



Conflict-Sensitive Assistance to Libya

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CSA Quarterly Review #2 | September – November 2017

'A conflict-sensitive approach involves gaining a sound understanding of the two-way interaction between activities and context, and acting to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts of intervention on conflict, within an organisation's given mandate.'

The CSA Quarterly Review summarises findings and developments in the area of applying conflict-sensitive approaches to the international community's assistance to Libya. Findings are drawn from bi-monthly conflict-sensitive assistance forum (CSA) meetings as well as trainings on conflict-sensitive approaches, sectorial peer reviews managed to improve conflict sensitivity, meetings of the Conflict Sensitivity Leadership Group, as well as case studies of applied conflict sensitivity described by organisations active on the ground in Libya. The CSA process looks to promote the principles of conflict-sensitive assistance as developed and refined over three years by participants in the CSA Forum.

The Principles of Conflict-Sensitive Assistance for Libya developed by the CSA Forum are:

- PRINCIPLE ONE: Assistance should be delivered as inclusively as possible.
- PRINCIPLE TWO: Assistance should strengthen the ability of our partners to be equally accountable across communities and constituencies.
- PRINCIPLE THREE: Assistance should strengthen the connection between state institutions and communities across the country, by delivering tangible improvements.

1. Conflict Analysis

CSA Forum – a platform to share analysis and reflect on practice

The last meeting of the Conflict-Sensitive Assistance to Libya (CSA) forum was held in Tunis on 12th October 2017. 38 people representing 26 different organisations participated in updating a joint context analysis, reflecting on its implications for the international community's assistance in Libya.

- **Developments, Impacts and Recommendations for international actors**

In the social sphere, civil society activists in the east continue to struggle to receive international funding due to the ongoing pressure they face from the eastern authorities.

- **Impact:** The impact of pressure in the east on civil society activists means certain Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and activists struggle to access specific municipalities, areas within these municipalities, or communities. This can create tensions between local communities and donors/implementers, with the latter open to accusations of neglect, or bias.
- **Recommendation:** The international community should invest in ways of helping its partners and Libyan CSOs access harder-to-reach parts of the country through more versatile activities such as trainings of trainers, e-learning tools and other remote management methodologies. An initial discussion paper could be proposed for consideration at UN or INGO fora in Tunis.

In September, a southern Brigade captured a convoy of some 60 vehicles carrying Libyan goods along with their drivers, their Thuraya satellite phones and caches of arms at the Kouri Bougoudi gold mine straddling the Libyan-Chadian border. The incident reflects both the level of smuggling and the lack of proper border management.

- Impact: This largely Tebu brigade has subsequently been backed by the former Interior Minister of the Bayda government, Colonel Ahmad Barka, also a Tebu. Such informal economic activity and efforts to manage it are therefore connected with both tribal and national-level political posturing. In addition, illicit deliveries of fuel from southern Libya to neighbouring countries have apparently resulted in shortages and price rises, creating tensions in the region.
- *Recommendation: Propose viable economic alternatives to smuggling and trafficking. It was mentioned at the October CSA forum meeting that the P5 and GNA/LNA should have responsibility for this, and the motion could be tabled at the Joint Technical Coordination Committee (JTCC) (16 October, 2017).*

On the security front, three of the LNA's battalions in the south have merged to make them more effective. The infantry battalions 12, 116 and 181 are now part of the newly-formed Rada ("deterrence") force for the south. It is headquartered at the military base at Brak Al-Shatti. A number of smaller units in the south are also reportedly being merged into the new force.

- Impact: International actors will experience challenges in terms of access to different parts of the country, given the rapidly changing security situation. In its efforts to access specific areas, international assistance providers may inadvertently legitimize or de-legitimize specific armed groups. By not engaging with some armed groups, it may aggravate them.
- *Recommendation: Assistance providers should conduct 'centre of gravity' or political-economy analyses to assess the political affiliations of militias and armed groups (16 October, 2017)*

Politically, there were encouraging developments. Between 26 September and 1 October, the dialogue committees of the House of Representatives (HoR) and the State Council (SC) began discussions to amend the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) and move the country forward to a proposed national conference which would endorse, with possible changes, the Constitution ahead of a referendum and then elections for a president and a new parliament. The new SRSG Ghassan Salamé reported "a positive atmosphere and a clear convergence of views".

- Impact: Developments across the reformulation of the Presidency Council, from 9 to 3 members, and a vision for advancing the LPA have been broadly backed, suggesting renewed faith in the process and a commitment to resolve the political crisis. This may galvanize spoilers, both within Libya's governments and beyond them. However, those supporting the LPA, including most of the international community, will see this as an opportunity to renew support for a national solution and national institutions.
- *Recommendation: At 22nd CSA in October, participants proposed that after 2 years of considerable support to local authorities, providers should return to supporting national-level institutions within the GNA (16 October, 2017).*

• Thematic Session: Protection and Migration Assistance

A speaker from Gharyan described the conditions of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in detention centres there as extremely bad and worse than what was being reported. Migrants in Gharyan are also working for local businesses without receiving proper payment. Migrants there are also being exploited to do dangerous work like arms smuggling, or work for a militia. The speaker recommended:

- ✓ Improving data collection on migrants and better monitoring of assistance (using local staff), since it is being diverted.

A speaker from Zawia described the municipality as a stopping point for human smuggling, where migrants are seldom seen but nevertheless valuable. The speaker recommended:

- ✓ Assistance to aid migrants through, for example, health services, should also support, and be seen to support vulnerable Libyan populations; that is, it should be inclusive.

In plenary, participants agreed that assistance to IDPs and migrants should be delivered in a manner that is inclusive, wherever possible, so as to avoid judgements of exclusion or 'bias against Libyans'. It was also recommended that:

- ✓ The international community re-frames the discourse around migration as a 'human rights problem' as opposed to a 'political problem for EU member states'.

