

[Final] Türkiye – earthquake response

ETS Situation Report #11

Reporting period: 02/05/2023 to 17/05/2023

The Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) response in Türkiye was co-led by WFP and the Government of Türkiye Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure to support the response in the areas affected by the multiple earthquakes that struck on 06 February 2023. The ETS responded in Türkiye from 16 February to 17 May.

Highlights

- The ETS supported the government-led response to the devastating Kahramanmaraş earthquakes from 16 February to 17 May to enhance and troubleshoot data connectivity in common spaces, set up and strengthen security communications systems, and set up charging station services for communities in temporary settlements. ETS services were delivered in eight locations across the earthquake-affected regions.
- The ETS response was supported by Standby Partners (SBP) and equipment from Ericsson Response, as well as a remote SBP from iMMAP. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) tracked mobile network and data connectivity across a 200 kilometres radius of the earthquake epicentre using the Disaster Connectivity Maps (DCM) tool.
- Ongoing activities to upgrade, enhance, or establish security communications services in six earthquake-affected locations are handed over to the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) and their local partner for implementation beyond the closure of the ETS in Türkiye on 17 May.



The ETS delivered communications services in eight locations during the sector's three-month operation. Photo: WFP/ETS

Situation overview

Two earthquakes of 7.8 and 7.7 magnitude occurred in south-east Türkiye on 06 February 2023. The epicentre of the earthquakes occurred in the Kahramanmaraş region and affected an area of 400 kilometres. Thousands of aftershock earthquakes ensued and continue to the present day.

The most heavily impacted provinces in Türkiye were Kahramanmaraş, Gaziantep, Hatay, Malatya, and Adiyaman. A Türkiye Earthquake Flash Appeal was launched on 16 February to support government relief efforts for three months.

The response to the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes has been led by the Government of Türkiye, coordinated through the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD).

ETS activities

Coordination

- The ETS response in Türkiye was coordinated from Gaziantep between 16 February to 17 May, following the impact of the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes on communications services. On 17 May, the ETS phased out its response activities in Türkiye in line with the three-month Flash Appeal timeline.
- A total of six local ETS Working Group meetings and nine Global ETC teleconferences took place to mobilize critical resources and coordinate partner activities.
- The ETS response was supported by two WFP Standby Partners (SBP). A SBP deployed from Ericsson Response from 25 February to 09 March to support data connectivity enhancement and the installation of charging station services. A second SBP deployed remotely from iMMAP from 23 March to 05 May to support ETS Information Management (IM) activities.
- During the ETS response in Türkiye, the sector coordinated the delivery of three services—enhanced data connectivity, charging stations for communities in temporary settlements, and security communications. Services were delivered across eight locations in the earthquake affected regions.

Services for communities

- A total of 20 charging station units were set up in two temporary settlements hosting impacted communities in the earthquake-affected areas of Türkiye—10 were installed in Sadaka settlement in Hatay on 04 March and another 10 were installed in Malat settlement in Malatya on 18 March. Using the services, affected communities can charge devices to contact loved ones and access critical sources of information.
- Following installation, the charging station services were handed over to the temporary settlement management in both Hatay and Malatya.

Data connectivity

- During the three-month response, the ETS supported the enhancement and troubleshooting of data connectivity in two United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) coordination sites in Hatay and Kahramanmaraş to assist humanitarians to coordinate and deliver assistance in the earthquake response.
- The activity was supported by Ericsson Response equipment and in close collaboration with responders providing the connectivity services for UNDAC, including Global ETC partner, the Government of Luxembourg.

Security communications

- Following the impact of the earthquake disaster, the ETS identified the critical gaps in security communications services—led by UNDSS—and provided technical advice and assistance to strengthen and enhance UHF radio service coverage in operational areas. Security communications services support the safety and security of personnel in the field when mobile networks are unavailable.

- In coordination with UNDSS, upgrades to existing repeater sites in Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa are ongoing, with UHF radio repeater sites in Hatay and Kilis already restored. Further, the ETS installed a planned new UHF repeater site in Mersin on 01 May and the handover plan includes the establishment of a second new repeater site in Reyhanlı. The two new sites will be operational once the necessary approval from the authorities is obtained.
- The ETS, in collaboration with UNDSS, initiated the procurement of additional security communications equipment to carry out the planned upgrades to the existing UHF radio network and to establish new sites. The equipment will take 4-6 weeks to arrive in Türkiye. Once it arrives, the equipment will be installed by UNDSS through their local partner. The ETS built the technical capacity of UNDSS before deactivation to support this activity.

Capacity building

- On 04 May, the ETS trained four Security Operations Centre (SOC) staff to operate the SOC in Gaziantep, which is temporarily based in the OCHA office before planned relocation to the restored UN House at a tentative date in June.
- During the operation, the ETS also built the capacity of UN agencies to use security communications equipment in the field. A total of 34 staff attended UHF handheld radio training sessions.

Funding

To support the response, US\$160,000 was received from the OCHA-managed Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) which funded ETS activities during the sector's three-month operation.

The ETS response was also supported by WFP Standby Partner staff from Ericsson Response and iMMAP, and equipment from Ericsson Response.

Challenges

The large geographical distance between the affected regions of Türkiye impacted on the timeliness of field missions and activities.

The required ICT equipment—particularly for security communications services—was not always available on the local market.

Mapping

See the final ETS Dashboard for the Türkiye response [here](#).

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) tracked mobile network and data connectivity across a 200 kilometres radius of the earthquake epicentre using the [Disaster Connectivity Maps \(DCM\)](#) tool for the duration of the ETS response. The DCM was activated on 06 February, when the earthquakes first hit.

Meetings

The final Global ETC Partners Teleconference on the earthquake response took place on **Thursday 15 May 2023 at 14:00 UTC.**

The final Local ETS Working Group meeting for the earthquake response took place on **Wednesday 05 April 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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