Ukraine

ETC Situation Report #8
Reporting period: 03/06/2022 to 15/06/2022

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster was activated in Ukraine on 3 March 2022 following the escalation of armed conflict between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. The ETC is deploying cybersecurity solutions to provide secure networks and backup connectivity to humanitarians, while working to obtain approvals for the establishment of radio security communications.

Highlights

- On 06 June, the ETC supported the setup of a backup Security Operations Centre (SOC) managed by the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) in Lviv.

- From 07-09 June, the ETC team conducted a second mission to Mukachevo to follow up on the setup of the main UNDSS SOC, provide training on security communications, and check the configuration of security communications systems (SCS) in armoured vehicles for UN agencies.

- A Services for Communities Officer from the Global ETC arrived in Lviv on 07 June for a mission to support the rollout of the ETC Chatbot. The ETC is engaging with its partners on the ground to continue to expand the content of the Chatbot and promote awareness of the tool amongst the affected population and humanitarian partners.

The ETC facilitates a training session for UNDP staff on radio security communications in Mukachevo. Photo: WFP/Beryl Lo

Overview

Over 110 days have passed since the start of the conflict in Ukraine. With key ports for the export of grain blocked due to the hostilities, concerns about the impact of the conflict on global food supplies are growing.

As of 13 June, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the toll of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine is estimated to have reached 9,785 civilian casualties, including 4,395 deaths. The OHCHR has stated that actual numbers may be significantly higher as many reports of casualties are still awaiting corroboration. The

most intense hostilities continue to take place in Donetska, Luhanska, and Kharkivska oblasts.

The [International Organisation for Migration (IOM)](#) reports that 7.13 million people are internally displaced in Ukraine due to the conflict, and the [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)](#) puts the total number of refugees having crossed international borders at 7.4 million.

Impact on telecommunications

Telecommunications infrastructure remains operational throughout most of Ukraine, however, there are reports of hacking and jamming of telecommunications channels in the country and localised outages in areas of heavy fighting. Although reports of 3G and 4G mobile network coverage continue to be positive along the Ukrainian borders, there may be localised saturation of the network in some areas due to the influx of refugees.

A high volume of cyber attacks on Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have been observed to have caused a significant reduction in internet speeds. Additionally, phishing attacks targeting humanitarians have been reported.

Activities

Coordination

The ETC team is coordinating its response from Lviv, Ukraine, since late April to support the deployment of connectivity and security communications services in the country. On 07 June, a Services for Communities Advisor from the Global ETC joined the team in Lviv, consisting of the ETC coordinator, ETC Information Management Officer, and IT & Telecommunications specialists as well as an Administration and Logistics Specialist from WFP's Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team (FITTEST).

The ETC is also supported by a WFP FITTEST IT and Telecommunications Specialist based in Vinnytsia and two additional WFP IT operations staff, one in Kyiv and another based in Dnipro.

Data connectivity

As of 15 June, the ETC is providing secure internet connectivity services to 193 staff from 12 humanitarian organisations, including UN agencies and INGOs, in two interagency workspaces in Dnipro and Lviv. The secure network will protect humanitarian data from cyber threats.

The team is continuing to support users with the one-time registration process required to access the network. Further, in Lviv, the ETC team supported the setup of a plotter for printing GIS maps in the interagency workspace on 03 June.

A WFP IT Operations Officer supported the ETC by joining an interagency assessment of two potential new office locations for the common operational hub in Dnipro. The ETC is planning to conduct a more in-depth technical assessment once the office location has been selected.

A WFP FITTEST specialist conducted a needs assessment on 06 June for the establishment ETC data connectivity services in potential interagency locations in Kropyvyntskyi. The ETC stands ready to provide data connectivity services to any new interagency office locations in Ukraine.

Security communications

The ETC is supporting the setup of four UNDSS-managed Security Operations Centres (SOCs) in Ukraine. The ETC is finalising a concept note on the overall set up of UNDSS SOCs in Ukraine.

On 06 June, the ETC team supported the setup of a backup SOC in Lviv managed by UNDSS by pre-positioning and installing telecommunications equipment.

The ETC conducted a mission to Mukachevo from 07 to 09 June to follow up on the ICT setup of UNDSS's main SOC which was initiated in an earlier mission from 23 to 26 May. Following the Security Communications Systems (SCS) protocols training that was delivered to the SOC operators during the last mission, the ETC facilitated a Training of Trainers (ToT) session on radio security communications for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) staff.

To improve the safety and security of UN personnel in the field, the ETC checked the configuration of security communications systems in 12 vehicles in Mukachevo. Communications systems in an additional five UNDSS armoured vehicles (AV) and one UNDP van were programmed in Lviv on 13 June, and communications systems in five UNHCR AVs were programmed in Dnipro on 14 June. This brings the total to 44 armoured and/or soft-skin vehicle communications systems verified by the ETC, from five different UN agencies across three locations in Ukraine.

On 04 June, the ETC team attended a meeting with UNDSS to follow up on the status of the submission of a formal request to the Government of Ukraine for a VHF frequency licence. The ETC's recommendations on the use of VHF as a back-up means of security communications in case mobile networks are compromised have been drafted in consultation with WFP's Telecommunications Security Standards {TESS+} team and formally endorsed by the Ukraine Security Management Team (SMT). The endorsement letter is now pending the United Nations Designated Official (DO)'s signature before the request for a VHF frequency license is submitted to the Government of Ukraine.

Services for communities

A Services for Communities Officer from the Global ETC team arrived in Lviv on 07 June to support the implementation of the ETC Chatbot in Ukraine during a one-month mission.

The ETC team continues to engage with partners on the ground, including the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) group, WFP Programme team, UNHCR, and the Cash Working Group, to expand and populate the content disseminated through the Chatbot. Most recently, a list of support hotlines from Cash distribution partners was added to the Chatbot, as well as information on another Chatbot developed by the UNHCR in Hungary.

The ETC Chatbot, available on Telegram and Viber, is a tool for communications between humanitarians and the affected population. In Ukraine, the Chatbot goes by the name

vBezpetsi_bot (вБезпеці in Ukrainian), which translates to "safe spaces". The ETC team is translating materials into Ukrainian in preparation for the launch of a promotional campaign to increase awareness of the Chatbot among the affected population and potential humanitarian partners.

The ETC team is waiting for feedback from the AAP Working Group on a concept note drafted for the establishment of a Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM).

Funding

The ETC is 91% funded out of the US$3.72 million required to cover the implementation of the ETC Chatbot and the provision of security communications, SOC setup, data connectivity, and helpdesk services in five locations until the end of August 2022.

So far, the ETC has received a total of $3.38 million from the following donors:

- US$1.1 million from two UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) envelopes;
- US$1 million from ICANN;
- US$1 million from the United States;
- US$150,000 from Cisco; and
- US$125,000 from Tableau.

Challenges

Security and access to some locations are expected to be a continued major constraint in the ETC's ability to implement telecommunications solutions within Ukraine.

The risk of cyber attacks is considered to be high in this response.

Meetings

The next Global ETC Partners Teleconference on the Ukraine response will take place on **16June 2022 at 13:00 UTC**.

Contacts

CONTACTS	EMAIL
ETC Coordinator	Amirullah Syarif Ukraine.ETC@wfp.org
ETC IM Officer	Beryl Lo Ukraine.ETC@wfp.org

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

https://www.etcluster.org/emergency/ukraine-conflict

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

Ukraine.ETC@wfp.org