

## UNICEF Situation Report #23 - Sub-regional Libya crisis

Date: 30 August 2011

Reporting period (21 – 30 August)

### Highlights:

- The fighting along various frontlines in the past weeks has left the Libyan capital short of water and fuel. The water supply to Tripoli through the GMR pipelines has completely stopped, leaving potential 4 million people without access to potable tap water. Many parts of Tripoli have now been without tapped water for almost one week. Stocks of Bottled drinking water is fast depleting.
- The UNICEF Libya team has been mainly focussed on the water response to Tripoli in the past week, procuring vital drinking water supplies covering the needs of 500,000 people. 11 million litres of bottled water has and will be arriving in Tripoli in the coming week to make sure that the most vital needs are met.
- UNICEF, as part of the new partnerships on the ground, delivered 71 recreation and early childhood development kits as well as 10 school-in-a box kits to Danish Church Aid, Mercy Corps and Scouts for support to the intervention in the eastern towns of Libya.. A total of 6,400 children will be benefiting from the recreational kits, and 500 children will benefit from the school-in-a-box kits in the coming weeks.
- UNICEF procured critically needed PENTA and DTP vaccines for 100,000 USD for the Benghazi health authorities. This ensures continued immunization campaigns for one month. UNICEF is also part of the interagency team led by WHO to procure and distribute much needed drugs and vaccines
- The UN, including UNICEF, is preparing for a permanent return to Tripoli in the coming days. Two UNICEF staff, an Emergency Coordinator and security officer are already on the ground in response to the water situation in Tripoli.



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A UNICEF vehicle and aid workers at a water-treatment plant in Derna, Libya. UNICEF has procured treatment chemicals for five such plants in eastern Libya recently.

## Situation Overview

The opposition forces of the National Transitional Council entered Tripoli on the weekend of the 21 August when fighting broke out within the city. The NTC now states to be in control of the Libyan capital, and are pushing towards Gaddafi's home town of Sirte.

The fighting along various frontlines in the past weeks has left the Libyan capital short of water and fuel. The water supply to Tripoli through the GMR pipelines has completely stopped and its resumption is hindered mainly by security concerns. Only 5 of the water bottling companies in Tripoli are functioning at present. Many parts of Tripoli have now been without tap water for more than one week. People in Tripoli have made use of a number of coping mechanisms, however, including the use of water from old wells for domestic use that are present in some parts of the Libyan capital, but this will not be sustainable in the long-term.

Over the past ten days, heavy fighting has been reported around the coastal cities west of Tripoli, particularly in Zawiyah, Zuwarah, Sabratah. There is limited information available on the humanitarian needs there, but the threats from a large presence of weapons, including UXO and ERWs is anticipated to be significant.

45 bodies were found dead in a Tripoli hospital last week. According to HRW, members of the Khamis Brigade, a force commanded by Muammar Gaddafi's son Khamis, appeared to have carried out the killings. This and other reports of violations that have been received raise a number of protection concerns that need to be addressed by the NTC immediately.

According to UNHCR, an approximate 800 families from the Tripoli area are arriving in Zintan and other areas in the western Nafusa Mountains on a daily basis in the past weeks due to the ongoing insecurity in Tripoli. A transitory site is being set up for these families with a capacity to host up to 15,000 families.

## Coordination, Cluster Leadership and Key Partnerships

### Libya

UNICEF, as the global WASH Cluster lead, has taken the technical lead on the response to the current cut in water supplies to Tripoli. When reports of power and water cuts in Tripoli were first received by the UNICEF Libya team on the 23 August, a working group was immediately set up to monitor the situation and plan the response. UNICEF is working

"I am 22 and I want to get married," said Hussein as the four young men burst into laughter around the table. "Gadhafi is gone now and we will be able to get married." I experienced my first crash course on fighter politics at an after dinner chat at the Radisson this evening. No water, no air conditioning, no shower were the complaints echoing the cigarette stubbed corridors of the journalist occupied hotel..."I don't need this gun," was what he quietly said, "and I want to listen to my country music again." I soon realized that they really did fight for it; as they use their video clips on their telephones... Hisham, the other 20 year old sat quiet for all of it until he decided he could trust us and thoughtfully began. "If only we have a voice now. We gave our blood and we sacrificed for the revolution but the leaders are busy striking oil deals and I know that my voice will never be heard." I was taken aback. The table was quiet. And all the victory euphoria of only a few minutes ago drifted into quiet reflection. "Yes" was the general agreement ...These four young men have lost the youthful innocence because the front line and prison pictures they paint are beyond what any young person should have to survive. With all the positive changes in this country and need for focused reconciliation and peace building the world and UNICEF will have to offer these young men the space to air their views and voice their opinions. UNICEF works with the protection of children and youth as well as Education activities in Libya. It will have to stretch its services so that such youth can have a voice and a loud enough voice that will be heard.

closely with WFP on the logistical side, with OCHA on information sharing and mapping, as well as on high-level advocacy with the Humanitarian Coordinator, Panos Moutmtzis.

