

LIBYA SITUATION

OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 September – 20 December 2015

KEY FIGURES

471, 431

People of concern to UNHCR (including an IDP population of 435, 000)

52, 785

Persons of concern received life sustaining items from UNHCR partners

16, 653

Individuals received medical assistance from UNHCR partners

238, 392

USD provided in cash assistance to refugees in Libya (2015)

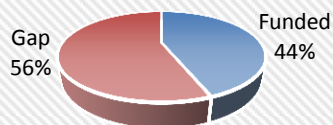
12, 913

Refugees and asylum seekers provided with hygiene items

Funding

USD 20.4 Million

Requested by agencies for the operation



PRIORITIES

- IDP data consolidation; needs assessments; capacity building.
- Distribution of NFI s to newly displaced and vulnerable IDPs and host community families.
- Humanitarian assistance for individuals intercepted/rescued by the Libyan Coastguard.
- Detention monitoring, NFI provision and seeking alternatives to detention. Provide documentation for refugees/asylum seekers; enhance outreach and protection monitoring; provision of legal; social assistance.

HIGHLIGHTS

- After 14 months of negotiations, Libyan parties signed a UN-brokered peace deal to form a Government of National Accord on 17 December in Skhirat, Morocco.
- Martin Kobler officially commenced his duties as the Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG) in Libya on 17 November. In his first public message as SRSG he emphasized that dialogue and unity is key to restoring peace, security and prosperity in Libya.
- UNHCR, with its partner International Medical Corps (IMC), distributed winter items to support persons of concern in detention centres. Thus far, 1,870 individuals in detention received warm clothing, mattresses and blankets.

- From August to November, UNHCR distributed aid to nearly 25,000 people in Tripoli and other coastal areas and inland towns.



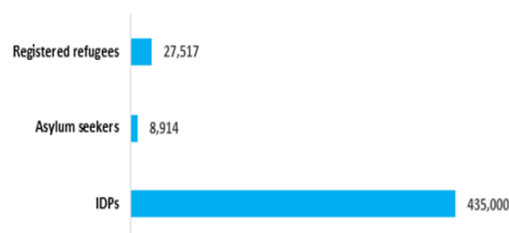
A family receives counselling and cash assistance at the community development centre in Tripoli. UNHCR and partners operate three community centres, (one in Benghazi and two in Tripoli) where persons of concern can seek protection assistance from UNHCR. Each week, between 100 and 200 individuals visit the centres. CESVI

- The second Technical Workshop and Coordination Meeting was jointly organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on 9-10 November 2015 in Tunis, Tunisia.

- As of 17 December, about 151,000 refugees and migrants arrived by sea in Italy, mainly from Libya. In 2014, there were 170,000 arrivals to Italy, mainly from Libya.

Population of concern

A total of **471,431** persons of concern



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

Libyan lawmakers signed an UN-brokered peace deal to form a Government of National Accord, on 17 December in Skhirat, Morocco. This signing brings an end to a 14 month long negotiation process and aspires to bring stability in the country. Some 88 members from both the General National Congress (GNC) and the House of Representatives (HoR) were present at the signing.

Mr. Martin Kobler officially commenced his duties as the SRSG for the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) on 17 November. In his first public message as SRSG he emphasized that dialogue and unity is the only path to restore peace, security and prosperity in Libya. On 21 and 22 November, SRSG Kobler visited Tobruk and Tripoli and held introductory meetings with key parties engaged in the political dialogue.

On 23 November a peace agreement was signed by the two key tribes in southern Libya, Tebu and Tuareg, calling for an immediate ceasefire, which may facilitate the return of thousands of displaced people. The agreement was signed in Doha, Qatar, and is hoped to end the 14 month conflict in the city of Obari, (south western Libya). Similarly on 12 November, representatives of the Zawiya and Wershafana tribes signed a ceasefire agreement in Bir Al-Ghannam, western Libya. This agreement meant the re-opening of a key highway between Tripoli and the Zuwaya area, allowing for the free movement of local communities and persons of concern to reach public services largely available only in Tripoli.

The conflict in Libya has displaced nearly 435,000 persons and many require varying degrees of protection and assistance from UNHCR. The most affected area continues to be Benghazi. In the absence of rule of law and functioning institutions, refugees and asylum-seekers are subjected to harassment, arbitrary detention, limited freedom of movement, and other human rights violations. Continuous risks of mass arrests and detention are common, particularly for Sub-Saharan Africans. This was further confirmed in the report entitled "Deadly violence and abuses continue to grip Libya with civilians bearing the brunt" jointly published by UNSMIL and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The report documents human rights abuses from 1 January to 31 October, 2015, and states that the overall situation in Libya remains highly volatile. According to UNSMIL, foreign nationals including asylum-seekers and refugees remained among the most vulnerable groups in Libya.

