

30 March 2015

LIBYA

State collapse triggers mass displacement

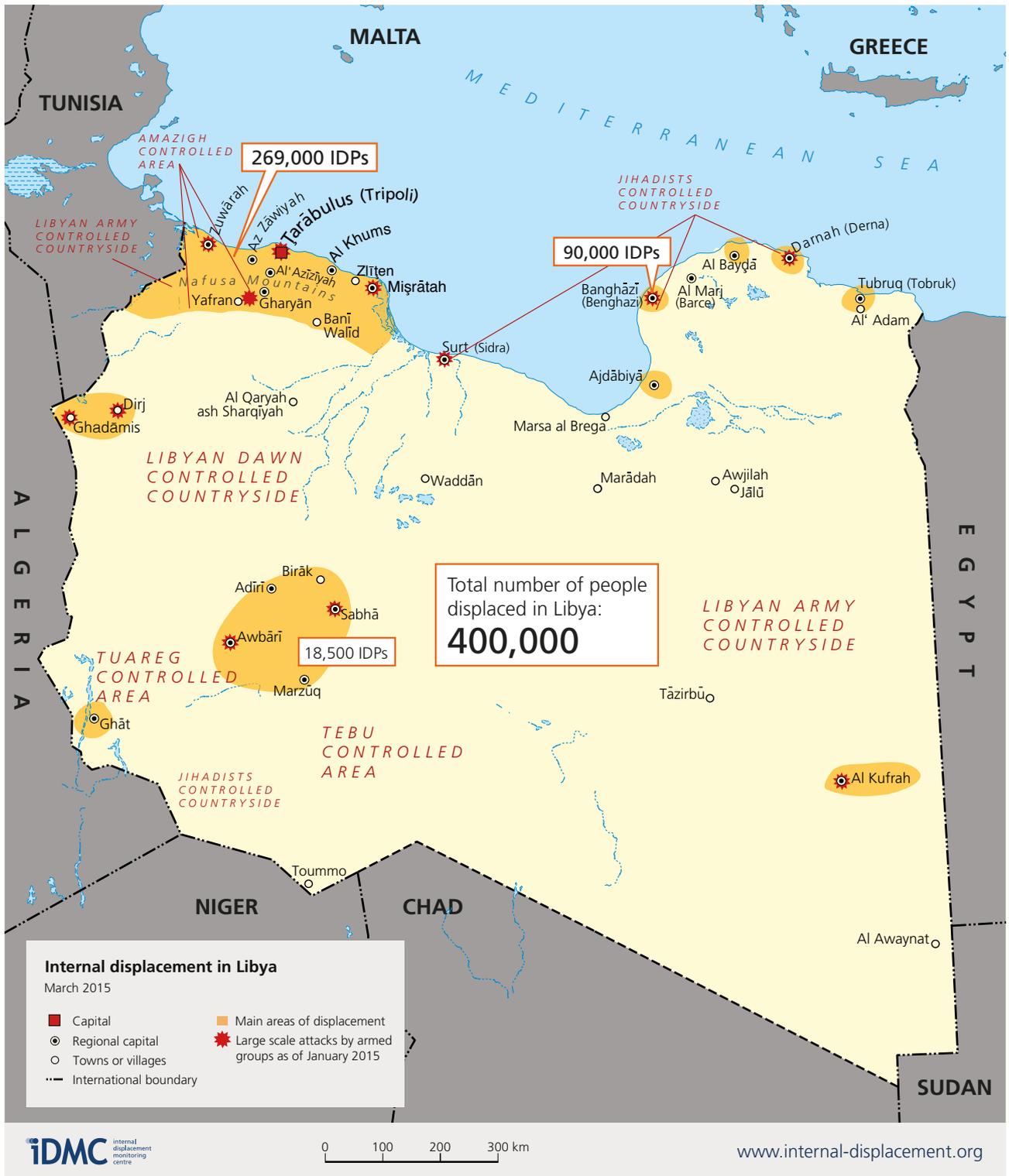
The political instability and crimes against humanity that accompanied and followed the uprising which overthrew President Muammar Qadhafi in October 2011 drove tens of thousands into displacement. Those perceived to have supported Qadhafi or to have benefited from privileges he dispensed through tribal patronage networks were attacked in retaliation. They were often driven out of their cities, unable to return. Some 60,000 IDPs who had fled during the uprising were still living in protracted displacement by February 2015.



Following the failure of political processes, Libya's situation became increasingly anarchic, culminating in the collapse of a fragile central authority and the emergence of two rival centres of power in mid-2014. Against this backdrop, and ensuing infighting among myriads of militias, violence increased. There was more than a six-fold rise in the number of IDPs, reaching at least 400,000 by December 2014, some eight per cent of the population. Precise figures are not available given lack of access and on-going pervasive chaos.

IDPs' basic needs for shelter, food and medical services remain grossly unmet. Their physical security has been seriously threatened by indiscriminate shelling, attacks on IDP camps and sieges that have prevented them from seeking security. The situation of tens of thousands of displaced migrants who remain trapped in Libya and are particularly vulnerable is a cause for serious concern.

