

Libya - Crisis

ETS Situation Report #25

Reporting period 01/08/2021 to 30/09/2021

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

- The interim ETS coordinator, Dalia Mansour, completed her mission in July. The new permanent ETS coordinator, Hikmat Akad, arrived in Libya on 24 September to take up his role. He joins the team with extensive experience working with the ETC operation in Syria.
- The Global ETC conducted a mission to Libya from 31 August to 6 September to evaluate the Common Feedback Mechanism in collaboration with partners on the ground. As a part of this mission ETS Libya staff were given training that will allow them to autonomously update and improve the Mila Chatbot.
- Equipment was received by the ETS team in Benghazi that will be used during the upcoming TESS mission to diagnose the ongoing coverage issue with the VHF radio security communications network.



ETS Activities

Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) project

- The Global ETC conducted a mission to Libya from 31 August to 6 September to assess the Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) by gathering feedback from the UN agencies that use the CFM and identify opportunities to increase the efficiency of the mechanism from a technical standpoint.
- During the Global ETC mission, training was provided to Libya ETS staff on the Chatbot. The Chatbot, known in Libya as “Mila”, provides an additional channel for communication that complements the CFM phone line. In its initial form, it is capable of providing automated answers to frequently asked questions regarding humanitarian assistance and COVID-19. ETS Libya staff were trained to update the Chatbot autonomously to improve the Arabic translation and incorporate answers to the call centre’s most frequently asked questions.

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- The ETS-managed call centre in Tripoli continues to serve as a nationwide COVID-19 information channel as well as a means for affected communities to seek information about other humanitarian issues and to provide feedback on assistance received. The service is offered in six languages: Arabic, Amharic, English, French, Hausa, and Tigrinya.
 - From 1 August - 30 September, the call centre registered 5,324 cases. 99 percent of cases related to humanitarian issues, with the most common topics of concern being protection, food security and cash-based transfers. The remaining calls related to COVID-19.
 - Of the total calls related to COVID-19, the majority were requests for information on vaccine side-effects and guidance on what to do if a family member is infected. Operators raise awareness about the virus and help people to protect themselves from it by providing critical information and official health guidelines and referring callers with potential symptoms to the health authorities.
 - The ETS is working to strengthen and sustain the CFM by setting up a cost sharing arrangement and Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with humanitarian organizations that want to use the platform. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) have signed SLAs for the CFM and the ETS continues to engage with partners with the aim of putting in place additional agreements with other organizations.

Services for Communities

- Following the re-establishment of free Wi-Fi services at the UNHCR Community Day Centre's new location in Tripoli in June, the ETS made changes to simplify the registration and log-in process for users. The new interface now also includes language options in Amharic and Tigrinya in addition to English and Arabic. Throughout August and September, 123 POCs accessed the Internet at the CDC in 509 unique sessions.

Security Communications

- Following the previous interim ETS coordinator's meeting with the UNDSS in Tripoli in July, it was agreed that a Telecommunications Security Standards (TESS) mission should be requested to evaluate and address security communications challenges in Libya. The request has been accepted and a TESS officer identified to conduct an evaluation mission in November.
- A telecommunications toolkit that was ordered from WFP FITTEST has arrived in Benghazi after several logistical delays with the shipment. The toolkit will be used to support efforts to troubleshoot the poor coverage of the VHF network in the Security Operations Centre (SOC) at the UN hub in Benghazi. The team will work with the TESS officer to take measurement to diagnose the signal coverage issue next month.
- The ETS has succeeded in obtaining clearance on behalf of OCHA from the Ministry of Telecommunications (MOT) for the importation of a satellite device. With ETS' support, an exemption was granted from the newly instituted requirements for such equipment to be purchased locally.
- The ETS is also supporting UNICEF with their application to the authorities for a VSAT license.



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- The license for all of the VHF frequencies managed by the ETS has been successfully renewed for another year.
 - The ETS continues to provide radio programming services to humanitarians upon request.

Funding

- The ETS has secured 18 percent of the required budget of USD 882,000 for the planned ETS activities for Libya in 2021.
- Additionally, USD 280,450 in funds from the Government of Luxembourg have been carried over into 2021. The grant has been extended until 31 December 2021 to allow the completion of ETS activities planned for 2020.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on **13 October 2021**.

Key information

- All information on the ETS response in Libya can be found [here](#).
- For further information or to contact the team on the ground please contact Libya.ETS@wfp.org

Contacts

LOCATION	NAME	TITLE	EMAIL
Tripoli	Hikmat Akad	ETS Coordinator	hikmat.akad@wfp.org
Dubai	Claire Roach	ETS Information Management Officer	claire.roach@wfp.org