



Conflict-Sensitive Assistance to Libya

Summary of Discussions | 24th Meeting

22 March 2018, Acropole Hotel, Tunis

The Conflict-Sensitive Assistance in Libya (CSA) forum, co-hosted by UNDP Libya and the Swiss Embassy to Libya and facilitated by the Peaceful Change Initiative (PCI), met for its 24th meeting on 22 March 2018 at the Acropole Hotel in Tunis. The meeting was attended by 27 persons from 20 different organisations and embassies.

The meeting covered:

- An overview of the CSA process and its various components;
- A joint update of the shared conflict analysis;
- Presentation and discussion on conflict sensitive assistance to Libya in the context of planned elections.

Overview of the CSA process

A short presentation reviewed the different components of the CSA process, including:

- The meaning of conflict sensitivity;
- The role of the CSA forum;
- The principles of conflict-sensitive assistance;
- The role of the Leadership Group in conflict sensitivity;
- Additional initiatives drawn from the CSA process (conflict sensitivity trainings and peer review).

Summary update of analysis

Participants reviewed and updated the joint context analysis, based on the factors of UNDP's original analysis, Insecurity and Instability in Libya (UNDP Libya, December 2015). **All sector groups reflected on the escalating situation in the south. It was recommended that PCI consider organising a more specific discussion on the situation in the south during the next CSA Forum.**

A complete overview of the updated analysis can be found by logging into the OPSECA online platform at: <https://opseca.humanidev.tech>. To register a profile and use of the platform, please contact anthony.foreman@peacefulchange.org. Only organisations participating in the forum have access to the online platform (one login profile per organisation).

Political

UN SRSG Salame continued his meetings with the different parties on the Action Plan, but political talks have failed to find meaningful agreement, in particular between the HoR and the HCS over the reform of the mechanism to select members of the PC. Meanwhile, incidents continue to highlight the political divide: On 24 January, the convoy of the GNA Minister for Education came under fire as it

approached the city of Bani Walid. In more positive developments, in late January, more than 100 mayors from all regions met in the east, to discuss the political situation and steps towards better services for municipalities once a political agreement is reached. A committee was created, headed by the mayor of Benghazi and including representatives from all regions, to follow up. A second meeting was held on 18 March in Tripoli.

On February 13, the Libya Supreme Court in Tripoli ruled that the lower court in Bayda cannot decide on matters related to the affairs of the constitution. This followed a ruling by the Bayda Appeal court in August 2017 that declared the Constitutional Draft Assembly vote approving the draft constitution as invalid. Subsequently, the head of the Constitutional Drafting Assembly called on the HoR to issue a referendum law. Eastern members of the HoR rejected the Supreme Court Ruling, saying it was politically driven. Meanwhile, preparations for elections continued. Following an original deadline of 3 February, domestic voter registration was then extended to 15 February, when the HNEC announced more than 2.4 million registered voters, of which about 1 million are women. This surpasses the target of half of eligible voters (4.4 million). On 2 February, Salame noted in a statement that not all conditions for the holding of elections had been met.

Tensions within the HoR surfaced in mid-February when southern MPs decided to boycott to push for greater support for the south. He complained of a complete lack of interest in the south by the different institutions in the north, whether the HoR, the Bayda-based Thinni administration, or the Presidency Council and its Government of National Accord in Tripoli.

- Forum participants noted how during the reporting period, important political actors shifted allegiances.
- With regards to impact, participants noted how the continued uncertainty regarding the electoral process, including around the planned municipal elections, impacts on planning,
- As a response to these political developments, participants noted:
 - the importance of raising awareness on the Constitution
 - the need for INGOs and other implementing partners to be able to adapt to the evolving political situation, e.g. the situation around the Tawergha IDPs.

Security

Following the attack on Mitiga airport on 17 January, which closed the airport for 5 days, the GNA affiliated Special Deterrence Force (SDF) reportedly arrested 61 people from the 33rd Brigade's militia from Tajoura (led by Bashir al-Bogra). Although affiliated with the GNA, the 33rd Brigade reportedly attacked the airport to free some of their members from the prison located within the airport compound. The SDF had been arresting people from Tajoura, which had sparked anti-SDF protests. It remains unclear to what extent the attack was motivated by the arrests of its members, or part of an orchestrated move by former GNC leader Khalifa Ghwell. Local level negotiations managed to bring a level of calm in Tajoura and Suq-al-Juma, but tensions remain high. Clashes around Derna continued during the reporting period. The LNA carried out airstrikes against Sudanese and Chadian rebels in the south-east of Libya. In late February, an SDF attack on Sahara Bank in Al-Maya, Wershefana, killed the commander of the armed group controlling the Bank, with the fighting closing the coastal road.

