

Syria – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #57

Reporting period: 01/12/2022 to 31/12/2022

The ETC was activated in Syria in January 2013 in response to the conflict crisis. Situation Reports are distributed every two months.

Highlights

- USAID’s Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA) has allocated USD 181,000 to fund the ETC’s activities in 2023. This grant covers 36% of the ETC’s funding requirement for the next year.
- The ETC has published the full results of its annual user satisfaction survey on the [ETC website](#). The survey found that 91% of users were satisfied with the ETC’s performance in 2022, up from 87% in 2021.
- The ETC installed a satellite phone and docking station in the UNDSS Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Tartous. The devices have now been installed in four of the six SOCs in Syria.



The ETC installs a satellite phone and docking station in the UNDSS SOC in Damascus.

Photo: WFP/ETC

Activities

Coordination

The ETC participated in the Inter-Sector Group (ISG) meeting on 5 November to discuss the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) timeline and the ETC’s strategy for 2023.

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The ETC has published the full results of its annual user satisfaction survey on the [ETC website](#). The survey found that 91% of users were satisfied with the ETC’s services, up from 87% in 2021. The ETC’s security communications services, ICT helpdesk, and information management activities were among the most highly rated, while feedback identified areas for improvement in the cluster’s internet connectivity services. The ETC in Syria is putting a holistic strategy in place to address the feedback provided and will periodically assess its services to identify opportunities for improvement and the need for new services through engagement with partners and stakeholders in the hubs and at the country office level.

Data connectivity

In 2022, the ETC provided internet connectivity services to 268 humanitarians from 13 UN agencies in six sites in Syria (Aleppo, Deir Ez-Zor, Hama, Homs, Qamishli) and Turkey (Gaziantep).

The ETC plans to upgrade its connectivity services in the UN hubs in Aleppo, Deir Ez-Zor, Homs, and Qamishli in 2023. The network equipment for these upgrades was received along with the necessary approvals from the authorities in November.

The ETC submitted a request to the authorities to procure further equipment and spare parts for 2023 maintenance activities in all UN hubs in Syria.

Security communications

In 2022 the ETC provided security communications services to 721 users from 15 UN agencies across seven sites in Syria (Aleppo, Damascus, Deir Ez-Zor, Homs, Tartous, Qamishli) and Turkey (Gaziantep).

The ETC installed a satellite phone and docking station in the Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Tartous, after UNDSS received approval from the authorities in November to install the devices in all six SOCs in Syria. The devices have now been installed in Aleppo, Damascus, Deir Ez-Zor, and Tartous, with Homs and Qamishli remaining.

The ETC programmed the 20 VHF handheld radio devices for UNDSS that were cleared by customs in November, five months after arriving in country. UNDSS will deploy the devices to the six SOCs in Syria to enhance security communications services.

The ETC is procuring portable solar power solutions to support interagency missions to communicate with UNDSS SOCs. The solutions have been cleared from customs in Lebanon and transported to the Syrian border for further clearance processes.

In the coming year, the ETC is planning to build a contingency stock of VHF repeaters in Syria. The ETC received approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to import the repeaters and is waiting for the final approval from the Council of Ministries. The ETC also submitted a request to the authorities to approve the installation of an additional VHF repeater in Hama to expand the network.

The ETC is engaging with the telecommunications unit of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva to identify alternatives to Push to Talk (PTT) radio devices after they were rejected for use in country by the Syrian Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (SyTRA). The PTT devices were originally intended to serve as a replacement for HF radios based on Telecommunications Security Standards {TESS+} recommendations.

Dashboard

See the [ETC Dashboard](#) for an overview of service locations.

Funding

The ETC received 100% of its funding requirements in 2022 through a BHA contribution of USD 250,000 and an additional USD 300,000 in funding from the Government of Ireland carried over from 2021.

The ETC has identified a funding requirement of USD 500,000 to cover its operations in Syria in 2023. USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) contributed USD 181,000 to the ETC operation in Syria in 2023, covering 36% of its requirements for the next year.

Challenges

Syria is facing a country-wide power crisis which impacts on ETC connectivity services.

The importation of equipment, lack of access to operational areas, and lengthy deployment authorisations from relevant authorities frequently affects the timely implementation of ETC activities across Syria.

Meetings

The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on **26 January 2023**.

Contacts

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION	CONTACT
Atmaja Sembiring	ETC Coordinator	Damascus, Syria	Atmaja.sembiring@wfp.org
Claire Roach	Information Management Officer	Dubai, UAE	Claire.roach@wfp.org

Further information related to ETC operations can be found on the website:

www.etcluster.org/emergencies/syria-conflict

For more information or to be added or deleted from the mailing list please contact:

Syria.ETC@wfp.org