IOM's ‘Together We Rebuild’ Community Stabilization (CS) programme supports the stability and resilience of conflict-affected communities in Libya. The CS programme seeks to address drivers of displacement and instability through restoring services and community infrastructure, promoting social cohesion and supporting the regeneration of livelihoods. In creating conditions for the restoration of normal social and economic life, IOM operates in limited and defined geographic areas, while using on-the-ground knowledge, assessments and other data sources.

CS initiatives are community-driven and conducted in close cooperation with local stakeholders and community representatives. The CS unit works in close cooperation with Community Management Committees (CMCs), comprising of community leaders representing a cross section of tribal groups. The committees support IOM's community stabilization efforts, advise on local conditions and concerns and provide recommendations for project priorities. This way of working ensures transparent, fair and high-quality activity implementation, oversight and local ownership. The CS programme engages a variety of local stakeholders both as implementing partners and as beneficiaries. The CS programme works with all groups within target communities affected by violence, displacement and mass migration, including host communities, civil society organizations, women and youth, Government officials, IDPs and migrants.

Starting in Sabha and Qatroun in 2016 with recent expansions into Kufrah and Benghazi, the programme contributes to:

1. Improved community social cohesion and reduction of community tensions, particularly as they relate to host communities, returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and migrants
2. Enhanced ability of local authorities to provide basic services to targeted communities
3. Improved livelihood opportunities for Libyans and migrants

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WATER AND SANITATION

Libya is among the most water scarce countries in the world. The south of Libya relies heavily on water wells to secure water for households. The CMC’s of Sabha and Qatroun highlighted the lack of functioning wells as one of the major challenges that their communities face. In response to these urgent needs, IOM supported the improvement of access to water for more than 47,000 inhabitants in various neighbourhoods and Muhallas of both Sabha and Qatroun through the rehabilitation of 37 wells and drilling of two new water wells.

Delivery of waste water pumps to communities in Sabha

Health and environmental conditions in Sabha have been affected by an incomplete wastewater system, as well as by random dumping of solid waste. The dysfunctional wastewater system has resulted in extensive leakages, forcing shops to close, damaging telephone cables and triggering public protests. To overcome the burdens on community members, to mitigate the adverse health and environmental impacts and to contribute to the improved quality of life, IOM supplied the General Water and Waste Water management company in Sabha with four waste water pumps for the main sewage system. These much-needed pumps have improved access to waste water services for almost 110,000 inhabitants. Living conditions have also been improved through the removal of solid waste and the creation of a public green zone in the Karama area in Sabha.

EDUCATION

The protracted conflict has damaged vital education infrastructure. In Sabha and Qatroun, classes were overcrowded (up to 60 students), there was a lack of equipment and schools were damaged or poorly maintained. IOM has contributed to improved access to education through the creation of better learning conditions for a total of 10,000 students and teachers in Sabha and Qatroun. Through the rehabilitation of 16 schools and 18 prefab classrooms, students have more space in each classroom and schools are able to accommodate increasing numbers of students, including IDPs. The provision of 72 computers has helped enhance the quality of education provided to the students and the installation of 45 air conditioning units makes teaching and learning more bearable throughout the high temperatures of the long summer season.

Opening ceremony of the rehabilitated Kadija school in Sabha, which provides education for 1500 female students

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

IOM facilitated youth engagement activities and provided various trainings to build the capacity of individuals representing a wide variety of tribal, ethnic, age and gender groups. More than 400 individuals benefitted from these trainings, including CSOs, CMC members, municipal staff, tribal leaders, health professionals and micro enterprises owners. Trainings were held on topics related to conflict sensitivity, peace building, business management and use of social media in peace dialogue and positive communication. Following calls for proposals with transparent selection criteria, these individuals were selected by committees of local community representatives and stakeholders.
HEALTH

The accessibility and functionality of Primary Health Care Units (PHCU) in Sabha and Qatroun has been limited by the need for renovation work and equipment, staff and electricity shortages. In 2017, IOM supported the improvement of health care services for 140,000 inhabitants in both Sabha and Qatroun through the rehabilitation of three Primary Health Care Units (PHCU), the provision of medical equipment for three PHCUs and generators to seven PHCUs.

