

Libya – Conflict

ETS Situation Report #31

Reporting period: 01/03/2022 to 31/03/2022

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

- To fulfill the Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) recommendations, approvals to obtain new security communications equipment, including VHF repeaters, satellite phones, and additional handheld VHF radios were requested to improve the existing security communications system in Libya.
- The ETS is supporting OCHA with clearance to import satellite connectivity equipment and is also supporting UNICEF to obtain a VSAT license.
- The inter-agency CFM Tawasul call centre registered 5,679 cases of people requesting information or assistance in March. Approximately 66 percent of the total number of Chatbot users was reported as new users in March.



The Tawasul CFM call centre in Tripoli registered over 5,679 cases in March. Photo: WFP/ETS

ETS Activities

Security communications

The ETS, Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS), and UNDSS are reviewing the implementation work plan for the remaining TESS recommendations issued in November 2021, which aim to increase the safety of humanitarian responders in Libya by improving radio infrastructure in-country. TESS, UNDSS, and the ETS met to discuss next steps. TESS is providing inputs on the cost-benefit analysis between available radio systems.

To fulfill the TESS recommendations to improve VHF radio communications services in the Benghazi humanitarian hub, two new VHF repeaters are being procured. A letter to obtain importation clearance for the equipment has been submitted to the Telecommunications Authority.

The ETS received one satellite phone to equip the Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Benghazi. In addition, four VHF handheld radios are to be shipped to Benghazi along with the two VHF repeaters, once approval is issued.

Internet connectivity

ETS, as the focal point with the Telecommunications Authority for all humanitarian UN agencies, received the clearance to import satellite connectivity devices (BGANs) for OCHA. Further, ETS

submitted a new request to obtain a satellite connectivity (VSAT) license for use by UNICEF in the country.

The ETS has finalized the registration of satellite communications system providers in Libya to utilize their services. The sector is also surveying national satellite solution providers to start procurement for a backup plan, to mitigate connectivity service disruption as recently experienced in the Benghazi humanitarian hub.

The ETS has received a request to provide connectivity services to the refugee community in a new Community Day Centre (CDC) to be opened in Tripoli. The ETS is assessing lessons learned from the Wi-Fi services provided in the CDC which closed down in January 2022 due to security concerns, before preparing a proposal and requesting funding.

Common Feedback Mechanism

The ETS-managed Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) in Tripoli serves as a means for affected communities to seek information about humanitarian services and to provide feedback on the assistance they receive. It is also a valuable tool for humanitarian organizations to better learn the needs of the communities they serve and to increase their accountability to the affected population.

The inter-agency CFM Tawasul call centre registered 5,679 cases of people requesting information or assistance in March. More than 99 percent of the calls received were related to humanitarian services, while none were related to COVID-19. 81 percent of calls were from men, and 99 percent of calls came from the west of the country.

The CFM is complemented by a Chatbot 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”. There are a total of six Chatbot users.

The ETS is developing a communications plan alongside its partners to advocate for the Tawasul CFM service within Libya. Part of this advocacy strategy is to collect feedback on the CFM reports to enhance the product and promote the CFM service to partners to become part of the feedback solution.

Funding

The ETS secured 18 percent of the required budget of US\$882,000 for the planned ETS activities for Libya in 2021 – these funds are now extended until 31 May 2022.

Meetings

The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will be held on **13 April 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>

For more information or to be added or deleted from the mailing list please contact:

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