

LIBYA

# UBARI

Area-Based  
Assessment (ABA)

August 2021



Ubari (Awbari) is a small oasis town located in the southern Fezzan region. The municipality is roughly 370 kilometres east of Ghat and 200 kilometres southwest of Sebha with a population of roughly 35,000 people with various ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, and displacement status.<sup>1</sup> Similar to the rest of the Fezzan region, Ubari is severely affected by the economic crisis Libya has been going through since 2014, where recovery is yet to happen.<sup>2,3</sup> The local governance mechanisms in Ubari baladiya consists of both formal and traditional governance stakeholders made up of the municipal council as well as muhallah councils/mukhtars, while the traditional governance stakeholders consist of the five social councils made up of family elders and notables within each tribe or community.<sup>4</sup>

## Key findings

1. Provision of basic utilities such as **electricity, water, sewage, and sanitation** exist to a certain extent in Ubari baladiya, however, with large disparities between Ubari city centre and peripheral muhallahs.<sup>5</sup> Due to the stagnation of infrastructural development, areas that came into existence or grew significantly in the last 20 years are often not officially connected to water or electricity networks.
2. In the absence of infrastructure or lack of infrastructural capacity to cope with over usage, **citizens have constructed 'random' infrastructures connecting their homes to the electricity and sanitation network** with support from private companies. This has been common especially in muhallahs with extensive population growth since the 1990s – such as Al Shareb (East and West) and Al Mashru.
3. Poor quality and historical underinvestment in public services including health, education, welfare and social services characterise the services available in Ubari.
4. Findings highlighted **the importance of peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts to improve inter-communal relations between population groups both in the city** and within specific neighbourhoods. The need for improving mutual understanding of cultural differences between communities was suggested to be possible to breach through dialogues and awareness raising sessions. Additionally, social events such as festivals and sports activities have previously shown to bridge cultural differences and bring together population groups.
5. There is a need for **provision of utilities, services, livelihood opportunities, and social**

**activities to be equally accessible across muhallahs.** Equal access per muhallah will be a determining element in easing tensions and improving tolerance and acceptance as well as avoiding conflict over already limited resources.

## Introduction

In 2012, the Libyan Interim National Transitional Council (NTC) introduced Law No. (59) on the structure of local administration system, which constitutes the legal framework around the decentralization of Libya<sup>6</sup> and the emergence of institutionalised local governance.<sup>7</sup> According to the legal framework, municipalities are tasked with service delivery (and thus the development and maintenance of service infrastructure) and the safety and security of its citizens.<sup>8</sup> However, despite the legal framework, municipalities are not mandated to collect tax and service provisions are still primarily delegated to decentralized offices of the centralized state agencies. As such, municipalities often lack the resources to respond to emergencies or the aftermath of crises in a timely manner.<sup>9</sup> On top of this, in 2021, Libya begins its eleventh year of protracted conflict. The war continues to cause infrastructure damages, security threats, and economic and political crises that undermine municipalities' opportunity to provide access to services and stable governance, and thus hinders the population's social cohesion, safety, and access to services. An integrative understanding of how governance and service access are interlinked and used by its population can facilitate integrated assistance and sustainable urban planning.

This Area-Based Assessment (ABA) was set in Ubari baladiya, a small desert town in the southern Fezzan region of Libya. Ubari consists of five muhallahs: Al Hattiya, Al Dissa, Ubari city centre, Al Mashru and Al Shareb (East and West). These muhallahs are made up of multiple neighbourhoods.<sup>10</sup> A reference table of the neighbourhood names can be found in **Annex 2**.

The city faces infrastructural challenges caused by years of structural underinvestment in the region, as well as the social inheritance and material damage of recent intercommunal conflict.<sup>11</sup> An area-based understanding presents an opportunity for national and international actors to help build the capacity of communities and municipalities to identify and address their most pressing needs in a systematic manner, and inform local governments about opportunities in conflict-sensitive urban planning and sustainable infrastructure development.<sup>12</sup> Cities operate as complex organizations and not in isolated sectors, with service infrastructure and a wide variety of governance and citizen stakeholders involved. Therefore, to develop appropriate assistance

programmes, national and international actors should focus on urban spaces as unified systems, rather than analysing needs on a sector-by-sector basis.<sup>13</sup>

## Objectives

Building on a settlements approach,<sup>14</sup> the ABA was designed to understand and map the ‘city as a system’.<sup>15</sup> Hence, it looked at the interlinkage between urban structures such as service provision and governance mechanisms, and how populations access these, as well as how governance actors and citizens engage with each other. In order to do this, the ABA Ubari focused on 1) service access and provision, and 2) governance mechanisms and stakeholders, from both a governance perspective as well as a citizen’s perspective.

