General developments: political & security situation

On 21 August, Prime Minister (PM) al-Sarraj and House of Representatives (HoR) Speaker Saleh issued separate statements calling for a ceasefire. As President of the Presidency Council (PC) of the Government of National Accord (GNA), al-Sarraj “instructed all military forces” to cease hostilities. The statement stressed that an “effective” ceasefire required the demilitarization of Sirte and al-Jufra and called for the resumption of oil production and exports, as well as the accumulation of revenues in a dedicated external account of the National Oil Corporation (NOC) at the Central Bank of Libya (CBL), available for use by the Libyan authorities after the conflict is settled. The PM also reiterated his call for presidential and parliamentary elections to be held in March 2021 on the basis of an agreed constitutional framework. Acting SRSG Williams welcomed points of agreement in declarations by Prime Minister al-Sarraj and HoR Speaker Aquila Saleh calling for a ceasefire. Key military and political actors in the East and West dismissed the calls for a ceasefire. International reactions were overwhelmingly supportive.

GNA affiliated armed groups appeared to be vying for territorial control and areas of influence in the capital.

IOM and UNHCR called for urgent action after at least 45 die in largest recorded shipwreck off the Libyan coast in 2020.

UNSMIL continued receiving information on migrants and asylum-seekers being subject to exploitation, forced labor, torture and ill-treatment, enforced disappearance, extortion and lack of food and access to health care.

IOM/DTM published the Migrant Round 31 (May-June 2020) data collection, in which at least 600,362 migrants of over 46 nationalities were identified in Libya.

Over the week, the Libyan Coast Guard (LCG) returned 285 migrants and asylum-seekers to Libya including 74 people (24 children and two women) to Tripoli on 18 August. As of 23 August, 7,127 refugees and migrants have been registered as rescued/intercepted at sea by the LCG and disembarked in Libya.

The frequency of the protest in Libya has been consistent for the last week of August. The demonstrations are characterized with blocking of roads and burning of tires. A number of protesters have been arrested while some are injured. In Tripoli, local security forces had blocked some roads and established checkpoints to deter the protesters from marching towards the venue of demonstrations despite the imposed curfew. There had been heavy deployment of security forces.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

WHO statement: WHO alarmed over rapidly escalating rates of COVID-19 in Libya

Tripoli, Libya, 26 August 2020 – Over the past 2 weeks, the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Libya has more than doubled. Given the acute shortages of tests and laboratory capacity, the real number of cases is likely to be much higher.


COVID-19 response

Pillar 1: Coordination
- Continued to disseminate daily and weekly updates on COVID-19.
- Participated in weekly meetings of the National Centre for Disease Control’s (NCDC) COVID-19 steering committee in Tripoli.
• Shortlisted candidates to participate in consultative and planning sessions for a health diplomacy project launched by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. The project aims to use COVID-19 as an example to build health as a bridge to peace.
• Participated in EUTF TWG meeting and presented the EU funded COVID project for Libya.
• Completed action checklist for 9 operational pillars for WHO Partners Platform.
• Attended Libya emergency meeting on review of grade with RO and HQ colleagues.
• Attended a meeting on Implementation of project on Hospitals’ experiences in combatting COVID-19 in Libya with International Cooperation Office.
• Provided technical support to UNSMIL medical section in Oea compound in lab testing, measures at workplace and contact tracing.
• Developed a concept note with budget for additional COVID support to Libya by Italy.
• Met with EOC Manager Benghazi and discussed issue and future action plan during Benghazi mission with head of sub office in Benghazi and the team.
• Completed the incorporation of feedback received by the donor on the EUTF proposal for COVID for final submission.
• Developed TORs for Benghazi mission
• Participated in the weekly meeting of Sabha Crisis Committee.
• Provided the needed technical support to Sabha medical consultancy committee.
• Provided a weekly update on COVID 19 situation in the south.
• Facilitated and participated in a meeting between the crisis committee and COVID-19 advisory group in Tobruk. The outcome was an action plan and agreement on how to resolve issues related to IPC and case management in Tobruk isolation centre.
• Met with the Libyan Boy Scout movement, the Red Crescent and other civil society institutions to agree on strengthening partnerships to raise awareness of COVID-19. WHO distributed COVID-19 awareness-raising materials and agreed to participate in future question and answer sessions.

