

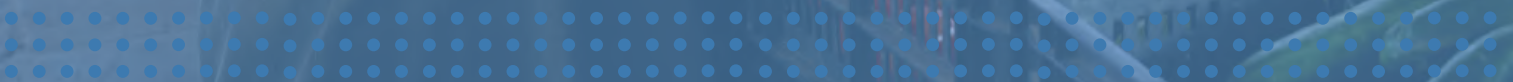


UNITED NATIONS  
LIBYA



2024

Situational Assessment of  
The South of Libya



This document consolidated UN Agencies and INGOs' assessments conducted in 2018-2023 in view of reconciling conflicting data from multiple sources and having a common analysis to advance sustainable development in southern Libya.



Updated Annex to the UN Common Country  
Analysis for Libya

# Table of contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	01
<b>Methodology</b>	02
<b>Context in Southern Libya</b>	03
Sebha	06
Murzuq	08
Ubari	10
Ghat	12
Kufra	14
<b>Comprehensive thematic reviews aligned with UNSDCF pillar areas</b>	16
<b>Peace and Governance</b>	16
Elections and Local Governance	16
Constitution	17
Civic Space and Women's Empowerment	17
National Planning	18
Justice & Rule of Law	18
Safety and security	19
<b>Sustainable Economic Development</b>	21
<b>Social and Human Capital Development</b>	22
Health & Nutrition	22
Education	23
Protection	25
Social Protection	25
<b>Climate Change, Environment, and Water</b>	28
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	28
Environmental Protection, Climate Change Adaptation & Disaster Risk Reduction	29

<b>Durable Solutions for IDPs</b> .....	<b>30</b>
Social Cohesion An Overview of Murzuq’s Social Fabric .....	30
Safe Paths Empowering IDPs and Returnees with Choice and Rights .....	31
Equal Access for Displaced Populations Housing, Services, and Protection .....	32
<b>Migration Management</b> .....	<b>33</b>
Enhanced Support for Migrants Access to Social and Protection Services .....	33
Developing a Comprehensive National Migration Strategy .....	34
Strengthening Migration Management Establishing Data Systems for Evidence-Based Policies .....	34
<b>Information Gaps</b> .....	<b>35</b>
Governance and Peace .....	35
Economic Opportunities .....	35
Social and Human Capital Development .....	35
Environment and Climate Change .....	35
Migration .....	36
Durable Solutions .....	36
<b>Recommendations to the UN and Development Partners</b> .....	<b>36</b>
Development of Comprehensive Data Collection Initiatives .....	36
Targeted Recommendations .....	37
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>List of the resources used to produce this report</b> .....	<b>40</b>





# Executive Summary



This document presents a detailed analysis of the challenges and opportunities facing Libya, with a particular focus on the southern region, to inform strategies for sustainable development, peacebuilding, and resilience. The analysis addresses critical gaps, identifies development priorities, and highlights the role of various stakeholders, linking findings to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to propose actionable recommendations. Libya's post-revolution reality remains marked by political, economic, social, and environmental challenges, particularly for the southern region—encompassing key municipalities such as Sebha, Murzuq, Ghat, Kufra, and Ubari—facing acute vulnerabilities compounded by conflict, governance deficits, and systemic underdevelopment. These challenges are deeply interconnected, with governance weaknesses undermining service delivery, economic stability, and social cohesion.

Governance structures in the southern region are weak, characterized by unclear municipal roles and fragmented authority among tribal, regional, and national actors.

Political instability and unresolved intercommunal conflicts, particularly in Murzuq and Kufra, have eroded social cohesion and stalled reconciliation efforts. Limited progress toward inclusive governance and accountability leaves long-standing grievances unaddressed, threatening the fragile peace processes underway.

Economically, the region faces significant instability, with high unemployment rates, dependence on informal economies, and restricted access to financial resources. Agriculture, once a key driver of livelihoods, has been severely undermined by inadequate infrastructure, water scarcity, and the worsening impacts of climate change. Despite opportunities for green growth and renewable energy development, recovery efforts remain insufficient to tackle inequalities and create sustainable livelihoods.

Basic service delivery in the southern region is critically underdeveloped, with healthcare, education, water, and sanitation systems failing to meet the population's needs. Healthcare facilities face chronic shortages of staff and supplies, while only a fraction of households are connected to functioning sewage networks. Marginalized groups, including women, youth, and displaced populations, are disproportionately affected by these deficiencies, further entrenching social inequalities.

Environmental challenges are similarly pressing, as the region is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts such as rising temperatures, water scarcity, and frequent droughts. Environmental degradation, driven by unsustainable resource use and ineffective legal frameworks, poses severe risks to agriculture and local ecosystems. While the region's renewable energy potential remains largely untapped, efforts to enhance disaster risk management and climate adaptation are fragmented and underfunded, leaving communities increasingly vulnerable.

This update examines the unique dynamics of Libya's southern regions, analyzing the interplay of governance, social cohesion, economic development, and environmental and climate sustainability. It integrates cross-cutting issues such as gender, youth, displacement, and human rights, aligning findings with Libya's development priorities, the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

By providing these interconnected challenges and proposing forward-looking recommendations, the analysis aims to guide Libyan authorities, international organizations, and development partners in crafting policies and interventions that address Libya and its southern region's most pressing needs and support its transition toward stability and sustainable development.

# Methodology



The methodology for this report involved the utilization of the Data Saturation Analysis Grid (DSAG) to consolidate the dataset gathered for analysis. The DSAG served as a systematic tool to provide an overview of the discussion topics, specifically focusing on the four Outcomes/ Pillars and two Collective Outcomes of the UNSDCF.

During the consolidation phase, the DSAG facilitated the organization of relevant information and data extracted from 39 documents. These documents were selected based on the significance and recency of the data. Additionally, secondary data sources such as REACH's Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) and other assessments were incorporated to enrich the analysis. Published reports and supplementary sources (refer to Annex 1) were also consulted to enhance the depth and breadth of the analysis. Most of the data sets used in this report benefited from consultations with national stakeholders, including government representatives and local authorities, ensuring a balanced approach that reflects ground realities.

The process began with the compilation of data into the DSAG, enabling the creation of detailed summaries. These summaries served as the foundation for subsequent stages of analysis. At a later stage, the initial analysis was conducted, building upon the insights gleaned from the DSAG and the comprehensive dataset.

However, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations inherent in the study. Firstly, the availability of documents pertaining to specific thematic areas was limited, particularly in certain regions of southern Libya. Consequently, the analysis is constrained to certain areas, potentially impacting the generalizability of findings to the broader context of the UNSDCF implementation.

Further, there was variability in the depth of analysis for different Pillars/Collective Outcomes within the UNSDCF.

The Pillars/Collective Outcomes on Peace and Governance and Social and Human Capital Development received more thorough examination compared to others due to disparities in the availability and quality of information. This unequal availability of data may have influenced the comprehensiveness of the analysis and the depth of insights drawn from the report.

Despite these limitations, the report endeavours to provide a comprehensive understanding of the UNSDCF's six priority areas in the southern region within the constraints of the available data and resources. Efforts were made to mitigate these limitations through rigorous methodology and careful interpretation of findings.

The upcoming Multi Indicators Cluster survey might also fill some of these gaps in future analyses.



## Context in Southern Libya



The absence of a centralized authority and cohesive national security infrastructure in post-2011 Libya ignited rivalries for control over state institutions and resources, leading to violent conflict and the division of the country into eastern and western factions. This division was compounded by external interventions, further complicating peace efforts and resulting in duplicate political, governance, and security institutions across the divided nation.

The situation in the south is particularly complex, marked by long-standing economic marginalization and an inequitable allocation of state resources. This situation contributed to the rise of organized criminal networks and armed groups, leveraging the lucrative opportunities provided by cross-border smuggling, human trafficking, and other black-market activities. The youth, especially young men, find themselves vulnerable to recruitment by these groups due to limited viable economic alternatives, posing significant challenges to reintegration into civil, social, and economic lives.

With a few exceptions, the southern areas of Libya, both southwest and southeast, largely remained uninvolved in the 2011 uprising against the Qaddafi regime. It was not until September 2011, following the capture of Tripoli, that the rebels managed to gain control over the southwestern region, also referred to as the Fezzan province. This delayed involvement reinforced the perception of the southern regions being supportive of Qaddafi. The Tuareg community and several Arab tribes in the area have reportedly maintained sympathies toward the former regime. This sentiment was apparent when Seif El Islam al Qaddafi chose Sebha as the location to register his candidacy for the 2021 presidential elections which did not take place.

The South's remoteness from the decision centres in the West and East have deepened its structural marginalization and deficient infrastructure and service provisions compared to other regions. Despite its significant contribution to Libya's revenues in oil, the southern areas face chronic neglect, and

unequal redistribution of wealth from the western and eastern based authorities. The predation and widespread smuggling and criminal activities over the scarce resources further exacerbate the situation.

Governance and the rule of law in the southern region are hampered by competition for control over the illicit economy, adding tension to historical inter-tribal rivalries and threatening local social fabric which are examined in this report. The control over oil resources and infrastructure, a pivotal element in Libya's conflict dynamics, remains contested, with armed groups vying for control to leverage political and tribal influence.

The chronic instability, marginalization, and absence of formal governance structures combined with fragmented security and civilian institutions organized along tribal lines had allowed the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to exploit the vacuum. They gained some presence not only in the South but also in some coastal cities, further worsening the region's security and governance. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) emphasized the need for active work towards the unification of various institutions, especially the military institutions. A primary objective of this unification is to significantly strengthen border security in the South. The Libyan factions have yet to reach a consensus on proceeding with this proposal, primarily due to prevailing political divisions.

