

Yemen – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #90

Reporting period: 01/03/2024 to 31/03/2024

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

Highlight

- In March, the ETC provided data connectivity services to 1,436 humanitarians and security communications services to a total of 2,561 responders across 19 sites in Yemen.
- On 04 March, international media and telecommunications providers reported damage to four Red Sea fibre cables, disrupting 25 percent of data traffic between Asia and Europe. Although this did not impact Yemen, the ETC presented a mitigation plan to the UN Security Management Team (SMT) on 14 March in case of similar future incidents. The UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO) approved US\$85,000 from inter-agency cost sharing funds to implement the plan, which includes upgrade of the existing VSAT satellite stations during the fibre services outage.
- The ETC conducted an oversight mission to Marib in coordination with UNDSS. The VHF radio network was changed, and 58 VHF radios were re-programmed to the new channel as part of efforts to improve security communications services in this location.



The ETC went on mission to Marib to build capacity and improve security communications services there. Photo: WFP/ETC

Activities

Coordination

The WFP-led ETC continues its long-term collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) in providing IT services including connectivity to 29 Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) across Yemen and supporting humanitarian operations in response to the ongoing cholera outbreak through access to internet and IT facilities.

In early March, four undersea fibre optic cables in the Red Sea were damaged, disrupting 25 percent of data traffic between Asia and Europe, reported by several international news channel and telecommunications providers. Ongoing instability in the region will prevent operators from fixing the cables immediately and internet traffic has been rerouted. The ETC has assessed the potential disruption of the fibre cables cut or damaged and developed a contingency plan. The plan—which includes the upgrade of the existing VSAT satellite

stations in Yemen—was presented at the Security Management team (SMT) meeting on 14 March. As a result, the SMT and UNRCO approved an allocation of US\$85,000 from inter-agency cost sharing funds to implement the contingency plan if cables are cut/damaged.

Internet connectivity

In March, the ETC provided data connectivity to 1,436 humanitarian in 19 sites across nine common operational areas in Yemen.

Three fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) connections were established for the UN guesthouse located in Aden. FTTH provides a high-speed internet connection. The same is being carried out at the UNOPs site in Hodeidah to overcome internet speed and Wi-Fi connection issues.

Also in Hodeidah, preventive maintenance was carried out on the ETC Wi-Fi user registration platform to identify faults and fix any outstanding issues.

Security communications

In March, a total of 2,561 users utilized ETC security communications services (SCS) through the nine United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)-managed Security Operations Centres (SOCs) across the country.

ETC has completed the installation of a solar system to support security communications services at the UNDSS-managed SOC in Sana'a.

ETC conducted an oversight mission to Marib from 25 to 31 March in coordination with UNDSS. The VHF radio network was changed over and 58 VHF radios were re-programmed to the new channel. Further, security communications training was held for 15 UN staff from WFP, UNDSS, UNFPA, IOM, and UNHCR to guide and assist UN staff in using the radio network systems.

In coordination with UNDSS, the ETC programmed two VHF radios for WFP in Aden, according to the UN standard callsign structure.

User support

In March the ETC helpdesk received and resolved 863 user requests.

Challenges

Since mid-2023, the ETC has faced significant funding challenges. Consequently, the ETC has adapted an alternative hybrid funding model between the Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF) and inter-agency cost sharing in coordination with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO) and the Operations Management Team (OMT) to ensure the cluster is fully funded.

The ETC continues to face difficulties in the importation of IT and telecommunications equipment. The pre-import certificate for the shipment of two consignments from Djibouti to Aden is still pending approval from the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG) WFP in

Aden followed up with the deputy minister of the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology (MTIT) to expedite the ETC shipment approval process in Djibouti.

Funding

The ETC funding appeal for 2024 is US\$2.7 million.

For 2024 funding, the UNRCO has approved 20% of the ETC projected funding from the Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF) while the remaining 80% must be covered through cost-recovery from UN agencies.

The ETC is currently 21% funded for its 2024 needs. In March, the ETC received US\$321,081 as part of cost-sharing funds.

To mitigate the catastrophic impact of damage to the Red Sea internet cables in Yemen, the ETC estimated and received approval for US\$85,000 from the inter-agency cost sharing budget.

Additional Information

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

Meetings

The next Local ETC Working Group meeting will be held on **24 April 2024**.

Contacts

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

www.etcluster.org/emergencies/yemen-conflict

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

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