**Pillar 2: Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)**
• Provided technical support to local radio stations and civil society institutions in Tobruk that are working to raise awareness about COVID-19.
• Organized a three-day training workshop for 22 community health volunteers and team leaders on enhancing community engagement and providing home care for COVID-19 patients. The participants were from 22 municipalities in the western and central regions.
• Coordinated for WHO support to launch of RCCE activities in Misurata.
• Reviewed WHO website press release for WR visit to Benghazi.

**Pillar 3: Surveillance, rapid response teams and case investigation**
• Continued follow up with NCDC daily registered COVID-19 cases and epidemiological situation updates.
• Developed the new electronic application for EWARN system and ready to use by surveillance officers.
• Conducted demo training on new application of EWARN conducted on 26 August targeted group of surveillance officers, the objective of this training to introduce the application and identify gaps and challenges faced surveillance officers to submit their reports.
• Conducted three weekly online meeting on every Monday conducted in this period (17, 24 and 31 August) with NCDC and EWARN EMRO colleagues, the agenda of these meeting included road map and work plan for strengthen and expansion Libya EWARN system.
• Supported NCDC issuing EWARN weekly bulletin for week 33 and 34.

**Pillar 5: National laboratory**
• Completed distribution list of 12100 GeneXpert cartridges received among COVID labs across the country.

**Pillar 6: Infection prevention and control**
• Disseminated technical guidance on Considerations for quarantine of contacts of COVID-19 cases and Advice on the use of masks for children in the community in the context of COVID-19 to health sector partners in Libya.

**Pillar 7: Case management**
- Completed the mapping of COVID case management facilities including isolation health facilities along with number of isolation and ICU beds available across the country for COVID response.
- Disseminated technical guidance on case management guidelines and SARI toolkit to health sector partners in Libya.

**Pillar 8: Operational support and logistics**
- Under log update below.
- Disseminated latest version of Emergency Global Supply Chain System (COVID-19) catalogue to health sector partners in Libya.

**Pillar 9: Maintaining essential health services**
- Distributed 13 supplementary and 15 basic modules of its Inter-Agency Emergency Health kit to health facilities in 13 municipalities, as well as 3000 vials of insulin to primary health care facilities in six municipalities.
- Dispatched laboratory reagents and IEHK modules to health facilities in Sebha, Brak and Murzuk, and psychotropic and other medicines to Alrazi psychiatric hospital.
- Supported WHO Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) in provision of primary and health care services in 27 health facilities across the country. Between 1 and 15 August 2020, the EMTs provided 678 surgical interventions and 8431 consultations.

**Leadership**
- Participated in the meeting with the Embassy of Italy.
- Took part in the technical consultations with the Regional Office to continue RMNCAHN services across the country.
- Conducted a visit to the east part of the country (visited and met with the representatives of Benghazi Children Hospital; Scientific COVID-19 Control High Committee (CCHC) in Benghazi; Benghazi Medical Center and Public Health Emergency Operation Centre (PHEOC); Benghazi health authorities; Libyan Red Crescent (LRC) General Secretary; Medical and Nursing Faculties of Libyan International Medical University of Benghazi and Omar Al Mukhtar University of Al Baida; Shahat Chest Hospital; Al Gabal Al Akhdar COVID-19 committee of the seven municipalities, Al Hawari General Hospital in Benghazi).
- Acted for RC/HC and the DO in Libya

**Coordination**
- Produced and disseminated health sector bulletin for August 2020.
- Consolidated bi-weekly health sector operational update.
- Provided an update on Libya situation for extension of current emergency grade (CO, RO, HQ).
- Took part and presented a joint WHO and IOM project during the EU technical working group meeting.
- Followed up on finalization of procedures for the approved EU Contribution Agreement to WHO and IOM on strengthening TB services across Libya.
- Finalized the list of key performance indicators for EMRO conducted exercise on regular reporting against 20 core indicators.
- Finalized selection of health sector indicator for inter-sector severity framework.