From 2017 onwards, the eastern based Libyan National Army (LNA) and its associated executive arm began a progressive takeover of the southwestern region (the Southeast was already under the LNA since 2014). Since 2019, the LNA has emerged as the main de facto state actor in the South, expanding its influence over the political, security, military, and economic sectors in the region. However, this expansion disrupted the pre-existing balances within and among the southern communities, as the LNA introduced new security, economic, and political dynamics. As a result, a large part of

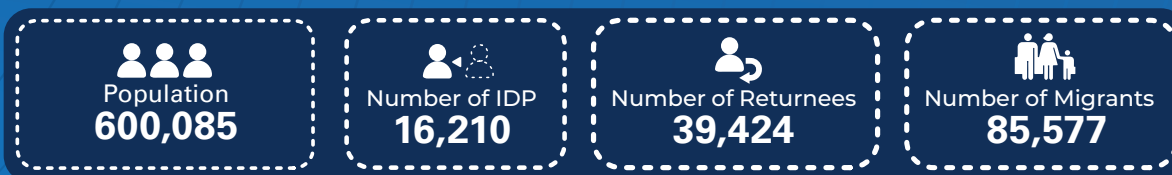
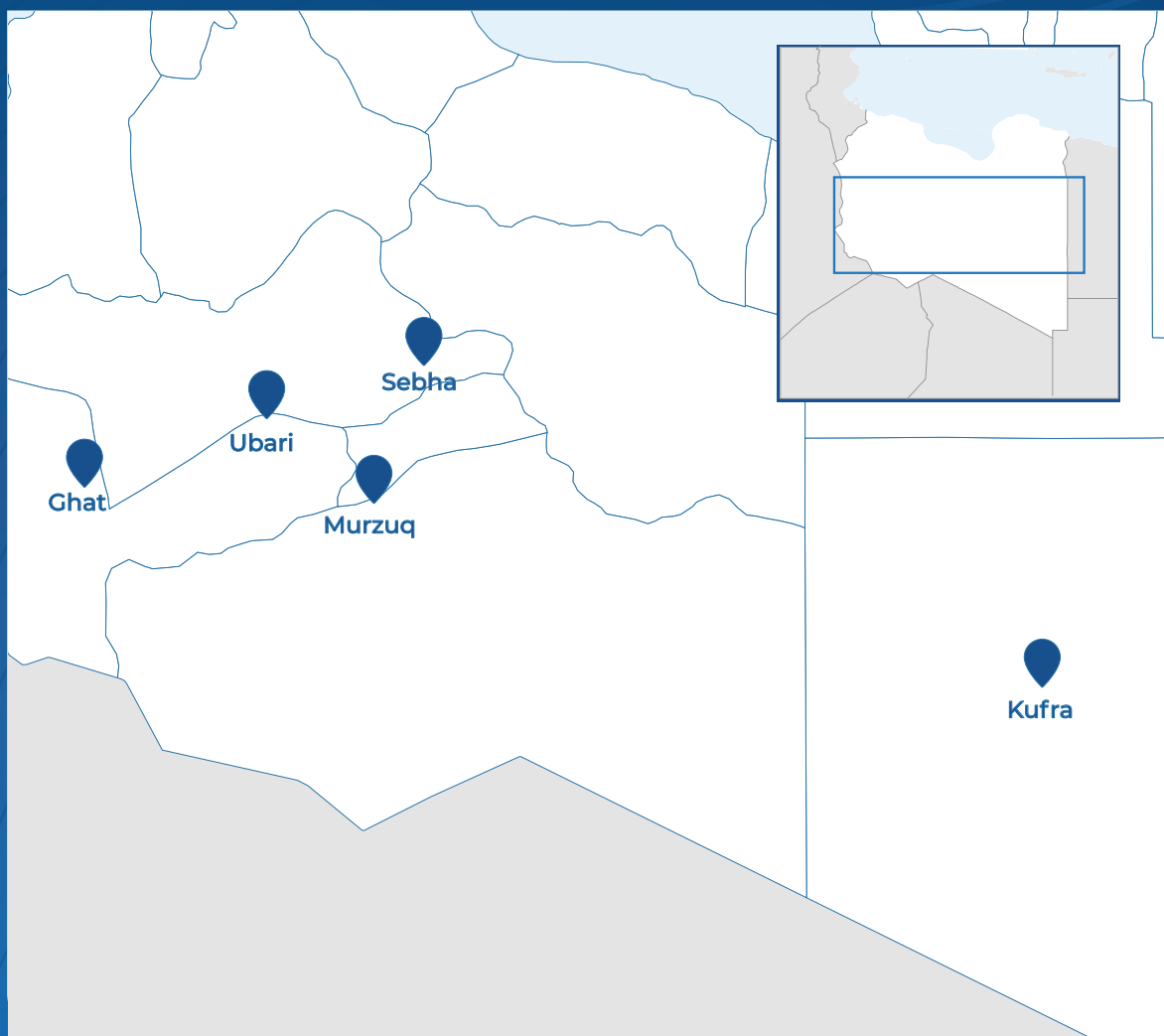
the southern constituencies has become supportive of the LNA in the domestic public discourse, although reportedly retaining their own local grievances and political allegiances. However, with increasing division in the country, the South also presents a potential flash point between competing interests in western and eastern Libya.

Following the Government of National Unity's installation in March 2021, its Ministries of Local Governance, Planning, and other ministries provided financial budget and basic services' support to municipalities in the south as part of the GNU's country-wide annual budgetary allocation to all municipalities in line with annual budget submissions from municipalities. This annual budgetary support continued up to 2023, while in 2024, the new HoR designated government led by Usama Hammad issued a decree directing all municipalities in the south and east to submit their budget request to the Ministry of Local Governance under the HoR designated government.

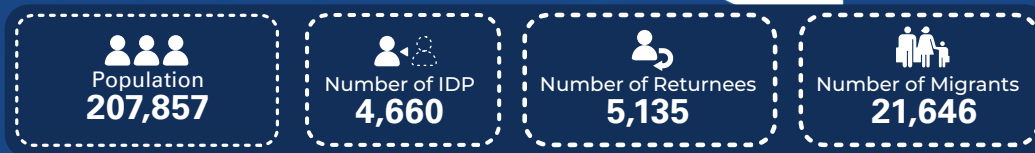
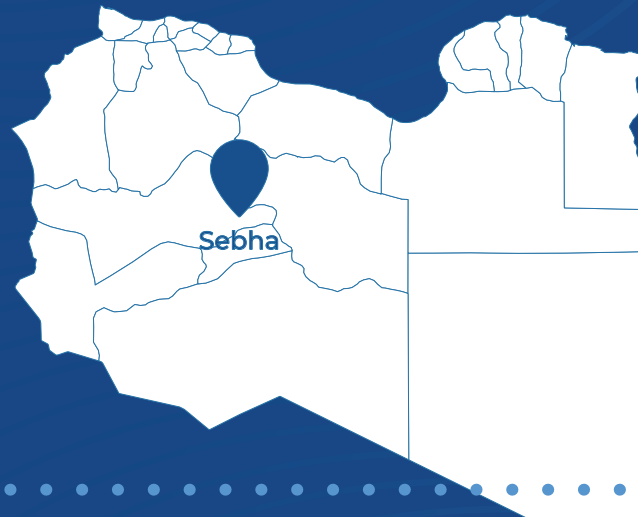
This intricate web of challenges underscores the critical need for comprehensive peace agreements and sustainable resource management strategies. Addressing the growing environmental and climate-related issues, particularly water scarcity and desertification, is imperative for averting potential conflicts and humanitarian crises, underscoring the urgency for national and international efforts to foster stability and development in Libya's south.



## Map of Southern Libya



## Sebha



Sebha, a pivotal city within the Fezzan region of Libya, presents a complex socio-political and economic landscape shaped by its rich historical backdrop, diverse demographic composition, and pressing challenges in governance and service provision. Serving as the "capital" of Fezzan, Sebha has evolved over centuries from a crucial node on the trans-Saharan caravan route to a significant urban centre grappling with the aftermath of Libya's 2011 revolution. The city's geography, marked by its oasis environment amidst the arid Sahara, supports its status as a hub for the surrounding desert regions, despite the challenges posed by unplanned urban expansion and environmental constraints.

Sebha faces interconnected political, economic, social, and environmental challenges. Politically, its history of shifting control, from tribal rule to contested authority among Libyan factions, undermines peace and strong institutions (SDG 16).

Fragmented governance among tribal leaders fuels rivalries, divisions, and insecurity, impeding reconciliation and institutional development. Governance deficiencies, including poor transparency and accountability, weaken public trust and service delivery. Sebha struggles with high unemployment, (10% of respondents, particularly youth) and reliance on an informal economy. The decline of agriculture and trade, once economic mainstays, exacerbates inequality (SDG 10) and hampers growth (SDG 8). Opportunities exist in promoting sustainable agriculture and renewable energy, such as solar-powered irrigation, to address unemployment, enhance food security, and boost climate resilience (SDG 13). Infrastructure investments (SDG 9) in transport and digital connectivity could further support long-term economic stability, though over-reliance on informal industries poses trade-offs.

Public services, including healthcare, education, water, and electricity, are critically under-resourced, directly impacting





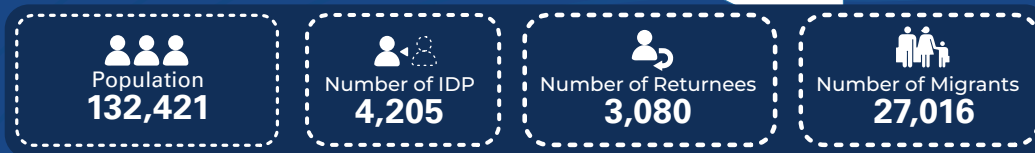
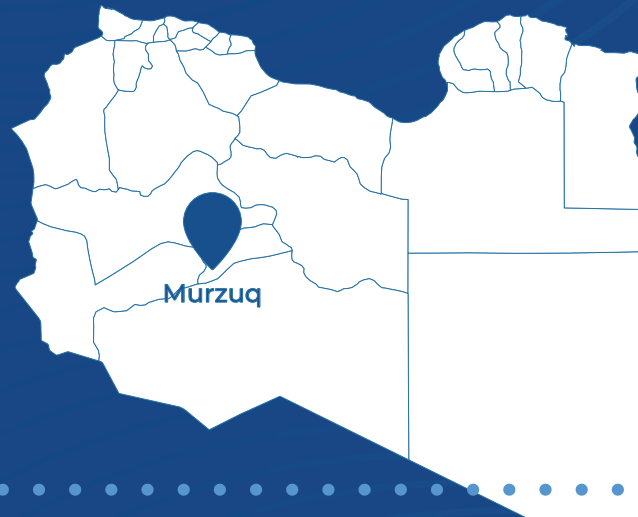
healthcare (SDG 3) and education (SDG 4). Frequent power outages and water scarcity disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, particularly women (SDG 5) and youth. However, Sebha's regional role in providing services to neighbouring areas, such as Ubari and Murzuq, presents opportunities to promote social cohesion (SDG 11) and reduce inequalities (SDG 10).

