

### A WORD FROM THE CHIEF OF MISSION

Federico SODA

During the month of February, IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix released Round 34 of data collection on migrants in Libya, covering November and December 2020. During the reporting period, 571,464 migrants from over 41 countries were identified in Libya, with two thirds of migrants coming from neighbouring countries, namely Niger, Egypt, Chad and Sudan.

Of the migrants interviewed, 47 per cent reported insufficient income in their country of origin was the main reason that pushed them to migrate, while 26 per cent of respondents identified the main reason for migration was the lack of job opportunities and 17 per cent reported they migrated to Libya mainly in search of livelihood opportunities abroad.

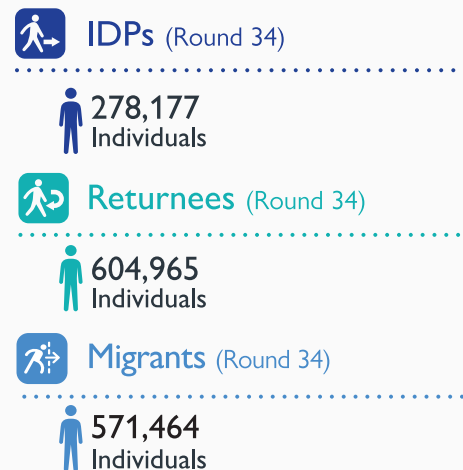
While numbers remain low compared to the total migrant population in Libya, migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean have sharply increased during the first two months of 2021 and remain steady. In only two months, the Libyan Coast Guard has intercepted and rescued almost one third of migrants brought back to Libya in 2020, and higher numbers of arrivals have been registered in Italy as well. While the weather conditions have been particularly favorable for this time of year, which may partly explain such an increase, other factors are certainly at play, including changes in territorial control allowing traffickers and smugglers to operate and organize departures.

IOM, UNICEF and UNODC are currently working on a joint study aiming at identifying the modus operandi of the smuggling of migrants and trafficking of persons in Libya. The study – expected to be finalized by the end of March 2021 – aims at providing concrete policy, programmatic and legal recommendations to reduce trafficking and counter smuggling of migrants and increase access to protection for victims of trafficking and smuggling.

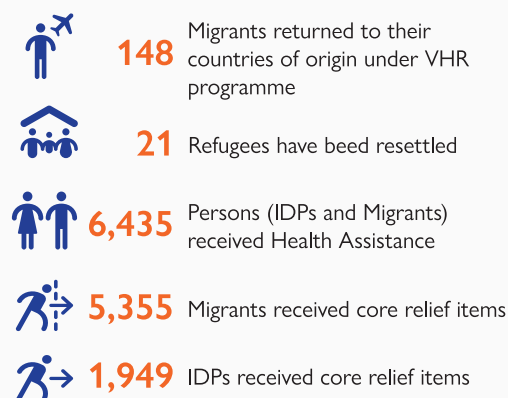
February has been an important month in terms of advancing migration governance dialogue and promoting the peer-to-peer sharing of good practices for the whole Arab region. On 24-25 February IOM, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA), and the League of Arab States (LAS), in collaboration with the Regional United Nations Network on Migration organized the first regional review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). The two-day virtual conference was an excellent opportunity for Libya to exchange good practices, challenges and lessons learned with other countries in the region, since the adoption of the Pact in 2018.

Despite not being a signatory to the GCM, Libya continues to show a serious commitment to participate in the different platforms to discuss progress and share experiences on the implementation of the objectives of the Pact. A national outreach event on the GCM was organized online by IOM for Libyan stakeholders on 22 February.

### KEY FIGURES



### ASSISTANCE PROVIDED IN FEBRUARY 2021



### CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN UPDATE



## ASSISTANCE TO MIGRANTS AND LIBYAN COMMUNITIES



During the month, **Direct Assistance** teams provided core relief items such as blankets, mattresses, hygiene kits, personal protective equipment, clothing and snacks to **5,355** migrants (2,238 in detention centres and 3,117 in urban areas) as well as to **1,949** internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Tripoli.



Over February, IOM **medical teams** provided **6,435 primary health care consultations** to migrants, IDPs and host community members and referred 44 migrants to secondary and tertiary health facilities for further medical investigation, treatment and management.

IOM medical teams also provided primary health care consultations for 1,357 migrants in detention (1,212 men and 145 women) in nine detention centres and referred 13 migrants to hospital for further clinical management. Through its support in four primary health care centres IOM provided 753 primary health care consultations (349 men and 404 women) to internally displaced persons and host community members, along with supporting the centre with medicines, medical consumables and information, education and communication materials on COVID-19.