**HEALTH OPERATIONS**

**Sub-office Benghazi**
- Conducted meetings with the leadership of COVID-19 response in the East: discussed the strategies for expanding COVID testing, delays in the importation of medical supplies, clearance of medical supplies at the port and strengthening essential services including childhood vaccinations.
- Held a meeting with the MoH interim government.
- Provided 100 anti scorpion vials to the health authorities in Al Kufra.
- Provided 125 Nasopharyngeal swabs to CODID-19 laboratory in Benghazi.
- Provided 9600 COVID 19 PCR reagents to COVID-19 laboratory in Benghazi.
- Disseminated various RCCE materials in Benghazi, Ajdabiya, Al Bayda and Tobruk.
• Conducted assessment for oxygen factories in Benghazi.

Sub-office Sabha

• Participated in the weekly meeting of Sabha Crisis Committee and meeting of Sabha medical consultancy committee.
• Conducted a meeting with LRC branch Sabha and Scouts to coordinate the RCCE campaign in Sabha, Ubari and Ashshatti which started on 2nd of September.
• Conducted a meeting with DG of Tragen Hospital to discuss the situation in the hospital and the main challenges that affected the provision of medical services.
• Participated in a monthly ACG south.
• Participated in the 2nd conference of the COVID 19 technical support organized by Sabha University and Ejdabia University.
• Conducted two cascades training for 65 volunteers to be Community Health Workers CHW and participate in COVID 19 response in Sabha.
• Conducted a meeting with the director of Sabha Health Services Administration to discuss the disruption of the provision of medical services in PHCs in Sabha.
• Dispatched Heparin Sodium to the dialysis department in Sabha Medical Center which will support the Center for 3 months.
• Dispatched 1500 cartridges for GeneXpert and 50 liters of Antiseptic Alcohol to NCDC Sabha.
• Dispatched NCD Kit module 1a, 100 bottle Sodium Chloride 0.9 %, 100 bottle Dextrose 5% and 100 bottle Ringer lactate with IV infusion sets to Al Gurtha Ashshatti Triage Center.

EMT

Emergency Medical Teams supported 27 health facilities providing primary and secondary health care services across the country with 640 surgical interventions and 8,310 specialized consultations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Specialties</th>
<th>Duty station</th>
<th>Major surgery</th>
<th>Minor surgery</th>
<th>Consultations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Alzintan EHT</td>
<td>Orthopedic</td>
<td>Alzintan GH</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tarhouna EHT</td>
<td>Anesthesia Neuro Surgery Vascular Surgery Internal medicine</td>
<td>Tarhouna GH</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Misrata EHT</td>
<td>Anesthesia Orthopedic General Surgery Vascular Surgery</td>
<td>Misrata medical Center</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Al Jofra EHT</td>
<td>General Surgery</td>
<td>Houn Al Afia GH</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Benghazi MMT</td>
<td>Pediatric Cardiology GP Gynecology</td>
<td>Al Majori PC Tawergha IDPs Camps Sidi Khalifa polyclinic</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ejdabia MMT</td>
<td>Pediatric Internal medicine Dermatology GP</td>
<td>Tawergha IDPs clinic Abu Shaala PHC Ejdabia Diabetic center</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tarhouna MMT</td>
<td>Endocrinology Gastroenterologist Gynecology Pediatric</td>
<td>Tarhouna PC Suk Alahad PHC Al khdra polyclinic</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sabha EHT</td>
<td>Anesthesia</td>
<td>Sabha Medical Center</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ghat EHT</td>
<td>Pediatric Gynecology</td>
<td>Berket PHC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No update</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EOC

- Reviewed SitReps received from 10 WHO field coordinators to identify the urgent health needs and possible WHO response.
- Coordinated with WHO field coordinators the earlier launched MoH assessment to assess the levels of readiness and preparedness undertaken at the municipality level to contain COVID-19 pandemic.
- Participated in PHEOC training conducted by EMRO for activation of EOC in Tripoli and Benghazi to support COVID-19 crisis.
- Participated in PHEOCs and COVID-19 Management Weekly Webinar Series and Online Community of Practice.