Environmental challenges, such as water scarcity and waste mismanagement, threaten sanitation (SDG 6) and contribute to public health risks. Climate impacts,

including desertification, endanger agriculture, emphasizing the need for climate adaptation strategies (SDG 13). Investments in renewable energy and sustainable waste systems could address economic, social, and environmental priorities simultaneously, enhancing resilience and fostering inclusive development.



## Murzuq



Murzuq, a historical oasis town in Libya's Fezzan region, encapsulates the challenges of tribal conflict, governance failure, economic decline, and environmental fragility that characterize much of southern Libya. These dynamics necessitate a comprehensive, multidimensional approach aligned with the SDGs to address its intertwined challenges.

Murzuq's governance structures have been undermined by long-standing intertribal rivalries and external military operations. The 2011 revolution heightened tensions between the Tebu and Ahali communities, leading to cycles of violence and displacement. The 2019 Fezzan Operation by the Libyan National Army (LNA), aimed at targeting "criminals and foreign mercenaries," exacerbated these divisions. Collateral casualties, forced displacement, and allegations of human rights abuses deepened mistrust and fragmented governance. With the LNA's temporary withdrawal and subsequent Tebu control, Ahali families

faced further displacement, reducing their already diminished influence in the region. Despite reconciliation agreements, including one in 2022, the Ahali remain hesitant to return, citing fears of violence and unmet demands for state compensation. The Tebu, while a minority, maintain significant power, further complicating efforts to create inclusive governance.

To achieve SDG 16, governance reforms must focus on transparency, equitable representation, and inclusive reconciliation mechanisms. These efforts should align with international human rights standards, emphasizing accountability and the protection of displaced populations. Capacity-building initiatives for local governance institutions can further support sustainable peacebuilding and social cohesion.

Murzuq's economy has suffered from the displacement of the Ahali, who were integral to trade and merchant activities.

The town now relies on informal smuggling networks and gold mining, activities that provide short-term economic relief but exacerbate instability and inequality (SDG 10). The absence of robust economic activity has worsened living standards for the Tebu community, leaving both groups with limited opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. Efforts by Tebu leaders to revive the economy hinge on the return of the Ahali, but these efforts face significant hurdles, including fears of reprisal violence and the need for reparations. Despite these challenges, Murzuq holds potential for economic revitalization through investments in sustainable



agriculture and renewable energy (SDG 8). Solar-powered irrigation systems, for instance, could restore agricultural productivity, while infrastructure improvements (SDG 9) could facilitate trade and market access.

Economic development must also address the socio-political roots of inequality. Policies that promote equitable resource distribution, formalize economic activities, and enhance digital connectivity can create a more inclusive and resilient local economy. Such initiatives can help bridge the economic divide between the Tebu and Ahali communities, fostering mutual benefits and reducing intertribal tensions.

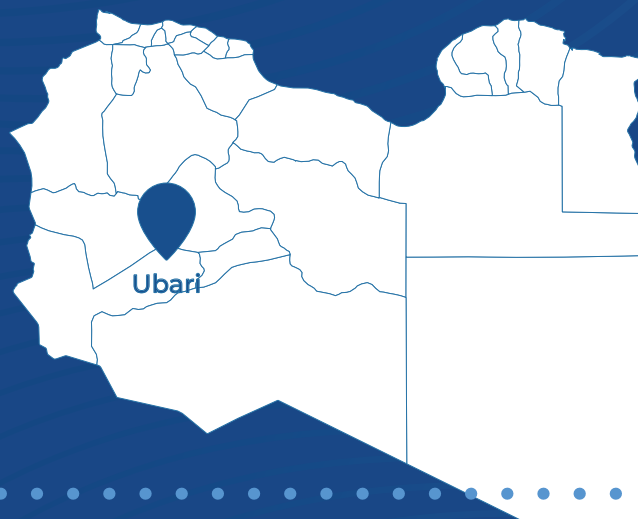


Murzuq's social fabric has been severely strained by displacement and inadequate service delivery. Access to healthcare, education, water, and electricity is limited, directly affecting the well-being of residents (SDG 3). The Ahali's displacement has compounded these challenges, as their absence diminishes local economic activity and undermines social cohesion. Women and children, in particular, face unique vulnerabilities in accessing education and healthcare (SDGs 3 and 4). Gender-specific barriers (SDG 5), such as limited employment opportunities and safety concerns, further marginalize women in the community. For children, the lack of functional schools and educational resources perpetuates cycles of poverty and inequality.

Murzuq's role in providing services to neighbouring regions, such as Ubari and Traghen, highlights its strategic importance. Strengthening these services could reduce inequalities (SDG 10) and foster regional stability. However, security constraints and governance failures limit the ability of national and international development agencies to implement effective interventions. Addressing these gaps requires improved funding mechanisms, enhanced local capacity, and adherence to international standards on access to basic services.



## Ubari



Population  
**143,581**

Number of IDP  
**3,295**

Number of Returnees  
**29,185**

Number of Migrants  
**15,200**

Ubari, a city crucial for agriculture and trade within the Fezzan region, encountered significant challenges due to conflict, leading to the displacement of a large part of its population between 2014 and 2016. The conflict, which began in September 2014, was primarily fuelled by disputes between the Tuareg and Tebu tribes for control over Ubari. Despite these difficulties, the majority of IDPs have returned due to a reconciliation agreement and provision of reparations, though the number of IDPs since 2018 remained below the levels seen before the conflict. Ubari is organized into five districts: Ubari Centre, Dissa, Mashru,' Hattia and Al-Shareb, with Ubari Centre being predominantly urban and peri-urban areas (Mashru' and al-Shareb) with others more agricultural-residential settlements.

Ubari's local economy, primarily reliant on agriculture and administrative functions, has suffered greatly due to conflict, leading to a sharp decline in trade, small-scale

industries, and agricultural productivity. The economic downturn, compounded by high living costs and limited cash access, has driven some residents into illegal activities such as smuggling and disrupting oil and gas operations. Addressing these economic vulnerabilities, dismantling armed groups, and integrating them into formal economic and social systems are critical for achieving stability and development in Ubari (SDGs 8 and 16).

Governance challenges are evident, particularly in unclear municipal functions and inadequate financing mechanisms, which affects effective service delivery and development. Public contracting and procurement processes require reform, and urban planning must address the prevalence of informal settlements. Developing a new master plan could facilitate social integration and urban development (SDG 11). Halted property registrations further highlight the need for legal and institutional reforms to restore trust in governance.



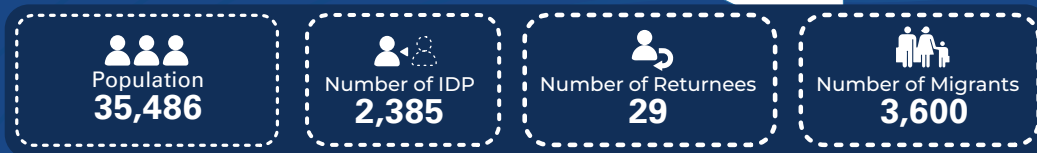
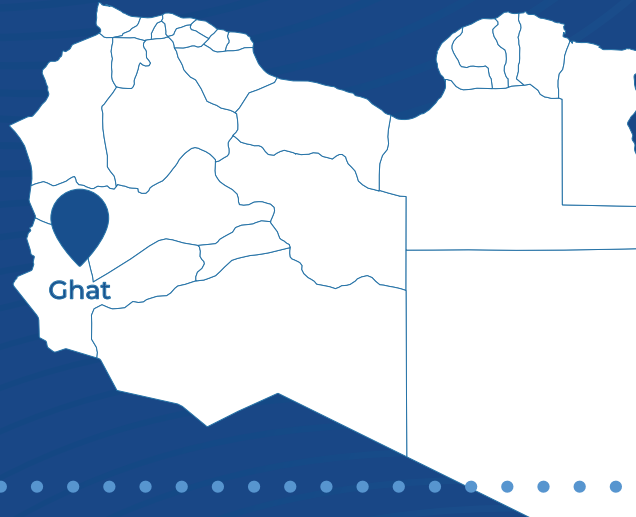
Basic service delivery remains weak, particularly in healthcare, which suffers from a lack of medical staff, specializations, and access to essential medicines (SDG 3). Educational infrastructure, especially in the Mashru' district, is also inadequate, limiting opportunities for social integration and human capital development (SDG 4).

adequate connections to sewage systems. Maintenance and development of water infrastructure, alongside solutions for electricity shortages and street lighting, are essential for improving living conditions and public health (SDGs 6 and 7), which are vital for Ubari's recovery and sustainable development.

Water, sewage, and waste management infrastructure are in critical need of improvement, with many districts lacking

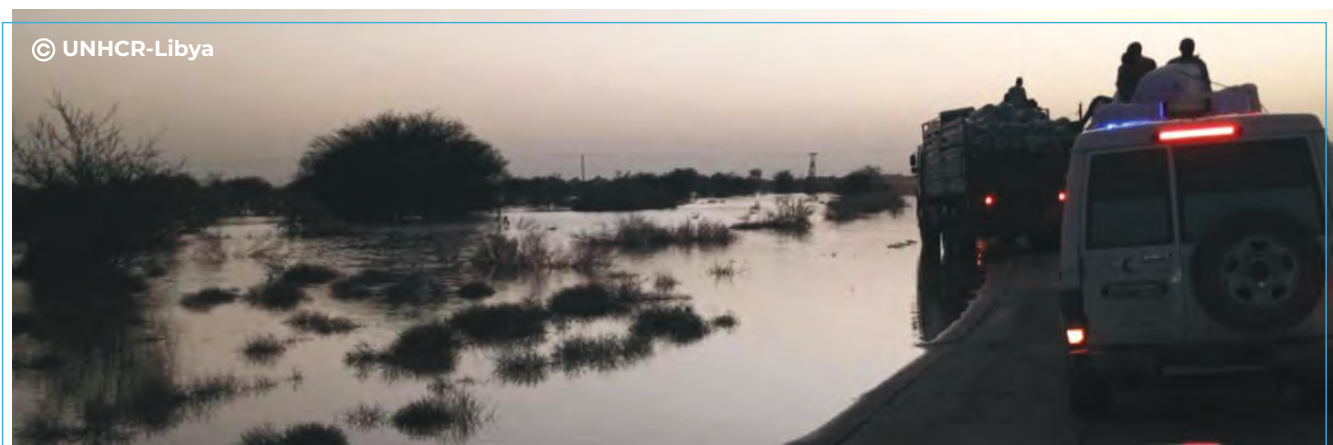


## Ghat



Situated near the Algerian border, Ghat's unique blend of towns and villages shapes its distinct cultural and economic identity. Historically, the region has held strategic importance due to its proximity to the Sahel and its socio-economic dynamics. Over the years, limited economic opportunities in Ghat have influenced individuals, including members of the Tuareg community,

to seek employment in security and military institutions. These patterns reflect broader socio-economic challenges in the region, highlighting the need for inclusive development and opportunity-driven solutions to enhance stability and livelihoods.