State collapse and fragmentation of Libya's essentially tribal society have hampered an effective national response to displacement and coordination of policies to address IDPs' needs. Security constraints have forced international actors to operate from Tunisia since July and August of 2014. In this context of political chaos and on-going conflict, durable solutions appear ever more remote. Lack of coordination of relief and assistance is a crucial impediment to an effective response to the plight of IDPs.



Map by: IDMC

More maps are available at www.internal-displacement.org/search?Type=Map

Background and causes of displacement

The arrest of a prominent human rights lawyer on 17 February 2011, at a time of widespread regional movements which became known as the Arab Spring, brought peaceful protesters to the streets in Benghazi, Ajdabiya, Tobruk and Derna in the east, as well as Zintan in the west ([BBC](#), 16 February 2011). Protests intensified after government forces used live fire ([Al Jazeera](#), 18 February 2011) and quickly spread to western cities of Misrata, Zawiya and the capital, Tripoli where they were brutally suppressed ([A/HRC/17/44](#), June 2011). A few days later, demonstrators in Benghazi formed a National Transitional Council (NTC). Across the vast country hundreds of militias emerged, the protests turning into an armed conflict between opposition forces and the army ([Geneva Academy](#), 12 February 2012; [Chatham House](#), 2014).

After increasing international concern at the escalation of violence and continuing serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution imposing a no-fly zone, sanctioning “all necessary measures to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack” (UNSC, [S/RES/1973](#)). After airstrikes by members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in March 2011, Qadhafi’s forces were expelled from Misrata in mid-May. Tripoli fell to the opposition at the end of August. In October 2011, three days after rebels had killed Qadhafi, the NTC declared the “liberation” of Libya, ending nine months of armed conflict and 42 years of authoritarian rule.

2014: A failed transition and the splintering of Libya
Under Qadhafi, Libya had virtually lacked any civil society. The tenuous institutions that had existed under his regime were dismantled. A General National Congress (GNC) that succeeded the NTC in July 2012 was tasked with putting in place a democratic constitution, paving the way

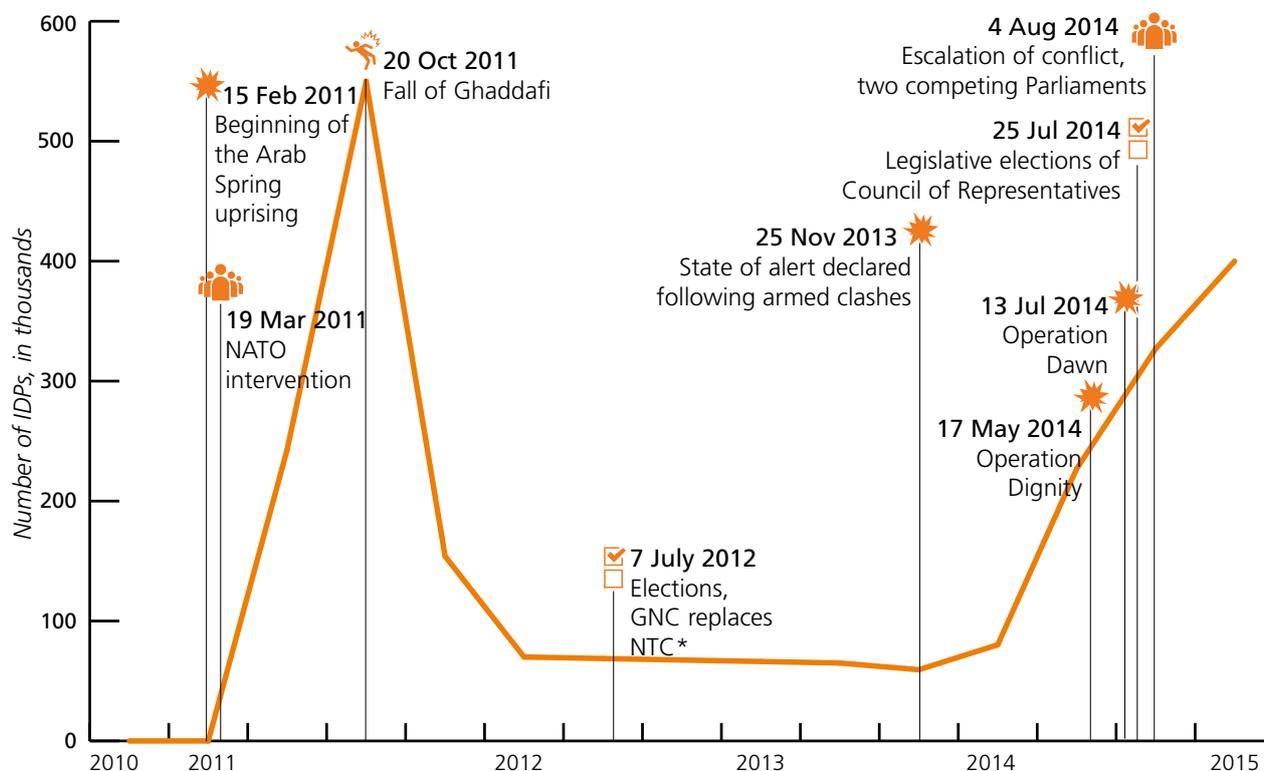
for the election of a House of Representatives. The Islamist-dominated GNC lost elections in August 2014 for which there was only 18 per cent turnout. The GNC refused to dissolve and reconvened in Tripoli, while the newly elected House of Representatives moved to Tobruk ([Refworld](#), 12 November 2014).

