

YEMEN – Conflict

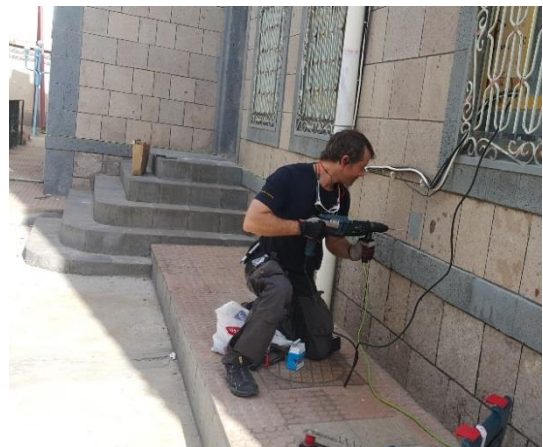
ETC Situation Report #10

Reporting period 04/04/16 to 20/05/16

These Situation Reports are distributed every four to six weeks. The next report will be issued on or around 30/06/16.

Highlights

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) is installing Information Technology (IT) equipment in Al Hudaydah to deploy ETC services in the common United Nations (UN) building.
- The ETC completed the installation of a Communications Centre (COMCEN) in Ibb. This COMCEN allows humanitarians to utilize radios and satellite communications, increasing their safety and security.
- An assessment mission took place at the VOS Apollo, the new inter-agency passenger boat, for the possible installation of a marine satellite system. This boat will be used by humanitarians travelling between Djibouti and Aden.



Telecommunications specialist Christer Wessberg carrying out installation works in Ibb.

Situation Overview

The ETC is currently supporting humanitarian operations in Sana'a, Aden, Al Hudaydah, Sa'ada and Ibb. Ta'izz and Al Mukalla, where the ETC plans to deploy vital communication services, continue to be inaccessible due to security concerns.

A ceasefire was declared on 11 April ahead of United Nations (UN)-backed peace talks in Kuwait in May 2016. However, the security situation across the country has remained volatile and unpredictable.

Response

- An assessment mission was conducted on 6 and 7 May to the new inter-agency boat, VOS Apollo, which will operate between Djibouti and Aden. The ETC is planning to install a marine satellite system

to provide Internet services to humanitarian passengers. An IT Specialist from the WFP Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team (FITTEST) will support users on the boat.

- In Al Hudaydah, IT network and equipment are being installed and configured to deploy ETC services in the common UN building. World Health Organization (WHO) offices will host the ETC internet services.
- The installation of a High Frequency (HF) network at the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) hub in Djibouti will be completed in the last week of May with the installation of a new HF antenna. This HF network will serve as a back-up communication system for UNHAS flights landing in Djibouti.

Planned Response

- The ETC has requested additional connectivity equipment from its member, Ericsson Response, to be deployed across the country to manage and expand the ETC Internet network.
- In Ibb, the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) ACTED volunteered to host the NGO back-up hub. The ETC visited their premises in the first week of May. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ETC and ACTED is being drafted.
- In Sa'ada, two NGOs have offered their premises to host the NGO back-up hub. The ETC team is planning an assessment mission to both offices.

Challenges

- Scarcity of telecommunications equipment in the local markets and challenges in importing telecommunications equipment are hampering the ETC response in Yemen. Mitigation measures include moving equipment between locations and reaching out to authorities to obtain clearances.
- Lack of access to some operational areas such as Al Mukalla and Ta'izz is a challenge. The ETC is mitigating this challenge by deploying vital communications services in alternative locations, e.g. Ibb.

Meetings

Local ETC meeting:

The ETC is holding fortnightly local meetings in Sana'a. The next meeting is planned for 01 June at 9:00 UTC.

Global ETC teleconference:

The ETC is holding monthly joint global ETC meetings. The next meeting is planned for 15 June at 12:00 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

COMCEN	Communications Centre
DTF	Diplomatic Transit Facility
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FITTEST	Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team
HF	High Frequency
IT	Information Technology
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Background on the emergency:

The ETC has been continuously present in Yemen since April 2015, supporting the humanitarian community with basic IT and telecommunications services. Operations are progressing amidst challenges of lack of equipment, lack of access to critical operational areas and restrictions of movement for staff. Internet hubs and security telecommunications are available in four locations, and plans are in place to deploy more services when conditions allow it.

The escalation of conflict in March 2015 is currently affecting all 22 governorates in Yemen. Restrictions on commercial imports are crippling the country. Civilians are bearing the brunt of the violence and humanitarian organizations estimate that 21.2 million people, 80% of the population, currently require some form of humanitarian assistance. Of these, 2.4 million are estimated to be displaced.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is leading ETC activities, which include:

1. Establish, upgrade and maintain security telecommunications services
2. Provide shared internet connectivity services and solar charging stations
3. Coordination and information-sharing.

Sources: Al Jazeera, OCHA



Shared ICT Services

CITY	LEAD AGENCY	ETC SERVICES
Sana'a	WFP/UNDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VHF Radio Coverage • Internet Hotspot in temporary location • Radio user training • Radio room operating during office hours
Aden	UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 COMCEN
Ibb	UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio room operating during office hours • Satellite base station
Sa'ada	UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VHF base radio • Satellite phone

ETC Yemen Focal Points

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