Through its mobile outreach services, medical teams provided health care services for migrants, internally displaced persons and conflict affected populations in Hay Alandalus, Ghot Alshaal, Ain Zara, Alsarraj, Souq Aljumaa, Abdulsalam, Al-Aoeanea, Ubari, Janzour and Tajoura. A total of 2,304 (2,128 men and 176 women) received health care services, out of which 10 migrants were referred to health facilities for further care.

Through the Migrant Resource and Response Mechanism (MRRM) IOM medical teams conducted medical consultations in urban areas in Zwara, Sabha, Qatroun, Tripoli, Hay Alandalus and Bani Waleed for 2,021 (1,269 men and 752 women) out of which 19 migrants were referred to health facilities for clinical management.

IOM medical teams also responded to rescue/interception at sea operations and provided services to 2,948 migrants (2,578 men, 237 women and 133 children) at Abusitta disembarkation point. 222 migrants received medical screenings and triage upon arrival and two migrants were referred to a secondary health facility for further care.



Vulnerability assessments led by the **Protection** unit were provided to **344 migrants (84 women, 192 men, 65 boys and three girls)** 218 of which (71 women and 147 men) required in-depth vulnerability assessments.

Child protection assessments were made for 65 boys and three girls and **58** victim of trafficking assessments were made for 45 men and 13 women. Furthermore, 410 migrants were screened in different locations.

Over the month, protection teams distributed 56 food baskets, 90 blankets, 40 pillows, 38 baby kits, 44 hygiene kits, 48 children kits, 2 baby bathtubs and 1 mattress for 138 migrants in need. The team also referred 71 migrants to UNHCR, Norwegian Refugee Council, Danish Refugee Council and INTERSOS, as well as 320 migrants to IOM's Voluntary Humanitarian Return programme, Migrant Resource and Response Mechanism, Migration Health unit and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support programme. Two joint counselling sessions were held at IOM's office for 48 migrants from Mali. All chose to return to their country of origin with IOM.

Protection teams paid **50 follow-up visits** to check on the welfare and well-being of 95 migrants and made 33 outreach visits to five urban areas in Tripoli, Misrata, Benghazi, Zwara and Al Khums and to five detention centres: Mabani, Abuslim, Triq Alsikka, Ganfouda and Shar'a Al Zawya. The unit was also present during 12 rescue operations that took place at Abusitta and Zwara disembarkation points to provide protection monitoring services to migrants rescued/intercepted at sea.

The unit also attended the Coordination Conference with Consultation Working Group and presented Protection activities in Libya.



**Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)** services were provided to **397 migrants (237 men, 104 women, 43 boys and 13 girls)** at IOM's centre in Hay Alandalus and in urban locations, health facilities, and at disembarkation points following interception/rescue at sea operations in Tripoli and Zwara.

During February, the MHPSS teams conducted a varied set of activities, including individual basic counselling and psychological first aid, psychosocial awareness sessions, art-based psychosocial activities, group readings of the UN developed "My Hero is You" storybook for children and their families, facilitation of recreational activities and distribution of drawing kits to children, psychoeducation sessions, psychosocial assessments and referrals to Protection and specialized mental health care services.

Also, the MHPSS teams conducted **32 follow-up psychosocial support sessions** throughout the month, including sessions for migrants with mental health conditions and their caregivers and migrants following distressful events in Tripoli and Zwara. MHPSS conducted 17 referrals to other IOM units for migrants in need of assistance in different locations in Tripoli, Al Kufra and Zwara.

Through the MHPSS helpline, migrants continued to access mental health and psychosocial support services. The MHPSS helpline received **21 calls** from Jadu, Tripoli and Zwara, where migrants from Egypt, Eritrea, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria and Sudan were provided with remote counselling and psychosocial support services.

MHPSS teams conducted two days of training in Tripoli for 38 health and frontline workers on MHPSS in response to COVID-19. The training targeted active health workers and frontline workers from different areas in Libya and included medical doctors, nurses, community health workers, psychosocial workers who provide direct services to the affected population, including migrant and local communities. Participants local NGOs Bila Houdoud, INTERSOS and the Ranwa centre joined the sessions, as well as psychosocial support staff from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). The training was interactive and focused on essential main concepts of mental health and psychosocial approaches and responses related to the pandemic.

