



INTRODUCTION TO TAWASUL CHATBOT

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) chatbot solution for Common Feedback Mechanisms (CFM) - @TawasulChatbot

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1 Solution Overview: The Tawasul Chatbot and its role within the Common Feedback Mechanism

As a part of the Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) for interacting with affected populations provided by the Emergency Telecommunication Cluster (ETC), the Global ETC Chatbot is an IT solution that UN country offices and partners may be able to deploy to greatly simplify and standardise their communications with affected populations while scaling their overall support capabilities.

Seen in greater detail, ETC Chatbot is an automated software solution designed to give beneficiary populations access to important information that they can obtain on-demand through their mobile devices and in their native languages, in turn enabling applicable country offices to take a scalable, electronic, hands-off approach to fielding queries and delivering information where and when needed. In the specific case of Libya chatbot, called TawasulChatbot, the languages available are Arabic and English.

Still more specifically, Tawasul is an artificial intelligence (AI) model that performs the role of a support agent by using natural language understanding (NLU) and natural language generation (NLG) to autonomously answer questions sent to it in the form of text messages in the [Telegram Messenger app](#), which it responds to using selections from a set of pre-defined text responses that are uploaded and curated by the local Content Manager with support from ETC.

1.1 Tawasul chatbot solution overview: support for programmatic goals

By introducing an automated telecommunications solution that, when implemented correctly, enables Responding Partner offices to automate their engagement with beneficiaries, Tawasul Chatbot offers many advantages over previous solutions both at the internal operational level for Responding Partners and at the in-field crisis mitigation level for Global ETC and other humanitarian programmes, ensuring the impact, reach, and ethical quality of communications. As such, Tawasul's primary programmatic goal is to help the ETC to meet its mandate under the Accountability to Affected Populations framework to create digital tool that provide affected populations with clear information and support in understanding risks they face, resources available to them, and how to respond in emergencies.

Since 2020, the Tawasul Chatbot has accelerated as a priority for deployment over previous solutions due to its inherent value in distributing COVID-19 related information and assistance amid the global pandemic. By greatly reducing and even fully eliminating the need for in-person gatherings with affected populations where viral exposure is a risk, the Tawasul Chatbot solution presents an optimal mechanism for navigating the pandemic crisis, as well as being the solution targeted for improving communications with affected populations more broadly in future.

In addition to serving as an effective standalone solution that beneficiaries may place greater trust in than local governance bodies, the Tawasul Chatbot can provide a robust, scalable supporting mechanism in other areas of the CFM, for instance as an alternative that can be indicated to callers on busy hotlines or who are consulting static resources such as informational websites and pamphlets.

For Responding Partners, key advantages of the Tawasul Chatbot include:

- Fully automated, digitised solution profile, reducing the need for coordinated offline meetings or person-to-person telecommunications with beneficiaries;
- Unlimited scalability, enabling small teams to reach large affected populations and respond to developing crises in real time;
- Centralised content management, enhancing control and supervision of assistance and information distribution;
- Data-driven insights on communication flows, enabling monitoring for the efficacy of interventions with affected populations (under development);
- Centralised reporting, facilitating documentation under AAP mandates (under development).

For affected populations, key advantages of the Tawasul Chatbot include:

- Physical inclusivity, not requiring mobility to access information distribution points;
- Cultural inclusivity, with communications not requiring English or other second language understanding from beneficiaries;
- Anonymity, enabling beneficiaries to request assistance regardless of personal hesitations toward in-person meetings;

- Safety, mitigating the risks of in-person gatherings during the COVID-19 global pandemic and/or travel through conflict regions;
- Around-the-clock, on-demand access to information, whenever and wherever a network connection is available;
- Consistent and equal treatment from one beneficiary to the next, improving beneficiaries' confidence in the accuracy of information.

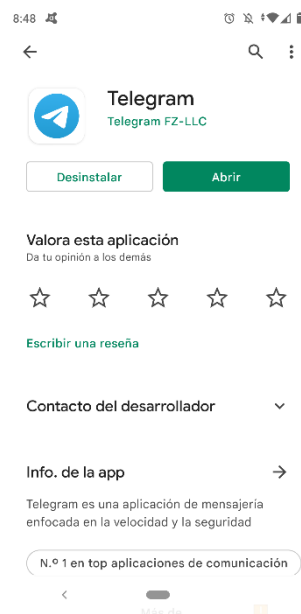
1.2 Tawasul Chatbot Solution Overview: Day to Day Functionality

1.2.1 How Affected Populations Interact with Tawasul Chatbot

Tawasul Chatbot is designed to be accessible to individual members of Affected Populations, without restrictions, through the free, publicly downloadable Telegram Messenger chat app, a globally distributed short message software that can be operated on devices connected to a mobile network or local area network.

For beneficiaries in Affected Populations, accessing and requesting assistance information from the Tawasul Chatbot involves the following steps:

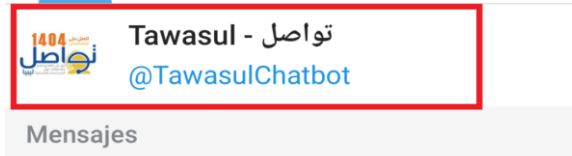
- Obtain a mobile smartphone with an active network connection and an installed SIM card (as SMS confirmation will be required for verification).
- Visit the App Store, Google Play, or relevant app store, the search for and download the Telegram Messenger app.