In mid-2014, a retired general, Khalifa Haftar, launched an armed attack on Benghazi, which they dubbed “Operation Dignity”. Opposing him was an alliance between Ansar al-Shari’a and other Islamist armed groups, notably the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries which besieged parts of Tripoli as part of their own operation they called “Libya Dawn” ([UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 4 September 2014; [Al Jazeera](#), 08 September 2014). In October, the House of Representatives allied itself officially with Haftar ([Reuters](#), 21 October 2014). Sitting in Tripoli alongside the GNC, the Supreme Court ruled that the House of Representatives was unconstitutional ([New York Times](#), 7 November 2014).

Throughout his 42-year rule, Qadhafi relied on an extensive political network of patronage, delegating authority to the local level and thus systematically preventing the creation of national or central institutions. Qadhafi favoured Libya’s south (Fezzan) and the western region of Tripolitania. There he provided disproportional resources, granting privileged access to state institutions and security services to people from those regions that became his strongholds. At the same time Cyrenaica (eastern Libya) was systematically neglected. The Qadhafi regime nurtured Libyans’ sense of geographical and tribal identity and manipulated ethnic and tribal tensions, engaging communities in a competition over resources and favours at the expense of developing a strong sense of national identity. For example, Qadhafi alternatively granted or denied citizenship to the Tebu and Tuareg minorities in the south ([ICG](#), September 2012; [Small Arms Survey](#), February 2014).

Key events and internal displacement in Libya

As of 19 March 2015



*GNC = General National Congress; NTC = National Transitional Congress
Sources: Amnesty International, European Commission, IRIN, UNHCR



The fragmented and weak authorities that emerged after his downfall and the end of the patronage system have not been able to address inter-tribal conflicts over oil, administrative power, land and control of smuggling routes. Instead, they have heavily relied on local elders to negotiate ceasefires. These have remained largely unenforceable and impossible to translate into lasting peace agreements (ICG, September 2012). The lack of centralised authority and functioning judicial or security institutions and the inability of elders to exert authority over militias, tribes, towns and individuals have prevented the channelling of political aspirations and grievances into peaceful and effective channels. This has opened the door to internecine armed violence (Al Jazeera, 4 July 2014; Al Jazeera, 11 August 2014).

While generally portrayed as a confrontation between Islamists (Libya Dawn) and anti-Islamists

(Operation Dignity), fighting involves a complex set of motives, including tribal and ethnic identities, power and security (Al Jazeera, 10 August 2014; Al-Monitor, 14 September 2014). Internal fighting erupted against the backdrop of an inherently weak state and an emerging security vacuum. There are serious regional repercussions as Libya has become a base for radical groups such as Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Islamic State.

Causes of displacement

The collapse of Libyan institutions and divisions within society has affected some two million people throughout the country, around a fifth of the population. Some 150,000 people, including approximately 15,000 third country nationals, had fled abroad in search of refuge and safety by the end of 2011 (OCHA Flash appeal, 5 March 2011).

As Qadhafi loyalists besieged Misrata in April-May 2011, they used Tawergha, a town some 40 kilometres to the south-east, as a base. Anti-Qadhafi armed groups accused the Tawerghans of supporting Qadhafi's government and of committing war crimes, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, in Misrata on behalf of the Qadhafi regime. In an apparent "deliberate campaign to target and collectively punish Tawergha's civilian population" (Amnesty International, 2013) Misratan anti-Qadhafi fighters attacked the town in mid-August 2011.

Between March and June 2011, rebels targeted the Mashashiya tribes for their alleged support for Qadhafi during the siege of Zintan. After the villages of 'Awnya, Zawiyat al-Bagul and Omer fell to the rebels from Zintan in June-July 2011, they forcibly displaced all members of the Mashashiya tribe living there (Amnesty International, 2013). According to the [International Commission of Inquiry on Libya](#) (COI) and [Amnesty International](#), Mashashiya towns were looted and witnessed significant destruction ([A/HRC/19/68](#), March 2012; [Amnesty International](#), 2013).

Between February 2012 and March 2014 when a ceasefire was negotiated, repeated clashes between the Tebu who had opposed Qadhafi, and the Tuaregs and Zwai tribes in and around al-Kufra resulted in the deaths of several hundred people and the displacement of large parts of the town's population ([UNSMIL](#), 27 February 2012; [ICRC](#), 12 April 2012; [ICRC](#), 28 January 2014). In March 2012 and January 2014, intense fighting occurred between the Tebu and Awlad Suleiman tribes which displaced 4,800 people, while the Awlad Suleiman and the Gaddadfa tribes clashed in September 2014 ([AFP](#), 28 September 2014; [Magharebia](#), 2 October 2014).

