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CITY PROFILE OF BENGHAZI, LIBYA

October 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, KEY FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS

The Rapid City Profiling and Monitoring System

With the support of the European Union, UN-Habitat and UNFPA had undertaken the realization of the Rapid City Profiling and Monitoring System (RCPMS) for six Libyan cities in close collaboration with the Libyan Ministry of Planning and the concerned municipalities, the Libyan Bureau of Statistics and Census (BSC) and the Urban Planning Agency (UPA).

This report is the City profile for the City of Benghazi, the second major city of the country. It aims at establishing a first comprehensive Urban Information Analysis providing a detailed assessment of urban structures and facilities as well as on urban indicators related to basic services, local economy, living standards. It considers the outcomes of sectors' assessments conducted by key informants interviews conducted in the city with the different sectors, the results of damage assessment conducted by the ground verification team and builds on assessments undertaken by UN agencies and INGOs.

The City Profiling exercise informs on humanitarian, early recovery and stabilization responses and the prioritization of urban rehabilitation interventions so that they have the largest impact to encourage urban recovery, in terms of location (spatial prioritization), sequencing, and types of interventions; and the return of displaced populations. It helps also building the capacity of local actors to evaluate and monitor the impact of the crisis on the urban functionality and services, considering the demographic changes because of the dynamic of the conflict and forced displacements.

UN-Habitat has utilized the latest high-resolution satellite imagery. The maps that were generated using GIS technology offer an evidence-based, multi-sector response planning framework and will be made available in the open data portal which will offer live up-to-date GIS mapping data whereby the concerned users can extract maps, tables, graphs and narrative reports. The urban functionality and damage assessment, undertaken by UN-Habitat, was complemented by the results of the household survey performed by UNFPA in close collaboration with the Libyan Bureau of Statistics and Census conducted in May 2018, which provides information on realities and perceptions of the life and service provisions of and to Benghazi's population.

Executive Summary and key findings

Benghazi is the second city of the country with a population estimated between **715,000 and 812,000 inhabitants** within its present administrative boundaries. Its historical districts of Old Benghazi have experienced severe damage during the conflict. The population of the municipality have been subject to **significant displacements** (more than **half of all displaced in Libya, 1/3**rd **of the population of the municipality**), while receiving relatively small number of IDPs. Most of the displaced remained in the region/mantika/governorate/mohafaza of Benghazi and returned to the city after the end of the conflict.

The municipal boundaries have changed significantly in 2015 following a decision of the municipal council. It is structured in 14 municipal branches/furu', grouping 64 districts/mahalla. The neighborhood of Benina, where the international airport and some major public facilities serving Benghazi are located, had been separated in an independent municipality within the Benghazi region.

The key findings of the City profile of Benghazi could be summarized at two levels:

General Environment

- At least 30,000 people need immediate humanitarian assistance in Benghazi: 45% of them are returnees, 35% among nondisplaced, 15% IDPs and 5% migrants and refugees.
- The migrant and refugee population in Benghazi and its region reached 26,880 mid-2018. They constitute only 4% of the total in Libya. Most of them originating from MENA countries and Asia. Thus, Benghazi migrant population seems to be mostly constituted of migrant workers.

- Some districts in Benghazi have experienced substantial and severe damage within the historical branch of the city (Old Benghazi) They require reconstruction and rehabilitation plans.
- Benghazi has conserved most of its major trade role in the country despite the long closure of its port.. The economic recovery of the city and the living conditions of its population need to address unemployment and boost youth entrepreneurship issues beyond the pre-crisis mechanisms.
- There is a need to address the reintegration of former combatants in public life and social reconciliation in several districts of Benghazi.

Multisector needs assessment

Governance

Despite the promulgation of Law of Local Administration n° 59 of 2012, Libyan municipalities had no clear functions and source of funding, and their relations with the central administration and that of the mohafazat – the latters still do not have elected councils - need to evolve according to the law and to be specified by rules. The investment needed for recovery necessitates a proper solution of these governance issues, particularly for what concerns budgeting, public contracting and procurement. The municipal staff needs institutional support in **managerial capacity-building** for that purpose.

- The municipality of Benghazi has a complex branches and districts layout. The land surface within the municipality boundaries has greatly increased to 106,513 ha. This creates significant challenges of administrative and public services for a proper management by the Municipal Council.
- Many administrative offices and courts were severely damaged or destroyed, as they were located in Old Benghazi districts that experienced intense fighting. They need to be rehabilitated or replaced to reactivate their functions.