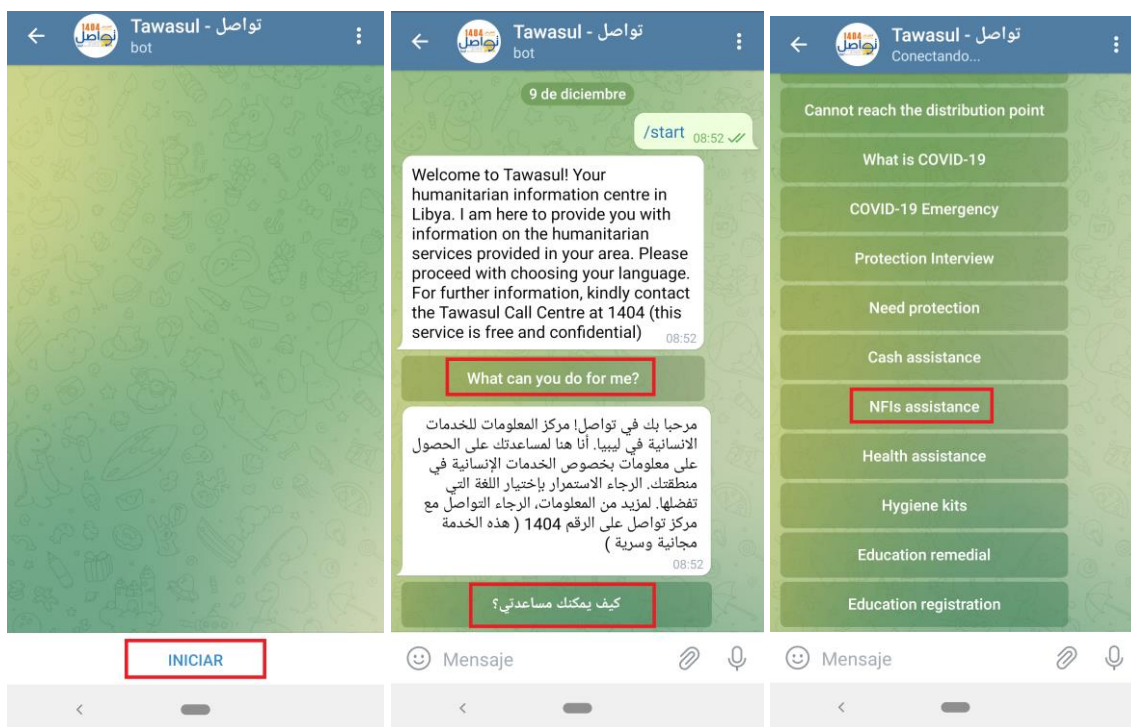
- In the Telegram Messenger app, (a) use the Scan QR Code feature to capture the QR code provided by the Response Partner, or (b) use the Search feature to search for the Chatbot by its username as indicated by the Response Partner. (@TawasulChatbot)

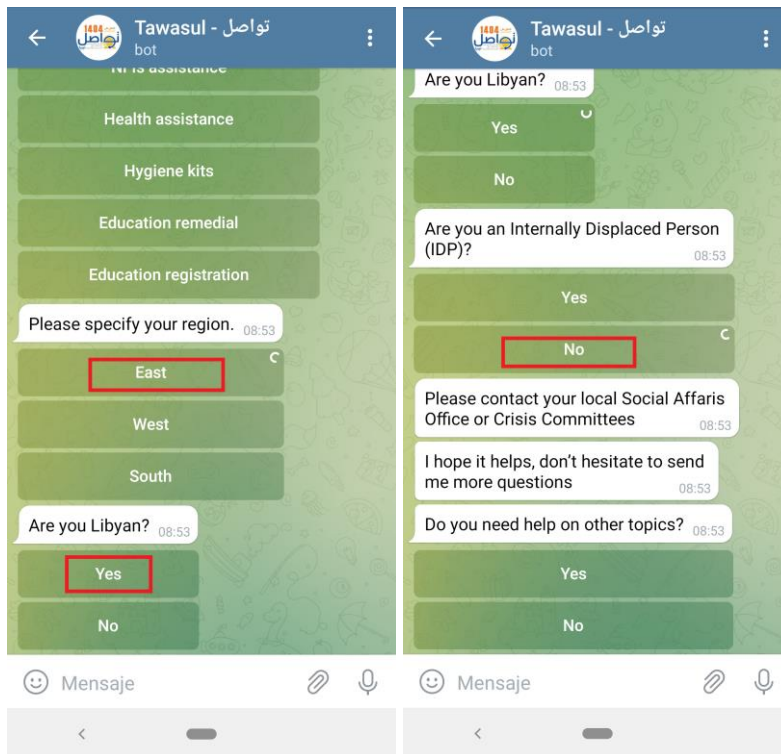
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- Using the Tawasul Chatbot chat window, use the buttons provided that will guide you to the answer to your query





Before being able to successfully complete these steps and begin receiving assistance from Tawasul in Telegram, Affected Populations must be made aware of the solution and how they can access it on their devices. This requires awareness-building activities on the part of the implementing Responding Partner according to in-field circumstances at the time of deployment. One or more of the following options should be applicable to all offices conducting such outreach initiatives:

- Distribution of pamphlets through established in-country CFM channels, containing the QR code or username that will locate the Chatbot in Telegram;
- In-person meetings with Affected Population groups to introduce and field questions about the Telegram Messenger app and relevant Tawasul Chatbot account;
- Inclusion of information about Tawasul and Telegram Messenger in hotline recordings made available from in-country call centers.

When creating a username for the Chatbot to make it discoverable to users in Telegram, Response Partners should note the following criteria for the username:

The username must not be used by any other Telegram account worldwide.

The username must start with the character “@”.

The username must end in the characters “bot”.