Armed clashes were recurrent in the southern town of Sebha between March 2012 and October 2014 and resulted in hundreds of casualties, severe damage to civilian infrastructure and

significant displacement ([UNSMIL](#), 30 August 2012; [AFP](#), 11 January 2014; [AFP](#), 18 January 2014; [International Crisis Group](#), 1 February 2014; [Small Arms Survey](#), February 2014).

Since mid-September 2014, armed clashes have erupted in Ubari between the Tebu and Tuareg communities, supportive of Libya Dawn, ([Reporters-sans-Frontières](#), 14 October 2014). By January 2015, the security and humanitarian situation in Ubari, Wadi Al Haya municipality in western Libya, remained critical. Intermittent violence linked to ethnic rivalries has been exacerbated by geopolitics and shifting allegiances. Conflict, particularly in and around the cities of Sabha and Ubari, has led to the displacement of 18,492 people ([UNHCR](#), 16 January 2015). Fighting has resulted in significant displacement of Tuareg families who have sought shelter and medical aid outside the city ([WHO](#), 24 November 2014).

In the summer 2014, fighting in Tripoli and others areas of country, characterised by the indiscriminate use of heavy weaponry in densely populated areas by all protagonists, led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people within and around the capital, as well as Benghazi ([Libyan Humanitarian appeal](#), 9 October 2014). For instance, militias from Misrata and Zintan fought over the Tripoli airport in July-August 2014. Most of those affected by the conflict were in the west, but 6,000 civilians were displaced in Benghazi in the east.

The situation of foreign migrants and refugees displaced and otherwise affected by the current wave of violence is another matter of concern. As of August 2014, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) had registered almost 37,000 asylum seekers and refugees in Tripoli and Benghazi, out of the approximately 200,000 foreign migrants in Libya. Many were living in the districts most affected by the violence and were in need of protection and assistance ([UNHCR](#), 5 August 2014; [Libya Humanitarian Appeal](#), 9 October 2014). Since the beginning of 2015, about 120,000 migrants and

refugees have fled to Italy, more than doubling the level recorded in 2011.

Displacement figures

There were at least 400,000 IDPs in Libya as of December 2014. This figure is derived from estimates and information provided by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR, the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the International Organisation for Migration, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies the Libyan Red Crescent Society (LRCS) and local authorities. The figure of 400,000 includes, but is not limited to, the IDP caseloads from different waves of displacement.

As of 8 September 2014, at least 56,544 people were still displaced from the 2011 armed uprising that toppled Qadhafi ([OCHA](#), 28 February 2014; IDMC interview, 8 September 2014). As most of them were living in or around Tripoli and Benghazi, many were affected by the fighting in 2014 and were displaced again (IDMC interviews, 9 and 11 September; [IOM](#), 24 August 2014).

Since mid-May 2014, at least 269,000 have been displaced in the west, and 90,000 in the east, by fighting between various armed groups that started in Benghazi in mid-May and in Tripoli in mid-July 2014 before extending to the whole country. About 18,500 people were internally displaced in southern Libya as of 15 January 2015 (IDMC interview, 9 September 2014; [UNHCR](#), 14 November 2014; [UNHCR](#), 16 January 2015).

Comprehensive data on internal displacement is hard to come by as most international organisations left the country in mid-July 2014 due to the worsening security situation. Data collection is further complicated by the weakness of local authorities and concerns that sources may be unreliable given the political divisions. The figures

may include groups that have been displaced several times and could have been counted twice. The overall figures may thus be inaccurate and are indicative, rather than reliable, data.

Patterns of displacement

269,000 IDPs have sought refuge in the country's western region ([UNHCR](#), 14 November 2014; [UNHCR](#), 16 January 2015; IDMC interview, 9 September 2014), including around 120,000 IDPs who fled fighting in the Warshefana suburb south-west of Tripoli in August 2014 ([UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 23 December 2014). Most of the IDPs who fled fighting in Tripoli principally sought refuge in the towns of al-Zawiya, Ajaylat and Yafran in the west. Smaller numbers fled to the east, mainly to Tarhunah, Bani Walid, Misrata and al-Khums ([OCHA](#), 25 August 2014; IDMC interview, 9 September 2014). Information on the location of those displaced from Warshefana remained limited as of October 2014 ([Libya Humanitarian Appeal](#), 9 October 2014). The number of IDPs within Tripoli was difficult to estimate, as the local authorities only provided IDP figures for towns in Tripoli's vicinity and not for the city itself (IDMC interview, 11 September 2014).

Displaced people are scattered across 35 towns and cities. They are either hosted by relatives and local communities or are sheltering in public buildings ([OCHA](#), 3 September 2014). At least, 15,000 families (approximately 90,000 people) have been displaced within eastern Libya, principally from Benghazi and from Derna and Tobruk. The full scale of displacement in those two areas remains unclear ([UNHCR](#), 14 November 2014; IDMC interview, 9 September 2014; [UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 23 December 2014).