On 23 January, twin car bombs exploded outside a mosque in Benghazi's central Al Salmani district, killing over 30 people. The first explosion occurred as worshippers were leaving the mosque, with a second following 15 minutes later when security forces and emergency services had arrived on the scene, planned to maximize casualties. One day later, pictures emerged of Mahmoud Al Werfalli executing ten detainees outside the same mosque. The executions sparked widespread

condemnations locally and internationally. The ICC, which had already issued an arrest warrant for Werfalli for earlier war crimes, renewed its appeal. A day later, Werfalli announced he had handed himself over to the LNA's military police. In response, his supporters staged protests and blocked roads in Benghazi, and he was released from prison a day after his arrest. There were reports of Al Saiqa members threatening LNA's general command. In mid-February, Haftar re-assigned the Head of the Al Saiqa Special Forces Wanis Bukhamada to Derna and replaced him with the military governor Abdul Razzaq Al-Nadhuri, indicating rifts within the LNA and highlighting questions about the extent of its control over various militia operating under its banner. The reporting period saw a number of (attempted) car bomb attacks on various check points by IS.

Following a drive-by shooting in a Tebu neighbourhood of Sabha, a series of revenge killings escalated into full-scale clashes from the end of the January onwards between Tebu and Awlad Suleiman tribes. Despite tribal mediation efforts, violence resumed in late February. On 24 February, Tebu forces aligned to the LNA attacked positions of the Awlad Suleiman-led Brigade 6. GNA officials have accused the LNA of deploying foreign mercenaries, with the Sabha mayor claiming that Sabha airport had been occupied by a foreign armed force. Clashes continued in early March. LNA jets were redeployed to Brak Al-Shati airbase, and artillery, tanks and heavy weaponry in the Nasiriya area lead to increased casualties. An uneasy calm was instigated by 7 March.

Displaced IDPs from Tawergha were scheduled to return to their town on 1 February. However, following protests by Misrata groups, the return was postponed. The Misratans claimed that parts of the agreement with the PC to allow for the return had not been fulfilled, including reconciliation, extradition, security measures, and compensation. On 4 February, a newly installed make-shift camp for Tawergha IDPs was attacked by gunmen. More than 2 000 people are reportedly still waiting to return from the informal settlements of Qararat al-Katl and Harawa. In more positive news, representatives from the Tebu and Zway tribes of Kufra district reached a reconciliation agreement in February.

During the month of January 2018, UNSMIL reported a sharp rise in civilian casualties from previous months: 39 deaths and 63 injuries. This increased further in February, with a reported 13 deaths and 133 injuries. During the fighting in Sabha, the Sabha Medical Centre was hit by stray bullets, whilst the clashes caused the displacement of 100 households. On February 14, a car accident involving a truck used by smugglers to transport migrants caused the death of 19 migrants and injuring 49 more. As of 31 January, 215 people were recorded to have died since the start of the year attempting to cross the Mediterranean.

- Forum participants noted how the security update is less reflective of community security, including focus on gender analysis, IDPs, migrants, refugees and minorities
- With regards to impact, participants noted how airport closures impact on their operations, and how a lack of liquidity affects programming.
- As a response to these security developments, participants recommended:
 - an increased presence in Tripoli to mitigate negative impacts of airport closure;
 - increased mediation through multiple tracks;
 - improved service delivery and infrastructure to ease tensions between local and displaced populations;
 - the importance of coordination and information sharing among the international community, despite the challenges posed by differing objectives;
 - the need for more community consultations for more comprehensive security assessments.

Economic

In early March, the Libyan Teachers Union calls for new strikes over salary promotions and health insurance. A statement noted that the promises made in late 2017 that had brought an end to the previous strike remained unfulfilled. Not all teachers responded to the call. The NOC announced the re-opening of the eastern As-Sarah oil fields that had been closed by a blockade since November 2017. On 21 February, a dispute of salaries caused security guards to walk out from El-Feel oilfield, in the latest of a series of similar disputes. The guards, who come from the Tebu community, were also demanding a broader set of benefits, like the more regular distribution of fuel supplies to their region. In early March, production at the El Sharara oil field was halted but then resumed one day later. There were conflicting reports as to the reasons why. On 12 March, workers at the Zawia oil port went on strike over a salary dispute, delaying the loading of some tankers. The strike was reported to have ended the following day.

Following a sharp, sudden change the value of the Libyan dinar at the end of January, the currency crisis continued. At the end of January, the HoR confirmed Mohammed Al Shoukri as the governor of the Bayda-based Central Bank of Libya. Al Shoukri had served in the CBL during Gadaffi's regime. The Tripoli-based and internationally recognised CBL's governor dismissed the appointment and remained in post.

