

IDP CHILD PROTECTION ASSESSEMENT

IN TRIPOLI AND BANI WALID

June 2016



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Cesvi Libya

In the framework of the project

Psychosocial emergency response and recreational activities for children exposed to violence in Tripoli and Bani Walid

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Introduction

This report presents the findings of a child protection rapid assessment conducted in the framework of the UNICEF funded project, implemented by Cesvi in Tripoli and Bani Walid, entitled '*Psychosocial emergency response and recreational activities for children exposed to violence in Tripoli and Bani Walid*'. The main expected outcomes of the project are the creation of inclusive child friendly spaces for IDP children, where they can benefit from protection and psychosocial support, and referral mechanisms in the case of children with special needs. It also includes child protection awareness raising and capacity building activities for IDP camp residents, educators and local authorities.

Informed by a previous survey conducted by Cesvi through its local partners in Tripoli and Benghazi IDP camps over January-February 2016, the project was originally destined to be implemented in these two locations. However, the geographical areas of intervention were modified after consulting with UNICEF, taking into consideration the latest events which affected Sirte in spring 2016. Military operations, recent clashes and everyday hardships forced thousands of people to flee Sirte in recent months. As of 11 May 2016, IOM recorded the displacement of up to 5,560 households to Al Khums, Bani Walid, Tarhouna, Tripoli, and other nearby cities.¹ The town of Bani Walid received the bulk of the IDP influx. The capacity of local actors in coping with this displacement crisis was stretched to breaking point. Human Rights Watch reported that residents from Sirte received limited emergency assistance comprising a few handouts of food and NFIs sent by international aid organizations.² Severe concerns about the fate of IDP children fleeing Sirte with their families urged discussions between UNICEF and Cesvi, which resulted in the decision of delivering a child protection emergency response in Bani Walid for three months.

Therefore, the objective of this assessment was twofold:

- To integrate the existing information on Tripoli camps with up-to-date qualitative evidence on IDP children population, their needs and vulnerabilities;
- To gather primary data on the current displacement in Bani Walid with a focus on child protection, so as to inform the intervention to the most compelling needs of IDP children, by also evaluating the services in place in view of the creation of a relevant referral system.

Cesvi's previous rapid assessment was based on household and camp leaders' questionnaires and contained a great deal of information on Tripoli IDP camps, but data on Bani Walid were lacking, due to the absence of any international organisation operating in that area. Despite being confronted with a number of challenges, the present work managed to capture the most recent status of forced displacement and child protection in both locations, together with a mapping of the main local actors responding to the emergency in Bani Walid. At the same time, continuous investigation and data collection is needed in order to keep up with the rapidly evolving situation.

¹ OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin.

<https://unsml.unmissions.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Hf5NUBDjBI%3D&tabid=3543&mid=6187&language=en-US>

² Human Rights Watch, "Life under ISIS in Sirte" <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/05/18/we-feel-we-are-cursed/life-under-isis-sirte-libya#8286a1>

Methodology

The present needs assessment was carried out by an external consultant³. Due to the urgency of the action, field data collection was conducted over a short period of time (18-29 June 2016). Time constraints coupled with security concerns limiting the access to the target sites excluded the possibility of a household survey. Therefore, the research methodology relied on key informant interviews, direct observation and focus group discussions. The assessment adopted a community-based approach, consisting in the involvement of both IDP and host communities and local authorities. The support offered by Cesvi local partners, i.e. *Altaraqui* in Tripoli and *Asaabel* in Bani Walid, has been precious to overcome the challenges related to security and to access as many actors as possible.