Opening of rehabilitated health clinic in Sabha

In response to community-based requests to support the health care sector in the context of conflict and instability, these generators and equipment contribute to improving the clinics’ capacity to provide quality health care services, while reducing the pressure on existing health facilities. Through the uninterrupted power supply provided by these generators, clinics can run their operations during electricity cut offs, as well as keep medication at a controlled and stable temperature.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Due to the absence of public parks or playgrounds in Sabha and Qatroun, IOM built two football grounds in Sabha and one in Qatroun, allowing more than 5,000 children to play sport in a safe and secure place. The playgrounds fulfill a need raised by the community for a public space in which youth and children can safely practice sports regardless of their tribal or ethnic background, thereby contributing to improved relationships among various groups. For the future, the establishment of these three football pitches opens up the opportunity to organize sports tournaments in support of social cohesion. Before this intervention, the psychosocial support team conducted sports activities in school yards due to the lack of proper sports facilities.

Children play football in a newly built pitch

AGRICULTURE

While agriculture is one of the major and promising sectors in Libya for growth and job creation, many farmers in the south lack technical equipment. Based on recommendations from an agricultural committee that was formed – which include representatives from the ministry of agriculture and agricultural associations - IOM is supplying the agricultural sector in Sabha with an olive press machine. This will introduce food industry techniques and help increase farmers’ incomes. In addition, the outbreak of the date palm green pit-scale insect jeopardizes one of Libya’s most promising sectors. If not addressed in time, such outbreaks can significantly damage the date production, thereby exacerbating poverty and vulnerability, eroding household resilience, as well as individual livelihood. IOM and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have facilitated a Training of Trainers for 29 participants with the aim of strengthening the capacity of technical staff and farmers to limit the spread of the pest to other areas within Libya.

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

To help alleviate stress and enhance peoples’ wellbeing, IOM established two Recreational and Cultural Centres in both Qatroun and Sabha. These centers enable people to come together and participate in sports and cultural activities (drawing, music, painting, sports). A total of 140 health professionals from Sabha and Qatroun received Psychosocial Support (PSS) training to support them in running the recreational centres. The Ministry of Social Affairs’ staff and 1,800 individuals from the community, including women and youth, have increased awareness on Psychosocial Support through trainings and the organization of recreational activities in the centres. IOM provided PSS activities, focus group discussions and awareness sessions to a total number of 3,118 persons of different ages and groups, fostering dialogue and building trust.
Medical Equipment and Generators Help Primary Health Care Workers in Southern Libya Better Serve their Communities

Faced with a lack of reliable power supply and equipment, primary health care units (PCHU) in Sabha have been supported by IOM in providing better medical care services to an increased number of patients. Particularly at times of conflict, PCHUs in Sabha have experienced that the number of people in need of medical care could triple. With a lack of medical, dental and laboratory equipment, PCHUs struggled to serve their patients appropriately. “Our ability to provide medical care to the communities has greatly improved following the provision of equipment,” explained Abu Bakr Beshr Al Saghir, the director of the Mahdia PCHU from behind his office desk. “For example, in gynecology we used to be able to provide care for five women per day. Now that we have received a gynecologist bed, we can help up to twenty women.”

“IOM’s generator has contributed to our ability to deliver better health care services,” said Mohammad Worayith, the director of the Sukara health care unit in Sabha. “Regardless of whether we face electricity cut-offs, we can carry on our services in the operation rooms and dental clinics, as well as continue to use our drugs and vaccinations.”

On a daily basis, the operating capacity of Worayith’s PCHU was obstructed by extended power cuts. This was particularly problematic during the long (April-October) and hot (up to 45°C) summer season because the medication’s exposure to extreme heat during summer could quickly damage it. Through the uninterrupted power supply, the medication can be stored at a controlled temperature.