

LIBYA

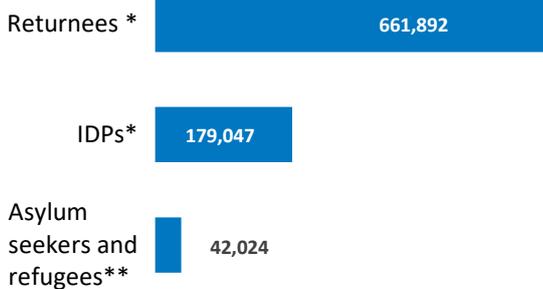
An estimated 803,000 people in Libya are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance (2022 Libya Humanitarian Needs Overview). Displaced Libyans, asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are amongst the most vulnerable populations.

UNHCR's overall strategic objective, in cooperation with the Libyan authorities, is to enhance the protection environment and provide life-saving assistance to displaced populations, asylum seekers, refugees and host communities in Libya. The pursuit of durable solutions outside Libya for some of the most vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees is also of paramount importance.

UNHCR supports the Libyan authorities to improve living conditions for displaced and conflict-affected Libyans and works with partners to assist vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees. UNHCR has been supporting government stabilization and peace-building efforts through the implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs).

POPULATION OF CONCERN

882,963



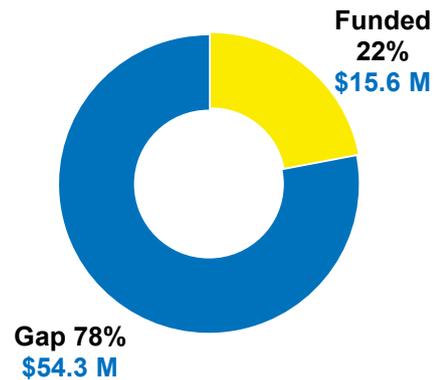
* IOM-DTM November 2021

** Asylum seekers and refugees registered with UNHCR (as of 1 February 2022)

FUNDING

\$70 million

requested for the Libya operation in 2022

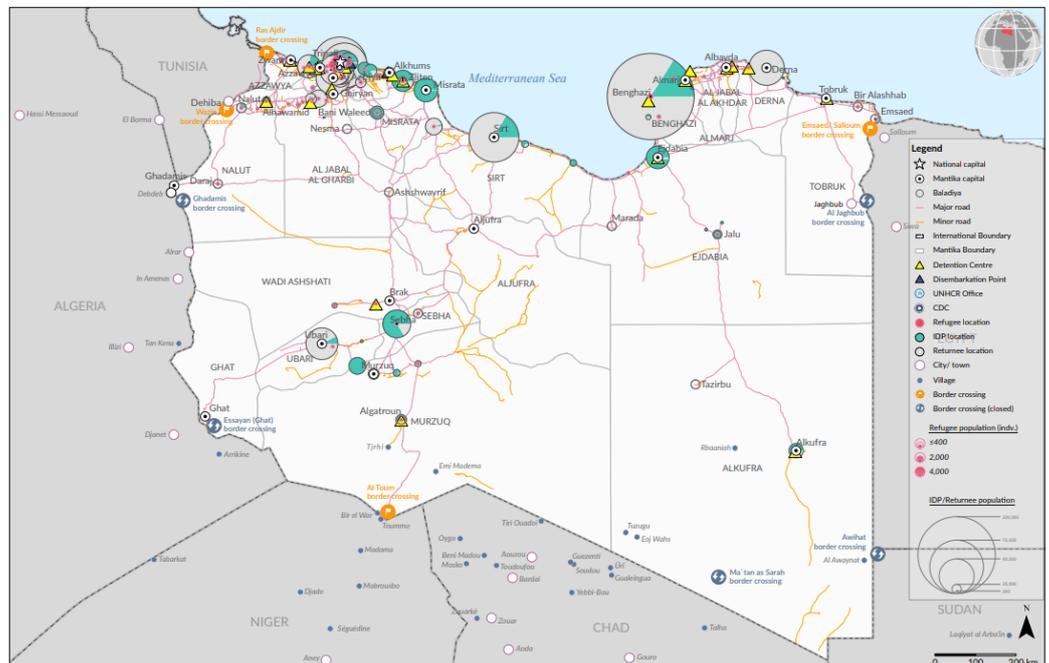


UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

111 national staff (**92** in Tripoli, **12** in Tunis, **6** in Benghazi, **1** in Misrata), **42** international staff (**35** in Tripoli, **6** in Tunis, **1** in Benghazi)*

*Currently 2 international staff in Tripoli.



