YEMEN – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #38

Reporting period 01/09/19 to 30/09/19

These ETC Situation Reports are issued monthly.

Highlights

- The ETC is providing critical Internet connectivity to 745 humanitarians across 11 hubs in Yemen.

- The ETC is finalizing plans to conduct an inter-agency technical capacity building that is due to take place before the end of the year.

- As part of the ETC's S4C project, fibre Internet connectivity services continue to be provided to 3,365 students at the University of Aden.

Laurent Bukera, new WFP Yemen Country Director with ETC Field Coordinator, Solomon Welle, inspecting equipment providing critical connectivity to humanitarians in Al Hodeidah. *Photo: WFP/ETC*

Situation Overview

In mid-September, the top United Nations official in Yemen called for advancing "with purpose and resolve" towards a political solution to end the conflict, now in its fourth year, as Security Council delegates cautioned that the 14 September attack on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia could spark a regional conflagration. Such prospects would be "terrifying", said the Special Envoy for Yemen, briefing the Council from Geneva. They would also run counter to the many conversations he has had with the parties and that with each day that the war persists, the greater the threat to regional stability.

Since 2014, war has driven poverty in Yemen from 47 percent of the population to a projected 75 percent by the end of 2019. If fighting continues into 2022, Yemen will rank as the poorest country in the world, with 79 percent of the population living under the poverty line and 65 percent classified as extremely poor, according to a new report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The ETC is a global network of organizations that work together to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies.

Response

- The ETC is now providing connectivity to 745 humanitarian responders in 11x hubs across Sana'a, Al Hodeidah, Ibb, Aden, Al Mukalla and Al Mokha.

- The ETC is in the process of finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) for the new inter-agency hub hosted by UNDP in Al Mukallah.
  - The deployment of ETC equipment in inter-agency hubs in Al Mokha and Tourbah is on hold due to the security situation in Aden.
  - Communications equipment required to be installed in 2x new inter-agency hubs in Marib and Hajjah has been ordered and is pending shipment.

- The ETC has started to install self-supported antenna towers in some locations in Yemen to support the expansion of security telecommunications services.

- The design of the 30-metre self-supported antenna is being revised to ensure it is compliant with UN safety standards. The installation of these towers will be coordinated by the hosting agencies namely UNHCR in Tourba, IOM in Marib and WFP in Al Mokha.

- The ETC received the no-objection confirmation from the Ministry of Telecommunications together with the National Security to issue Ultra High Frequency (UHF) frequency in Aden to enhance radio coverage, ensuring the safety and security of responders.

- As part of the ETC's S4C project, fibre Internet connectivity services continue to be provided to 3,365 students at the University of Aden.

Al Hodeidah

- Local ETC partners participated in the first ever inter-agency coordination meeting specifically for Al Hodeidah on 25 September. Participants reviewed the existing ETC services in Al Hodeidah and identified additional needs for connectivity and user support.

- The ETC and World Health Organisation (WHO) conducted a joint visit to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in Al Hodeidah to assess the status of the IT equipment installation.

- The ETC supported the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Al Hodeidah to determine their requirements for the provision of IT infrastructure and services in their new office.

- The ETC and UNDSS will conduct a Security Operations Centre (SOC) management training in Al Hodeidah and then replicate it in the other five SOCs.

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Planned Response

- To expand local technical knowledge in Yemen, the ETC is planning to conduct a capacity building training in November. The exercise may be held in Amman or in Yemen due to difficulties to get visas for Yemeni nationals for Cairo and Dubai.

Challenges

- The ETC plans to deploy a satellite terminal at the ETC hub in Ibb. However, TeleYemen, the only local provider of satellite communications equipment in Yemen, is facing issues with their stock in the country.

- The security situation remains increasingly volatile across the country. Humanitarians face insecurity and movement restrictions.

- The difficulties in obtaining visas for technical staff deployments to Yemen and shortage of accommodation are 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 and donor condition on timely utilization of the funding

- The lack of access and logistical limitation continues to impact the humanitarian operation.

Meetings

Global ETC teleconference:

Global ETC Joint teleconferences are held monthly. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 30 October 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

EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FITTEST	WFP's Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross

ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SOC	Security Operations Centre
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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Shared ICT Services

CITY	LEAD AGENCY	ETC SERVICES
Sana'a	WFP/UNDSS	- 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	- VHF Radio Coverage - Radio user training 24/7 COMCEN - Internet Hotspot in UN hub (WHO premises) - Internet Hotspot in INGO hub (PU-AMA) - Internet Hotspot in international staff guesthouse - Internet Hotspot in national staff accommodation
Aden	WFP/UNDSS/UNHCR	- VHF Radio Coverage - Radio user training 24/7 COMCEN - Internet Hotspot at the common UN building (WHO premises)
Ibb	WFP/UNICEF	- 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	- VHF base radio - VHF radio coverage - Satellite phone

ETC Yemen Dashboard: https://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-yemen-dashboard-august-2019

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