As of 23 December 2014, UNSMIL reported that 90,000 people were displaced from Benghazi ([UNSMIL](#), December 2014). Other eastern towns with significant IDP populations include Ajdabya

and Albayda ([OCHA](#), 25 August 2014). Access to the eastern part of Libya, and in particular to Benghazi, is severely restricted. As local authorities in Benghazi stopped registering IDPs in May 2014, the total figure of IDPs in this part of the country is likely to be considerably higher (IDMC interview, 9 September 2014; [Libya Humanitarian Appeal](#), 9 October 2014).

The majority of the 40,000 people who were expelled from Tawerghan live in protracted displacement in Tripoli or Benghazi. The figure includes approximately 9,200 IDPs from the Mashashya, Qawalish and Sian tribes who remain displaced in the Nafusa Mountains in the north-west (IDMC interviews, 9 and 19 September 2014). By the end of December 2014, approximately 9,600 Tawerghan IDPs from five camps in Benghazi were again displaced and continued to find shelter in schools, rented homes or other public facilities in Benghazi, Ajdabiya and nearby towns ([UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 23 December 2014).

In January 2014, armed clashes between the Tebu and Awlad Suleiman tribes in and around the southern city of Sebha caused the displacement of approximately 21,000 people ([OCHA](#), 30 April 2014). According to UNHCR, the majority of those displaced belonged to the Tebu tribe ([UNHCR](#), November 2014). While most of the displaced returned home after a truce was agreed in February-March 2014, unconfirmed reports suggest that approximately 4,800 people were still displaced by September 2014 (IDMC interview, 9 September 2014). An estimated 1,600 Tuareg were displaced to nearby Dirj.

Fighting between the Tebu and Tuareg groups in the southern town of Ubari in early October 2014 has left close to 18,500 people displaced. Some of these families have congregated in schools and empty houses in Sabha, Ghat, Murzuq, Wadi Shafti, Lewenat and Jufra, in the south-west ([UNHCR](#), November 2014; [UNHCR](#), 16 January 2015).

Protection concerns

In March 2011, the COI, which was set up by the UN Human Rights Council, concluded that Qadhafi's forces had committed crimes against humanity during the conflict "within a context of widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population" ([A/HRC/19/68](#), March 2012). Such violations were widespread in areas and cities where the fighting was particularly intense, such as the Nafusa Mountains and during the siege of Misrata by Qadhafi's forces from March to May 2011, during which water and electricity were cut off. Thousands of civilians were unable to leave the city and hundreds of civilians were killed by relentless indiscriminate shelling by Qadhafi's forces ([Al Jazeera](#), 23 August 2011; [A/HRC/19/68](#), March 2012).

Indiscriminate shelling of and fighting in residential areas

The 2011 uprising and the subsequent fighting between rival armed groups, in particular in Tripoli and Benghazi, were characterised by the indiscriminate use of weapons. Fighting mainly took place in residential areas and disproportionately affected civilians ([Amnesty International](#), 23 April 2012; [IRIN](#), 2 April 2013; [IRIN](#), 21 January 2014; [ICRC](#), 28 January 2014; [Amnesty International](#), 6 August 2014; [Magharebia](#), 2 October 2014). All sides to the fighting in Tripoli and Benghazi have used heavy weaponry in populated areas, with residential areas and places sheltering IDPs, such as al Fallah camp near the airport, frequently engulfed in severe fighting ([UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 4 September 2014).

In Benghazi, frequent indiscriminate shelling and aerial bombardments of residential areas have displayed "a wanton disregard for the safety of ordinary civilians" ([Amnesty International](#), 6 August 2014). Several neighbourhoods of the city and the Benina airport, some 20 kilometres east of the city, have been particularly affected. In Tripoli, several residential districts, including Warshefana

in September 2014, have been engulfed by fighting. Shelling caused significant damage to civilian infrastructure, and led to casualties and displacement in the cities of Benghazi, Tripoli and Warshefana ([UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 4 September 2014) where members of some communities have been accused of being supporters of the Qaddafi regime and have been victims of retaliatory attacks.

Indiscriminate shelling also affected Tawerghan IDP camps in both Tripoli and Benghazi, prompting most camp residents to flee again, this time to a number of locations including Bani Walid and Tarhouna to the east of Tripoli and al-Zawiya, Surman, and Ajaylat to the west. ([UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 4 September 2014; IDMC interview, 9 September 2014; [Amnesty International](#), 17 June 2014).

Housing

The full extent of destruction in urban areas resulting from conflict and the number of IDPs affected is hard to ascertain. Difficulties in determining the scale of violation of housing, land and property rights is compounded by evictions of inhabitants living in houses that had been expropriated and redistributed by Qadhafi after his fall ([TerraNullius](#), 2013). Civilians who have fled to Tripoli and the nearby town of Shgeiga have continued to live in dire conditions in schools and unfinished administrative buildings and have been squatting in metal hangars since October 2011. More than four years after their displacement, they still lack access to running water, heating or proper ventilation.