- Forum participants noted how the economic update is less reflective of developments in the black market and human trafficking. They also noted some of the consequences of these economic developments, such as people finding alternative ways to access money, an impact on women through an increase in child marriages and how the promotion of gender equality is a secondary issue.
- In terms of impact, participants noted the need for implementing partners to find alternatives such as e-cards and vouchers when delivering assistance.
- As a response to these economic developments, participants noted:
 - The need for more research into how the market functions and specific trends in the financial market
 - The need to find service providers that accept e-cards
 - The importance of considering cash-based assistance instead of non-food items where there are functioning markets

Social

On the eve of the 7th anniversary of Libya's revolution, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) put out a statement condemning the impunity for violence against journalists in Libya. It said the conflict between two rival governments had made reporting very dangerous, with journalists forced to choose between rival factions. RSF has registered many cases of disappearance, abduction and torture. Many journalists and journalistic outlets continue to operate from abroad. On 13 January, demonstrations took place in Sabha by Tuareg youth and civil movements. Many have been unable to register as they do not have a national ID number.

- Forum participants noted some positive developments regarding the factor on Women's Rights. They saw an increased participation of women and the establishment of gender units in ministries. They also noted how HNEC has reporting 40% of registered voters in the recent registrations process were women. International Women's Day saw a number of events in Libya and participation from Government.

- Forum participants also noted some positive developments regarding the factor on Strengthening Sub-national Identities. The CDA has held talks with Tebu on the constitutional drafting process, and the Amazigh are seen to be asserting their right to protect cultural heritage and language through an international consulting body that is working on this with the Amazigh Council.
- In terms of impact, participants noted how the escalation of conflict in the south has impacted on operations. It has also again emphasized the importance of ensuring inclusivity in recruitment. International organisations have impacted on women's rights by ensuring their participations and support to a number of events that support building momentum in supporting women's participation in government.
- As a response to these social developments, participants recommended:
 - An increased dialogue with minorities as part of the political process
 - Building on the increasing momentum of women in politics
 - Using different approaches to engage with CSOs (for example using technology to tackle security issues)
 - Using partnerships, for example with universities, to exploit resources in order to reach CSOs in difficult situations

Conflict sensitive assistance in the context of planned elections

During the previous CSA Forum (Forum 23 on 18 January 2018), uncertainties regarding the planned elections in Libya were highlighted by participants. For this CSA Forum, PCI invited a Libyan guest speaker to provide an introduction on the planned elections, and how it links into other aspects of the Roadmap like the constitution and national dialogue process.

The speaker gave a brief background to the current situation, starting from 2012. In 2014, the 7th amendment of the constitution declared that Libya should hold parliamentary elections. Due to the failure of the political process in 2014, UNSMIL led mediation efforts that resulted in the LPA and more recently, the UN Roadmap for Libya, that was announced in Sept 2017. The UN Roadmap has made clear that there is a lot of willingness to find a solution to the political process. At the same time, talking about elections is ambitious without having a foundation for democracy. There is no implementation plan for other parts of the Roadmap, such as the national conference or the constitutional referendum.

The speaker drew on recent data on public opinion in Libya with regards to different aspects of the political process. He drew on a recent IFES report (see http://www.ifes.org/sites/default/files/public_opinion_in_libya_2017_english.pdf). He noted how this data shows that the political vacuum, security vacuum and lack of awareness are the biggest challenges to Salamé's plan. The level of frustration shows that many Libyans are not considering the longer term when looking for solutions. Many see a military solution as a viable option, which provides insights into what may happen if elections fail to produce political agreement. The data also shows that many Libyans want a new dialogue process among Libyans without interference from international actors.

Discussions following the introduction included the question of what may happen if no elections are held, with the risk of a military solution being enforced. The plans for municipal elections were also raised. The CCMCA is leading on the planning of 44 municipal elections in April/May, with the remainder of the 77 municipalities planned before the end of the year. There are risks, in that the CCMCA cannot assist in providing security, plus it is unclear how it is linked to HNEC. The governance of many municipalities is contested with a number of parallel institutions, although the recent mayor meetings are a positive sign. The international community needs to take care not to confer political power on certain actors by bringing them into political processes, when these actors are not seen as legitimate or representative by local constituencies. Forum participant noted that, given developments since the revolution, it is far from certain that elections will lead to transfer of power.

In terms of implications for conflict sensitive assistance, forum participants noted:

- The importance of taking into account the data on public opinion in Libya that were presented by the speaker in the design of their programmes.
- The need to involve Libyans at the grassroots into national level political/dialogue processes. It is important to incorporate local leaders into the planned national conference.