

YEMEN – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #24

Reporting period 18/05/18 to 30/06/18

These ETC Situation Reports are issued monthly. The next report will be published on or around 31/07/18.

Highlights

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) has developed a contingency plan based on a worst-case scenario and presented it to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) during the Cluster Defence meetings.
- The ETC is currently developing a project proposal for an additional Services for Communities (S4C) project in Sana'a University, which would involve the ETC rehabilitating the IT infrastructure at the university to allow students to continue their studies.



The ETC hub in Al Hudaydah hosted by World Health Organisation (WHO) provides connectivity services to humanitarians.
Photo: ETC Yemen

Situation Overview

The security situation in general remains tense and unpredictable. Cyclone Mekunu struck southeastern Yemen on 25 May and was the most intense tropical cyclone to make landfall in the region in recorded history. The Yemeni island of Socotra bore the brunt of the cyclone, receiving heavy rainfall, flash flooding and downed power lines. Several ships were reported to have capsized.

At the same time, heavy fighting continued in different parts of Al Hudaydah governorate with the Saudi-led coalition reaching Al Hudaydah airport. Airstrikes were reported in some locations in Al Hudaydah City. Humanitarian partners continue to respond to the needs of the displaced population through the provision of life-saving assistance, comprising food, water and health services across the governorate.

Access to warehouses has become difficult due to ongoing fighting and blockage of some roads. The repair of the water and sewage system in the city is a critical priority since the pipes were damaged when trenches were being dug up by warring factions.

The conflict continues to displace people within their own districts and to neighbouring governorates including Sana'a, Dhamar and Ibb. As displacement continues, humanitarian partners have scaled up coordinated assistance to affected people in all areas hosting displaced families. However, in some districts, the fighting is limiting access to displaced people. Electricity is unavailable in most areas of Al Hudaydah City and water shortages are reported due to recent damage to the supply pipes. Sanitation problems are also reported in some IDP sites, which could trigger a cholera outbreak.

Response

- All clusters were asked to develop a contingency plan based on a worst-case scenario in Yemen. The ETC presented its final plan to OCHA at the Cluster Defence meetings on 7 May.
 - The ETC's preparedness plan included a budget of US\$670,000 which was approved. The ETC is currently working with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to get the funding from the Country-Based Pooled Fund.
- The mid-term plan involves the possibility of the ETC establishing an office in one of the emergency sites in Al Hudaydah which have not been identified yet. If this office is set up, rapid deployment kits will need to be deployed.
 - With a long-term view, the ETC has ordered IT and telecommunications kits to help set up three concurrent offices in emergency sites around Al Hudaydah. The procurement process is ongoing.
- The ETC in Yemen is currently 35% funded/pledged. Of the US\$2.2 million requested to cover activities for 2018, the cluster has received US\$929,597, including funds carried over from 2017.
- The ETC is currently working on an S4C project with Sana'a University. The ETC is currently developing a project proposal for an additional S4C project in Sana'a University, which would involve the ETC rehabilitating the IT infrastructure at the university to allow students to continue their studies.
- The ETC continues to support the implementation of the World Health Organization (WHO) Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) project as part of the cholera response in Yemen. The ETC expects to complete the installation of all 25x EOCs by the end of July.
- 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 Hudaydah. 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.



Planned Response

- The ETC is planning to conduct an Inter-Agency IT capacity building training in Sana'a and Aden.
- The ETC is planning an Information Management and Communications mission to Aden and Sana'a in mid-July as the visas have now been granted.

Challenges

- The security situation remains increasingly volatile across the country, especially in Al Hudaydah. 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 18 July 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 • Internet Hotspot in UN hub (WHO premises) • Internet Hotspot in INGO hub (PU-AMA)
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 Services Map: <https://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-yemen-services-map-july-2018>



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