PHC

- Organized and facilitated 1-day workshop on minimum package of health services under project entitled Supporting all-hazard emergency health management in Libya at strategic and operational levels funded by the German federal foreign office.
- Conducted a field visit to Tripoli university hospital triage and isolation center before the official opening and provided IPC educational posters against COVID19.
- Distributed 8000 posters to COVID19 Isolation centers and triages in Tripoli, Sabha, Misrata, Zletin, and Benghazi.
- Organized a three-day training workshop for 22 community health volunteers and team leaders on enhancing community engagement and providing home care for COVID-19 patients. The participants were from 22 municipalities in the western and central regions.
- Convened a meeting with the primary health care institute director general and discuss the acceleration process toward the finalization of the essential health service package.
- Conducted a meeting with the health emergency management department of MoH on enhancing IPC measures and regulations and providing capacity building trainings on case management for medical staff in COVID-19 triage and isolation centers.
- Facilitated with ICO-MoH consent and approval for EMR/TFI unite to issue APW contract to its TFI Libya focal point to start working on the eighth edition of the WHO Report on Global Tobacco Epidemic (GTCR VIII).
- Convened a meeting with ICO-MoH to provide guidance on the nomination list of participants for the “2nd Eastern Mediterranean Regional Tobacco Control Leadership Programme Emerging Leadership in Tobacco Control” that will be held virtually on the internet from 9 to 20 November 2020 [a 10-Day Programme].
- Followed with the MHPSS ministry of health focal point on the suspension of services of Al Razi psychiatric hospital due to the transmission of COVID-19 among health staff and discuss alternative options to resume services as soon as possible.
- Conducted online meeting with HQ Digital Health Innovation unite and reviewed the hypertension SMS library and COVID-19 awareness campaign material of Libya.
- Responded to EMR/SID/ISH unite comments and provided answers on Libya update of core indicators 2020 on the health-related sustainable development goals.
- Provided distribution plan of essential laboratory reagents to hospitals with COVID-19 isolation centers.
- Conducted meeting with Regional Advisors for Reproductive and Maternal Health (RMH) and Child and Adolescent Health about strengthening of essential services pillar of Covid-19 response for Libya.
- Conducted TC with HQ consultant on the feasibility of mhGAP HIG case study for Libya.
• Conducted meeting with Regional Advisor for Hospital Care and Management, International Co-operation Office (ICO) of MoH regarding conduction of assessment in relation to Hospitals' experiences in combatting COVID-19 in Libya
• Participated in TC with Regional Advisor for Primary and Community Health Care with regard to participation of Libya in the online training course: Primary Health Care Practice in the Context of COVID-19
• Facilitated dissemination of WHO's guidance on management of Covid-19 with all relevant departments of MoH.
• Shared a brief overview of our planned MHPSS project with Chair and Co-Chair of MHPSS Technical sub-working group.