Mapping of local actors

In Bani Walid, information gathering was mainly based on informal interviews with displaced Sirte residents who had fled the hostilities and sought protection there. Key representatives from the following local authorities, the local community and civil society organizations (CSOs) were also involved:

- Bani Walid Community Council, which consists of tribal leaders and plays a major role in the emergency situation, by leading the communication, coordinating the support and donations from all the tribal groups and working to resolve potential problems affecting the displaced. It is considered to be the reference point and coordination body among all the NGOs;
- Bani Walid Local Council, a local government body;
- Bani Walid Social Affairs Department, a branch of the Ministry of Social Affairs, which facilitates all the measures taken by the government to help IDPs;
- Crisis committee in Bani Walid, an emergency response body formed by the local council and working under its supervision;
- Crisis committees in Zamzam (covering the areas of Zamzam, Abu Qurayn and Abunjim areas), born spontaneously and working to help IDPs from these areas meet their basic needs, including food, water etc. These committees play a role in communication with Bani Walid community council as well as with the local council.
- Local NGOs: Alsaalam, Assabel foundation, Wadi Alkaheer, Qguarir Women's Association, Ayadi Alkheer.

Similarly to the method used in Bani Walid, assessment tools used in Tripoli camps included informal discussions with Tawerghan camp residents/ leaders and key informant interviews with local authorities, community leaders and CSO members, namely:

- The Tawerghan local council, a formally recognized local governmental body;

³ Al-Kimma International Services Ltd.

- The Committee for humanitarian relief and children’s protection, formed by the local council, whose main role is to provide food aid to the displaced in the camps, but also to support camp schools and facilitate child focused activities.

In Tripoli, two main challenges were reported during the data collection phase, i.e. scarce accessibility to the target sites due to insecurity (esp. Janzour camp) and a certain degree of distrust towards NGO actors among Tawerghan IDPs. However, discussions with IDP camp leaders suggested that there are also a number of trusted local NGOs currently allowed to work in the camps, incl. on child protection in emergencies and psychosocial support.

Bani Walid assessment findings

Approximately 2,000 families fleeing from Sirte sought refuge and were hosted in Bani Walid in early May 2016. Neither IDP camps nor common accommodation arrangements (e.g. schools) were devised to respond to this displacement crisis. All informants, including Bani Walid tribe leaders of the community council, the governmental local council and NGO workers agreed that practically all Sirte IDPs were accommodated in private houses, either hosted by their relatives or friends or in rented houses in Bani Walid city. This is explained by the strong ethnic ties existing between the displaced families and Bani Walid residents. One key informant stated: “It is not acceptable for us, Bani Walid tribes, to allow our brothers to live in camps”. This finding is consistent with previous reports on displacement from Sirte.⁴



Figure 1. Map 1 - Bani Walid

⁴ Libya: Displacement in Sirte and IDP Needs Assessment and Protection Monitoring. (2016). REACH Initiative. Retrieved 19 July 2016, from <http://www.reach-initiative.org/libya-displacement-in-sirte-and-idp-needs-assessment-and-protection-monitoring>

The only IDP camp that can be found in Bani Walid is a Tawerghan IDP camp created in 2011. However, the camp manager also pointed out that a number of displaced families from Tawergha have progressively abandoned the camp to move to private houses in town.

Table 1 shows the estimates of displaced families by place of origin according to unpublished reports by the Bani Walid local council.

Place of origin	Number of families
Tawergha	265 ⁵
Sirte	723
Abu Qurayn	262
Al-Kaddahiyah	439
Ubari	143
Zliten	64
Other	61
Total	1,957

Table 1. Number of IDP families hosted in Bani Walid by place of origin.

Almost all families from Abu Qurayn, Alkaddahiyah, and Zamzam returned back to their houses by the month of June. Households from Ubari and Zliten chose to live and settled in Bani Walid city.

Since the onset of the conflict, community-based actors, the local civil society and youth led by the community council have been playing a crucial role in humanitarian activities, by mobilizing and providing support for the displaced families. The Bani Walid Public Health Authority, Bani Walid Hospital and some private clinics have scaled up the services for IDPs from Sirte and other areas, in addition to those destined for the local community. Officials in Bani Walid complain that the resources and capacities available to the council are insufficient to meet the current level of need.