IOM continues supporting the national coordination mechanism through chairing the MHPSS technical working group (MHPSS TWG) with the International Medical Corps and in close coordination with the Ministry of Health. IOM chaired the monthly meeting of the group on 23 February with the active participation of local and international NGOs.

**MRRM** During February, **Migrant Rapid Response Mechanism (MRRM)** teams in Tripoli, Zwara, Bani Waleed, Sabha and Qatroun reached **4,810 migrants** (3,018 men and 1,792 women) mainly from Sudan, Mali, Niger and Chad. Among them 1,952 migrants (including 254 households) received core relief items, 217 clothing kits, 932 hygiene kits, 95 solar lamps, 161 mattresses, 357 winter blankets, 14 tarpaulins, 138 diapers and 68 kitchen sets, while 2,858 migrants (including 451 households) received 1,544 individual food kits and 66 family food kits. MRRM teams conducted **15 health awareness-raising information sessions on COVID-19** impacts and precautions in Qatroun for 325 migrants (55 women and 270 men) and distributed 32 COVID-19 awareness flyers in Arabic, English and French. Moreover, 178 #Informedmigrant awareness-raising sessions were conducted for 1,944 migrants (541 women and 1,403 men) in Tripoli, Zwara, Bani Waleed, Sabha and Qatroun, while 812 #Informedmigrant awareness booklets six posters were distributed in Arabic, English and French.

**CS** Over the month, **Community Stabilization (CS)** conducted three feasibility assessments in collaboration with DTM in Ubari, Murzuq and Tripoli to understand context, local dynamics and priority needs in the municipality for possible CS activities. Eighteen grants have been finalized in the past months and in February two NGOs completed their activities:

Local organization, Moomkeen held a three week online course for 29 youth from Sabha, Qatroun, Kufra and Benghazi on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, dialogue and social cohesion skills. After the training, participants were supported to implement more than **20 dialogue sessions** in their cities to expand their positive influence with peers and develop small networks of youth dedicated to supporting peaceful resolution of conflicts in their communities.

Another initiative by local organization Nana Marine trained more than 250 youth on social cohesion, dialogue and peacebuilding skills in Sabha and Qatroun. After the training, the youth were supported to organize several meetings with the local council in both cities to discuss the possibility to set up a permanent volunteer youth group acting as mediators in the community to contribute to a peaceful resolution of conflicts in their communities.

On 9 February, the last water well in Hay Alkarama Altayouri neighbourhood was handed over to the General Water and Wastewater Company (GWWC). An outdoor ceremony with approximately 100 people was organized with local authorities and community members and local authorities' representatives shared an appreciation certificate with IOM. In total, 13 water wells have been drilled around Sabha in the last year and half and five generators have been installed on the completed wells.



IOM LIBYA'S ACTIVITIES ARE SUPPORTED BY



## SPOTLIGHT FROM THE FIELD

Emraja Mohamed, Operations Assistant  
Community Stabilization in Kufra.

Kufra is the biggest city in the south eastern region of Libya, located near the borders of Chad, Sudan and Egypt. The closest major city is Ejdabia which is 850km away. The city of 80,000 people is made up of Tebu and Arab tribes with a history of conflict. Post 2011 saw a significant increase in tensions, escalating into violent conflict in 2012 to 2014. These armed confrontations further divided the community, destroying infrastructure and displacing whole neighbourhoods to what is now a physical division of tribes. Before 2015 the city was unreachable by many organizations due to the security situation, but since 2016 tensions between both groups has decreased, allowing organizations to access the city and begin to respond to populations' needs.

IOM's Community Stabilization (CS) programme supports conflict-affected communities through locally driven initiatives. I coordinate between IOM and local authorities, local organizations and partners. I started working with CS in September 2019. IOM had already established a presence in Kufra by then after donating a mobile health clinic to the municipality and opening an information technology training centre for Tebu residents. In 2020, we started meeting with service providers in the city to create concept notes for the needs mapped out through our research with local authorities.

At the beginning of the year, we focused mostly on health care facilities due to the pandemic and the urgent need for adequate health services. Our first project included the provision of a power generator and medical equipment for Kufra Public Hospital. As the biggest hospital in the region, it provides health services to the city of Kufra and its suburbs, as well as to migrants and internally displaced Libyans. The generator provides power to vital sections of the hospital, allowing them to maintain services during power outages and providing a lifeline to the people who need it most.