A group of 56 families in Sidi Salim camp near Tripoli have faced the threat of forced eviction since the owner of the land on which they settled in late 2011 started proceedings to recover his property.

Of particular concern is the situation of some 9,600 Tawerghans who fled their camp in Benghazi in mid-October and are staying in parks, schools and parking areas in Ajdabiya and neigh-

bouring towns, with only plastic sheets and some tents ([UNHCR](#), 16 January 2015).

Freedom of movement

Sieges imposed in Benghazi and parts of Tripoli by armed groups have restricted the freedom of movement of civilians, including IDPs. Medical supplies have not reached them and IDPs have not been able to have access to medical and food supplies ([Al Monitor](#), 14 September 2014; [ACAPS](#), 7 October 2014). In mid-September 2014 militias allied to Operation Dawn heavily shelled the Warshefana area south-west of Tripoli and prevented IDPs from fleeing ([Al Monitor](#), 14 September 2014).

Health

Shortage of medical supplies has been an ongoing problem, not only in hospitals and health centres in Tripoli and Benghazi, but also in medical facilities in towns hosting significant numbers of IDPs such as al-Zawiya and Ajdabiya ([IRIN](#), 2 September 2014; [ICRC](#), 17 September 2014). Most warehouses storing medicines in Tripoli were located in areas where fighting has been particularly intense, putting them out of reach. Even where access to warehouses in Tripoli and Benghazi has been possible, medical supplies have been looted ([IRIN](#), 2 September 2014).

Importation of medical supplies has been severely hampered by the closure of Libyan airspace and difficulties in overland access. Since 2011, shortages of medical supplies and medicines have been reported during most instances of armed clashes (e.g. [ICRC](#), 26 October 2012). Hospitals have repeatedly come under attack, not only during fighting in Tripoli and Benghazi, but also during waves of violence prior to August 2014 ([ICRC](#), 3 June 2014; [Libya Herald](#), 21 September 2014).

Those problems are compounded by Libya's dependence on foreign medical personnel. For several decades, Libya relied on foreign health workers. Before the uprising, medical facilities

were comparable to those in developed countries, but up to 80 per cent of medical personnel in Libya were expatriates ([IRIN](#), 2 September 2014). Following the evacuation of thousands of Filipino migrant workers, including 3,000 medical staff in August 2014, the Libyan Ministry of Health warned of the risk of a total collapse of the health system ([IFRC](#), 12 August 2014). In the context of increasing insecurity and frequent fighting, this reliance on foreign workers has raised concerns about the ability of the country to sustainably provide adequate healthcare to all in need.

Food

Although agriculture is the second largest sector in the economy, Libya imports up to 90 per cent of cereals ([FAO](#), 18 August 2014). Fighting in Tripoli and Benghazi, including attacks on the commercial port in Benghazi, has disrupted some of the main import routes for food. Shortages have led to a doubling of food prices since May 2014 ([IOM](#), 12 August 2014; [Reuters](#), 23 September 2014; [Reuters](#), 24 September 2014; [UNHCR](#), 10 October 2014). As public and private food supply warehouses are often located in conflict areas, they are generally inaccessible, making cross-border aid convoys crucial ([UNHCR](#), 18 August 2014; [ACAPS GEO](#), 7 October 2014; [UNHCR](#), 10 October 2014). While no specific data is available on the impact of food shortages on IDPs, it is very likely that it dramatically increases their vulnerabilities.

Sieges imposed on certain parts of Tripoli and Benghazi, have prevented the delivery of food supplies, particularly affecting trapped IDPs ([Al Monitor](#), 14 September 2014; [ACAPS](#), 7 October 2014).

Explosive remnants of war (ERW)

During the 2011 uprising the use of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle landmines was widespread. Tens of thousands of mines were laid in the area of Benghazi, al-Zawiya, Sirte and the Nafusa Mountains ([ICRC](#), 4 November 2011; [IRIN](#), 06 August 2013). While extensive clearance opera-

tions have been carried out over the past four years, hundreds of thousands of ERW from the 2011 uprising, and from World War II, remain to be cleared ([UNCT Strategic Framework 2012-2014](#), September 2012; [HRW](#), November 2014). The 2014 fighting in Benghazi and Tripoli, as well as armed clashes in the south and the Nafusa Mountains have added new ERW ([UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 4 September 2014). IDPs are particularly exposed to the risks posed by ERW that represent an important obstacle to their safe return. Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) is still found in houses, farms and public places, and in areas close to several towns.

Vulnerable displaced populations

The situation of certain groups of IDPs living in protracted displacement, such as the Tawergha, Mashashya, Gualish and Tuareg, is particularly worrying. Actual or perceived former Qadhafi loyalists, displaced members of these tribes and whole communities have been victims of retaliatory attacks, harassment, intimidation, discrimination and other human rights abuses.