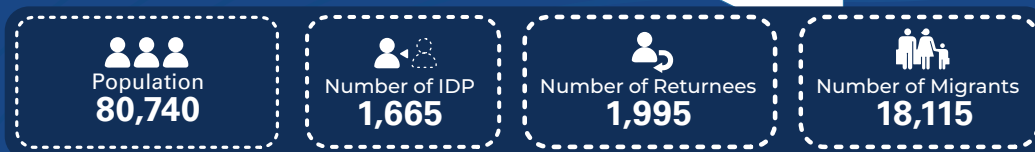
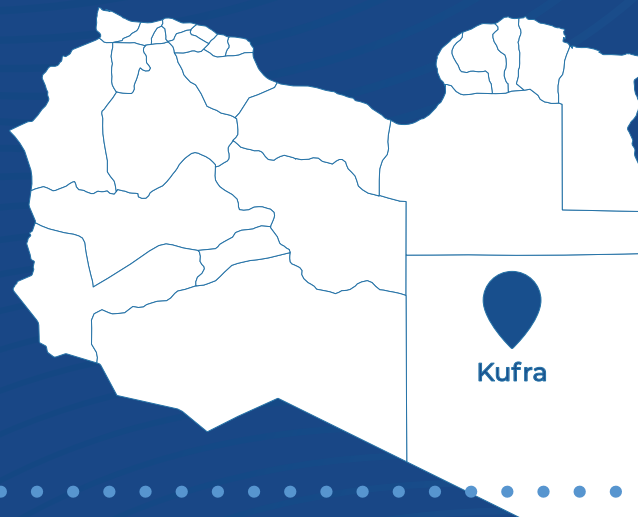
Predominantly inhabited by the Tuaregs with an Arab minority, remains shaped by the legacy of Qaddafi's rule, which continues to influence its social and political fabric. Its rich cultural heritage, including a major Tuareg festival, positions Ghat as a significant cultural hub for the Tuareg community.

Ghat relies on state employment and pensions, with supplementary income from cross-border smuggling and trafficking, reflecting challenges tied to its remote location. Declining trade has intensified economic hardship, driving up living costs and deepening poverty, limiting access to essential services and exacerbating inequalities (SDG 10).

Basic service delivery faces critical challenges, including inefficient waste management, inconsistent electricity supply, and inadequate healthcare services due to a shortage of skilled health professionals. Governance deficiencies and weak collaboration between the municipal council hinder efforts to improve conditions. International initiatives have highlighted the urgent need for infrastructure upgrades, particularly in health, electricity, and waste management, to improve living conditions (SDGs 6, 3, and 7). These improvements are vital for fostering sustainable development and enhancing resilience in Ghat.



## Kufra



Al Kufra, located in southeastern Libya, is a city of historical significance and regional connectivity. Kufra area/administrative borders extends over a vast area, from the Chadian and Sudanese borders in the south to the agricultural bed project near Jalu, and from the Egyptian

border in the east to the west beyond Bazima. It is strategically positioned near the borders of Chad, Sudan, and Egypt, making it a crucial hub for both official and parallel trade and supply routes.



Kufra, a city with a diverse population shaped by displacement and migration, including refugees from Sudan since April 2023, reflects the complexities of Libya's conflict-affected regions. The population primarily comprises the Zuwayya Arab tribe and the Tebu community, with a mix of other Arab tribes. Urban-tribal divisions have fueled intercommunal tensions, with the city split into zones controlled by Zway in the north/center and Tebu in the south/southeast.

Efforts to improve peace and governance (SDG 16) have included reconciliation initiatives, such as UNSMIL's 2018 agreement, which reopened roads and services for both tribes. However, social cohesion remains fragile, with unresolved grievances—particularly among the Zway community, which demands justice for past crimes—hindering progress. Despite partial returns of displaced persons, tensions persist, as some Tebu families remain displaced in Fezzan.

Kufra's economy is hampered by high unemployment, especially among youth and women, reflecting the broader impact of insecurity on livelihoods (SDGs 8 and 5). Although agriculture is a key economic activity, supported by nearby oil fields, infrastructural damage and limited healthcare and educational facilities undermine its potential. Urban rehabilitation and targeted development interventions are essential for revitalizing the local economy and addressing inequalities (SDG 10).

Basic services remain insufficient, with healthcare and education requiring urgent investment to meet community needs (SDGs 3 and 4). Infrastructure development focused on reconciliation and inclusion could enhance access to essential services, improve livelihoods, and foster long-term stability. Such efforts are crucial for transforming Kufra into a more cohesive and resilient community aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.



# Comprehensive thematic reviews aligned with UNSDCF pillar areas



## Peace and Governance

### Elections and Local Governance

The political and social landscape of southern Libya is characterized by complexity and variation, deeply shaped by historical marginalization. The South is perceived as having a substantial support for the former regime as illustrated by the choice of Sebha as the location to announce Seif Qaddafi's presidential bid in 2021. Moreover, the head of the Seif Qaddafi reconciliation team participating in the current Presidential Council national reconciliation initiative is from Sebha. Across this region, municipalities face distinct yet interconnected challenges that underscore the intricacies of governance and representation amidst limited resources and ongoing conflicts.

In terms of local elections in the south, the most recent attempt in 2019 was a constrained endeavour with only a few southern municipalities participating, for instance in Sebha. This limited participation underscores a broader trend of low voter turnout across most southern municipalities, highlighting significant logistical and

security hurdles that impede the electoral process, for instance, in certain cities like Murzuq, conducting elections proves difficult due to the significant presence of IDPs. Similarly, in Ubari, the process faces challenges owing to a sizable population lacking identification numbers, complicating voter registration and participation.

In the south of Libya, local governance structures are frequently challenged by an array of obstacles, each municipality grappling with its distinct set of difficulties. Financial constraints are a significant hindrance, as seen in areas like Kufra, where from 2018 until 2021, the absence of budgetary support from the Government of National Accord and, the Ministry of Local Governance has resulted in a decline in the quality of local services. This financial shortfall has questioned the effectiveness and legitimacy of governance, putting a strain on governmental functionality.





## Constitution

In Libya, particularly in the South, constitutional issues extend beyond general concerns to encompass the rights of indigenous groups and ethnic minorities. This focal point became a primary source of contention during the constitutional drafting process, prompting minority groups to abstain from participation. Notably, both the Tebu and Tuareg initially boycotted the assembly elections of 2014

reflecting broader sentiments of dissatisfaction and marginalization. While the South generally exhibits less enthusiasm for federalism compared to the East, widespread support exists for decentralization as an alternative approach.

## Civic Space and Women's Empowerment

In the southern regions of Libya, there is a complex landscape regarding equitable access to civic space for people, particularly women and youth, with an increasingly limited political space and their participation in political and democratic processes across different regions, namely Kufra, Murzuq, Sebha, and Ghat. Information regarding access to civic space and participation in public affairs for the general southern population is lacking. Following the legal opinion issued on 8 March 2023 by the Supreme Judicial Council, the crackdown on civic space in Libya has intensified. In February 2023, the Criminal Investigation Department raided the office and detained the staff of international CSOs in Sebha.

Based on data from 2021, while there were evident efforts and acknowledgments of the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in various communities, significant challenges and disparities persisted. One major challenge in the South remains the legal obstacles for Libyan women married to non-Libyan nationals to grant their children Libyan nationality. In Kufra, despite a generally supportive attitude towards gender equality, pockets of resistance continued, particularly in neighbourhoods of Altulab and Kufra Aljadid, where traditional gender norms hindered women's active participation. This is further compounded by a reported belief among respondents, especially male, that women earning more than men could lead to domestic issues.

Similarly, in Murzuq, although there was a notable representation of women in executive roles and positions of power, overall participation in political processes remained low, with significant disparities between men and women.

This was exacerbated by a reported widespread belief among the community that individual actions have little impact on society, contributing to disengagement from public affairs and social activism. In Sebha, while there was a reported relatively higher level of gender equality attitude, with many women serving as breadwinners and business owners, significant barriers to women's representation in positions of power and decision-making roles within local governance structures persisted.

In Ghat, although there were reported positive attitudes towards gender equality and active participation of women in various spheres, disparities across neighbourhoods persist, with certain areas showing greater support for gender equality than others. However, a general trend of disengagement from public affairs and low levels of social activism, particularly among youth, was reported.



## National Planning

Despite the agreed common development and peacebuilding priorities of the Libyan government and the UN in Libya outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2025 including to enhance government capacity for evidence-based planning and coordination in the south, particularly through the development and implementation of an inclusive National Development Plan (NDP) and associated policies, a significant gap exists in understanding and analysing this theme in Libya's southern region.

The development of local peacebuilding and development plans, led by UNDP across nine southern municipalities in Libya—Kufra, Brak Al Shati, Murzuq, Sebha, Ubari, Ghat, Gurda, Sharghuiya, and Bint Baya—aim to significantly enhance national planning capabilities by fostering a collaborative approach between local authorities and communities. This initiative seeks to build a common understanding of peace challenges and solutions, involving all relevant stakeholders, including women and youth. By facilitating dialogue, capacity building, and joint planning, the initiative strengthens the government's ability to address local needs effectively, improves citizen-state relationships, and incorporates climate-resilient and conflict-sensitive practices into planning processes.

It is also anticipated that these plans will be utilized to enhance resource mobilization potential among development partners, the national government, and the private sector.

Libya's national strategy for development of statistics - NSDS (2018-2023) aims at modernizing the National Statistical System and enhancing its credibility and effectiveness. However, the NSDS remains largely underfunded despite its endorsement by the Ministry of Planning. One key output of the NSDS is to conduct a national population and housing census (scheduled to take place in 2025). Most of the development programs implemented in the south of Libya focused on capacity building for local authorities on evidence-based planning.

Unfortunately, no substantial data or insights have been found regarding the extent to which the government's capacity for evidence-based planning and coordination has been enhanced in the southern region.

