



## UN launches climate change campaign amid growing water concerns in Libya

Tripoli, 19 August 2021 – As concerns about water availability in Libya grow due to climate change and conflict, the UN’s humanitarian office (UNOCHA) today commemorates World Humanitarian Day and launched #TheHumanRace – a global challenge for climate action in solidarity with people in the world’s most disaster-prone countries and those hardest hit by climate change.

Recent heatwaves across Libya, amidst acute power cuts and the rapid spread of COVID-19, as well as continuous damage to the water system and the drying of the Wadi Kaam Dam pose acute threats to people’s lives while time is running out to act.

“We are extremely worried about extreme weather and climate change in Libya at a scale that people and the humanitarian and development communities cannot help manage,” says Justin Brady, UNOCHA Head of Office for Libya.

Repeated attacks on the Man-Made River, which provides 60 per cent of all freshwater used in Libya, threatens the water security of the entire country. Moreover, the Wadi Kaam Dam, once holding about 33 million cubic meters of water, has entirely dried up due to an ever-warming climate, affecting farms and projects directly dependent on it for irrigation.

“Conflict and the current health situation have overshadowed the climate impacts to which Libya is very vulnerable. Disrupted water supplies and drying reservoirs are just a few visible depictions of that. If we do not take action now, we are putting millions of lives at immediate risk of losing access to safe water. This can have a catastrophic effect on people’s health, livelihoods, agriculture, hygiene and the spread of communicable diseases,” Brady says.

Hosted on the leading exercise app Strava, #TheHumanRace will challenge users around the world to run, ride, swim, walk or do any activity of their choice for a cumulative 100 minutes between 16 and 31 August in solidarity with the world’s most vulnerable people. Anyone unable to take part physically can also sign up to support our call to action via the [campaign microsite](#). The campaign calls on the public to remind developed countries at the UN climate summit (COP26) in November to fulfil their 12-year-old pledge to provide \$100 billion per year for developing countries to respond to climate change and support climate adaptation.

- Campaign website: [www.worldhumanitarianiday.org](http://www.worldhumanitarianiday.org)
- Strava Challenge: <https://www.strava.com/challenges/The-Human-Race>

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