

YEMEN – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #20

Reporting period 06/11/17 to 05/01/18

These ETC Situation Reports are issued every other month. The next report will be published on or around 09/03/18.

Highlights

- As part of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) workplan exercise for 2018, the ETC organised a workshop with partners in Sana'a on 4 January to map their needs and gaps.
- The ETC has relocated its Internet connectivity services and equipment from the Diplomatic Transit Facility (DTF) in Sana'a to the new United Nations (UN) compound in Haddah.
- To support the temporary relocation of International staff from Sana'a to Amman, the ETC conducted assessment missions at the World Food Programme (WFP) office in Jordan to ensure the required equipment and services are in place to ensure continuity of humanitarian operations.



The ETC organised a workshop with partners on the ground in Sana'a to ensure their needs are included on the ETC workplan for 2018.

Photo: WFP/ Wali Noor

Situation Overview

A blockade of Yemen's ports since 6 November has been preventing the import of much needed commercial and humanitarian supplies. The humanitarian situation is further compounded by a price inflation of basic commodities, impacting the purchasing power and increasing food insecurity.

A sharp escalation of violence characterized the month of November, with airstrikes on 1 November reportedly causing the death of several civilians in a market in Sa'ada governorate. Indiscriminate shelling of residential areas in Ta'izz continued.

While clashes in the streets of the capital Sana'a subsided, airstrikes were reported on 5 and 6 December. Following this, humanitarian movements and operations in Sana'a have been limited. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as of 6 December, at least 234 civilians have been killed and 486 have been injured in Sana'a and northern governorates, which indicates the current volatile security



situation in the country. On 7 December, UN essential staff members reported to their offices. However, some humanitarian organizations have temporarily relocated their staff to reduce their presence until the situation stabilizes.

Response

- The ETC is working on the 2018 workplan with partners on the ground to make sure their needs are properly reflected. Over 25 participants from 20 organisations joined the ETC workplan meeting held on 4 January in Sana'a.
- The ETC continues to provide shared Internet connectivity and security telecommunications services in five operational areas across Yemen, namely Sana'a, Sa'ada, Ibb, Aden and Al Hudeydah. Given the pressing needs on the ground, the ETC has decided to extend the provision of vital Internet and security telecommunications services in those operational areas until the end of 2018 to support the humanitarian response.
- The ETC satellite terminal and Internet services were relocated from the previous UN accommodation in Sana'a at the DTF to the new UN compound in Haddah. In addition, the ETC sponsored the move of the common UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) Communications Centre (COMCEN) to the Haddah compound. The ETC played a key role in providing reliable and stable connectivity services for humanitarians in common areas within the compound.
- The ETC has finalised the recruitment of the Information Technology (IT) assistant who will provide customer support services to humanitarians staying at the new UN compound in Haddah. The setup of the ETC service desk office is ongoing.
- The ETC team continues supporting the implementation of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) project led by the World Health Organization (WHO) across Yemen. Following a technical assessment, the ETC has completed the deployment of a solar power solution, Internet services and cabling at five EOCs in Al Hudeydah, Ibb, Amran, Hajjah, and Sana'a Governorate EOC.
- At the end of December, the ETC carried out an IT assessment of the existing infrastructure and services at UN Women and UN Population Fund (UNFPA) in Sana'a and it is preparing a report for both organisations with recommendations.
- To support the temporary relocation of WFP international staff to Amman following the deteriorating situation in Sana'a, the ETC team conducted technical assessment of IT infrastructure in WFP Djibouti and WFP Amman. That included the assessment of the Local Area Network (LAN), Internet connectivity, IT staff capacity and IT user equipment (e.g. computers, printers, docking stations) among other aspects to ensure an adequate level of services are available to cope with the IT needs of the staff from Yemen.



Planned Response

- The ETC is planning to conduct an Inter-Agency IT capacity building training in Sana'a in early 2018. security situation and staff slots allowing
- The ETC will focus on the implementation of the EOC project in the next two locations – Al Hudeydah and Ibb which will be handed over to WHO on 16 January.

Challenges

- The security situation remains unpredictable across the country. Humanitarians face insecurity and movement restrictions.
- The difficulties in obtaining visas for staff deployments to Yemen is hampering the ETC response on the ground.
- Import restrictions related to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment, especially security telecommunications, are having an impact on the ETC operational plans.

Meetings

Global ETC teleconference:

Global ETC Joint teleconferences are held monthly. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 31 January at 1200 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
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
UN	United Nations



UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
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



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