

Transforming the humanitarian response:

Satcom in action

IEC Telecom is bringing a revolutionary connectivity solution to the market to transform the humanitarian response. Powered by high-speed Starlink connectivity and enhanced by a resilient L-band back-up by Thuraya, the Xpand Portfolio by IEC Telecom enables a range of advanced features for humanitarian activities and mobile missions operating in areas where there is limited Global System for Mobile communication (GSM) coverage.

The new system will become an invaluable asset to humanitarian corporations stationed in the MENA region. The solution was unveiled at the 19th Dubai International Humanitarian Aid & Development (DIHAD) Exhibition, taking place this week at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

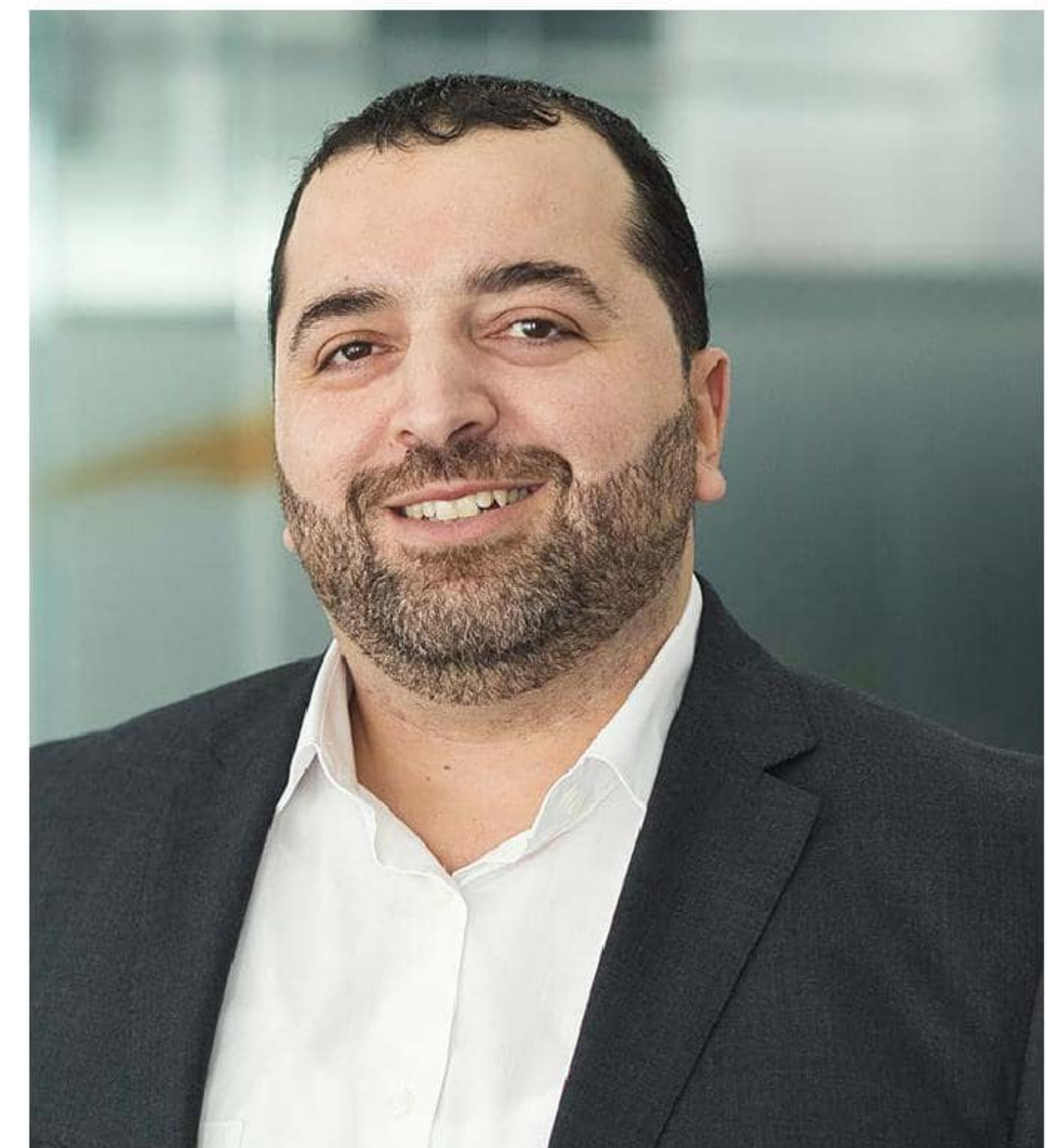
Global adoption of digital services has increased tremendously over the past decade. According to the latest research by Meltwater, currently, over 5 billion people have access to the internet worldwide, which is around 64% of the global population. The “unconnected” 2.85 billion are based predominantly in Southern & Eastern Asia and Africa, regions heavily dependent on humanitarian support. Lack of infrastructure not only hinders digital progress in developing communities but also affects the effectiveness of aid operations managed by global non-profit organisations (NGOs).