Libya continues to be the main transit and departure point for irregular sea migration to Europe from North Africa. In 2015, thus far 151,000 arrivals to Italy have been reported with 90 per cent departing from Libya. In October and November a decrease was noted in the number of arrivals to Italy that departed from Libya to roughly 75 per cent. Meanwhile the total number of detainees held by the Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM) is between 2,500 and 4,000 people in eight detention centres, including around 396 women and 52 children. Most of detainees are West Africans, Bangladeshi, or from Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Chad, Syria, and Sudan.



In this community development centre in Tripoli, a person of concern is being counselled prior to receiving cash assistance. CESVI/2015.

Achievements

Protection

- A significant achievement has been the establishment of an information sharing forum to improve Libya's response to boats in distress off its coast by streamlining information sharing and coordination between relevant Libyan officials and international organizations. The **second Technical Workshop and Coordination Meeting** was jointly organized by IOM and UNHCR on 9-10 November 2015 in Tunis, Tunisia. The Workshop was preceded by a preparatory meeting held in July 2015, which brought together representatives from the Libyan Coast Guard (LCG), the Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM), the Libyan Red Crescent (LRC), Ministry of Health in Libya, representatives from UNHCR/IOM Rome and Geneva, as well as other agencies involved in humanitarian action in Libya to exchange information, share best practices and evaluate ways to further strengthen inter-agency cooperation in responding to the assistance and protection needs of persons rescued at sea. UNHCR and IOM proposed terms of reference for a Technical Working Group (TWG) - Contact Group (CG) for creating a Technical Working Group (TWG) consists of the Libyan Coast Guard and DCIM managers. The draft is currently pending review by the LCG and DCIM at HQ level in Libya.
- Between August and November, **UNHCR delivered assistance to nearly 25,000 persons of concern in Tripoli and other coastal areas** in the west as well as the inland towns of Wadi Shata and Jufra.
- **UNHCR resumed targeted registration activities in Tripoli and Benghazi**, mainly for vulnerable persons for whom UNHCR documentation facilitates their access to basic public services and financial assistance, as well as durable solutions including resettlement to a third country albeit this is only available for a very limited number of refugees. UNHCR's partners in the field support the registration process through outreach activities as well as pre-registration activities.
- **UNHCR and partners run three community development centres**, one in Benghazi and two in Tripoli. The centres provide a space where persons of concern can receive counselling and a host of other forms of protection support including the identification of vulnerable persons in need of assistance as well as referral for or registration of new cases, and renewal of UNHCR's attestation. Some 400 vulnerable families (1,835 individuals) have been identified to receive cash assistance by UNHCR through the centres; thus far in 2015 nearly 240,000 USD has been distributed to families in various areas of the country. UNHCR and its partners continued to undertake weekly outreach activities in western and eastern Libya, (pending security) mainly to identify vulnerable persons in need of assistance
- **Nine hotlines managed by UNHCR and partners** provide easily accessible information and counselling to people of concern on protection support and community services, and responding to requests for assistance from those who have been arrested due to lack of documentation in order for UNHCR to advocate for their release. In 2015, 944 calls were received through the hotlines, the majority of which were Syrians followed by Sudanese, Palestinians, and Iraqis as well as other African nationalities (mainly Eritreans). The main queries are related to resettlement, medical assistance, cash assistance, reports of detention, education support, and other protection concerns.
- UNHCR's partner International Medical Corps has systematized access and **monitoring in eight of the 18 detention centres** run by DCIM. Through detention visits, UNHCR and IMC reached around 2,500 detained persons. In 2015, UNHCR successfully intervened for the release of around 700 persons of concern who were detained in various DCIM centres on the account of their illegal entry.
- **UNHCR monitors rescue at sea/interception operations**: Thus far in 2015, the total number of individuals intercepted or rescued at sea by the LCG is 7,650 persons, among them were 434 women and 70 children. The total number of reported dead or missing in the Mediterranean Sea is 3,716 persons. UNHCR provided immediate humanitarian assistance to those rescued through its partner IMC to around 2,000 persons.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- As a result of the conflict, protection space for refugees and asylum seekers in Libya is shrinking in terms of livelihoods and access to education and health services. The cost of rent for IDPs continues to rise while opportunities for employment for all persons of concern are scarce.

