

## LIBYA SITUATION

### OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 January – 30 April 2016

#### KEY FIGURES

**454,566**

People of concern to UNHCR as of 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**37,443**

Refugees and asylum-seekers registered in Libya (Source: UNHCR, April 2016) out of an estimated 100,000 in total

**417,123**

Internally displaced persons in various regions of Libya (Source: IOM, April 2016)

**11,725**

Refugees and asylum-seekers received medical assistance so far in 2016

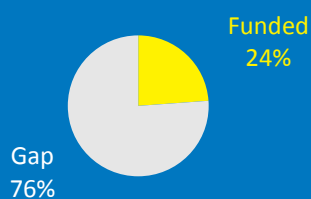
**13,434**

Refugees and asylum-seekers provided with hygiene items so far in 2016

#### FUNDING

**USD 21.8 million**

requested for the operation



#### PRIORITIES

- Protection and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers in Libya
- Support to internally displaced people and returnees as well as to host communities
- Capacity building of Libyan authorities for asylum- and protection-sensitive border management
- Detention monitoring, basic assistance to persons of concern in detention and seeking alternatives to detention.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

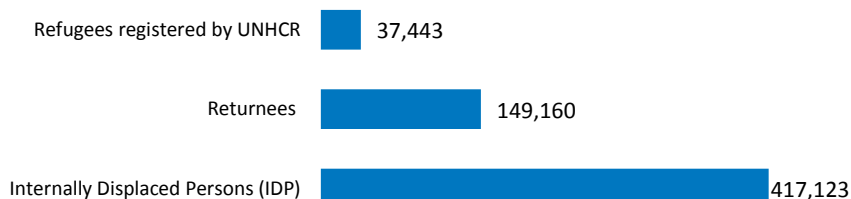
- UNHCR resumed registration activities through its partners in Tripoli and Benghazi in December 2015, targeting the most vulnerable cases. **End-April 2016, UNHCR registered a total of 493 asylum-seekers.**
- Libya continues to be the main transit and departure point for sea crossing from North Africa to Europe, with over 90% of arrivals to Italy departing from Libya. **UNHCR provided assistance to around 3,500 people rescued or intercepted at sea** and disembarked in Libya, **at two health posts established in Zawayia and Tripoli ports**, through its partner International Medical Corps (IMC).
- UNHCR monitors detention facilities run by the Department for Combating Illegal Migration (DCIM) around Tripoli. Through its partner IMC, **UNHCR reached some 1,637 persons in detention facilities in 2016.** IMC provides basic healthcare to detainees, distributed hygiene items and refers UNHCR the most vulnerable such as pregnant women and unaccompanied minors to advocate for their release.
- Refugees and asylum-seekers can reach UNHCR at two Community Development Centres run by partners CESVI and IMC in Tripoli and Benghazi. Outreach visits reached 110 vulnerable families who needed specialised assistance.



UNHCR partner IMC visits a vulnerable refugee family © UNHCR

#### Persons of concern

A total of **454,566** persons of concern



# UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

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## Operational Context

### Political and Security Context

**Libyan political actors continue to make progress, despite certain delays, on implementing the UN-brokered Libyan Political Agreement** signed on 17 December 2015. In an important first step towards a peaceful and orderly transition of authority to the Government of National Accord, the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, previously based in Tunis, installed itself in Tripoli on 30 March. Pending the endorsement of the Government of National Accord by the House of Representatives, **Libya is de facto divided between three political entities:**

- The Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, previously based in Tunis and now established in Tripoli, while not officially endorsed, has received international support and is gradually gaining control over a number of ministries in Tripoli;
- The House of Representatives (HoR) also known as Council of Representatives (CoR) or Libyan Parliament based in Tobruk since 2014 elections is still to endorse the Presidency Council's Government of National Accord and handover powers to it;
- The General National Congress (GNC) supported by Fajr Libya, a coalition of Islamist militias, is in control of Tripoli.

In addition, there are hundreds of militias across the country. Other groups such as Ansar Al-Sharia and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) are in control of other areas in Libya.