Urban planning, land use and housing

- The 3rd generation master plan needs to be reassessed considering the new administrative division of the municipality and the fact that it has not been applied. Especially, the distribution of public services and the axes of activities and movement of the population should be assessed in light of the transformations that occurred during the conflict.
- Significant informal constructions had been erected during the conflict to cope with the population displacement and a pre-conflict housing units deficit. The total number of

housing structures has increased by 81% between 2006 and 2018.

Licenses for construction and registration of properties seem to have been stopped since 2011. This gives a peculiar vision on property rights and informal constructions before and after the crisis. The **Housing**, **Land and Property (HLP) Right** has become therefore **a major concern** for the proper management of the municipality, but more importantly for recovery and reconciliation.

Destructions and damage

- Most of the damage of the fighting areas has been recently repaired and the housing units inhabited despite their substantial or severe damage. This is except the historical and cultural area of Old Benghazi which has experienced destructions, as well as the district of Tikah in Sahel Gharbi.
- The repairs and reconstruction of the damaged neighborhoods and housings should be assessed within a comprehensive vision.

Health

Even prior to the conflict, Benghazi was assessed as ill serviced in terms of health facilities in comparison with other cities in Libya. This situation had aggravated with the conflict with many hospitals, PHCs and PHUs damaged and non-operational. In particular, Benghazi has lost half of its main hospital beds capacities during the conflict. The improvement of the health services (rehabilitation of hospitals, PHCs and PHUs) is a priority.

Benghazi, like other cities of Libya, faces a lack medicines and for many types of medicine obtain them at high price. The commercial network for the import and distribution of medicines should be assessed and addressed as a priority.

Education

- Even before the conflict, there was a lack of class rooms for primary and secondary schools within the municipality and an uneven distribution of education facilities between the different districts. This problem was aggravated with the effects of the conflict.
- The rehabilitation of the campus and buildings of Benghazi University, the oldest in the country and severely damaged by the conflict, is a priority.
- There are also very few children care centers within the municipality.

Water, sewage and waste

The sustainability of Benghazi as a major metropole depends on the proper operation and security of the Great Man Made River (GMMR) network along hundreds of kilometers, which constitute a major concern. The city network needs to be rehabilitated to enable proper healthy provision of drinking water. In particular, the problem of sewage intrusion into the drinking water network should be addressed as a priority.

- The sewage system in Benghazi seems to be a major serious issue. The pre-conflict network was already insufficient and fragile, lacking maintenance. The conflict had led to the interruption of the construction of the treatment plant and the extension of the network. This is in addition to the destruction of equipment and pumping stations. Currently, sewage is leaking in some areas to the drinking water network and spilling to the July 23rd lake, which should be addressed as a priority.
- The collection of solid waste in Benghazi is irregular and the dumping sites need to be multiplied and rehabilitated.

Electricity and energy

- The population still suffer from electricity cuts. The power plant, substations and network need urgent repairing.
- Shortage of cooking gas and its high prices constitute also a major concern for the population, to be addressed.

Roads and transportation

Two small bridges in Old Benghazi are damaged and need repairing.

Heritage and culture

Finally, the Old Benghazi district comprises several historical sites and buildings which constitute the cultural heritage of the city, and a corner stone of the Libyan identity. This district has been severely damaged during the conflict with many of the heritage buildings destroyed or extremely damaged. A proper plan for the restoration and preservation of this heritage is key for Libyan reconciliation.

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1. CONTEXT

The city of Benghazi and its regional network

The city of Benghazi is the center of the Benghazi governorate (or Sha'biya in the old naming¹); one of the 22 regions of Libya. Benghazi is also one of the 6 municipalities/Baladiyat which constitutes this governorate; the other areas being Al Abyar², Qaminis³, Slukh⁴, Tucra⁵ and Benina⁶ (maps 1 and 2).

The city developed around its port and old town (Benghazi Medina). The core of its central districts is composed of the municipality branches of Old Benghazi, Slawi, Salmani, Benghazi Jadida, Al Fweihat and Al Berka, circled by Al Kuwaifyah, Bu 'Atni, Huwari, Qwarsha, Sahel Gharbi, Al Nwaqiya, Maqzeha and Sidi Khlifa⁷ (map 3). These constitute the old limits of the municipality (see map 3).

The decision of the Municipal council n°13 of 2015⁸ had resulted in the organization of urban Benghazi in 14 municipality branches (or Fara') and 64 districts

The details of these branches and districts, including the different names used and the correspondence with the old districts are given in the table below (see also map 3).

Benina, where the airport is located, was considered before 2015 as part of the municipality, but is now an independent one.



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