EPI/AFP/ Measles surveillance program

• 28 AFP samples has been transported to institute Pasteur lab in Tunisia.
• Libya EPI monthly call meeting with EMRO was held. Routine immunization, cold chain, effective vaccine management, and disease surveillance were discussed and the corrective measures to be taken were agreed upon.
• Supported notification and reporting of 9 AFP cases from Benghazi, Merij, Subrata, Gharyan and Ejdabya
• Participated and facilitated COVID-19 advisory committee meeting on joining COVAX facility. Meeting outcome was signing of Confirmation of Intent to Participate in the COVAX Facility. Followed up next steps on joining COVAX facility by sharing Final Terms and Conditions and Commitment Agreement templates with concerned authority
• Monitored procurement and arrival of MMR vaccines to MSO warehouse.
• Developed plan for AFP supportive supervisory field visits covering period from 29 August to 24 September. The plan was cleared by WR and funds allocated.
• Visited, supported and supervised 3 AFP reporting sites in Gharyan and Yefren. 6 medical doctors got trained on AFP surveillance
• Prepared, reviewed and submitted 2 AFP Weekly Reports, Epi Week No. 34 and 35, 2020
  o 72 AFP cases have been reported up to week 35 in 2020, compared with 61 AFP cases during the same period of 2019.
  o Non-Polio AFP rate was 4.3 per 100,000 children of 15 years of age compared with 3.6 during the same period of 2019.
  o 00% of AFP cases have adequate stool specimen.
  o 96% of AFP cases have been notified within 7 days of onset.
  o 100% of AFP cases were investigated within 48 hours after notification.
  o 46 AFP cases (64%) were discarded, and 26(36%) cases pending for results from lab.
  o 95% of AFP cases have at least 3 doses of polio vaccine, the rest ( 5% ) have 2 doses of polio vaccine.
  o No AFP cases were reported this week with zero OPV dose.
  o No non-Libyan AFP cases reported this week
  o 0% of NPEV isolation.
  o No SL isolated.
  o 1 case classified as a VDPV3 in 2020.

Disease surveillance

• Continued to follow up with NCDC on daily registered COVID-19 cases and epidemiological situation updates.
• The new electronic application for EWARN system is developed and ready to use by surveillance officers. Demo training on new application of EWARN was conducted on 26 August for targeted group of surveillance officers.
• Three weekly online meetings conducted with NCDC and EWARN EMRO colleagues (discussions of road map and work plan to strengthen and expand Libya EWARN system).
• Supported NCDC issuing EWARN weekly bulletins for weeks 33 and 34.

Operational Support and Logistics

Distributed 2800 XPRESS, SARS-COV-2 cartridges to WHO Benghazi hub (for the Medical Center and Al-Kwefia Lab and the NCDC branches at Igdayba, Tazerbu, Al-Kofra) along with 244 lts disinfectant 70% and 2 boxes of mixtard insulin; 1000 cartridges XPRESS, SARS-COV-2 cartridges to NCDC Tobruk along with 245 lts disinfectant 70% and
4480 blood bags for the Medical Center; and for Sabha 1500 of same cartridges to NCDC Sabha along with 400 lts disinfectant 70%, 3500 vials of Heparin and assorted lab supplies.

In Tripoli dispatched 75 kgs chemical reagents to the FDA and 1,200 XPRESS, SARS-COV-2 cartridges to NCDC along with assorted lab supplies.

The shipment with the Italian donation of kits to WHO is still under temporary release. These kits will be distributed to the municipalities of Tarhuna, Sirte, Swhuareff, Ghat, Murzuq, Gatrun. We have also more NCDK kits pending final release (4x 1a-1c + 8x 1b)

The ETA of the shipment to Benghazi with 15.5 tons (139 cbm) of COVID-19 supplies is now expected to arrive on the 3rd of September. A distribution plan is being currently elaborated to cover the most urgent of needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supply type</th>
<th>Quantity (pieces)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gloves</td>
<td>198000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masks</td>
<td>663000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masks N95</td>
<td>150020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face shields</td>
<td>61400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gowns</td>
<td>19600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goggles</td>
<td>16507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ventilator</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxygen concentrators</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thermometers</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverall</td>
<td>10320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swabs and VTM</td>
<td>7200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Received 5 partial shipments at Misrata airport with lab reagents and consumable and 12,100 cartridges of XPRESS, SARS-COV-2 tests.

While shipments, including COVID-19 goods, are arriving in increased numbers, WHO is to follow long customs clearance and FDA procedures with no special facilitation due to the pandemic response.

An Operations Support and Logistics missions assessed the capacity of WHO Benghazi Hub to be able to receive, store and distribute medical supplies.

**Procurement**

No update

**KEY GAPS & CHALLENGES**

Same as for the last reporting period.

**RESPONSE PRIORITIES**

Same as for the last reporting period.