Since the fall of Qadhafi, dozens of Tawerghan IDPs, as well as members of the Mashashya and Warfalla tribes, have been reportedly abducted or have been forcibly disappeared ([Amnesty International](#), 23 October 2013). Many abducted Tawerghan IDPs were transferred to detention facilities, where they were reportedly subjected to torture and other forms of inhumane and degrading treatment, at times resulting in their death ([HRW](#), 30 October 2011; [Amnesty International](#), 19 April 2012; [Amnesty International](#), 8 June 2012; [Amnesty International](#), 23 October 2013). The whereabouts of those abducted often remain unknown. Misratan militias also repeatedly attacked Tawerghan IDP camps in Tripoli ([IRIN](#), 13 December 2011; [HRW](#), 5 March 2012; [HRW](#), 17 March 2012; [HRW](#), 19 November 2013), such as the Janzour Marine Camp on 6 February 2012 or the al-Fallah Camp in November 2013 and August 2014, during which dozens of Tawerghan IDPs were arbitrarily arrested, some reportedly

extrajudicially executed ([UNSMIL](#), 10 February 2012; [COI Libya](#), March 2012; [HRW](#), 19 November 2013; [OHCHR](#), 13 January 2014; IDMC interview, 9 September 2014).

Displaced members of the Mashashya tribe also continue to be at risk of retaliatory attacks, including abductions. They face serious restrictions to their freedom of movement ([Amnesty International](#), 23 October 2013).

Migrants and asylum seekers remained trapped in Tripoli as several districts fell either under siege or engulfed in heavy fighting. While these migrants used to contribute to the Libyan economy during Qadhafi's rule, they are now stranded and internally displaced, as movement outwards has been hampered by insecurity and by neighbouring countries refusing to allow migrants to cross their borders without valid travel documents and confirmed onward travel arrangements. A large number of those who managed to flee Tripoli have remained unable to leave Libya and are in dire need of assistance, in particular to food, water, sanitation and shelter ([UNHCR](#), 5 August 2014; [IOM](#), 14 September 2014; [IFRC](#), 12 August 2014; [IOM](#), 5 September 2014). Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who remain in the country continue to be victims of violent racist attacks. Sub-Saharan Africans are particularly at risk of kidnapping or arbitrary arrests ([IRIN](#), 7 August 2014; [Amnesty International](#), 30 September 2014).

Prospects for durable solutions

Ongoing violence and armed clashes have left Libya in a downward spiral of insecurity, seriously hampering any prospects for durable solutions for IDPs. Hopes for national reconciliation, transitional justice and reconstruction appear ever more remote since the collapse of Libyan institutions and the partitioning of the country into two rival governments after renewed conflict in 2014.

While the majority of those displaced during the uprising in 2011 have managed to return to their place of origin, at least 56,500 IDPs have remained in protracted displacement since then and face harassment when attempting to return ([UNHCR](#), February 2013).

Through the indiscriminate use of weapons, direct targeting of civilians who tried to flee as well as detention of those who stayed, the Misrata-affiliated armed groups eventually forced the entire population, some 40,000 people, out of Tawergha in October 2011. The COI noted that after anti-Qadhafi rebels emptied the town of its inhabitants they looted, demolished and burned down houses, destroyed vital infrastructure to "render [the town] uninhabitable" and blocked access to Tawergha ([COI](#), March 2011). By February 2015, Tawergha IDPs were still unable to return and continued to be attacked, arbitrarily arrested, tortured or killed ([Amnesty International](#), 2013).

As with the Tawerghans, anti-Qadhafi groups actively prevented the return of roughly 10,000 Mashashiya. Most of them have been living in protracted displacement in Sgeiga, Misdah in the Nafusa Mountains or Tripoli.

Clashes between members of the Mashashiya tribe and Zintani fighters in Misdah and Sgeiga in June 2012, and between members of the Mashashiya and Qantrar tribes in Misdah in March 2013, led to a further deterioration in the situation facing Mashashiya IDPs. The fighting in June 2012 killed or wounded dozens of people, while thousands fled the two towns ([AFP](#), 13 June 2012; [ICRC](#), 21 June 2012; [Amnesty International](#), 2013; [IRIN](#), 2 April 2013).

Against the background of a lack of national reconciliation, those clashes, along with the extensive destruction of housing and infrastructure, prevent either the return of IDPs or their achievement of durable solutions in host communities.

Response to displacement

National response

Crisis committees have been established by the Prime Minister's Office to respond to the current humanitarian situation in the country's western and eastern regions ([UNSMIL/OHCHR](#), 4 September 2014). The Ministry of Economy has provided food for displaced families and the Ministry of Social Affairs has provided alternative housing. However, acute political polarisation has led to the formation of various parallel bodies reporting to local councils.

The bulk of aid has been delivered by LRCS, making it a valuable source of information and an important partner for humanitarian response. As one of the only humanitarian organisations remaining on the ground, LRCS has played a vital role in responding to the needs of IDPs. Since fighting flared again in May 2014, LRCS has facilitated the evacuation of trapped civilians from areas affected by violence and has assisted IDPs and their host communities with water, food and household items.

