Türkiye – earthquake response

ETS Situation Report #1
Reporting period: 06/02/2023 to 17/02/2023

A WFP-led Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) response is established for Türkiye to support government-led relief efforts to the areas affected by the multiple earthquakes that struck on 6 February 2023.

Highlights

- Following the initial search and rescue activities in the aftermath of the earthquake disaster on 6 February, the humanitarian community are scaling up operations in Türkiye to provide humanitarian assistance in support of the response, led by the government of Türkiye.

Search and rescue efforts in Türkiye, 6 February. Photo: UNOCHA

- A Türkiye Earthquake Flash Appeal was launched on 16 February to support government relief efforts for an initial three months. A WFP-led ETS response was established and is appealing for US$1 million to coordinate ICT activities and provide security communications, internet connectivity, customer support, capacity building, and communications with communities (CwC).

- An ETS coordinator deployed to Gaziantep on 15 February to coordinate ICT efforts in Türkiye. The first Inter Agency Telecommunications Working Group (IATWG) meeting was held on 16 February to collaborate with partners on the ground.

Situation overview

Two earthquakes of 7.8 and 7.7 magnitude occurred on Monday 6 February in south-eastern Türkiye at 4:15am and 1:30pm local time. The earthquakes affected an area of 400 kilometres, including the north-west of neighbouring Syria. The epicentre of the 7.8-magnitude quake was in Türkiye's Gaziantep province.

The locations most heavily impacted in Türkiye are the cities of Gaziantep and Adana, and the surrounding areas of Hatay, Malatya, Kilis, Diyarbakir, and Adiyaman, where around 12 million people live—including two million Syrian refugees.

OCHA's UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) and International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) teams were mobilized to Türkiye.

Importation and Customs Clearance Together (IMPACCT) activated its network and is assisting with information and liaison in country for the customs clearance and importation of humanitarian items into Türkiye.

Telecommunications impact

- All three Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) in Türkiye—Turkcell, Vodafone, and Türk Telekom—were impacted by the earthquakes. Turkcell and Türk Telekom have kickstarted support to provide domestic mobile calls within Türkiye free-of-charge, as well as access to Wi-Fi hotspots in the affected areas.

- In Gaziantep, the services of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are stable. GSM, 3G and 4G connectivity is available. However, assessments show that network connectivity is unstable in Hatay province. Humanitarian teams deploying on field missions are carrying back-up communications equipment.

- The severity of the earthquakes has left the local electric grid in the affected region unstable. There are power challenges in parts of Hatay and Kahramanmaras provinces. Most MNOs in these provinces are running on generator power.

Interagency activities

Coordination

- A Türkiye Earthquake Flash Appeal was launched on 16 February to support government relief efforts for an initial three months. A WFP-led ETS response was established and is appealing for US$1 million to coordinate ICT activities and provide security communications, internet connectivity, customer support, capacity building, and communications with communities (CwC).

- To kick-start services delivery in one common operational area, the ETS has requested US$150,000 to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

- The Global ETC is engaging with its partners for information-gathering and a coordinated response. An emergency page has been set up on the Global ETC website to gather information on the response and an ICT country profile for both Türkiye and Syria can also be found on the country pages of the website.

- The emergency operation under the Flash Appeal will be coordinated closely with the Government of Türkiye. Following the deployment of the UNDAC team, six coordination hubs have been established in Türkiye so far—Adana (entry point for arriving responders), Ankara (coordination between international responders and the Türkiye Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), Gaziantep (main coordination hub), Hatay, Kahramanmaras, and Adiyaman.

- It is expected that a large number of emergency responders will operate in several locations in the affected areas and there will be a need to ensure reliable and secure communications services in the main operational hubs.

- A WFP TEC emergency coordinator arrived in Gaziantep on 12 February and kicked off collaboration with partner humanitarian agencies on the ground to carry out needs assessments and identify gaps for intervention in the affected areas.

- An ETS coordinator deployed to Gaziantep on 15 February. He coordinated the first meeting of the Inter Agency Telecommunications Working Group (IATWG) on 16 February, attending by UN agencies, I/NGOs, and national service provider representatives.