Education

Refugees and asylum seekers continue to use UNHCR's attestation letters to obtain access to primary, secondary and higher education such as university level programs.

Health

Refugees and asylum seekers continue to use UNHCR's attestation letters to obtain access to public health services.

Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR together with IMC carried out distributions of winter items to support refugees in detention centres. Thus far, 1,870 individuals in detention received winter items includes warm clothing, mattresses and blankets to ease the poor conditions of their detainment. Five detention centres were reached in Khoms and Misrata (Karrarim) detention centres as well as Abosaleem, Gweea and Salah Adeen detention centres.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Given the situation in Libya where security remains extremely volatile, greater numbers of people are forced to flee and become displaced in Libya, particularly in Sirte but also around Benghazi, Tripoli, Misrata and Awbari.
- The situation is deteriorating in collective centres hosting IDPs. In Benghazi, 71 schools are currently hosting IDPs without any envisioned alternatives or proposed improvements to the conditions within these collective centres.
- Those who reside in coastal cities like Misrata and Tripoli are often living in makeshift accommodation, factories, and rented houses. Any remaining savings are rapidly decreasing and payment of rent is increasingly problematic.
- In southern Libya, the situation in Awbari remains extremely volatile despite a peace agreement signed mid-November between tribal representatives. The presence of approximately 30,000 IDPs on the outskirts of Awbari has been reported in addition to 10,000 IDPs residing in the city. All are facing difficulties securing food and water and access to health and education services.
- Various areas in the country are extremely difficult to reach and there is subsequently a low presence of actors on the ground to provide basic shelter needs.

Durable Solutions

Achievements and Impact

- The departure to Denmark was completed for a single refugee woman identified with specific needs under UNHCR's resettlement program.
- To facilitate the resettlement process for a vulnerable Iraqi refugee currently in Misrata, UNHCR successfully negotiated with the Canadian embassy in Tunis to conduct the interview with the family via teleconference. The interview is scheduled to take place on 29 December.
- UNHCR's resumption of registration activities will result in an increase of the resettlement quota and will continue to be used by UNHCR as a tool for protection in a strategic manner.

Working in partnership

UNHCR leads the Protection Working Group, which coordinates protection activities and humanitarian responses by all actors in Libya. UNHCR also chairs the Detention Sub-working Group, which serves as an advocacy platform for alternatives to detention for refugees and asylum-seekers, particularly women and children. UNHCR also leads the Shelter/Non-food items (NFI) sector in Libya. UNHCR, represented by partner CESVI, also participates in the IDP Working Group for Benghazi, which coordinates IDP data/NFI for national/international organizations established in Benghazi. The UN Country Team in Libya continues to work from Tunis as a result of the evacuation of international staff in July 2014. UNHCR works closely with partners for implementation of programme activities through remote management.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

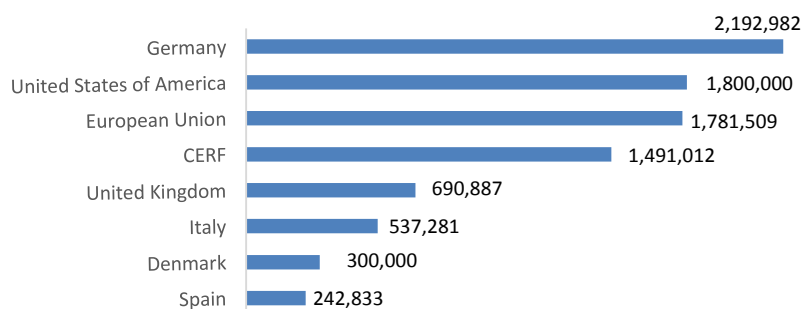
Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 9.04 million**

UNHCR is grateful for the financial support provided by donors who have contributed to their activities with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds as well as for those who have contributed directly to the operation.

Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2015: United States of America (251 M) | Sweden (80 M) | United Kingdom (53 M) | Netherlands (45 M) | Norway (44 M) | Priv Donors Spain (41 M) | Denmark (28 M) | Australia (24 M) | Japan (18 M) | Canada (18 M) | Priv Donors Italy (16 M) | Switzerland (16 M) | France (14 M) | Priv Donors Republic of Korea (12 M) | Priv Donors Japan (11 M) | Finland (10 M)

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Donor who have contributed to the operation (USD)



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