



BACKGROUND

Since 30 July 2017, the military encirclement of Derna in East Libya has tightened, resulting in a deteriorating humanitarian situation for the estimated 100,000 people remaining in the city⁽¹⁾.

In support of the Libya Inter-Sector Coordination Group, REACH conducted a series of remote and direct interviews between 6 and 13 August 2017 with 13 key informants (KIs) to understand humanitarian trends and provide a snapshot of the most immediate needs of Derna's population. Due to the qualitative nature of data collection, results should be considered as indicative only.

Map 1: Neighbourhoods of Greater Derna



KEY FINDINGS

RESTRICTIONS OF MOVEMENT

- Since the encirclement was tightened, all main roads to the city have been closed. People have been barred from going in or out of the city by car⁽²⁾.
- At the time of writing, people were able to enter and leave the city on foot only, sometimes requiring them to walk over long distances.
- One KI reported that people leaving the city were at risk for their personal safety, with shots reportedly fired at people on the southeastern route towards Martuba⁽³⁾.

HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

DISRUPTION OF MARKET CHAINS

- No external goods or commercial trucks are able to enter the city since the tightening of the encirclement on 30 August. As a result, shortages of basic commodities have progressively been reported on markets in the city, including shortages of bread, chicken meat, eggs and potatoes, and fresh vegetables except those locally produced.

Additionally, medication and fuel stocks quickly depleted with significant consequences on access to services for the affected population.

- At the time of writing, the only bread available in the city was homemade bread produced by individuals with firewood sold informally on the streets in the absence of other types of fuel.
- These disruptions of market chains have led to significant price inflation. Prices of basic food commodities such as sugar, flour, rice, pasta, couscous, tomato paste and chickpeas have risen by 14% to 30% compared to the previous month⁽⁵⁾.
- Shortages and price inflation were further aggravated by the lack of readily available cash and overall liquidity crisis, with banks being closed at the time of writing. Reported coping mechanisms to deal with the lack of cash included using other forms of payments such as certified cheques or bank transfers, selling gold or borrowing money.

⁽¹⁾ Figures from the 2014 census from the Libyan Bureau of Statistics, exact figures might have changed since then.

⁽²⁾ Demazoom (news agency), 7 August 2017. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/demazoom/status/894560474955739136>

⁽³⁾ Libya Prospect, 9 August 2017. 'Haftar forces shoot citizens from Derna'.

Retrieved from <http://www.marsad.ly/en/2017/08/09/haftars-forces-shoot-citizens-derna/>

⁽⁴⁾ Based on data from the latest round of REACH market monitoring conducted in Derna



WASH

- Increased pressure on water was reported, as the local water service company was unable to provide drinking water to most parts of the city due to a lack of fuel to run the desalination plan. According to a KI, accessing the water network was particularly problematic in the 400 and Elfataih neighbourhoods.
- As a coping mechanism, many households are reportedly using private wells for drinking water, the quality of which could not be assessed.

HEALTH

- Health, especially medicine and medical supplies, was mentioned by a majority of KIs as a humanitarian priority. Stocks of medicine are quickly depleting, in particular for chronic diseases (heart and kidney disease, diabetes). Shortages of medical supplies such as syringes for infant use⁽⁵⁾, and of medical staff were also mentioned. As a result, health facilities could not function at full capacity.
- KIs indicated a high prevalence of chronic diseases, as well as an increase in the predominance of mental health issues⁽⁶⁾.

- The stress on medicine availability was temporarily relieved by a delivery of medicine by the Red Crescent on 10 August⁽⁷⁾, as well as deliveries from the World Health Organization (WHO) of oxygen, medicine and medical supplies between 7 and 10 August.

CONCLUSION

At the time of writing, Derna's remaining population faced increasing challenges to leave the city. In addition, the disruption of market supplies had led to shortages and rising prices for many basic items, including fuel and medicine. There is limited access for humanitarian goods and no fuel is allowed to enter the city, severely affecting basic services. Humanitarian capacities inside Derna are limited.

As a result, affected households resorted to coping mechanisms such as producing their own food in the street with firewood and/or drinking untreated water from wells, the quality of which could not be assessed.

Given the deteriorating situation, REACH, in coordination with local and international partners, will continue to monitor as much as possible the evolving situation in the coming weeks to further inform humanitarian planning.



Individuals baking homemade bread on the street in absence of other fuel and to cope with closed bakeries, 6 August 2017

About REACH

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⁽⁵⁾ Libyan Gazette, 14 August 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/ArraedLG/posts/1576929925660920:0>

⁽⁶⁾ One health sector key informant indicated that in the city of Derna alone, 2,000 individuals were suffering from psychiatric issues, 10% of whom were children.

⁽⁷⁾ ICRC Libya, 10 August 2017. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/ICRC_lby/status/895586936366157826