Response

- WHO, agency leading the humanitarian response to the cholera outbreak in the country, had set up a Service Level Agreement with WFP, global lead of the ETC, in early July to deploy the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and services at the main EOC in Sana'a and at the 25x additional EOCs across the country. These EOCs serve as operations hubs to lead and coordinate the efforts of all humanitarians responding to the outbreak.
- The deployment of the first EOC at the Ministry of Public Health in Sana'a was completed with the support of the ETC team at the end of July and it is serving 130 humanitarians. WFP IT procured, delivered and installed Internet connectivity, Internet network infrastructure (wired and wireless), a call centre serving as a registration centre for the cholera cases, solar power supply and video and audio conferencing facilities at this EOC in Sana'a.
- The second EOC in the country is currently being established at the WHO office in Aden.
- The ETC has assessed the UNDSS COMCENs in Sana'a, Aden and Al Hudaydah to evaluate the status of the security telecommunications equipment. After the assessment of the remaining two COMCENs in the country. An improvement plan, to address the shortfalls, is being developed.
- The ETC will continue its efforts to replace the obsolete and faulty security telecommunications equipment. The ETC has recently applied for the importation permits for the telecommunications equipment to be replaced.
- The ETC continues to provide vital communications services in 5x common operational areas across Yemen namely Sana'a, Sa'ada, Al Hudaydah, Ibb and Aden.
- Wali Noor has joined the operation in Yemen in mid-August as ETC Coordinator.

Planned Response

- The ETC is looking at enhancing the Internet services at the Diplomatic Transit Facility (DTF) in Sana'a. Some recommendations will be presented to WFP management by the beginning of September.
- An IT specialist from WFP's Fast IT, Telecommunications and Coordination Support Services Team (FITTEST) will be deployed to support the implementation of the EOC project.

Challenges

- The security situation remains extremely volatile across the country. Humanitarians face insecurity and movement restrictions. Access has been further limited following the intensification of conflict.



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- Difficulties in granting visas for staff to be deployed to Yemen is hindering the ETC response on the ground.
 - Constrains in the importation of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment, especially security telecommunications, are hampering the ETC operation in the country.

Meetings

Global ETC teleconference:

Global ETC Joint teleconferences are held monthly. The next meeting is planned for 13 September at 12:00 UTC.

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the ETC website: www.ETCluster.org. For security reasons, most information is kept private, and logging in is required to access them.

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

Acronyms

COMCEN	Communications Centre
DTF	Diplomatic Transit Facility
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FITTEST	WFP's Fast IT, Telecommunications and Coordination Support Services Team
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
WHO	World Health Organization
WFP	World Food Programme



Shared ICT Services

CITY	LEAD AGENCY	ETC SERVICES
Sana'a	WFP/UNDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination hub • Customer support • Radio user training • Radio programming • VHF radio coverage • HF radio coverage • 24/7 COMCEN • Internet Hotspot in DTF • Internet Hotspot in INGO
Al Hudaydah	WFP/UNDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VHF Radio Coverage • Radio user training • 24/7 COMCEN
Aden	WFP/UNDSS/UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VHF Radio Coverage • Radio user training • 24/7 COMCEN • Internet Hotspot at the common UN building (WHO premises)
Ibb	WFP/UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMCEN operating during office hours • Satellite base station • Internet Hotspot in UN hub (UNICEF premises) • Internet Hotspot in INGO (ACTED premises)
Sa'ada	UNICEF/UNDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VHF base radio • VHF radio coverage • Satellite phone



ETC Yemen Focal Points

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