Community Stabilization also provides different training courses. These courses always include a diverse pool of participants from the different communities in the city. One such course taught photography and business skills to 10 women. Focusing on photo editing and production, the course also provided the participants with cameras, laptops and lighting stands to start their own business. The project was attended by the mayor who said it was the first project of its kind in Kufra. [By providing technical training to women in Kufra, a city that is highly conservative, we have created a chance for these women to be self-sufficient.](#) Breaking the barrier for women to be entrepreneurs in their own communities. We now



see some of the participants covering events around the city and further advancing their careers.

Other training courses, such as mobile phone maintenance and baking were also introduced to mixed participants in the city, some of whom have already created functioning businesses. IOM's approach is to bring different people together and create stability through group work and equal opportunities.

Another way we do this is by creating communal recreational areas, such as playgrounds and football fields in different areas. At Alkufra Aljadida, a mostly Tebu community, the football field was the first to be inaugurated by the mayor, who is not Tebu. At Bezzema Aljadida, an area where a lot of internally displaced Libyans and migrants live, the field is considered the first high quality recreational facility in the area. For myself, football fields have had the biggest impact on communities. They create space for different groups to interact with each other and provide a much-needed place for leisure.

Due to the lack of economic opportunities in Kufra, most people work in agriculture and border trafficking of people and goods. People take merchandise to Sudan and Chad and bring migrants back into the country. Some come with the purpose of residing in Kufra to work before returning to their country of origin, others wish to continue and cross the Mediterranean to Europe. This has created a mixed community of nationalities in the city, some of whom moved to the city before 2011 and continue to live in Kufra despite the conflicts.

Working with these communities, fostering tolerance between conflicting parties and seeing actual change from our work is my biggest motivation.



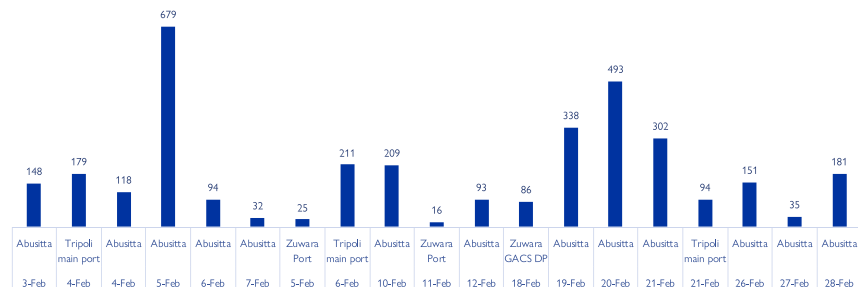
IN FEBRUARY 2021

**3,484** Migrants Disembarked in Libya

**2,838** Men      **239** Women  
**107** Boys      **74** Girls

\*No gender data available for 226 individuals

Disembarkation Location and Date (February 2021)



In 2020

**11,891**

DISEMBARKED IN LIBYA



**381** Deaths      **597** Missing

In 2021 so far

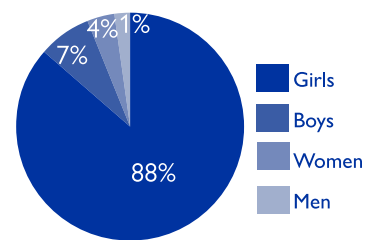
**3,953** DISEMBARKED

**3,221** Men      **284** Women  
**142** Boys      **80** Girls

\*No gender data available for 226 individuals



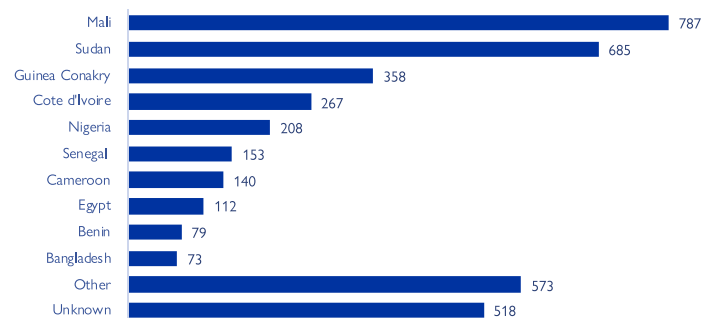
**8** Bodies Retrieved      **90** Missing



Monthly Disembarkation Trends 2019, 2020 and 2021



Nationalities of Individuals Disembarked in 2021



Disclaimer: Figures based on updates from IOM Libya Search and Rescue (SAR) data, compiled from disembarkations in Libya. For detailed data on deaths and missing migrants please refer to the missing migrants project. (<https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>)  
 Figures on Maritime incidents in Libya are estimates based on initial reports at the time of each incident, and are regularly updated as more information becomes available.