

## Libya– Conflict

ETS Situation Report #29

Reporting period: 01/01/2022 to 31/01/2022

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 report and recommendations from the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) mission that took place in November 2021 has been shared with the ETS and UNDSS for endorsement. The ETS will work with UNDSS to implement the necessary changes to ensure the safety of humanitarian personnel in Libya.
- Due to persistent security concerns, the UNHCR Community Day Centre where the ETS has been providing free internet services to persons of concern has been permanently closed. The ETS is engaging with UNCHR to identify new opportunities to support the communications needs of the affected population.
- The ETS is working to promote the use of the new chatbot that was developed to complement the Tawasul Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) hotline.



An operator takes calls from people seeking information on humanitarian services and COVID-19 at the Tawasul hotline call centre in Tripoli.

*Photo Credit: Moomken*

### ETS Activities

#### *Security Communications*

A Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) specialist deployed to Benghazi from 4-14 November to conduct an assessment of the security telecommunications challenges in the country and identify solutions and opportunities for improvement.

The report from this mission was shared with UNDSS on 7 January. Once the recommendations of the report have been endorsed, the ETS will support UNDSS to implement them.

As an immediate result of 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 working with UNDSS to develop a financial proposal for further re-habilitation of the radio infrastructure.

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

### *Common Feedback Mechanism*

The ETS is working to promote the use of the new chatbot that was developed to complement the Tawasul Common Feedback Mechanism hotline. The chatbot, which can provide automated answers to frequently asked questions about COVID-19 and humanitarian services in English and Arabic, has been available on Telegram under the name “@Tawasulbot” since November 2021. The Tawasul chatbot has been presented at events with community representatives to increase awareness amongst the affected population on how it can be used to access information on humanitarian services.

The ETS-managed CFM call centre in Tripoli continues to serve as a nationwide COVID-19 information channel as well as a means for affected communities to seek information about other humanitarian issues and to provide feedback on assistance received.

The Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) inter-agency Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) registered 5,531 cases of people requesting information or assistance in January. More than 99 percent of the calls received were related to humanitarian services. The most frequently raised concerns related to Protection, Cash, and Shelter & NFIs. The CFM also serves as a national COVID-19 informational 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.

A new dashboard to manage, display, and share statistics on the Common Feedback Mechanism with partners is under development.

### *Service for Communities*

The UNHCR Community Day Centre in Tripoli has been permanently closed due to ongoing security concerns.

The ETS has been providing a free-of-charge internet service for persons of concern (POC) at the centre since October 2020, and maintained the services through the relocation of the centre in June and the temporary closure that began in November 2021. 352 POCs accessed the ETS internet service in 3,041 unique sessions over the course of 2021.

Following the decision to permanently close the centre, the ETS is working with UNHCR to identify new opportunities to provide connectivity services to the affected population.

### *Planning and Coordination*

The ETS is engaging with the Libyan Ministry of Telecommunications (MoT) to facilitate their access to training that will build their capacity to deploy telecommunications solutions.

## 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 **February 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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