## Justice & Rule of Law

Data gathered and analysed from Kufra, Murzuq, and Ghat provide some insights into the perceptions of security, justice, and corruption in these municipalities. It is important to acknowledge that the limited data mainly from 2021 provides only partial and potentially outdated insight into the current situation in southern cities.

In 2021 in Kufra, there was a reported generally positive perception of security providers' efficiency, with many residents expressing confidence in their ability to control crime and protect the community. However, concerns had been raised about a surge in crime, which local informants attribute to increased migrant flows.

Based on reports from 2021, in Murzuq, while the quality of justice was reported as generally perceived as good, there were notable variations across neighbourhoods. Some areas reported higher rates of crime and violence, indicating disparities in access to justice and law enforcement services. Additionally, there was a reported prevalent perception of corruption, with respondents expressing scepticism about municipal authorities' efforts to address it.

Similarly, in Ghat, there were perceptions of security providers, with varying levels of trust in different institutions such as the police and the military.



Reported concerns included corruption, with respondents noting its impact on various sectors, including utilities, education, and the private sector.

The data also sheds light on which institutions were perceived as most corrupt within these regions. In Murzuq in 2021, the military and media were ranked highest in

terms of perceived corruption, while religious bodies were seen as the least corrupt. In Kufra, inhabitants viewed the registry and permit agency as the most corrupt institution, followed by the utilities department, with corruption also affecting the private sector and media to a significant extent.



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## Safety and security ::

The analysis, based on data from late 2021, while not reflecting the most current situation, offers some understanding of the basic capacities of rule of law institutions and civil society organizations to monitor and report in the municipalities of Kufra, Murzuq, Sebha, and Ghat.

Starting with Kufra, local security appeared to have improved across the municipality, with many residents expressing confidence in the efficiency of security providers. While the overall perception of security was positive, pockets of insecurity were noted, particularly at night. There were also some reported instances of kidnapping and sexual assault. Despite reported improvements, a notable proportion of individuals, especially women, described feeling unsafe.

In Murzuq, interviewed individuals reported a belief that security providers were controlling crime well, but concerns remained about their ability to protect the community from armed groups. While the overall quality of security was perceived as good, disparities were reported across neighbourhoods, with some areas experiencing higher rates of crime and violence. Kidnapping was a significant security challenge in Murzuq, with many inhabitants reporting incidents and expressing safety concerns. Residents expressed scepticism about the responsiveness and impartiality of state authorities, leading them to seek alternative avenues, such as family and community leaders, for resolving disputes and injustices. This reliance on informal mechanisms highlighted a lack of trust in formal justice systems and underscored the need for reforms to strengthen the rule of law.

Sebha presented a mixed scenario, with varying levels of trust in security providers reported across neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood defence groups played a significant role in ensuring security, especially in areas where the police and army were perceived as absent or ineffective. There were widespread concerns about rising crime rates, including robberies, kidnappings, and extortion. Despite these challenges, inhabitants showed a willingness to help their neighbours, indicating a sense of community solidarity. The data revealed a significant preference for informal resolution mechanisms, such as family and tribal leaders, indicating a lack of trust in formal justice systems. Concerns about the slow and impartial response of authorities further eroded public confidence in the rule of law.

In contrast, data from Ghat in 2021 presented a more positive outlook, with residents expressing higher levels of confidence in security providers, particularly the police and military. Local security institutions were perceived as effective in maintaining stability and resolving conflicts, with police chiefs reportedly intervening actively to ease tensions between local authorities. The presence of neighbourhood defence groups further reflected a sense of community cooperation in maintaining law and order.

Peacebuilding and stabilization efforts in Libya, including in Kufra, Murzuq, Sebha, and Ghat, encounter complex challenges due to the widespread availability of firearms. Based on 2021 data, almost 40% of Kufra residents perceived firearm possession as necessary, notably in areas like Bizima Aljadida and Jwaf Gharbi. This data underscores entrenched beliefs in the use of firearms for personal safety, reflecting a broader societal reliance on violence for protection and community safety, and the need for tailored security sector reform.



## Sustainable Economic Development

A significant shortage of recent data and information necessary is unavailable for understanding economic sustainability and development in Libya's southern region. The available data, from 2020 and 2021, offers only a partial view of the economic context, focusing on a few municipalities in the Fezzan region (Ghat, Sebha, Murzuq and Ubari). This lack of comprehensive data impedes the ability to conduct a thorough analysis of economic opportunities and challenges affecting the livelihoods of communities in southern Libya. However, the analysis provided can offer some insight on the region's' economic landscape.

Kufra, Murzuq, Sebha, and Ghat continued to face complex socio-economic challenges that hinder inclusive and sustainable development. For instance, when considering development initiatives in areas like Murzuq, it is imperative to address not only the rebuilding of the city but restoration of surrounding agricultural regions. The destruction of both the urban centre and the agricultural lands has resulted in significant economic losses, impacting the revenue streams of the local community. This devastation has been reported as a crucial factor contributing to the reluctance of the Ahaali community to return to the region.

Examining the employment landscape revealed a significant gender disparity, with men being twice as likely as women to have full-time or part-time jobs. Women primarily occupied mid-level professions such as teaching, while men dominated sectors like commerce, agriculture, and livestock production. This disparity reflected both cultural norms and structural barriers, such as discriminatory hiring practices and lack of supportive workplace policies, which perpetuated gender inequality and limited economic opportunities for women.

Based on 2021 data, high unemployment rates further exacerbated economic hardships, particularly in Ghat, where limited job opportunities existed in both the public

and private sectors. The closure of trade routes and borders since the 2011 revolution has worsened the situation, prompting many young people to migrate to other regions in search of employment. Efforts to revive economic activities, such as establishing free trade zones, have shown limited success, leaving many residents unemployed or underemployed.

Traditional economic activities, including commerce, agriculture, and livestock production, remained vital sources of income in the region. However, these sectors faced numerous challenges, including water scarcity, electricity shortages, and transportation difficulties. The decline in state support for agricultural projects post-revolution has hampered productivity, leading to increased reliance on imported goods and exacerbating poverty levels. Cottage industries in Ghat, such as brass ware and weaving, contributed to the local economy but faced limitations due to the decline in tourism and trade routes.

Political instability and security concerns further impeded economic development, with conflicts between ethnic minorities and the presence of smuggling activities deterring potential investors.



While reconciliation efforts have shown some success in easing tensions, sustainable peace and stability are essential for attracting investments and fostering inclusive growth. Additionally, the lack of basic infrastructure, including reliable electricity, clean water, and healthcare facilities, undermined residents' well-being, and economic productivity.

Gender disparities persisted in access to education and employment opportunities, with women facing cultural and structural barriers to participation in the labour market with women 40% less likely to have participated in

the labour market than men. Efforts to empower women economically, such as promoting their involvement in agriculture and providing access to skill-building programs, remained critical for reducing poverty and fostering inclusive growth. Migrant labour played a significant role in sectors like agriculture and construction, but migrants faced challenges accessing formal employment and vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.



## Social and Human Capital Development

### Health & Nutrition

The healthcare systems in Kufra, Murzuq, Sebha, Ubari and Ghat are confronted with multifaceted challenges that hinder their ability to provide equitable, accessible, and quality services to the population.

As highlighted by health care providers in multiple meetings with UN interlocutors since 2021, a primary issue across these areas is the acute shortage of medical personnel and essential supplies, which significantly compromises healthcare delivery. For instance, in Murzuq, the total number of health services' workers decreased from 690 to 315 by late 2021 due to forced displacement,

resulting in a 54% reduction in available healthcare providers.

Similarly, Sebha faces shortages in medical staff, with over 65% of respondents seeking healthcare in private facilities due to reported inadequacies in public hospitals and medical facilities. Moreover, data from 2021 reveal that only a few permanent doctors served the entire community in Ghat, leading to insufficient healthcare coverage and exacerbating the strain on the system.





Sebha Medical Centre (SMC) remained the major referral hospital in the south and serves the whole population in the Fezzan area (with people in Ghat having to travel for eight hours to reach the SMC).

In addition to staffing shortages, inadequate infrastructure and resource constraints continued to pose significant barriers to accessing healthcare services. Murzuq's General Hospital, for instance, faced a critical shortage of medical equipment, impacting the ability to provide essential treatments. The situation remains dire, with specific medications for treating kidney failure, chronic diseases like stress and diabetes, and thoracic and skin diseases often unavailable. Similarly, the General Ghat Hospital's maintenance issues since 2007 highlighted systemic challenges in infrastructure upkeep, affecting the quality of care provided.

Discrimination and access barriers were reported to further compound healthcare disparities within these municipalities in 2021.

In Kufra, over half of respondents, particularly women, reported being unable to access needed healthcare due to a combination of factors such as inadequate medical equipment, unskilled staff, and financial constraints. Moreover, discrimination based on economic status and tribal affiliations added another layer of complexity, hindering access for vulnerable groups. Similarly, in Sebha, certain neighbourhoods reported experiencing lower levels of healthcare access, with access to basic treatments and medications for chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension being particularly challenging for residents.

Despite these challenges, pockets of relative strength were reported within the healthcare systems of these municipalities. For instance, in Sebha, the presence of a cancer treatment facility signified efforts to address specific healthcare needs, although shortages in chemotherapy drugs and qualified medical staff persisted.

## Education

Despite efforts to enhance the education system's capacity for inclusive and quality learning in municipalities like Kufra, Murzuq, Sebha, and Ghat, multifaceted challenges persisted. Disparities in educational quality were evident,

with certain neighbourhoods experiencing poorer standards than others. In Kufra, for instance, areas like Altulab and Jawf witnessed significant challenges,



with 26% of children (including those with disability) not attending regular public school. Similarly, Sebha's Alnasiriyah and Alqahira neighbourhoods faced issues, with one-third of respondents reporting irregular attendance in public schools. Murzuq demonstrated variability in educational quality, with 68% overall satisfaction in 2021 but ongoing concerns regarding teacher qualifications, absenteeism, infrastructure maintenance (including destroyed schools and schools used for other purposes), and limited extracurricular activities. Ghat exhibited severe challenges, with reports of poor infrastructure, teacher salary delays, and high dropout rates. Notably, 80% of respondents reported that schools lack basic equipment, exacerbating issues like overcrowded classrooms.

