

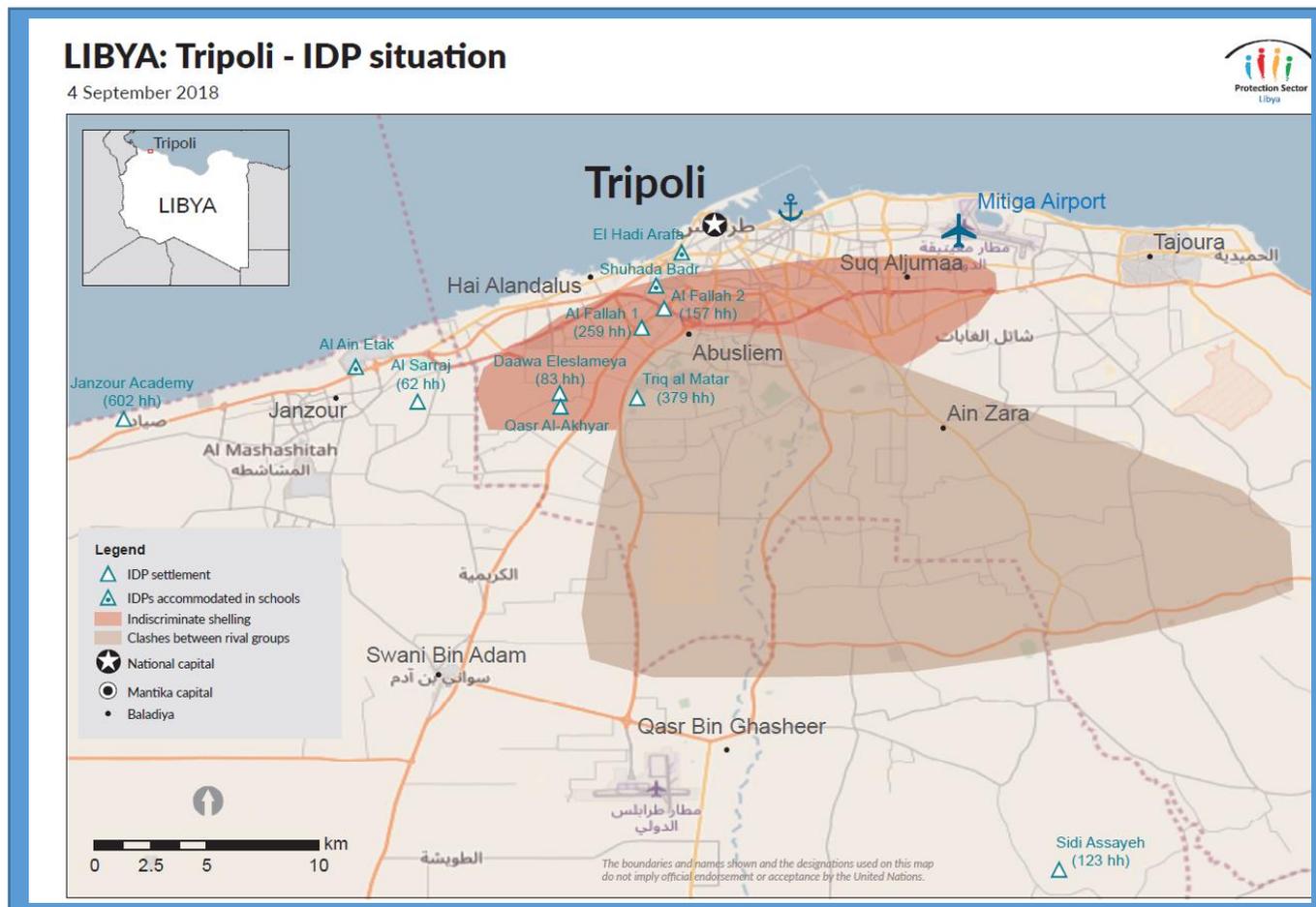
Protection sector update on the protection situation in Tripoli 5 September 2018

Overview:

After eight days of deadly clashes between different armed groups in Tripoli, the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) managed to negotiate a ceasefire on September 4, 2018. Since then, the security situation in Tripoli is reportedly calm with no fighting between the armed groups. The municipality of Tripoli has started cleaning the roads and areas previously affected by the fighting.

Nearly 24 hours later, the protection sector members report little to no movement of the displaced families to their location of origin. This is reportedly due to a lack of faith among Libyans that this ceasefire will hold – ceasefire agreements in the previous days have not. Families are unwilling to travel back to areas which may, again, erupt into clashes which will leave them stranded in insecurity without access to basic goods and services.

