

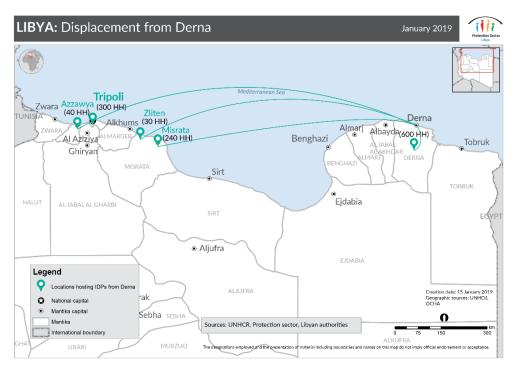
SITUATION OVERVIEW:

Since July 2017, Derna has been under military siege by the Libyan National Army (LNA). The fighting has intensified since mid-May 2018, when the LNA increased its presence and sought to expel the Darna Security Force (DSF)¹. During the period of May and June 2018, the LNA closed all access points to the city, which hindered the access to supply markets, banks and health facilities, and led to a deteriorating humanitarian situation for those remaining in the city. The city also witnessed intense aerial bombardment and usage of heavy weapons, including artillery. The intensified fighting reached the city centre. According to the Protection Sector's members, approximately 1,000-2,000 families have been displaced either to neighbourhoods inside Derna or to other Mantikas in Libya.

Despite LNA declaring victory on 28 June 2018, the fighting continued inside the old city of Derna, as remaining DSF military members continue to control the old city centre. Progressively, Derna is returning to normal life; approximately 1,300 families have returned to Derna, while 600 families are still displaced and not able to return due to political and security reasons.

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

The intensive fighting and indiscriminate attacks had a massive impact on the civilians living in the area of the conflict. As a result, substantial civilian casualties were reported. The fighting into urban areas put the lives of thousands of civilians at risk, particularly where military operations took place in neighbourhoods where civilians reside, or on busy road junctions or around vital services. Safe routes for civilians to leave conflicted areas were not always available, due to military siege,



airstrikes, landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXOs), while humanitarian access was prevented for many months. A few humanitarian partners including national and international actors were able to provide assistance during the last three months. The access of the humanitarian assistance is still quite limited due to the prevailing security situation in Derna.

Civilian structures have been damaged; houses were the most impacted, as well as roads, telecommunication infrastructures, governmental compounds, food and water infrastructures, education centres and healthcare facilities.

DISPLACEMENT AND RETURN

Due to the fighting of the past two years, Derna witnessed multiple waves of displacement with thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) seeking safety in different areas in Libya. While a big number of IDPs have returned home in the last six months, approximately 1,200 families continue to be displaced in several areas in Libya (including 600 families within Derna). The main reasons of displacement are linked to political opinions, perceptions of supporting the DSF, or families originating from West Libya. According to several IDPs interviewed, the families originating from West Libya were targeted and forcibly displaced, "ethnic cleansing" reasons. The main areas of displacement for the aforementioned 600 families are Tripoli, Misrata, Azzawya, and Zliten, in addition to other scattered areas inside Libya.

¹ Derna force use to be called Shura Council, on 12 May 2018 Shura Council dissolved into Derna Security Force.

Approximately 1,300 families have returned to Derna, however, 600 of these families found their houses destroyed, looted or burned down; these families are currently living with relatives, renting houses, or the LNA forces allocated houses belonging to other families and IDPs.

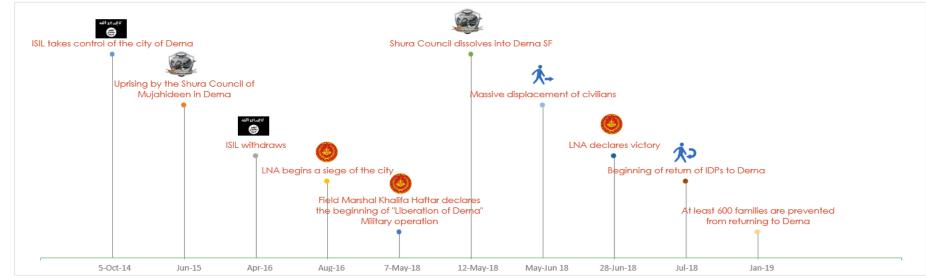
HUMANITARIAN AND PROTECTION SITUATION FOR IDPs OUTSIDE DERNA:

Security, safety and freedom of movement were reported as the main concerns by the interviewed IDPs. They claimed to be targeted by different military groups on the account of suspected affiliations with terrorist groups or supporting rivalry political positions. As a result, freedom of movement is restricted in certain areas, particularly in Misrata and Tripoli. According to the IDPs committee and interviewed IDPs, several IDPs have been arrested by different military in Misrata only because they are from Derna. Many of the IDP families hide their identity out of fear of prosecution from militias and host communities.

The majority of IDP families are renting accommodation and paying between (500-700) LYD a month, and continue receiving regular food assistance from WFP, they also received non-food items and hygiene kits from ICRC and UNHCR.

PROTECTION CONCERNS AND VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (IHL) AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAW:

- The widespread or systematic practice of enforced disappearance in Derna was reported by many of the interviewed IDPs and key informants (KIs); including arrest, detention and abduction of young men, women, children and family members of Shura council members;
- Torture and other ill-treatment was reported as widespread in prisons under the control of LNA especially in Gernada, Al-kweefah and Al-Rajma prison;
- Hindering access to food, petrol and medical supplies, resulting in a rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in some areas of the city, especially the old city of Derna.
- Widespread destruction, looting, burning down and confiscation of property belonging to the displaced families who are relatives of DSF families accused of not supporting LNA forces and families originally from West Libya. Several videos on the social media are showing militaries looting and burning down several houses and properties. The protection sector also received reports that the military allowed IDP families in Derna to occupy houses belong to families members of DSF or to families displaced outside Derna;
- > Continued military siege of the old city
- > Limited to no access to health, food and water supplies to the fighters in the old city;
- > Presence of explosive remnants of war (ERW) was reported in many neighbourhoods of the city.



For more information, please contact Protection sector coordinator Yasin Abbas, abassy@unhcr.org.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Monitoring of the security and protection situation of the IDPs from Derna;
- Monitoring of the humanitarian needs to the IDPS in and outside or Derna;
- Coordination of a wider humanitarian assistance if secure access is possible
- Continued advocacy for an official SRSG statement condemning the siege and the security situation;
- Advocacy for an official UNHCR HC and other humanitarian actors statement condemning the discrimination faced by the Derna IDPs and promoting a safe, voluntary and dignified return to Derna.