

UNHCR Libya Flash Update #2

19 September 2023



UNHCR team assessing damages in Derna, Libya.
Photo: © UNHCR/Ahmed El Houdiri

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- UNHCR teams are on the ground in east Libya to assist people affected by the floods. So far, around 1,500 people in Derna and Benghazi have been assisted with core relief items including blankets, plastic tarpaulins, kitchen sets, hygiene kits and clothes. A distribution to another 8,000 people in Derna is scheduled for 19 September.
- UNHCR is working closely with national and international partners to respond to the situation as part of a broader UN response and leads the coordination for Protection and Shelter/NFI. On 15-16 September, UNHCR participated in the interagency UN assessment mission to Derna.
- An airlift from UNHCR's warehouse in Dubai is scheduled to arrive on 19 September in Benghazi with relief items to assist 10,000 people.

AFFECTED POPULATION

Some [50,000 refugees and asylum-seekers](#) are registered with UNHCR in Libya, including more than 1,000 who live in eastern Libya. However, UNHCR is aware of larger numbers of forcibly displaced people from Sudan and Syria who were not registered with UNHCR living in the affected areas.

In addition, some 46,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were hosted in eastern Libya before the storm and floods, the majority in Benghazi ([IOM, Displacement and Solutions Report, August 2023](#)). In the worst affected areas, some 2,800 IDPs were living in Derna and 3,100 in Ajdabiya. The floods have caused mass displacement, including an estimated 30,000 people in Derna and 3,000 people in Ajdabiya.

UNHCR EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Protection

- UNHCR is trying to reach by phone the 1,000 refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR living in east Libya; of the 339 people contacted by UNHCR and its partners to date, less than 10% could be reached. UNHCR is also reaching out to refugees and asylum-seekers through its website and Facebook page with basic information on available services in the affected areas.
- The floods caused heavy damage to infrastructure. Phone connectivity network issues are impeding access to the expanded UNHCR helpline staff. Major rehabilitation of the power lines and infrastructure is needed.

Shelter and core relief items

- Around 1,500 people in Derna and Benghazi have been assisted with core relief items including blankets, plastic tarpaulins, kitchen sets, hygiene kits and clothes.
- An airlift from UNHCR's warehouse in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates is scheduled to arrive on 19 September in Benghazi with relief items to assist 10,000 people. The 53 metric tons of relief items on board include solar lamps, kitchen sets, tarpaulin sheets, jerrycans, and blankets.
- UNHCR is also dispatching medicines, rub halls, and power generators to affected locations.
- Additional core relief items are being transported by road from Amman, Jordan to replenish stocks in Tripoli. Dispatch from Tripoli to Benghazi is ongoing to increase immediate capacity to respond.

COORDINATION

UNHCR is working closely with national and international partners to respond to the situation as part of a broader UN response and leads the coordination for Protection and Shelter/NFI. Together with its national partner LibAid, UNHCR is assessing the humanitarian needs on the ground to inform its response.