Nabil Ben Soussia, CCO, IEC Telecom Group, explained: “IEC Telecom has been serving the humanitarian sector for nearly three decades. We have witnessed the digital transformation of aid operations first-hand. While requirements differ from case to case, the objective remains the same. Connectivity means better coordination of humanitarian efforts, the safety of remote

workers, the security of NGO’s assets and the sustainability of long-term operations. It is also the sole gateway to closing the digital divide for vulnerable communities. Introducing the Xpand Portfolio will significantly impact humanitarian operations, enabling major aid agencies to expand their reach as well as multiply the scope of services delivered within existing areas of dislocation.”

Powered by the Starlink network, the Xpand Portfolio offers network connectivity of up to 350Mbps, a speed comparable to an average internet browsing experience over GSM. Further enhanced by the OneGate network management system by IEC Telecom, the new solution can be monitored, maintained, and up-scaled remotely. Also, the Xpand Portfolio is backed by Thuraya WE, an L-band terminal by Thuraya, the mobility business arm of Yahsat, that enables clear communications and uninterrupted coverage across two-thirds of the globe by MSS. Thuraya’s mobile solutions provide reliable security and business continuity for critical operations. Thuraya’s L-band backup satellite connectivity will keep first responders connected and operational at all times.

Sulaiman Al Ali, Chief Executive Officer of Thuraya, said: “We are proud to be supporting IEC Telecom Group in launching the Xpand Portfolio as a key connectivity solution aiding the humanitarian corporations based in the MENA region. The L-band network by Thuraya has proven its resilience in different environments. Our terminals have been deployed to assist first responders, support humanitarian operations, and serve as a backbone for search and rescue teams. Thuraya’s extensive satellite network provides coverage in the most remote locations



Nabil Ben Soussia - CCO, IEC Telecom Group

and our Dynamic Resource Allocation assigns capacity automatically, assuring dependable connectivity for humanitarian response.”

Not only will the Xpand Portfolio increase the operational efficiency of humanitarian NGOs, but it will also significantly decrease consumption rates. The solution is equipped with a set of applications by IEC Telecom, optimised to consume up to 10 times less bandwidth than popular software. From videoconferencing and telemedicine to drone surveillance and remote maintenance, humanitarian teams are well-equipped to serve their noble mission with the Xpand Portfolio.

Xpand Portfolio is available for stationary set-up and vehicular use, covering the entire cycle of humanitarian response. As such, possible use cases stretch far beyond NGO deployments. This innovation can empower far-away schools and hospitals with subject matter experts based remotely. It can also enable e-government services over mobile trucks, servicing underserved communities.

“The future is unfolding today. Affordable and dependable connectivity is now available. The network coverage is growing every month. Soon, I hope, we shall all witness a day when access to connectivity will no longer be a privilege but a human right in action,” says Ben Soussia. ■