Access and enrolment issues were reported as prevalent across all municipalities, with security concerns, such as kidnappings around schools in Kufra and conflicts among students in Sebha, contributing to low enrolment rates. Teacher shortages and inadequate qualifications were cited as primary concerns in all areas, with respondents lamenting overcrowded classrooms and insufficient teacher presence. In Murzuq, despite efforts by organizations like the British Council to enhance teacher skills, attendance at workshops remained low, indicating ongoing challenges in teacher quality improvement. Ghat faced severe teacher shortages, with reports of teachers not receiving salaries for years, exacerbating absenteeism issues and compromising educational quality.

Infrastructure deficiencies further strained the education system especially for children with disabilities, with schools lacking basic amenities like restrooms and running water. Safety concerns exacerbated these challenges, highlighting the urgent need for infrastructure improvements to ensure a safe learning environment. Despite some available extracurricular activities like sports and religious education, there was limited diversity and availability reported, particularly in arts, music, and professional training, across all municipalities.

In Kufra, the quality of education varied significantly, with areas like Altulab, Jawf Gharbi, Jawf Sharqi, and Alhiwiri experiencing poorer standards. High dropout rates and a preference for alternative education options among parents contributed to these challenges. For instance, 26% of children not attending regular public school in Kufra were reported as homeschooled, while 34% attended Qur'anic schools. Similarly, in Sebha, neighborhoods like Alnasiriyah, Alqahira, Algorda, City Centre, and Soukharah faced significant challenges in the public education system. A third of respondents reported irregular attendance among their children, with 56% receiving no regular education. Bullying and conflicts among students further exacerbated the situation, with instances leading to school closures and even fatalities.

Murzuq was reported as demonstrating fair but varied educational quality across neighborhoods, with concerns about teacher qualifications, absenteeism, and infrastructure maintenance. Despite a reported moderate level of satisfaction with the public education system (68%), extracurricular opportunities remained limited, with Qur'anic schools and sports being the most common activities.

In Ghat, the public education system faced severe challenges, particularly in neighborhoods like Felalan and Tahala. Schools suffered from poor infrastructure, inadequate equipment, and a shortage of qualified teachers. Additionally, delayed teacher salaries contributed to absenteeism, exacerbating the already weak educational environment. Despite these challenges, public school fees reportedly remained affordable for most, and extracurricular activities such as sports and religious studies were accessible, albeit limited.

A third of migrants in the South who have school-age children mentioned being able to access education (34%), similar to the situation in the west (36%) but fewer than in the east (73%).



Migrants in the South identified the language barrier (93%), lack of documents (85%), problems of integration with the host community (81%) and financial barriers

(78%) as the main reasons explaining the lack of access to education for their children.

## Protection

Gender-based violence (GBV) while widely prevalent, is a taboo topic in Libyan society. As such, there is a lack of accurate data and information on GBV in Libya. The most common forms of GBV in Libya are assault, conflict related GBV, sexual violence, early and forced marriage, harassment, and human trafficking. Rape and gender-based violence have been reported as widely used as a weapon in the context of the past Libyan conflicts by combatants on both sides.

As per the GBV AoR service mapping for the Southern area, services addressing violence against women are available only in Sebha with critical gaps in the provision of clinical management of sexual violence and case management services in all areas in the South. Partners expressed capacity to expand services to Kufrah, Ubari and Murzuq if financial resources are made available.

Survivors of SGBV have limited access to life-saving services due to limited freedom of movement, lack of knowledge about existing services, lack of decision-making power, and cultural barriers to disclosure and lack of information especially on displaced women and girls in host communities.

## Social Protection

Libya is a signatory to several international and regional treaties that are relevant to social protection, notably the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. These treaties have been incorporated into the Libyan Constitutional Declaration, which recognizes the right to social protection for all Libyan citizens. In Libya the social protection system is legally framed to guarantee equal access to appropriate standard of living. According to the Libyan Social Security Law No. 13 (1980) Libyan citizens enjoy different ways of access to services that are mainly centred around social insurance – which includes pensions, invalidity insurance, survivors' insurance, family allowance, lump-sum benefits for

employees/self-employed. Additionally, social assistance offers basic pensions for those with no breadwinner or limited income and Zakat distribution for poor and vulnerable people. Another pillar is social care services through which care services are provided for all people with no guardian/carer and unable to care for themselves. Also, care services are guaranteed for victims of work injuries and accidents

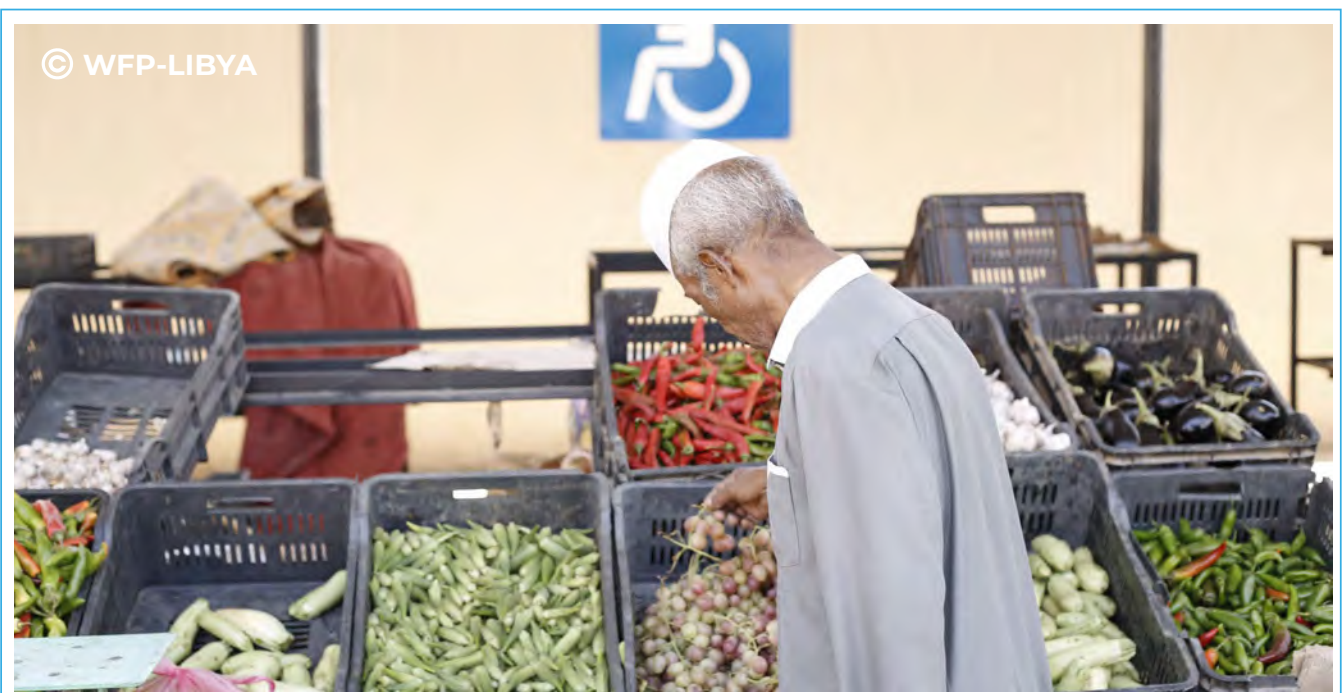
The main national actors involved in social protection in Libya are the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Solidarity Fund, Social Solidarity Fund, Ministry of Finance, General Authority for Information, and the National Centre for Supporting Decision-Making. These official entities are overseeing the shaping of social protection policies and implementing programs to support vulnerable populations.

A mapping conducted by International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth on identifying the existing social protection programs in Libya offers a comprehensive overview of the social protection programs implemented in the southern region of Libya, including subsidies provided by different entities. These programs cater to various needs and populations, with a focus on supporting vulnerable groups and offer financial assistance, food subsidies, and other forms of support to eligible individuals and households. Among these programs only 12 are active while others are either inactive, partially active, or have unknown status.

The second component is social insurance benefits – there are eight covered insurance benefits that align with branches indicated in the ILO Convention No. 1024546. These benefits provide financial protection to workers in different sectors, providing social security and income stability. The social insurance system’s stated aims are to safeguard individuals and families against risks such as illness, disability, and unemployment.

The third component is social care services – various shelters in Libya provide social care services to vulnerable groups, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, unaccompanied children, and victims of domestic abuse. These services aim to offer protection, support, and care to individuals facing social challenges and vulnerabilities. The social care programs may include shelter facilities, counselling services, and assistance with basic needs and healthcare.

The social protection programs in Libya including in Libya’s south face several limitations and challenges that impact their effectiveness and reach. The main challenges are lack of clarity in governance – which translates into lack of clarity in the overall governance of the social protection sector, particularly in terms of social assistance and social care services. Overlaps exist in mandates among different entities, such as the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Social Solidarity Fund, contributing to governance challenges. Additionally, the absence of a common strategy or policy framework organizing the sector hinders coordination and efficiency.



Although there are national laws governing the social protection programs to avoid overlapping of assistance programs, the limitation in coordination affects the implementation of different social protection programs as different entities may duplicate efforts by implementing similar programs, leading to inefficiencies and potential gaps in coverage. Lack of coordination even within departments and offices of the same government entity also poses challenges to effective program delivery.

There is insufficient strategic planning and annual reporting for most government entities in the social protection sector. The absence of robust planning mechanisms hampers the ability to set clear objectives, monitor progress, and evaluate program outcomes effectively. Funding constraints and weak monitoring and evaluation were identified as challenges. Limited funding poses a significant challenge to the implementation of social protection programs. Many programs face budgetary constraints, leading to the suspension or reduction of cash assistance programs. Inadequate financial resources restrict the expansion and sustainability of social protection initiatives.

There is a weak implementation of monitoring and evaluation processes for social protection programs, which hamper the assessment of program effectiveness and alignment with the current needs of the population. The lack of comprehensive evaluation mechanisms may result in the continuation of programs that may not be meeting their intended objectives.

Another challenge is the presence of data gaps and limited information. Due to instability in the country, there is limited consolidated data on the number of beneficiaries in different regions of Libya, including the southern region. Data gaps hinder evidence-based decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation of social protection programs. Additionally, the lack of digitized systems and interoperability among existing data systems further exacerbate data challenges.

Marginalized ethnic groups and cultural components in the southern region often lack documentation, particularly people without an assigned national number, which allows individuals to access to many services, mainly healthcare and education, covered by the social security system. For instance, 100% of IDPs in Aljufra reported that their access to education has been disrupted due to lack of required legal documentation.