**The security situation in Libya therefore remains fragile** with confrontations involving a complex constellation of armed groups.

### Humanitarian Situation

The conflict in Libya affects an **estimated 100,000 refugees and asylum-seekers** (of which 37,000 are registered with UNHCR), some **417,000 internally displaced persons** and about **150,000 persons recently returned** to their area of origin after displacement. Many require varying degrees of protection and assistance from UNHCR.

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. 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.

**Libya continues to be the main transit and departure point for irregular sea migration to Europe** from North Africa. About 90 per cent of the 18,700 individuals arrived in Italy in 2016, have been reported departing from Libya.

Meanwhile between 2,500 and 4,000 detainees are being held by the Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM) in eight detention centres. Most of detainees are from West Africa, the Horn of Africa but also from Bangladesh, or from Bangladesh, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Chad, Syria, and Sudan.

### UNHCR Presence in Libya

Since July 2014, UNHCR has maintained operations in Libya through remote management from Tunisia, relying on a team of dedicated national staff based in Tripoli and Benghazi and several partner organizations to provide un interrupted support and assistance to persons of concern, through Community Development Centres (CDC) and hotlines. In 2015, UNHCR provided humanitarian assistance to nearly 60,000 persons of concern, mainly through partners.

## Achievements

### Protection

- **UNHCR resumed targeted registration activities in Tripoli and Benghazi**, focusing on vulnerable persons for whom UNHCR provides documentation and facilitates access to basic public services and financial assistance. UNHCR's partners assist in the registration process through outreach activities as well as data collection. UNHCR completes the registration and issues asylum-seeker certificates. So far in 2016, UNHCR received some 1,606 requests for registration representing 447 families. During the same period, UNHCR completed the registration of 493 asylum-seekers and renewed the documentation of 228 asylum-seekers and refugees.
- **UNHCR and its partners run two community development centres**, one each in Benghazi and in Tripoli. The centres provide a space where persons of concern can receive counselling and protection services. This includes registration, renewal of UNHCR's documents, persons with specific needs or in need of health or financial assistance are identified. Some 462 families were receiving monthly cash assistance. Cash assistance however was suspended in 2016 due to Libyan banks' liquidity issues. UNHCR partners continued to carry out home visits in western and eastern Libya to identify persons in need of assistance. In 2016, 110 families were visited and counselled on available assistance.
- **In 2016, UNHCR hotlines received 673 calls from refugees and asylum-seekers.** The nine hotlines managed by UNHCR and partners provide information to refugees and asylum-seekers on protection support and community services. They also receive requests for assistance from people who have been arrested and are in detention. Callers were mainly Syrians, Sudanese, Palestinians and Iraqis. Main queries relate to resettlement, medical assistance, cash assistance, reports of detention, education support, and other protection concerns.
- **Through detention visits, UNHCR reached around 1,637 detained persons in 2016.** UNHCR's partner International Medical Corps (IMC) has access to eight of over 20 detention centres run by Department of Combating Illegal Migration (DCIM). In 2016, UNHCR successfully intervened for the release to around 100 persons of concern who were detained in various DCIM centres on the account of their irregular entry, presence or attempt to leave.
- **Thus far in 2016, over 2,432 persons were intercepted or rescued at sea by the Libyan Coastal Guards (LCG),** including women and children. The total number of reported dead or missing at sea in the Mediterranean is over 500 persons. UNHCR monitors rescue at sea/interception operations and, through its partners, provided basic emergency assistance to around 2,000 persons disembarked in Tripoli and Zawya, where UNHCR has established health posts.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- As a result of the conflict, protection space for refugees and asylum-seekers in Libya is shrinking; access to employment, education and health services is getting more difficult. The cost of rent for IDPs continues to rise while opportunities for employment for all persons of concern are scarce, combined with hyperinflation and liquidity of Libyan banks.
- The Community Development Centre in Benghazi has been closed since the end of March 2016 at the request of local authorities. UNHCR partner CESVI is discussion on possibilities to resume activities to allow refugees and asylum-seekers to access basic assistance.