There was limited chance for the researcher to meet with children and women who fled from Sirte to Bani Walid because of security constraints and a certain degree of reticence of the local population in exposing them to outsiders. However, most key informants pointed at the increased psychological and emotional distress among conflict-affected children because of the disruption of their lives and/or specific traumatic experiences, such as loss or separation from a family member, violence, sexual abuse, involvement in armed forces or groups. Gender-based violence (GBV) is believed to be an issue facing IDP children, though under-reported due to social stigma. The current assessment did not manage to document any specific case.

All informants claimed that there is no specific child protection intervention currently being carried out in Bani Walid. No child protection mechanism is in place. In general, teachers lack the necessary training and experience to provide quality psychosocial support and effectively handle cases of child

⁵ The figure relates to both in and out of camp IDPs combined.

abuse or other cases needing referral to specialized services. No formal case management and referral system is in place. Three structures were identified that could serve this purpose: Bani Walid Public Authority, Bani Walid General Hospital, and Bani Walid Centre for Autism, which is government-run and can provide free consultations with one psychiatrist and one psychotherapist, employed as permanent staff.

Upon consultation with Assabel, Cesvi’s local partner, the most suitable locations to setup two child friendly spaces (CFS) were identified, by dividing the city of Bani Walid in two parts:

- a. In the North, a CFS will be located in Bani Walid Technical School.
- b. In the South, a CFS will be located in the Lybian Red Crescent building.

Tripoli assessment findings

According to data provided by the Tawerghan local council, this is the distribution of IDP children (0-18) in the Western region of Libya:

No	Location	Children population		
		Male	Female	TOT
1	Airport road	300	340	640
2	Alfallah (1)	290	270	560
	Alfallah (2)	80	55	135
3	Janzour	373	319	692
4	Sidi Asseyeh	99	61	160
5	Tarhouna	131	66	197
6	Bani Walid	63	67	130 ⁶
7	Out of IDP camps	625	675	1300
	Total	1961	1853	3814

Table 2. Distribution of IDP children (0-18) in the Western region of Libya

The assessment in Tripoli investigated the situation of children living in the following 5 Tawerghan IDP camps:

- Airport Road
- Janzour
- Sidi Assayeh
- Asseraj
- Alfallah (1-2)

⁶ This figure refers just to the Tawerghan camp in Bani Walid.

The camps (except Alfallah 2) were formed in 2011, but their demographic profile evolved in recent years ensuing different waves of displacement. The most recent one is Alfallah 2, which was built in recent months due to a mix of new conflict-induced displacement and issues related to economic hardships of longer term IDPs previously living in private accommodation. The camp of Asseraj, surveyed in Cesvi’s previous assessment in January-February 2016, is emptying and now hosts just 14 households (24 in Jan-Feb). This is the reason why it was not further investigated. Apart from the case of Asseraj and the formation of a new camp in Alfallah, a comparison between the data collected during the previous and the present assessments shows some variations in the number of households hosted in each camp. The population size of Airport Road and Janzour slightly decreased, as opposed to Alfallah 1 and Sidi Assayeh, which witnessed a modest growth in the number of hosted families.

In terms of education, primary school services are available in the Tripoli camps of Airport Road, Alfallah 1 and Janzour, whereas the Alfallah (2) and Sidi Assayeh camps suffer from an absence of schools on their premises. The idea of child friendly spaces was highly welcomed by all key informants. Most interviewees preferred not to share information on their personal stories and their ideas on security and protection concerns at camp level, but signs of neglect and violence against children are perceivable. One informant (a woman) living in Airport Road admitted that episodes of verbal, physical and even sexual violence against children are likely to occur but rarely reported. Post-stress symptoms among children seem also to be widespread because of both the trauma experienced during the war and everyday hardships. She also welcomed the idea of employing social workers and psychologists who would be able to identify, support and treat affected children. Out of the local structures better equipped to address these issues, Essafa Centre for Mental Health was identified as the most appropriate for the development of a referral system in Tripoli.