Working with Partners

UNHCR is a member of the UN Country Team and Humanitarian Country Team in Libya. Together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), UNHCR co-leads the Migrants and Refugees Platform. UNHCR also co-leads the Shelter/NFI Sector and the Protection Sector on IDPs, returnees and non-displaced population, as well as refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, and leads the Cash and Market Working Group. UNHCR and UNICEF are working together on the implementation of their BluePrint initiative for Joint Action, pledging to expand assistance, improve delivery of essential services (water, sanitation and hygiene), education and protection for refugee children in Libya (one of 11 pilot countries) through the promotion of their access to the related public facilities. UNHCR works with the World Food Programme (WFP) for the joint distribution of emergency food packages for food-insecure asylum seekers and refugees.

UNHCR supports Libyan authorities to enhance the rights environment and provide assistance for the displaced and conflict-affected Libyan population. It works with partners to protect and assist refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR is currently working in partnership with both international and national NGOs, as well as civil society organizations. Partners include ACTED, *Cooperazione e Sviluppo* (CESVI), IRC, INTERSOS, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and LibAid, as well as UN sister agencies, WFP, UNICEF.

Main Activities

Assistance to internally displaced people (IDPs)

Support for IDPs is a priority. UNHCR is providing basic assistance to IDPs in Libya, such as core-relief items (CRIs), shelter support and cash assistance. Working with partners, ACTED and NRC, UNHCR provides cash assistance via prepaid e-cards to help the most vulnerable displaced families to cover shelter and basic needs in Tripoli, Benghazi and Sebha. The cards allow people to directly purchase goods, circumventing the acute banking liquidity problem that Libya is facing. Besides, UNHCR together with its partner NRC also provides shelter rehabilitation support for the most vulnerable IDPs, as well as core-relief items through the Libyan Humanitarian Relief Agency (LibAid) to IDPs, IDP returnees and affected host communities across Libya.

UNHCR continues to implement quick impact projects (QIPs), which are small and rapidly implemented projects to support IDPs, returnees and host communities aimed at promoting social cohesion and facilitating access to essential services. Together with communities and relevant local authorities, UNHCR and partners identify projects, mainly targeting local infrastructure, equipment and basic services related to health, education, shelter and WASH. In 2021, UNHCR finalised 54 QIPs, both directly and through partners, most related to health and education, in hospitals, clinics, and schools.

In 2021, UNHCR, through partners, completed 31 QIPs in the health sector and 14 QIPs in education while the remaining QIPs targetted youth and sports. In 2021, **with close cooperation with the Abusliem Municipality in Tripoli, UNHCR Libya initiated a pilot project ‘Sport for Peace’ to help improve social cohesion and psychosocial well-being amongst IDPs, IDP returnees, refugees, asylum seekers, and host communities within the city.** As the most popular sport among all population groups in Libya, football was selected as the athletic focus of this project. Phase 1 of the project (September 2021 – August 2022) focuses on the rehabilitation of the Abusliem football stadium and design of social activities. During phase 2 (September 2022 – August 2024), UNHCR and partners will involve trained coaches to organise complementary life-skills workshops aimed at developing social cohesion and skills building, including conflict resolution, peace building, teamwork, and respect for diversity. In parallel, a curriculum of activities is being developed with the support of Fútbol Más, Libyan Scouts and the Libyan Football Federation for a range of sports activities in support of youth participation, empowerment, and peaceful co-existence. The Ministry of Sports and Youth, the Ministry for IDPs and Human Rights, as well as civil society associations will also be engaged as promoters of the project and key allies to reinforce the sports for protection response.

In 2021, nearly 20,383 IDPs received cash grants through Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and ACTED. NRC targetted households in the Tripoli area with prepaid cash card distributions, which can be used to purchase items in stores, while ACTED provided cash support for households in Benghazi and Sebha.

Support following rescue/interception at sea

UNHCR’s interventions at disembarkation points in Libya focus on the provision of life-saving assistance and protection monitoring to identify people in need of international protection, and vulnerable individuals, including unaccompanied and separated children, the elderly, people with specific needs, women at risk and victims of trafficking. UNHCR and IRC has access to and conducts protection monitoring at

disembarkation points in western Libya, when informed by the relevant authorities. In 2021, 32,425 migrants, asylum seekers and refugees were disembarked over 235 operations. The number of survivors returned to Libya represented a 178 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2020 (11,520 individuals). UNHCR and partner IRC distributed 6,804 food items and 1,735 hygiene kits at disembarkation points, and 1,456 medical consultations were provided to those in need. So far in 2022, 1,721 migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees were disembarked in 21 operations. UNHCR, with its partner IRC distributed 303 food items and blankets at the disembarkation points, and while medical consultations were provided to those in need.

Assistance and advocacy to end arbitrary detention of refugees and asylum-seekers

UNHCR continues to appeal for the release of refugees and asylum-seekers from detention, an end to arbitrary detention in Libya and the establishment of an efficient judicial review process. UNHCR stands ready to support alternatives to detention including care arrangements for unaccompanied children. In 2021, UNHCR and partners conducted 400 visits to detention centres (the numbers and frequency of the visits depend on access to the centres). In addition, the geographical nature of some detention centres means that they lie in areas deemed insecure. Where present, UNHCR through its partners provides lifesaving assistance, including medical support where particularly poor hygiene conditions contribute to the risk disease. UNHCR also advocates for measures to be taken to reduce the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (GBV).