UNICEF continues to expand its partnerships on child protection and education issues, and new agreements have been signed with Danish Church Aid and the Scouts in Misrata where psychosocial activities will be offered to children affected by the conflict.

A 30-day Action Plan is currently being finalized by the humanitarian actors for Libya. UNICEF is requesting additional funds to cover costs incurred in the current response to the water response in particular.

Humanitarian actors, including UNICEF and other UN agencies, are planning a permanent return to Tripoli in the coming days. The UNICEF Emergency Coordinator has already travelled to Tripoli to coordinate the water emergency response.

## **UNICEF Libya Advocacy**

### **WASH**

UNICEF is actively advocating and supporting the NTC in Tripoli and Zarzis, Tunisia to find an immediate solution to the cut in water supplies in Tripoli. A technical team of engineers needs to go to the well field in Jebel Hassouna, south of Tripoli, in order to assess the cause for the stop in pumping from the field, assess the potential extent of damages, and restore pumping activity as soon as possible in order to avoid deterioration.

UNICEF has shared with the NTC a number of options for bulk water procurement as a more sustainable solution to the lack of water for domestic use while hoping that the pumping of water from the GMR will resume as soon as possible.

### **Child Protection**

With the ongoing fighting in Sirte, sporadic violence in Tripoli, fighting in other western coastal cities, and the lack of tap water supply to the Libyan capital, UNICEF is extremely concerned about the protection of civilians and children in particular, as well as the misuse of civilian infrastructure such as schools and hospitals.

UNICEF continued monitoring, reporting and advocating on child rights violations. The major violations of concern include; risks of children being injured or killed in the ongoing fighting especially in Tripoli, by explosive remnants of war and/or celebratory weapon fire; attacks on and military occupation of schools and medical facilities; and ongoing participation of adolescent boys in the conflict, especially in support roles and manning checkpoints. Advocacy has been conducted with the NTC including military authorities and donors to address these issues.

## **UNICEF Response**

### **Libya**

The UNICEF Libya team has been mainly focussed on the water response to Tripoli in the past week, procuring vital drinking water supplies covering the needs of 500,000 people for two weeks. 11 million litres of bottled water has and will be arriving in Tripoli in the coming week from Malta, Greece, Spain, and Tunisia to make sure that the most vital needs are met.

## WASH

UNICEF has taken the technical and coordination lead in response to the current ongoing lack of tap water supplies to Tripoli. The causes of interruption in the water supply are multiple, including ongoing insecurity and fighting near the plant which forced the staff to leave the plant, the area not being accessible to technicians of the NTC, and lack of fuel to supply the power plants.

The water supply through what is known as the Great Man-made River, a network carrying water from more than 1,300 deep wells in the Nubian sandstone aquifer in the south, serving a population of approximately 4 million people, has stopped almost completely as of 22 August. Normally, the pipelines provide 6.5 m<sup>3</sup> of fresh water per day to Tripoli, Benghazi, Sirt and other areas. Currently the line serving Tripoli and Misrata and other coastal cities west of Tripoli is currently cut.

In response, UNICEF has as of 31 August procured, transported, and delivered over 230,000 litres of bottled drinking water, meeting the needs of 38,000 people during the past 5 days. The water is distributed through the mosques in Tripoli, prioritizing the most vulnerable neighbourhoods. The response has benefited greatly from logistical support by WFP, as well as ICRC.

UNICEF is procuring a total of 11 million litres of water to meet the needs of 500,000 during 2 weeks. The water will continue to arrive in the coming days through the same distribution mechanisms as above.

UNICEF has also provided the Benghazi desalination plants with 66 tons of vital water treatment chemicals. Without these chemicals the plants cannot produce water. The effort secured safe water supplies to 500,000 people.

## Child Protection

UNICEF, as part of the new partnerships on the ground, delivered 71 recreation and early childhood development kits as well as 10 school-in-a box kits to Danish Church Aid NGO, Mercy Corps and Scouts. A total of 6,400 children will be benefiting from the recreational kits, and 500 children will benefit from the school-in-a-box kits in the coming weeks.