Though it is extremely difficult to ensure the full accuracy of the data due to the volatile nature of the camp population, the table below summarizes the most up-to-date figures on the number of households and children (5-15) in each camp, disaggregated by gender.

Camp	Place of origin	# HH per location	Children (5-15)	M	F
Airport road	Tawergha	350	345	180	165
Alfallah 1	Tawergha	256	264	106	158
Alfallah 2	Tawergha	120	135	80	55
Sidi assayeh	Tawergha	85	112	45	67
Janzour	Tawergha	481	475	244	231
TOT		1292	1331	655	676

Table 3. Number of children aged 5-15 in IDPs camps in Tripoli

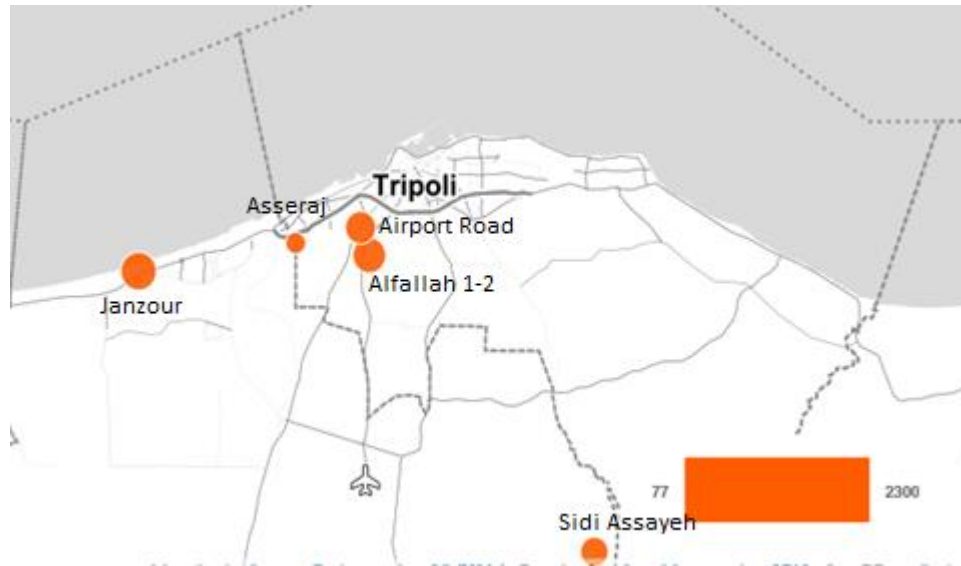


Figure 2. Map 2 - Tripoli camps geographical location and camp size⁷

A more detailed description of the camps is provided below.

Airport Road

The Airport Road camp, 9km south of Tripoli, is home to 350 families totalling approx. 1800 individuals. It is the second biggest camp after Janzour and it is nothing more than a huge hangar divided into small living units. IDPs have built a small primary school (classes 1-9), while adolescents attending classes 10-12 go to secondary schools in surrounding areas, making the daily trip and being exposed to security threats.

Alfallah 1-2

Alfallah 1 is located to the south of Tripoli, less than 10km from the centre. Formed in 2011, it is now home to 256 families, with a total population of approx. 1,215 people, a fifth of whom are children under the age of 15. The camp school is too small, giving primary education to 210 students in classes 1-9. There are a clinic and a pharmacy in the camp.

Alfallah 2 was formed earlier this year by people fled from Aljdabya, Sirte and most of all Benghazi. There are 120 families living in the camp, with a total population of 590. When asked about the reasons for the formation of this second camp in Alfallah, the camp manager replied that the camp population increased due to the most recent conflict and insecurity in the residents' areas of origin, but also referred to the weakening economic situation of some longer-term IDPs. Partly because of the lack of

⁷ Attribution for Maps: CARTO DB

cash liquidity in banks, displaced families that were previously renting houses are no longer able to afford it and had to move to live in this camp.