The fighting erupted between several armed groups in the Tripoli's southern districts on 27 August (Including Khallat Al Furjan, Ain Zara, Abu Slim, Salah Eddin and Ben Aoun). Armed groups used medium and heavy weaponry, which resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians. Many civilians were trapped without a corridor for safe passage to flee the areas affected by conflict.





Over the course of eight days, more than 1800 families were displaced to several locations in Tripoli and across Libya. Additionally, according to the Ministry of Health (MoH) 61 persons (including 21 civilians) were killed and more than 150 were injured due to the clashes and indiscriminate shelling. The Libyan Red Crescent (LRC) received more than 2000 calls from families who were trapped in conflict areas. LRC was only able to evacuate less than 10% of people who called requesting movement assistance.

Current situation:

- Little to no movement to return by newly displaced families.
- Despite establishment of armed group checkpoints, key informants report that civilian movement through the checkpoints is unrestricted.
- The majority of newly displaced families are staying with friends, families and relatives; meanwhile approximately 200 families took shelter in 5 schools across Tripoli.
- In conflict affected areas there are reports that banks, markets and roads are closed. The fighting also affected the electricity and water systems and limited access to food, health and other basic services;
- Flights in and out of Mitiga Airport were suspended on the evening of August 31, 2018, and the airport has not reopened to date.
- General lawlessness including looting, carjacking and petty crime activities have been reported in several locations, contributing to former refusal of many to leave their homes for fear of their property being damaged. Additionally, the feeling of lawlessness contributes to a continued feeling of insecurity regardless of the cessation of hostilities.
- Due to the insecurity, many international organisations have suspended their activities in Tripoli and relocated their staff to safer areas;
- A number of civilian structures were affected. Houses were the most frequently impacted structures, as well as civilian infrastructure including main roads, telecommunication infrastructure, governmental compounds and electricity. Other structures used by civilians, including food and water infrastructure, education centres and healthcare facility were also damaged.

Protection concerns:

- Continue limitation of access for humanitarian actors
- Potential re-engagement of armed actors resulting in further displaces and humanitarian needs
- Lack of clear information on needs of person (ISC is currently working to launch a multi-sector, multi-org, assessment early next week)
- Lack of rule of law creating to a prolonged sense of insecurity



Protection of Civilians:

As a result of armed clashes, the protection of civilians is being increasingly threatened in Tripoli, by indiscriminate attacks as fighting spills over into new neighbourhoods. Almost 40 percent of the casualties were civilians killed in their own homes or on the road, or health workers trying to help vulnerable



persons. Many of them were trying to access services or find routes to safety. The eruption of ground fighting further into other neighbourhoods in Tripoli would put the lives of thousands of civilians at risk, particularly where military operations occur in civilian neighbourhoods and buildings, or on busy road junctions or around vital services, putting the lives of civilians in harm's way. Safe routes for civilians to leave conflict areas were not available, due to armed groups, shelling and indiscriminate attacks while humanitarian access remains challenging.

Thousands of civilians, have reported being trapped or inaccessible. Some civilian infrastructure, upon which civilians are depending for survival, are at threat of damage or destruction. Hospitals, schools, electricity system and religious sites are already among those that have been damaged in the fighting.

Meanwhile, children remain at heightened risk of injury during the shelling, shooting and due to explosive remnants of war. Prevention of family separation is a priority along with women and girls, particularly female-headed households, who may be at risk of violence, both during flight and where hosted in sub-standard living situations.

Vulnerability and Persons with Specific Needs

Armed Conflict, lack of safety, together with lack of access to basic services, continue to exacerbate the vulnerabilities of the population. In particular, women, children and persons with specific needs are at heightened risk from conflict and the consequent loss of heads of households, family separation and breakdown of community structures. 4 have been killed and many people with specific needs were not able to leave the areas with clashes. Many families separated from their head of household, who refused to leave the areas with clashes as they were concerned about the looting of their houses and properties during their displacement.

Access of humanitarian community

The majority of the international organisations relocated their staff members to safer areas; meanwhile, national staff have been requested to stay at home due to the insecurity. Due to the ongoing conflict and not respecting the ceasefire agreements, the humanitarian community was not able to access to the affected populations, including trapped and displaced families. One humanitarian volunteer worker have been killed while he was trying to provide assistance to trapped civilians in the conflict areas.

Violations of International humanitarian law (IHL)

The humanitarian and international community have made several calls to all parties to the conflict to strictly adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian law to take all feasible measures to protect civilians from harm, including the prohibition of indiscriminate attacks and the principle of proportionality; however, the indiscriminate attacks and shelling continued and resulted with the loss of many of civilian lives including children and humanitarian workers. Thousands of civilians were trapped in conflict zone areas and were not given any safe routes to evacuate the conflict areas, civilian infrastructure have been targeted and humanitarian actors were denied to access to the most vulnerable population.