

Türkiye – earthquake response

ETS Situation Report #2

Reporting period: 18/02/2023 to 23/02/2023

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

Highlights

- The Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) response has been established since 16 February to support the government-led response, coordinated by the Government of Türkiye’s Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD).
- Two ETS Coordinators are part of the inter sector coordination cells in Ankara and Gaziantep—the second ETS Coordinator deployed to Ankara on 20 February.
- The ETS is appealing for US\$1 million for a three-month response to coordinate ICT efforts and to support the scale-up of humanitarian operations in the affected regions, as well as implement charging station services to the affected population who are currently sheltered in temporary settlements. A total of US\$499,000 from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was received on 22 February for both the ETS and the Logistics Sector.



The ETS is building the capacity of UN staff in Gaziantep to use handheld UHF radios in the field to support their safety and security. Photo: WFP/ETS

Situation overview

The two earthquakes which struck Türkiye on 6 February 2023 as well as multiple aftershocks have caused catastrophic devastation, affecting almost 14 million people. The most heavily impacted areas in Türkiye are Malatya, Kahramanmaraş, Adiyaman, Gaziantep, and Hatay.

A new 6.4 magnitude earthquake was recorded on 20 February in Türkiye’s southern province of Hatay, already hit hard by the 6 February earthquakes. Several damaged buildings in the province have collapsed, causing at least six fatalities. Approximately 300 individuals are reported to be injured.

Given the devastating scale of the disaster, relief and recovery efforts are being planned on a large scale. Joint multi-sector rapid needs assessments are ongoing in the affected locations.

ETS activities

Coordination and information management

- The ETS response has been established since 16 February to support the government-led response, coordinated by the Government of Türkiye’s Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD).
- Sector-specific focal points from AFAD are being assigned to enhance coordination efforts. A meeting has been set up by the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure—lead for the ETS and the Logistics Sector as indicated in the Flash Appeal—on 24 February. The ETS is identifying an additional AFAD sector focal point for ETS activities in the field.
- The ETS is appealing for US\$1 million for a three-month response to coordinate ICT efforts and to support the scale-up of humanitarian operations in the region including for data connectivity, security communications, and customer support services, and to also offer charging station services to the affected population who are currently sheltered in temporary settlements.
- A total of US\$499,000 from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was received on 22 February for both the ETS and the Logistics Sector.
- Two ETS Coordinators are part of the inter sector coordination cells in Ankara and Gaziantep—the second ETS Coordinator deployed to Ankara on 20 February. The inter-sector coordination cell in Ankara is expected to end on 1 March and to be absorbed by the Gaziantep coordination cell.
- The second local ETS Working Group meeting¹ was held on 23 February, coordinated from Gaziantep with online access. The group has been established to coordinate ICT activities across UN agencies, I/NGOs which have been approved by the government, and Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) in Türkiye. A total of 15 in-country organizations have attended the two first meetings.
- An ETS Information Management Officer (IMO) arrived in Gaziantep on 22 February and two additional technical ICT staff are expected to join the ETS team to support the response soon.

Data connectivity

- Four humanitarian hubs are planned to be established in the affected regions. Suggested locations are Kahramanmaraş, Hatay, Adiyaman, and Malatya. Although Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are operational in Türkiye, the ETS is on standby to provide back-up common ICT services for humanitarians in the hubs, including data connectivity and secure radio communications. The hub locations may change in line with operational needs.

¹ Transitioned from the Interagency Telecommunications Working Group (IATWG).

Assessments

- ITU continues to track mobile network and data connectivity across a 200 kilometre radius of the earthquake epicentre using the [Disaster Connectivity Maps \(DCM\)](#) tool, active since 6 February when the earthquakes first hit. By 11 February, 3G data connectivity had been restored to 90% of the normal status in Türkiye. Pockets of connectivity loss are still evident across all the affected areas. ITU is monitoring the impact of the aftershock earthquakes on mobile network coverage and connectivity.
- The ETS Coordinator in Gaziantep conducted two ICT assessments in Hatay on 17 and 19 February to meet with local actors operating there and to identify gaps for common communications services.

Services for communities

- The assessment in Hatay revealed that access to power is a challenge for communities located in temporary settlements following the earthquake across the most impacted regions, including in Hatay, Adiyaman, and Malatya. The charging stations for affected communities in multiple locations will complement the efforts of the three national MNOs in Türkiye—which rapidly recovered their services following the earthquake disaster—to enable the population to access critical communications services and information.
- The ETS is engaging with AFAD to plan for implementation of the charging station services with Hatay as a priority area. The sector is awaiting AFAD's confirmation of the service locations before going ahead with planning.
- The Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) on the ground has extended support for the project, if needed.
- The ETS is also engaging with the Protection Sector and OCHA to support the possible dissemination of key messages on humanitarian assistance using a Chatbot solution on mobile phones to contribute towards Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP).

Security communications

- The ETS is assessing and planning to strengthen existing security communications services for UN agencies across the impacted areas and deliver capacity building for radio use where needed.
- On 19 February, the ETS assessed the status of the UHF radio repeater and equipment located in the UNDSS Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Gaziantep to identify any damage to the security communications systems caused by the earthquake. It was found that the antenna needs adjustment, and the repeater requires upgrading.
- Meanwhile, the SOC operations in Gaziantep have temporarily been moved to an OCHA building following the earthquake. The ETS will work with UNDSS to re-establish the permanent SOC in Gaziantep.
- Training sessions on using handheld UHF radios have been delivered by the ETS to 13 WFP staff including Programme and drivers from 17 to 22 February to ensure access to secure radio communications while on field missions.

Funding

The ETS is appealing for US\$1 million for three months' response. A total of US\$499,000 from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was received on 22 February for both the ETS and the Logistics Sector.

WFP is supporting the ETS with an advance of US\$300,000 to kickstart staffing needs, as well as the delivery of security communications services for humanitarians and charging station services for affected populations.

Challenges

A large scale-up of humanitarian activities is ongoing in Türkiye in response to the earthquake disaster, which requires additional staffing and equipment in multiple locations. The exact locations for are pending confirmation. The ETS is working with partners on the ground to plan for the possible locations where common ICT services may be needed.

The availability of specific equipment—including charging stations—on the local market in Türkiye is limited. The ETS is exploring all opportunities to procure the required equipment.

Dashboard

See the latest version of the ETS Dashboard for the Türkiye response [here](#).

Meetings

The next Global ETC Partners Teleconference on the earthquake response will take place on **Tuesday 28 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:

www.etcluster.org/emergency/turkiye-earthquakes

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