As of 13 February 2022, UNHCR estimates some 2,300 refugees and migrants are currently detained in Libya, including around 1,500 people of concern to UNHCR. In 2021, over 500 refugees and asylum-seekers have been released following UNHCR's advocacy efforts (389 in 2020), for the purpose of evacuation to a safe third country, as well as some having been screened for evacuation; the majority have been supported with meeting essential needs in urban areas.

Urban Refugee Programme

One of UNHCR's key objectives in Libya is improving the protection environment for refugees and asylum-seekers. Until October 2021, UNHCR assisted people in need of international protection at the Community Day Centre (CDC) in Tripoli, through outreach visits and via telephone hotlines. Activities at the CDC were suspended in early October 2021 following extended protests at the site, which blocked access for staff and people of concern. The suspension of activities at the CDC due to security concerns significantly hampered UNHCR's ability to provide essential assistance and support to vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees. On 2 December, UNHCR and partners announced the permanent closure of the CDC, while continuing to provide assistance to people in need of assistance via other modalities. Since the beginning of October 2021, UNHCR and partners CESVI and IRC have been providing help and services to some of the most vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees in other locations, as well as through home/field visits.

UNHCR partners CESVI and IRC provide specialized assistance to people with specific needs, including unaccompanied and separated children and victims of trafficking. In 2021, the UNHCR and NRC call centre provided information and advice about services and assistance. However, this service was replaced in January by the Tawasul Common Feedback Mechanism Line. NRC also offers legal services, providing refugees and asylum-seekers with practical legal advice and counselling on areas such as legal residence and rental agreements.

Cash assistance remains key to building the resilience of vulnerable people of concern, pending possible durable solutions outside Libya. In 2021, UNHCR through partners CESVI and NRC provided cash assistance to some 9,503 vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees across Libya. This assistance is primarily used to help pay rent and cover expenses for basic food items.

UNHCR continues to distribute food parcels (designed to last for one month), hygiene kits and other core-relief items. In 2021, UNHCR and WFP reached 14,425 food-insecure individuals with food parcels.

Refugees and asylum-seekers have limited access to Libyan health facilities. **UNHCR and partners provide primary healthcare and psychosocial support** to refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas of Tripoli and in detention facilities. In 2021, UNHCR and partners conducted 18,581 medical consultations for vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers in both the urban setting (12,026), in detention (5,099), as well as at disembarkation points (1,456). In partnership with IRC and the Libyan Red Crescent (LRC)—and through the generous support of the EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)—a 24-hour emergency medical hotline and ambulance service was launched for emergency cases.

Durable Solutions

UNHCR continues to seek durable solutions such as resettlement, family reunification and voluntary repatriation for refugees and asylum-seekers, giving particular attention to the most vulnerable. Since November 2017, a total of 7,861 refugees and asylum seekers departed from Libya, either through resettlement (2,438 since 2017) or humanitarian evacuations (5,389 since 2017, including 3,667 to Niger, 898 to Italy, 824 to Rwanda). In January 2022, three individuals were resettled to Norway.

COVID-19

Libya reported its first case of COVID-19 on 24 March 2020. As a result, the operation has adjusted its regular programming in line with social distancing and public health protocols.

UNHCR and partners introduced new health and safety protocols at the Serraj Registration Centre in Tripoli, working on an appointment-only basis to ensure social distancing to protect the health of people of concern, partners and staff, with temperature checks, sanitation equipment, and PPE required for everyone entering the facilities.

UNHCR has strengthened its hotline response in order to improve its outreach and provide information to refugees and asylum-seekers. In 2021, over 30,000 calls were received by UNHCR and partners CESVI, IRC, and NRC (compared to 10,000 in 2020). Queries mostly related to protection concerns, followed by resettlement and cash assistance.

Detention centres (DC) present a particular health risk due to COVID-19, due to significant overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. UNHCR through partners LibAid and IRC organized the distribution of hygiene kits and other CRIs at a number of DCs across the country in both east and west Libya. So far in 2021, UNHCR and partner IRC have carried out 400 monitoring visits and distributed core relief items/hygiene kits to 16,695 individuals in DCs across Libya.

UNHCR continues to support local health response. Since March 2020, UNHCR provided 21 ambulances, 46,915 hygiene kits, 16 generators, 12 hospital tents, 5,983 mattresses, 120 rolls of sanitary cloth, 2,955 piece of protection equipment, 21,800 face masks, 19 prefabricated containers, 62,700 protective gloves, and 3,961 hand sanitizers to hospitals and healthcare facilities across Libya. Through its response, UNHCR continues to strengthen authorities' emergency preparedness and response to COVID-19.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors to UNHCR's 2021 humanitarian response in Libya

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