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FLASH APPEAL

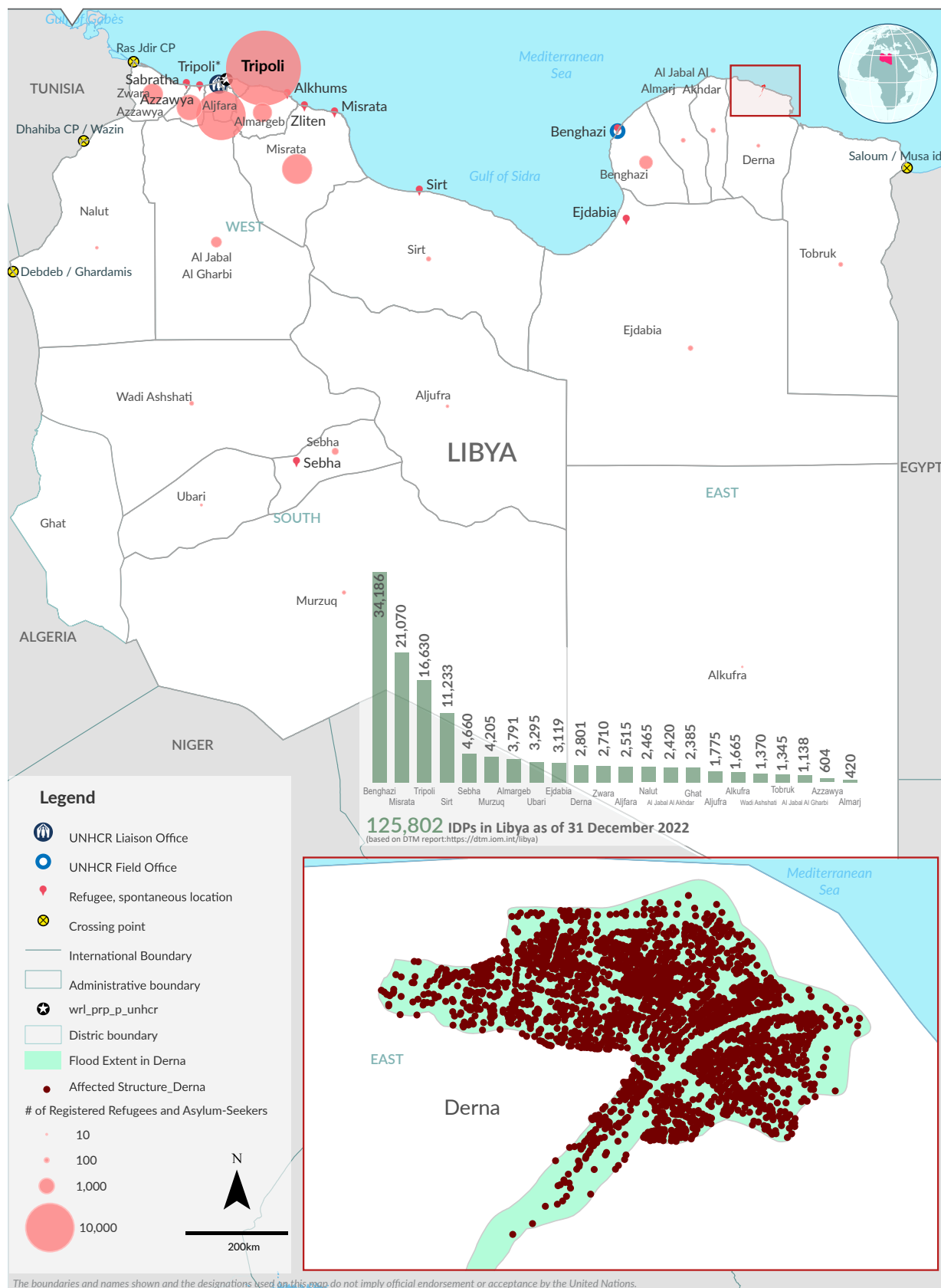
2023 Libya Flood Response

BACKGROUND

On 9-11 September, Storm Daniel – a tropical-like cyclone known as a medicane – hit eastern Libya. Severe weather conditions including strong winds, sudden heavy rainfall and widespread floods have affected several areas along the coast.

Search and rescue operations as well as humanitarian needs assessments are ongoing and the full impact and scale of the devastation is still being determined; reports estimate close to 4,000 deaths and more than 9,000 missing as entire neighbourhoods have been destroyed. Damage to roads, telecommunication networks and other communal infrastructure is complicating rescue and relief efforts.

OCHA [reports](#) that floodwaters have shifted landmines and other ordnance left over from years of conflict. IRC has [warned](#) of a public health crisis in flood-affected parts of Libya, particularly in Derna, as water sources have been severely contaminated by sewage, leaving thousands without access to clean and safe drinking water.



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