

Libya– Conflict

ETS Situation Report #30

Reporting period: 01/02/2022 to 28/02/2022

The World Food Programme (WFP), in its capacity as global lead of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), is leading the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) in Libya, responding with government, private sector and humanitarian partners on the ground to ensure a coordinated response.

Highlights

- The ETS finalized the installation of a back-up solar power system at the Security Operations Centre (SOC) in the Benghazi hub on 27 February.
- The procurement of equipment for the re-habilitation of the radio infrastructure at the Benghazi hub is underway, following the UN Department for Safety and Security's (UNDSS) endorsement of the recommendations of the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) report.
- The ETS-managed Common Feedback Mechanism received USD \$200,000 from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and USD \$31,000 from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to continue the service in 2022..



The back-up solar power system for the Security Operations Centre (SOC) is installed on the roof of the UN Hub in Benghazi.

Photo Credit: ETS Libya

ETS Activities

Security Communications

The ETS finalized the installation of a solar power system at the Security Operations Centre (SOC) in the Benghazi hub on 27 February. Having reliable back-up power is critical in Libya where electricity supply from the local power grid is unreliable and subject to frequent outages. Additional IT equipment to support the SOC, including a new laptop, screen and smartphone was provided by the ETS.

The ETS is also preparing a budget for a VSAT solution for back-up connectivity at the Benghazi hub. The budget will be shared with the head of the hub and the administration and finance departments of participating agencies for their review.

Following the endorsement by the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) of the recommendations of the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) report, the ETS is engaging closely with UNDSS to develop an implementation plan.

The recommendations, which are based on the findings of the TESS mission that took place in Benghazi from 4-14 November 2021, aim to increase the safety of humanitarian responders in Libya by improving the infrastructure for radio communications in the country.

Since the TESS mission, improvements have already been made to the Benghazi VHF radio network, expanding its coverage to reach the Benghazi airport. The ETS is in the process of procuring additional equipment for the further re-habilitation of the radio infrastructure. This work will involve replacing the radio repeater as well as possibly erecting a tower at the hub to increase the VHF coverage area.

The ETS continues to support humanitarians with telecommunications importation and licensing procedures and radio programming services upon request.

Common Feedback Mechanism

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) contributed USD \$200,014 and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) contributed USD \$30,880 to the ETS-managed Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) for a total of USD \$230,894.

In addition to serving as a means for affected communities to seek information about humanitarian services and to provide feedback on the assistance they receive, the CFM is a valuable tool for humanitarian organisations to better learn the needs of communities they serve and to increase their accountability to the affected population.

The ETS is engaging with other CFM partner organisations to establish a sustainable funding model for the continuation of the service.

The inter-agency CFM Tawasul call centre registered 4,618 cases of people requesting information or assistance in February. More than 99 percent of the calls received were related to humanitarian services, while the remainder were related to COVID-19. 82 percent of calls were from men, and 98 percent of calls came from the west of the country. The CFM also serves as a national COVID-19 information hotline, and its trained operators continue to share official health guidelines and refer suspected COVID-19 cases to the National Centre for Disease Control as required.

The CFM is complemented by a Chatbot that was launched in November 2021. The chatbot, which can provide automated answers to frequently asked questions about COVID-19 and humanitarian services in English and Arabic, is available on Telegram under the name “@Tawasulchatbot”.

Funding

The ETS secured 18 percent of the required budget of US \$882,000 for the planned ETS activities for Libya in 2021. The Libya Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has been extended into the first six months of 2022.

The ETS also received US \$280,450 in funds from the Government of Luxembourg, which was carried over into 2021 to allow the completion of ETS activities planned for 2020. Given the extension of the HRP, the grant was further extended until 31 May 2022.

Meetings

The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will be held in **March 2022**.

Contacts

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

<https://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/libya-crisis>

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