Sidi Assayeh

Located around 70 km to the south of Tripoli, Sidi Assayeh hosts 85 families, with a total population of 425. The vast majority have settled in the camp since 2011. The small area on which the camp is built results in overcrowding and no school facility is present. The lack of appropriate structures and initiatives for children and youth, coupled with the distance from the city centre and urban education facilities, make the situation in this camp particularly worrisome. In a discussion with the camp manager, he did not conceal his fears for the future of the children growing up in the camps with no opportunity for education and a healthy personal development.

Janzour

Janzour is located around 25km to the west of Tripoli. With 481 families and a total population of around 2,300, it is one of the most populated. The camp is surrounded by unsafe areas haunted by armed bandits and gangs, and the main road linking the camp to central Tripoli is frequently closed. During an interview, the Janzour camp manager informed that as a result of the deteriorated security situation in Janzour and ensuing limited humanitarian access to the camp, the IDP residents suffer from severe health and nutrition problems. Money for food and medicines is scarce, and children are the worst-affected. The same informant highlighted the spread of skin problems. In his words: “Several children have nasty sores on their skin, and we are worried because we do not know how they will be able to heal while living in these conditions”.

There is a primary school in the camp (classes 1-9), with all teachers of Tawergha origins. In a group meeting with camp leaders, different concerns were raised by the participants regarding the challenges of in-camp education, especially in terms of lack of capacity building among teachers and youth workers. There is a common feeling that Tawergha education actors – teachers as well as potential child friendly spaces animators – require targeted training on psychosocial support.

Conclusions

This report presented the outcomes of a rapid assessment conducted by an external consultant in two locations in Western Libya: Tripoli and Bani Walid (18-29 June 2016). As part of the UNICEF funded project '*Psychosocial emergency response and recreational activities for children exposed to violence in Tripoli and Bani Walid*', the needs assessment was meant to integrate the data previously collected by Cesvi in the Tripoli camps and to offer an up-to-date overview on displacement trends in Bani Walid, with a focus on the most pressing child protection needs and existing services.

Bani Walid presents a heterogeneous and rapidly shifting displacement profile. On the one hand, Tawerghan IDPs have lived in the only camp in town since 2011, though among them some families have progressively moved out of the camp to go live in private accommodation. On the other, in May 2016 there has been an inflow of newly-displaced families from the Sirte Governorate fleeing insecurity and everyday hardships. Thanks to the strong tribal bounds between these populations and Bani Walid residents, their relations were marked by a strong sense of solidarity, even though local services were put under considerable strain. Virtually all IDPs were accommodated in private accommodations, either hosted or paying rents. According to the information gathered, many IDPs belonging to this recent displacement wave have already returned to their houses in neighbouring areas.

The demographics of **Tripoli** IDP camps show signs of constant evolution. The two most significant developments include the fact that the population of Asseraj camp has dwindled (just 14 families currently living there) while a new camp has been recently created in Alfallah by an upsurge of arrivals from Aljdabya, Sirte and most of all Benghazi. A brief profile of each camp has been provided. Despite the specificities of each site, all of them share common problems of insecurity (esp. Janzour), lack of services and external support.

Though the assessment exclusively relied on subjective sources, it is reasonable to say that **child protection** concerns are high in both locations. These include the lack of specialized psychosocial support services, training of child protection actors, and the absence of appropriate case management and referral systems. The main purpose of this assessment was to inform the intervention to be implemented by Cesvi under the aegis of UNICEF and prepare the ground for a proper response to their compelling psychosocial needs in Tripoli and Bani Walid. The most suitable locations to setup CFS have been identified and ties with local organizations and authorities have been established in order to start framing a child protection referral system to be strengthened during the project.

At the same time, further analysis and a continuous follow-up on the humanitarian needs of IDP families and children in both Tripoli and Bani Walid is required. This work, conducted in a start-up phase, will be complemented by other rounds of data collection during which further information could be gathered thanks to the operative presence of Cesvi and its local partners in the area. Future assessments could also take into consideration the needs of returnee population and the relevant outcomes will be shared accordingly.