### Education

- Refugees and asylum-seekers use UNHCR's documents to access to primary, secondary and higher education such as university level programmes.

### Health

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

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The Libyan health care system is on the verge of collapsing, heavily impacted by the ongoing clashes and severe shortages. As a result, refugees and asylum-seekers are also facing difficulties to access public health services and basic medicines.

## Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs)

### Achievements and Impact

- Since the beginning of the year 2016, **UNHCR, through its partner REACH-ACTED has conducted an IDP assessment** including WASH and Shelter/Non-Food Items components. To overcome difficulties and restrictions to conduct households' surveys, this first round of assessment is conducted via key informants, with recognized knowledge and presence within the IDP communities. A second assessment covering the Benghazi area with a higher number of key informants will start during the second quarter 2016. Following the first key findings of this assessment, strategic priority has been given to cash-based assistance projects in the eastern part of Libya, while in the western part of Libya priority is given to NFI response.
- In February 2016, **UNHCR responded to an emergency request for assistance to displaced Libyan families** from Tawargha area and distributed non-food items kits to 364 families.

### 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 within Libya and in need of temporary shelter. The situation is deteriorating in collective centres hosting IDPs, such as factories or schools. Refugees and asylum-seekers, and internally displaced populations are also facing difficulties in paying their rent due to the lack of liquidity in Libyan banks.
- Hyperinflation of prices in Libya combined with shortage of food and basic items are creating a pressure on the most vulnerable, i.e. refugees and asylum-seekers.

## Durable Solutions

### Achievements and Impact

UNHCR's resumption of registration activities resulted in an increase of the resettlement quota. Resettlement will continue to be used by UNHCR as a protection tool, prioritizing the most vulnerable cases.

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- UNHCR is a **member of the United Nations Country Team and Humanitarian Country Team in Libya** and works in close cooperation with other UN agencies. As part of the [Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\) 2015-2016 for Libya](#), UNHCR leads the Protection Working Group (PWG), the Shelter/NFI working group and co-leads the Detention Task Force with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) under the HRP for Libya's Refugee and Migrant Response Plan.
- **UNHCR collaborates with Libyan authorities** and has set up a forum to boost Libya's ability to respond to rescue at sea incidents and provide humanitarian assistance to the persons rescued or intercepted. The group brings together UNHCR, the Libyan Coastguard, the Port Security Department, the Directorate for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM), the Libyan Red Crescent Society (LRC), international actors, such as the IOM and IMC.
- **UNHCR works with two international NGOs** - CESVI and the IMC - in Benghazi and Tripoli to carry out protection and assistance activities and detention monitoring.

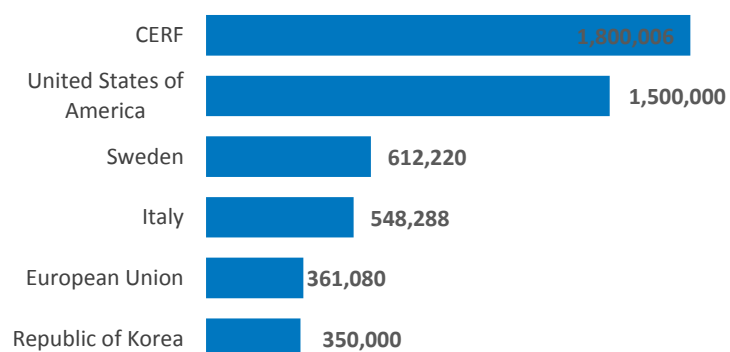
## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **USD 5,2 million**

UNHCR is grateful for the financial support provided by donors who have contributed to their activities with unrestricted and regional funds in 2016:

Sweden (78 M) | United States of America (78 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | Norway (40 M) | Australia (31 M) | Denmark (24 M) | Canada (16 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | Germany (13 M) | Priv Donors Spain (12 M)

### Funding received (in million USD)



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