

Mzansi in the dark: Microsoft acknowledges EMEA outage, but reports suggest wider issues

By  Lindsey Schutters

14 Mar 2024

Some chaos hit South Africa at lunchtime today as Microsoft battles a service outage across the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) region that has left businesses and private users high and dry without access to cloud services like Microsoft 365, Teams, and Azure.



A tough day at the office for internet users in South Africa

There are also reports of problems with other service providers according to [downdetector](#), a website that tracks online outages. This includes MTN, Telkom, Vodacom, Seacom, Vumatel and Openserve. It's unclear if these outages are all connected, but they are certainly causing issues for many South Africans.



Seacom Red Sea cable repair in permitting phase, work beginning soon

8 Mar 2024



Microsoft has acknowledged the problem on its service status page and social media feeds. The software giant is currently investigating the issue and hasn't given an estimated time for when things will be back to normal.

 **Microsoft 365 Status**
@MSFT365Status Follow

We're investigating reports of an issue where some users in the EMEA region are unable to access one or more Microsoft 365 services. Please follow the SI MO737187 in your admin center for more details. Majority of the reports are coming from South Africa and the United Kingdom.

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"We are aware there's a problem affecting users in the EMEA region who can't access Microsoft 365, Teams, and Azure services," said a Microsoft spokesperson in a statement.

"We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and are working flat out to get things back online as soon as possible."


Many organisations rely heavily on Microsoft's cloud services to work effectively, but early reports suggest that companies in finance, healthcare, and education are taking the biggest knock.


Experts reckon this outage could cost Microsoft millions of dollars in lost productivity. It could also damage the brand's reputation for being reliable, which is a big selling point for its cloud services.

Users in Africa may be unable to access multiple Microsoft 365 services or features

MO737187, Last updated: Mar 14, 2024, 7:00 PM GMT+7
Estimated start time: Mar 14, 2024, 6:15 PM GMT+7

Affected services

 Microsoft 365 suite

Issue type	Issue origin
 Incident	Microsoft

Status

Service degradation

[Manage notifications for this issue](#)

User impact

Users in Africa may be unable to access Multiple Microsoft 365 services or features.

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All updates

Mar 14, 2024, 7:00 PM GMT+7

Title: Users in Africa may be unable to access multiple Microsoft 365 services or features

User impact: Users in Africa may be unable to access Multiple Microsoft 365 services or features.

Current status: We've identified a networking issue and we're rerouting connections to alternate components to mitigate impact.

Limited info on scope and cause

While Microsoft has admitted the outage, it hasn't divulged any details. It is unknown which specific services within the bigger Microsoft 365 and Azure suites are down, nor is there any information on exactly which is the worst affected region in the EMEA.

[UPDATED 15h00]

WIOCC group business development head Darren Bedford confirmed to [Mybroadband](#) that "multiple undersea cables operating along Africa's West coast are experiencing outages."

A Vodacom spokesperson said that they confirmed the undersea cable outages. They reported that multiple undersea cable failures between South Africa and Europe were currently impacting South Africa's network providers, including Vodacom.

This, according to the spokesperson, meant that certain customers were currently experiencing intermittent connectivity issues. The spokesperson apologised for any inconvenience this might cause and thanked customers for their patience while the issue was being addressed.

[UPDATED 15h05]

Major internet disruptions are being reported across Africa due to critical failures in undersea cables connecting the continent to Europe. The situation is particularly severe on the East Coast, where all three major cables - Seacom/TGN, AAE1, and EIG - are completely cut in the Red Sea.

On the West Coast, faults have also been identified in several key cables, including WACS, Mainone, ACE, and SAT3, near Abidjan. These faults are causing intermittent connectivity issues for many users.

While these are all speculation, telecom providers like Vodacom have confirmed the outages and are apologising for any inconvenience caused. Technicians are working to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

[UPDATED 17h15]

Microsoft response on social media:

“ While the third-party carrier continues to work on the fibre cables issue, we're rerouting traffic to alternate locations, and optimising the service to manage available capacity. Further details can be viewed on our Emergency Broadcast Site:<https://t.co/uSHwRmXFJZ>— Microsoft 365 Status (@MSFT365Status) [March 14, 2024](#) ”

ABOUT LINDSEY SCHUTTERS

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