Discrimination based on economic status and tribal affiliations occurs sporadically in healthcare facilities. Marginalized ethnic groups, such as the Ekawaren and Tamachak Tuareg, face discrimination and difficulties in accessing healthcare due to their perceived status as foreigners. The lack of a national number also further complicates access to public services such as medical care, particularly for Libyan individuals with Undetermined Legal Status originating from Chad and Niger.





# Climate Change, Environment, and Water

## Water, Sanitation & Hygiene

In southern Libya, access to safe water and adequate sanitation remains a significant challenge, threatening public health, livelihoods, and ecosystems. In 40% ,2021 of households in Murzuq relied on contaminated wells due to deteriorating infrastructure, contributing to widespread waterborne diseases and groundwater contamination. Similarly, in Ghat, groundwater serves as the primary water source, yet over 30% of the population faced water scarcity during the dry season, worsened by inadequate distribution networks.

Despite areas like Kufra Aljadida boasting excellent water quality, disparities persist, with neighborhoods such as Ghawat and Jisau struggling with unreliable water services. Frequent power outages further disrupt water provision as electric pumps fail, hampering domestic and agricultural water supply.

Sanitation infrastructure across the region is outdated and insufficient. For instance, only 25% of households in Sebha are connected to a sewage network, leaving most reliant on septic tanks or open defecation. This contributes to environmental pollution, contaminating water sources and soil while posing severe public health risks.

Solid waste management is another pressing issue. In Murzuq, only 20% of solid waste is regularly collected, with the remainder burned or dumped in open spaces, exacerbating air and soil pollution.

Improved waste management systems are critical for reducing health risks and safeguarding the environment.





## Environmental Protection, Climate Change Adaptation & Disaster Risk Reduction

Southern Libya's agricultural sector, vital for livelihoods, is heavily impacted by environmental degradation and climate change. Unreliable electricity infrastructure limits the functionality of irrigation systems, further straining agricultural productivity. Poor land and water management practices, exacerbated by Libya's weak legal framework on environmental protection, accelerate resource degradation and reduce community resilience.

Climate change poses severe risks to the region, including rising temperatures, decreased rainfall, and frequent droughts, all of which directly threaten agricultural outputs and water availability. These stressors demand robust climate adaptation strategies to ensure sustainable livelihoods and food security. However, Libya's yet to be submitted Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the UNFCCC reflects the absence of a national strategy to address climate challenges. This lack of direction leaves southern communities vulnerable to climate-induced risks and undermines opportunities for mitigation efforts, such as reducing carbon emissions and conserving biodiversity.

The southern region holds significant potential for renewable energy, particularly solar power, given its high solar irradiance levels. Investment in renewable energy infrastructure could address the chronic electricity shortages that hinder agricultural and domestic water use while contributing to climate mitigation. However, the absence of a renewable energy strategy further exacerbates the challenges Libya faces in transitioning to sustainable energy systems.

In addition to climate adaptation, a focus on disaster risk management is critical. Increased droughts and extreme weather events threaten both human and ecological systems, highlighting the need for improved early warning systems, community preparedness, and resource

conservation. Integrating sustainable use of water bodies for aquaculture or eco-tourism, could enhance economic opportunities while preserving ecosystems and biodiversity.

The value of ecosystems, including their role in supporting agriculture, reducing flood risks, and providing resources for livelihoods, must also be emphasized. Effective governance, strengthened legal frameworks, and international collaboration are essential in protecting these ecosystems and ensuring sustainable development in the region.

Addressing these interconnected issues requires a multifaceted approach. Modernizing water and sanitation systems, including upgrading distribution networks and expanding sewage infrastructure, is crucial to improving living conditions and safeguarding public health. Similarly, investments in renewable energy, particularly solar power, can alleviate chronic electricity shortages and power essential agricultural and domestic systems. Comprehensive climate adaptation strategies must be implemented to strengthen agriculture and water management, while disaster risk reduction measures, such as early warning systems and enhanced community preparedness, can mitigate the impacts of extreme weather events. Furthermore, safeguarding ecosystems through conservation initiatives and sustainable practices will enhance the region's resilience to environmental and economic challenges. By integrating these solutions into national and regional planning, southern Libya can build a more sustainable and prosperous future for its communities.







## Durable Solutions for IDPs

Limited data is available on durable solutions for IDPs and returnees in Libya, particularly in the south, which has suffered from a decade of armed conflict and instability, leading to widespread involuntary displacement. The

analysis below focuses on Murzuq, as the available data offers insights into the situation of internal displacement and durable solutions in this southern region.

### Social Cohesion: An Overview of Murzuq’s Social Fabric

The intricate dynamics surrounding the Aahli and Tebu communities in Murzuq (Such as Awlad Sulaiman in Sebha) present a narrative of displacement, ethnic tensions, and the looming threat of armed conflict. Following their forced exodus, the Aahli sought support from anti-Tebu tribes, authorities in the west, and recently from authorities in the east, but the assistance they received has generally been limited. However, Aahli civil organizations and the GNU, through the IDP Fund, have persisted in providing support to displaced families.

Roadmap. Supported by prominent organizations such as the American Bar Association (ABA), USAID, and the UN, this roadmap signifies a significant step forward in resolving conflicts in the region. Specifically, discussions facilitated by the USAID-sponsored agreement in March 2022, primarily involving the Tebu community from Murzuq, resulted in a breakthrough agreement. This agreement outlined conditions for the return of willing IDPs, including measures such as identifying missing persons, providing essential services, and expelling mercenaries, laying a foundation for sustainable peace and reconciliation efforts in the area.

As of 2021, internal tensions in Murzuq intensified, with growing apprehension regarding the influential position of the Tebu community in the region and potential impacts on positions of major national factions. Murzuq has transformed into an entirely Tebu-controlled town since the Aahli’s expulsion in 2018, with internal divisions among the Tebu populace between the local Tebu and those from Chad.

Despite the possibility and efforts toward reconciliation between local Tebu and Aahli communities, entrenched grievances, and the reluctance of certain Tebu leaders hinder the likelihood of such efforts. This highlights the urgent need for a coordinated approach to resolve deep-seated grievances and foster peaceful coexistence among all community members.

The current context in Murzuq is shaped by events in 2021. In June 2021, a delegation representing the Aahli engaged in discussions with Libyan and international officials in Tunis regarding their potential return to Murzuq. Their expressed apprehensions centred on fears of attacks upon return, particularly from what they perceived as "non-Libyan" Tebu exerting control over the town, especially following the announcement of a military offensive targeting "terrorists" and "African mercenaries."



The overall situation has seen changes since 2021, with the establishment of the Murzuq Steering Committee (SC) following the adoption of the March 2022 Reconciliation

## Safe Paths : Empowering IDPs and Returnees with Choice and Rights :::::

The current focus of local, national, and international efforts is on the safety of movement, voluntary return, and re-integration of IDPs and returnees in Murzuq. On safety and security aspects, in 2022 most households (99%) reported not being affected by hazards in the previous 12 months or since the time of displacement.

Safety and security risks such as armed clashes, presence of armed actors, robberies, theft, and kidnappings were reported as significantly higher in Murzuq compared to the national level. Returnee households expressed concerns about safety and security, with specific safety and security concerns including arrest and detention for men and sexual harassment and violence for women.

Internally displaced households in Murzuq, whether displaced within the city or from outside, expressed their top three movement intentions as follows: 62% preferred to stay in their current location of residence, 10% planned to return voluntarily to their place of origin, and 9% aimed to settle elsewhere within Libya.

For households originating from Murzuq but currently living elsewhere, the majority reported a preference to stay in their current location rather than return to Murzuq. Reasons for choosing to stay in the current settlement included being well integrated in the current location, safety/security concerns due to risk of persecution, insecurity, and destroyed houses in Murzuq.

More recent data on Murzuq highlighted the safety of movement, voluntary return, and reintegration of returnees as critical concerns. Returnees reported facing significant risks due to the presence of informal armed groups, inadequate public infrastructure, and insufficient lighting in Murzuq, which severely restricts their movement, especially at night. Women, in particular, fear harassment and violence, while men are concerned about security incidents such as kidnappings and robberies.

The reintegration process was reported as fraught with challenges, including damaged buildings, limited job opportunities, and ongoing threats from armed groups. Many returnees continued to face family separation due to the persistent security threats. While efforts toward reconciliation and social cohesion have been made, these initiatives often lacked adequate support to be fully effective and sustainable.

Voluntary return is hampered by fears of reprisals and the threat of armed groups seeking revenge. This insecurity discourages many families from returning to their homes, perpetuating their displacement. Additionally, logistical, and administrative obstacles, such as the partial functionality of key offices needed for document recovery, further complicate the return process.



## Equal Access for Displaced Populations: Housing, Services, and Protection

Returnees reported facing significant challenges in accessing basic services, particularly in healthcare and education. Healthcare facilities suffer from a severe shortage of doctors, equipment, and administrative staff.

Specific areas with notable deficiencies include orthopaedics, urology, cardiology, and ENT services. Public healthcare also lacks essential equipment in departments such as laboratories, MRI, operations, and physiotherapy. This shortage extends to medicines and transportation, further exacerbating the situation of access to basic services. Consequently, many returnees reported poor quality of healthcare and insufficient availability of medicines as major barriers to accessing healthcare.

Regarding education, returnee children were reported to encounter multiple obstacles. The transfer of personal documents from old to new schools imposed both psychological and financial strains on families. Additionally, the lack of nearby food sources and public transportation means that children often bear high transportation costs and purchase food at their own expense. Although education in Libya is free, additional costs such as textbooks and uniforms are significant burdens. Mechanisms to facilitate the education of returnee children are largely unavailable, adding to the challenges they face.



# Migration Management

## Enhanced Support for Migrants: Access to Social and Protection Services

Migrants and persons in need of international protection, residing in Libya, encounter various challenges, and the southern region of the country is no exception. These challenges vary across different dimensions, from living conditions to governance.

A central issue is poor living conditions faced by migrants, marked by overcrowded and unsafe spaces. Such conditions jeopardize the health and well-being of migrants and strain relations with host communities, exacerbating tensions.

Access to social protection services is essential for migrants to enjoy basic protection. However, migrant communities often lack the necessary criteria to access these services, as providing legal documentation is required by the Libyan system.