UNICEF and Save the Children supported the facilitation of a 6-day train the trainers workshop on psychosocial support for children affected by the armed conflict. The workshop targeted four representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, four representatives from the Ministry of Education, five staff of Save the Children, and two trainers of the Libyan Scouts and one staff of IMC.

UNICEF has supported the opening and running of 16 additional Child Friendly Spaces with regular technical support by Save the Children volunteers in Benghazi.

Save the Children has been supported in the production of leaflets with child protection messages raising awareness on the danger of celebratory gunfire for children. The leaflets were distributed to parents in key IDP sites in Benghazi.

To reduce risk posed for civilians by a heavy presence of ERW and small arms and light weapons (SALW), UNICEF and Handicap International (HI) continued awareness raising activities in Benghazi and Ajdabiya. Teams have been also been identified and trained for Brega, Misrata and Ras Lanouf and sessions will begin in these areas as soon as possible,

“UNICEF is responding to the immediate needs,” said UNICEF Libya Head of Office Christian Balslev-Olesen. “But we remain extremely concerned about the situation should the water flow to Tripoli not return in the coming days.”

*UNICEF Libya, Head of Office, on the UNICEF water response.*

subject to security. HI has conducted 105 risk education presentations so far, reaching 7510 individuals in total, including 1324 teachers.

UNICEF's partnership with the Scouts to conduct child protection and psychosocial activities for adolescents has been initiated, and the youth leaders from 14 project sites in Misrata and eastern Libya have been identified and will be trained in early September.

## **Health & Nutrition**

UNICEF procured critically needed PENTA and DTP vaccines for 100,000 USD for the Benghazi health authorities. This ensures continued immunization campaigns for one month.

## **Communication**

The communication activities started this week by meeting with education authorities, visiting schools and interviewing parents and children in Eastern Libya and preparing human interest stories as schools are due to open on 17 September. Human interest stories for the National Committees on UNICEF supported Child Protection activities in eastern Libya were also being prepared. However, the focus shifted mid-week on delivering water for emergency use in Tripoli. UNICEF is the WASH Coordinator in Libya and as part of its response, and has increased its procurement of water to 11 million litres for distribution in the coming week.

UNICEF does not have an operational presence in Tripoli at this time, however two UNICEF staff are now on the ground in Tripoli to coordinate the water response activities in the Libyan capital. Interviews on water delivery to Tripoli and the UNICEF WASH response in Libya continue to be arranged with UNICEF Emergency Officer, in Tripoli as well as the Head of UNICEF Libya, currently in Zarzis, Tunisia. A Videographer crew has arrived in Tripoli to film the delivery of water at the end of this week.

Some of the news stories with mention of UNICEF activities can be found here:

CNN: <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/08/31/libya.war/>

UPI: [http://www.upi.com/Business\\_News/Energy-Resources/2011/08/30/Libya-running-out-of-water/UPI-16331314710947/](http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Energy-Resources/2011/08/30/Libya-running-out-of-water/UPI-16331314710947/)

The National: <http://www.thenational.ae/news/worldwide/middle-east/libya-needs-water-despite-gaddafis-great-manmade-river>

All Africa.com: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201108300040.html>

Afrique En Ligne: <http://www.afriquejet.com/libya-unicef-bottles-of-water-2011083021388.html>

Bloomberg (UNICEF mention): <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-08-28/libyan-rebels-say-gaddafi-using-human-shields-to-defend-sirte-stronghold.html>

Updates on the UNICEF response in Libya continues to be shared with the Natcoms and media via Twitter at: @RoshanKhadivi/UNICEF

Other activities include:

Interviews with UNICEF Libya Head of Office in Zarzis, ChristianBalslev-Olesen on Swedish Radio, the Arab News Network (London), and BBC Breakfast.

A human interest story on UNICEF response to water needs in Libya

[http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/laj\\_59672.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/laj_59672.html)

A news note was prepared on UNICEF response to the emerging water crisis in Tripoli

[http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_59666.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_59666.html)

## **Funding**

UNICEF has so far received 48 per cent of the requested funds through the Libya Flash Appeal. The total appeal has been met with 60 per cent. UNICEF will need extensive funding to cover the costs occurred in the response to the water crisis in Tripoli.

**Date of next Situation Report: on or around 05 September 2011**

For more information, please contact:

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