2. Programmatic Actions

• Recent CSA Actions Delivered by International Organizations

Organization	Recent CSA Action	Rationale
Handicap International	Adoption of online conflict analysis tool OPSECA	Strengthen organizational capacity to assess and respond to changing conflict context
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Trainings for Community Management Committees in conflict analysis, conflict sensitivity and conflict management skills	Enhance CMC's capacity to manage conflict within their communities
Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	Integrating conflict sensitivity considerations and indicators into Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)	Develop a common framework by which international assistance can be accountable to conflict-sensitivity standards

• CSA Peer Review on Protection and Migration, November 2017

Beneath are a *selection* of critical issues and recommendations taken from the latest CSA Peer Review on Protection & Migration Assistance, aligned with the Three Principles of Conflict-Sensitive Assistance to Libya.

Principle 1: 'Assistance should be as inclusive as possible'

Issue: The challenge of supporting the 'invisible' mixed migrant community

Some in the mixed migration community prefer to remain 'invisible' for a variety of reasons, including to avoid arrest and detention, exploitation by groups of smugglers and people traffickers, armed violence, among others. This group of mixed migrants are also vulnerable; their needs, the discrimination they face and general circumstances are not fully understood.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Establish a sector-wide strategy and methodology to ensure that the needs of the 'invisible' and 'beyond reach' target group are included in analysis and needs assessments.
- ✓ Hire and train data gatherers from local communities.
- ✓ Ensure a "needs assessment(s)" budget line is included in all project M&E plans, with time allocated in work plans, and an indicator for donor reporting.

Principle 2: 'Assistance should strengthen the ability of our partners to be equally accountable across communities and constituencies'

Issue: Commitment and integrity of government departments and other local stakeholders

With uncertainty around the integrity of governance structures, the sector relies on cooperative Ministries, but crucially on local level relationships facilitating their work. Even with approval at the Ministry level, local level challenges can occur; for example, access to detention centres are reportedly negotiated separately with the manager of each centre, often with great difficulty. Corruption and opportunism leaves organisations exposed to a high risk of exploitation by opportunistic or biased staff and can compromise the support provided to some of Libya's most vulnerable.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Given government staff turnover, rather than rely on a single contact point within national and local authorities, cultivate relationships at different levels to strengthen resilience of the partnership and to provide coordination options that are less vulnerable to a single-point-of-failure scenario.
- ✓ Develop a partnership strategy that prioritises the building of trust and confidence, mutual respect, role recognition and the sharing of knowledge and resources.

Principle 3: 'Assistance should strengthen the connection between state institutions and communities across the country, by delivering tangible improvements'

Issue: Low confidence and trust in government

Disruption or closure of public administration and service provision has weakened the connection between state institutions, and between these institutions and communities. The modalities of international assistance to local government – which can be directive, or offer limited visibility, or extricate Council members from their locality for trainings in Tunis – can at times serve to undermine the connection between local authorities and their communities.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Ensure projects reference and follow relevant Libyan national strategies and policies.
- ✓ Facilitate greater local government ownership of interventions and encourage visibility at municipality, agency and department level.
- ✓ Include the concept and practice of feedback loops in all relevant training workshops, and make it a pre-condition of attending subsequent Tunis-based training and meetings.

3. Learning and Development

CSA Leadership Group meeting, 8 September 2017

In September, the 4th CSA Leadership Group meeting took place in Tunis. Heads of Mission and Representatives discussed key conflict sensitivity challenges and opportunities related to protection and migration assistance, as well as how to work effectively with Libyan partners. Some critical actions were agreed; for example, the development of a common monitoring and evaluation (M & E) framework for conflict-sensitive assistance.

This M & E framework will draw down on the Three Principles for Conflict-Sensitive Assistance to Libya, focused on inclusiveness, accountability and state-society connection. Initial indicators have been developed and are already considered for adoption by OCHA (as described above). It is hoped that these project/programme-level indicators will be broadly adopted to create a common mechanism to ensure international assistance and partners can be held accountable to CSA standards. The proposed indicators are:

CSA Libya Principle	Indicator
1. Assistance should be delivered as inclusively as possible	All projects are informed by a conflict analysis that includes their areas of delivery
2. Assistance should strengthen the ability of our partners to be accountable to their communities and constituencies	Projects conduct assessments of all partners with regard to their impartiality and accountability and prepare capacity building plans to make them more accountable to their own communities and constituencies
3. Assistance should strengthen the connection between state institutions and communities across the country, by delivering tangible improvements	Project activities fall within the framework of Libyan national laws and strategies

Building skills: Conflict Analysis Tool, 13 October 2017

In cooperation with the Swiss Embassy to Libya, PCi held a small training with international donors and implementers on 13 October to further inform participants of the utility of OPSECA, an online platform, for conflict analysis and a conflict-sensitive approach to implementation. As mentioned above, one organisation, Handicap International, is beginning to use this tool for its own conflict analyses. It is expected that other international organisations will soon begin to make such use of the platform. More user access is available, with no cost – for further information, please contact anthony.foreman@peacefulchange.org.

Inclusive assistance by reaching remote areas: WHO in Derna

Through semi-remote programming, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has successfully delivered emergency health supplies to populations in need in Derna, in eastern Libya, where conflict has prevented health and other social services from effectively operating. The Director of the Derna Hospital confirmed that the supplies reached the hospital. Such methods offer examples for other international organisations seeking to work in less accessible areas. Apart from responding to needs, reaching populations and municipalities that receive less international assistance is also strategically conflict-sensitive in the current Libyan context, as it helps to counteract perceptions of bias.

Upcoming events

The next CSA Forum is scheduled to take place on Thursday 18 January 2018.