Moreover, limited access to essential social services, including healthcare, education, and social welfare, compounds the challenges faced by migrants. Access to education is crucial for well-being of migrants and can play a significant role in improving perceptions of migration and migrants among host communities.

Many migrants reside in informal settlements or makeshift housing arrangements, which lack formal recognition and protection. The precarious nature of these settlements can leave migrants at risk of eviction, exploitation, and further marginalization. Incidents of human trafficking, smuggling, and physical harm pose a significant risk to migrants' well-being. Additionally, safety concerns are heightened in detention centres, where frequent incidents of violence, and human rights abuses have been reported, highlighting the need for improved protection measures. Negative perceptions and stereotypes surrounding migrants further exacerbate their marginalization which can contribute to safety concerns, as migrants may face discrimination, harassment, and xenophobia.

Economic capability is hindered by limited access to formal employment opportunities, necessitating vocational training programs and capacity-building initiatives to empower migrants economically. Migrants in Libya,



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particularly in the southern region, face various challenges as they have limited access to economic opportunities including to agricultural land, barriers in legal entry and employment opportunities. Migrants often lack the financial means to rent agricultural land or acquire necessary resources for cultivation, hindering their ability to sustain livelihoods.

The legal entry into Libya for work purposes involves bureaucratic hurdles and financial obligations, rendering it

inaccessible for many migrants. Undocumented migrants face greater obstacles, resorting to irregular employment and becoming susceptible to exploitation due to the lack of work authorizations.

For instance, many migrants in Sebha stay in the city to work and earn money and have important roles as labourers in agriculture. They often end up stranded in specific camps located in the Hay Abedlkafi neighbourhood under control of trafficking groups.

## Developing a Comprehensive National Migration Strategy

Libyan national authorities report they are engaged in crafting comprehensive migration management policies to tackle the multifaceted challenges of migration. These policies aim to regulate migration flows, bolster border control measures, and refine overall migration process management. Concurrently, internationally supported efforts are underway to enhance the capacity of both local and national policymakers in managing various facets of migration. This encompasses initiatives such as border control, migrant registration, oversight of informal sector

businesses, and bolstering infrastructure and public service support.

Strengthening authorities' capacity is pivotal for ensuring effective migration governance. IOM Libya's Department for Migration Management offers policy guidance, aids in strategy development, and facilitates knowledge management support for national authorities. Collaborative endeavours with national bodies for implementing robust migration policies are underway.

## Strengthening Migration Management: Establishing Data Systems for Evidence-Based Policies

National authorities in Libya have established data and information management systems to collect, analyse, and disseminate data related to migration and persons in need of international protection.

These systems reportedly aim to provide comprehensive and reliable information to inform evidence-based policies and strategies. UN agencies have offered technical support aimed at ensuring compliance with international standards on human rights, data protection, and privacy is prioritized, and the ethical and responsible use of data.

Relevant due diligence processes are to be implemented to safeguard data integrity, confidentiality, and security throughout the data management process. However, challenges in data management are many including limited resources, technical capacity constraints, and coordination gaps among relevant stakeholders.



## Information Gaps



The analysis found critical information gaps across various domains which are crucial for effective and targeted programming and support on governance, economic prosperity, social development, environmental sustainability, and migration management in southern Libya. These gaps represent substantial obstacles in crafting effective policies and interventions to address the region's

challenges comprehensively. By shedding light on the absence of nuanced data and insights, this section underscores the pressing need to bridge these information gaps. Addressing these gaps can enhance the understanding of local dynamics and inform strategic approaches aimed at fostering stability, prosperity, and inclusivity in southern Libya.

## Governance and Peace

The lack of detailed insights into why governance structures remain fragmented in southern Libya suggests a critical gap in understanding local political culture, trust in electoral systems, and the impact of security concerns on civic participation. A need for nuanced data on the perceptions

and experiences of the electorate is critical, as well as an analysis of governance models across different municipalities to identify barriers to effective and unified governance.

## Economic Opportunities

The persistence of high unemployment rates and the prevalence of informal and illicit economic activities point to a significant gap in labour market analysis, including the identification of skills mismatches, barriers to entrepreneurship, and the regulatory environment's impact

on economic formalization. Understanding the dynamics of the informal economy and the needs of unemployed people can guide strategies for economic inclusion and development.

## Social and Human Capital Development

The healthcare system's inadequacies, especially in remote areas, indicate missing data on the geographical distribution of healthcare resources, the capacity of existing healthcare facilities, and specific health needs of disparate communities. Detailed health demographic studies and infrastructure assessments are required to tailor health services effectively.

Variability in education quality and accessibility highlights an information void regarding the distribution of educational resources, teacher-to-student ratios, the condition of educational infrastructure, and the impact of socio-economic disparities on educational attainment. Surveys and studies focused on identifying regional disparities in education can inform targeted improvements.

## Environment and Climate Change

The scarcity of clean water and effective sanitation, combined with the region's susceptibility to climate change, underscores a lack of comprehensive environmental data, including water quality assessments, the availability and sustainability of water resources, and detailed climate risk analyses.

This gap necessitates targeted environmental studies to develop strategies for sustainable resource management and climate adaptation.

## Migration

The intricate difficulties encountered by migrants and asylum-seekers underscore the need for additional assessments to gain insights into their legal status, integration opportunities, and challenges. This information gap highlights the necessity for extensive research into

the effectiveness of existing support mechanisms, and the social dynamics between host communities and migrant populations.

## Durable Solutions

While the situation in Marzuq shows improvement, other southern municipalities lack information on durable solutions. This gap makes it difficult to understand how well

durable solutions are being implemented across the entire south of Libya.



## Recommendations to the UN and Development Partners



These recommendations are intended to assist the UN in Libya and development partners in their development and peacebuilding efforts in Libya's southern region. It is essential that recommendations be implemented with

the active involvement of local authorities, communities, affected people and relevant government entities.

## Development of Comprehensive Data Collection Initiatives

**UN agencies:** Implement a structured approach to gather up-to-date and comprehensive data across all sectors mentioned (governance, economy, social service, environment, IDPs and migration). This involves deploying surveys, utilizing technology for data gathering, and collaborating with local organizations to obtain grassroots-level information.

The structured approach could build on existing government initiatives such as the National Strategy for Development of Statistics and include the different data providers and users in the targeted areas.

**UN agencies:** Launch area based and multi-sectoral data collection and analysis initiatives to provide a current and accurate picture of the challenges and needs across southern Libya. This foundational step is critical for informing all subsequent recommendations and actions. Such an initiative could build on the outputs of the national population and housing census (scheduled for 2025).

## Targeted Recommendations

### Use Tailored Data to Address Governance and Electoral Participation

**UN agencies:** Gather specific information and data to understand the root causes of limited voter turnout and fragmented governance in the southern region.

Use findings to develop strategies that enhance civic engagement and streamline governance processes through

initiating a comprehensive study on electoral participation barriers and governance challenges in the south, followed by community dialogues to discuss findings and propose solutions.

### Guide Economic Development Through Market Analysis

**UN agencies:** Perform detailed economic analyses to inform policies that support economic diversification, private sector development, and job creation specific to the context of the south of Libya by developing a comprehensive economic

development strategy based on market analysis findings, focusing on sectors with high growth potential.

### Promote Equal Economic Opportunities for Women

**Development partners:** Implement targeted initiatives and policies that promote equal employment opportunities for

women, ensuring they have the same access to full-time and part-time jobs as men.

### Inform Basic Services Improvements with Data

**Development partners:** Collect data to identify gaps in services infrastructure, service delivery, and access in the southern region. Tailor interventions to address specific community needs based on evidence.

deterioration, followed by targeted infrastructure development and interventions to strengthen human capital and service enhancement projects in underserved areas.

Implement interventions to maintain access to basic surveys (especially life-saving activities) and prevent their

### Address Environmental and Climate Challenges with Targeted Research

**Development partners:** Prioritize the further development of a comprehensive Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that outlines specific targets and strategies for climate mitigation and adaptation, to ensure sustainable land use and water management practices in the southern region of Libya.

Using community-based networks, assess the climate-related vulnerabilities and the existing local capacities (VCA) and help local authorities develop local disaster risk reduction plans.



## Enhancing Reconciliation and Social Cohesion

**UN agencies:** Implement more interventions tailored to facilitate reconciliation and social cohesion, such as community-led reconciliation processes and dialogue initiatives. These efforts should focus on fostering understanding, building trust, and promoting collaboration among diverse community members to address conflicts and strengthen social bonds.

## Improving Migration Management

**UN agencies:** Assess the effectiveness of existing UN migration policies and protection services for migrants and asylum-seekers in the southern municipalities. This evaluation can support identifying areas for improvement and refinement of policies, facilitating improved integration and assistance for migrant communities.



# Conclusion



This analysis highlights the multidimensional challenges and opportunities facing the southern region of Libya. The findings underscore the interconnectedness of governance, economic development, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability, all of which are critical for the country's transition toward stability and sustainable development. Persistent governance deficits, marked by fragmented governance structures at multiple levels and limited institutional capacity, continue to undermine efforts to rebuild trust, resolve intercommunal conflicts, and strengthen local and national governance structures. Without transparent and accountable planning and management frameworks, development initiatives risk being undermined by unresolved grievances and fragile peace processes.

Economic instability remains a pressing issue, with high unemployment rates, reliance on informal economies, and underutilized resources, particularly in agriculture and renewable energy sectors. The erosion of agricultural productivity due to poor infrastructure, water scarcity, and climate change impacts further exacerbates inequalities and deepens vulnerabilities. Addressing these challenges requires targeted investments in infrastructure, green growth initiatives, and inclusive economic policies to revitalize livelihoods and promote equitable opportunities.

Social inclusion remains a significant barrier to sustainable development in the south, with marginalized groups such as women, youth, and displaced populations disproportionately affected by inadequate access to healthcare, education, and basic services. Bridging these gaps is essential for fostering social cohesion and ensuring no one is left behind. Environmental challenges, including water scarcity, land degradation, and climate change, add another layer of complexity. The absence of a national framework for renewable energy and climate adaptation leaves communities vulnerable to resource depletion and environmental shocks.

To address these interconnected challenges, Libyan authorities and international partners must adopt an integrated approach for the South that aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals. Strengthening governance, revitalizing the economy, improving service delivery, and implementing robust climate and disaster risk management strategies are critical. By focusing on these priorities, the South can create a pathway to stability, resilience, and sustainable growth for the region.







## List of the resources used to produce this report



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