LRCS has also provided substantial assistance to foreign migrants displaced by the fighting and those stranded at the border with Tunisia ([IFRC](#), 22 May 2014; [ICRC](#), 2 August 2014; [IFRC](#), 12 August 2014). In cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, LRCS has also continued to deliver medical supplies to health centres and hospitals in Tripoli and Benghazi, as well as to communities hosting IDPs ([ICRC](#), 17 September 2014).

International response

Following the fall of Qadhafi, oil-rich Libya was not seen as a funding and assistance priority by most potential donors. Millions of dollars that had been frozen under sanctions were released and earmarked for humanitarian assistance and development initiatives. Tending to the needs of the Libyan population was considered the respon-

sibility of the new authorities ([IRIN](#), 5 December 2011). Potential international donors overlooked the absence of structures required to transfer large amounts of money and the weak capacity of the new Libyan authorities to effectively distribute funds in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Qadhafi regime.

After the initial emergency phase, many traditional major donors, such as the United States Agency for International Development and the UK Department for International Development, discontinued funding for humanitarian operations ([IRIN](#), 5 December 2011). By the end of 2011, most humanitarian relief operations had phased out recovery and reconstruction programming ([OCHA](#), 18 December 2011; [UNCT Strategic Framework 2013-2014](#), September 2012). This was despite a report by OCHA in early December 2011 that around 63,000 IDPs still required humanitarian assistance ([OCHA](#), 4 December 2011).

Despite increasing insecurity, ICRC was one of the few major humanitarian organisations to remain operational in Libya after the uprising, providing assistance to IDPs in protracted displacement, as well as those newly displaced by armed clashes and waves of violence. It provided emergency food aid, household items, medicines and medical supplies, facilitated the evacuation of IDPs, improved water distribution systems in IDP camps in Tripoli and Benghazi and cleared some ERW ([ICRC](#), 18 November 2011; [ICRC](#), 4 November 2011; [ICRC](#), 23 August 2012; [ICRC](#), 31 March 2014; [ICRC](#), 17 September 2014). Following the murder of the head of its Misrata sub-delegation in June 2014, ICRC suspended its operations ([ICRC](#), 6 June 2014; [ICRC](#), 4 June 2014; [ICRC](#), 2 August 2014).

After the outbreak of fighting in mid-2014, all international organisations, including most UN agencies that were still present in Tripoli, left the country ([ICRC](#), 2 August 2014; [IRIN](#), 7 August 2014). They are either temporarily operating out of Tunisia or have suspended all operations.

In October 2014, the Humanitarian Country Team launched the Libya Humanitarian Appeal 2014. This identified food security, protection, health, early recovery and education as priorities. The appeal requested \$35.25 million ([Humanitarian Appeal](#), 8 October 2014). As of 31 December 2014, less than two per cent of the requested funding had been received ([FTS](#), January 2015). Around \$22 million has been donated to the emergency response through other channels and appeals, including those of IFRC and ICRC ([FTS](#), 24 October 2014).

Implementation of the response plan set out in the Humanitarian Appeal has been hampered by a general lack of access to affected populations due to on-going fighting and a volatile security situation that has prevented thorough assessments of IDPs' needs ([IRIN](#), 1 October 2014; [Humanitarian Appeal](#), 8 October 2014). Militias have little or no knowledge of humanitarian organisations and international humanitarian law. They often prevent humanitarian assistance passing their checkpoints ([IRIN](#), 1 October 2014). Since the outbreak of violence in May 2014, two humanitarian truck convoys have entered Libya from Tunisia, delivering food and humanitarian supplies to IDPs in al-Zawiya, Zintan, Gharyan and Tarhuna in the west ([UNHCR](#), 18 August 2014; [WFP and UNHCR](#), 22 September 2014). UNHCR provided additional humanitarian assistance for some 1,500 IDPs families, including Tawerghans, in and around Tripoli in December 2014.

While humanitarian organisations have been able to reach several thousand IDPs in the western region through cross-border operations, access to displaced persons in the east, in particular those in Benghazi, has thus far not been possible (IDMC interview with UNHCR, 9 September 2014). Remotely coordinated aid operations rely on cooperation with local actors and have faced numerous important logistical challenges. Frequent power outages, up to 19 hours a day, have made effective communication between implement-

ing partners in Libya, such as the LRCS and the International Medical Corps, and those coordinating operations from Tunisia extremely difficult ([IRIN](#), 1 October 2014; [Humanitarian Appeal](#), 8 October 2014).

About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement. For the millions of people worldwide displaced within their own country, IDMC plays a unique role as a global monitor and evidence-based advocate to influence policy and action by governments, UN agencies, donors, international organisations and NGOs.

IDMC was established in 1998 at the request of the Interagency Standing Committee on humanitarian assistance. Since then, IDMC's unique global function has been recognised and reiterated in annual UN General Assembly resolutions.

IDMC is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), an independent, non-governmental humanitarian organisation.

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