- UNDSS is leading and managing the field safety and security of all interagency staff from Ankara and Gaziantep. Security communications training will be coordinated under the IATWG.

- On 17 February, the ETS coordinator conducted an assessment mission in Hatay to meet with local actors operating there and to identify any gaps for common ICT services.

ETC partner activities

Cisco Crisis Response (CCR)

- Through its accounts teams in Türkiye, CCR was requested by Türksat Satellite Communications to provide access points for temporary accommodations.

Ericsson

- The Ericsson supply and customer services office in Türkiye is supporting the MNO Turkcell to restock their telecommunications equipment, which is depleted following continuous repair work following the earthquake disaster.

Government of Luxembourg

- The Government of Luxembourg deployed two personnel to Türkiye in the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes, one member as part of the UNDAC team.

- In Hatay, an emergencu.lu VSAT terminal is supporting connectivity for a sub–On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) set up by UNDAC.

- The Government of Luxembourg team installed a Ground Air Transmit Receive (GATR) satellite connectivity terminal at the Belgian Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) site to support the response in Kırıkhan, Hatay province. Another emergency.lu VSAT terminal is being shipped to Türkiye to replace the GATR.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

- ITU activated the [Disaster Connectivity Maps (DCM)](#) campaign[1] on 6 February to track mobile network and data connectivity across a 200 kilometres radius of the earthquake epicentre. The DCM showed an initial fall in mobile data connectivity following the earthquakes to 80% of the normal status. By 11 February, 3G data connectivity had been restored to 90% of the normal status. Pockets of connectivity loss are still evident.

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[1] The DCM data comes from four sources: 1) Worldwide baseline, 2) Ookla (open source for global fixed broadband and mobile network performance datasets), 3) Speedchecker (draws data anonymously from mobile phones application) and 4) Meta (parent company of Facebook and WhatsApp). All data collected is with users' consensus.

NetHope

- Two NetHope personnel deployed to Türkiye on 9 February. NetHope teams are operating in collaboration with a local partner and are present in Kahramanmaras and Hatay province.

- NetHope installed a VSAT terminal in collaboration with Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF) at an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) sub-office in Antakya.

Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF)

- TSF deployed two personnel to Kahramanmaras and Hatay province to support UNDAC and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams. The teams arrived on the ground on 10 February.

- TSF is providing technical communications support to the USAR sub office in Antakya after TSF and NetHope established connectivity there. TSF also set up a VSAT terminal for connectivity at the main USAR coordination centre in Kahramanmaras.

- TSF plans to assess the presence of service for communities' platforms in Kahramanmaras, Adiyaman, and Antakya.

UNHCR

- As this operation is a non-refugee emergency, the Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS) will not be activating but will act in a support capacity to the ETS as required.

- UNHCR operations in Türkiye continue and are being led from the Gaziantep sub-office supported by the two field offices in Sanliurfa and Hatay, the latter of which has been relocated due to the earthquake.

- UNHCR is supporting the IATWG to conduct ICT assessments.

WFP-led Logistics Sector

- A team of logistics surge staff are on the ground in Türkiye. Information on the main entry points, corridors, access constraints, and border crossing points are being gathered for partners on an interactive map.

Funding

The ETS requested for US$150,000 from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) on 13 February for its response in Turkiye, and is appealing for US$1 million in the Türkiye Earthquake Flash Appeal launched on 16 February.

Challenges

A large scale-up of humanitarian activities is anticipated in Turkiye which will require additional staffing and equipment resources in multiple locations. The ETS is working with partners on the ground to identify secure locations prior to setting up services.

Access to affected areas may be hampered by badly damaged secondary roads. Movement and displacement operations via road using heavy vehicles are further impacted by winter weather conditions.

A key concern is the lack of both fuel and accommodation in the affected areas to faciliate the delivery of humanitarian equipment and assistance.

Meetings

The next Global ETC Partners Teleconference on the earthquake response will take place on **Tuesday 21 February** 2023 **at 14:00 UTC**.

Contacts

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

https://www.etcluster.org/emergency/turkiye-syria-earthquake

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

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