Yemen – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #64
Reporting period: 01/01/2022 to 31/01/2022

The ETC was activated in Yemen in April 2015 in response to the conflict crisis. Situation Reports are issued monthly.

Highlights

- The ETC responded to the country-wide shutdown of internet services following an airstrike which targeted a key telecommunications hub in Al Hudaydah on 21 January. The ETC provided internet services to humanitarian responders in 16 sites across Yemen.

- In January, the ETC provided data connectivity services to 1,096 humanitarians and security communications services to a total of 2,535 responders across Yemen.

- In coordination with UNDSS, the ETC team in Aden conducted preventive and corrective maintenance of the Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Aden to improve services.

ETC staff assists a student in Aden University to access internet services in the newly-equipped lab.
Photo: WHO.

Activities

Coordination

On 21 January, an airstrike on Al Hodaydah hit a key telecommunications hub and damaged the fibre optic link that crosses the Red Sea. The damage caused a widespread telecommunications outage across most of the country from early on 22 January until 01:00 AM on 25 January. Except one, most UN agencies were able to rely on their corporate VSATs, despite limited capacity. The ETC's 16 VSAT sites were fully operational and accessible by partners. In Sana'a, the ETC provided connectivity from the UN Common Accommodation Facility (UNCAF) to all agencies, including additional humanitarian staff with critical functions who lost their connectivity access.

Internet connectivity

In January, the ETC provided data connectivity to 1,096 humanitarians across 17 sites in Yemen.

On 23 January, the ETC in Aden conducted a mission to the UN hub in Al-Turba to upgrade internet connectivity equipment for improved services, and carried out preventive and corrective maintenance work in the Security Operations Centre (SOC).

The expansion of ETC connectivity services in Sana'a has been completed for three new guesthouses, which are part of a new UN Common Accommodation Facility (UNCAF) managed by WFP. To mitigate

the impact of the recent outage of internet services in Yemen, the ETC is in the process of installing a new VSAT station for the three new guesthouses.

Security communications

ETC security communications services were provided to a total of 2,535 responders, supported by eight UNDSS-managed Security Operations Centres (SOCs) across the country.

User support

In January, the ETC helpdesk received and resolved 1,779 user requests.

Planning

Internet connectivity

In response to increasing humanitarian operational needs, the ETC is coordinating planning to set up new sites for INGOs and UN agencies in Sa'ada and Ibb.

Following the recent opening of the UN hub in Hajjah, the ETC upgraded the internet connectivity services by activating the fibre link.

Security communications

The ETC is working to establish a VHF communications network for 20 ambulances in Aden at the request of NGO, NYC Medics. The national authorities have approved the project to proceed with the importation of the required equipment. The equipment order will be placed shortly with WFP UAE.

Capacity building

The ETC is planning to hold two training sessions for IT staff in the Emergency Operations Centres (EOC). The first session, based in Aden, will be held on 5 February while the second session will be held in Sana'a, date to be confirmed. The training aims to improve the technical skills of IT support staff.

The ETC team will roll out a virtual training course on 18 February with iMMAP to enhance ETC information management services in Yemen.

Challenges

Restrictions on the importation of telecommunications equipment remains the main challenge for the ETC in Yemen. The ETC continues to face difficulties in obtaining pre-import approval for the shipment of its two consignees from Djibouti to Aden. The equipment, when received, will be used to expand security communications services in Aden city, supported by Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS). The Resident Coordinator's Office (RC) has escalated the issue with Yemen's authorities. The ETC continues to await their formal approval, before initiating the procedure.

Funding

The ETC's budget requirement for 2022 is US$3.8 million, of which US$800,000 is already allocated to fund the ETC until end of March 2022. The ETC is therefore 21 percent funded in 2022. Fundraising activities will continue for the remaining 79 percent.

Further, the ETC has submitted two funding proposals. The first was submitted to the Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF) to cover the cost of connectivity services for six months, until August 2022. The second is a Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) proposal for funding to set up services in the new humanitarian site in Marib.

Meetings

The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place in **February 2022**.

Contacts

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

https://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/yemen-conflict

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