Primary data collection took place in Libya between February and May 2021. In total, 210 surveys with individuals were conducted as well as 4 key informant interviews (KIIs) with service providers for electricity and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), 2 focus group discussions (FGDs) with health care providers, 1 FGDs with educational personnel, 1 FGD with social affairs workers, 11 KIIs with governance actors, and 20 community KIIs.

For more information on the full research design, please refer to the *Terms of Reference (ToR)* on the REACH resource centre.<sup>16</sup> The research objectives that guided the ABA of Ubari Baladiya were as follows:

### 1. Define and profile the primary geographic areas within the municipality of Ubari

- 1.1. Identify and map official administrative neighbourhood boundaries, community areas
- 1.2. Map locations and assess geographic distribution of basic services in each neighbourhood, focusing on schools, health services, social gathering areas, WASH systems, and access to electricity
- 1.3. Identify population groups in each identified neighbourhood

### 2. Assess operationality and accessibility of key service infrastructure, specifically education centres, health centres, electricity and WASH, and social security mechanisms

- 2.1. Identify structural problems that restrict access to services, such as distance and operationality,

and identify service catchment areas accordingly<sup>17</sup>

- 2.2 Identify key stakeholders in each respective service area

### 3. Assess horizontal and vertical social cohesion dynamics and challenges in Ubari

- 3.1. Services and access to governance mechanisms
- 3.2. Identify traditional and bureaucratic governance stakeholders and decision-making mechanisms
  - 3.2.1. Identify decision-making mechanisms, from a bottom-up and top-down perspective, at the community and baladiya level
  - 3.2.2. Identify international and national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) providing assistance in Ubari

### 4. Measure citizen perceptions of service provision and access, and governance mechanisms

- 4.1. Map service catchment areas and movement on a muhallah level based on where citizens access health and education services.
- 4.2. Identify governance actors that are the most accessible to citizens and that they feel most represented by.

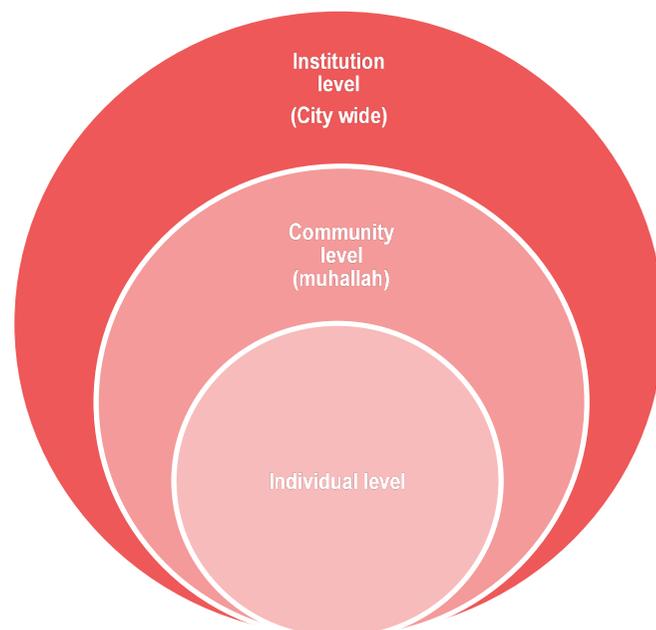
## Methodology

### Population of interest

In order to understand ‘the city as a system’ approach, research must integrate perspectives of the local population, local authorities, and service providers. To do so, key service infrastructure and governance mechanisms were explored in FGDs and KIIs with service providers, and formal (bureaucratic) and informal (traditional) authorities, while citizen perceptions of identified systems and mechanisms were measured in the citizen survey. As such, the relevant units of measurement applied during the ABA were at the institution level, community (muhallah) level, and the individual level. Findings from each component were assessed against each other (i.e.

what services are available and how do individuals engage access and rate their quality).

Figure 1. Overview of units of measurement



A second important component of this ABA was mapping the demographic distribution of population groups across Ubari’s muhallahs and understanding the differences per area in terms of access to services and governance mechanisms based on geographic or social barriers. Ubari consists of four muhallahs, however for the ABA and the comparative analysis, the city centre was split into two separate areas, Ubari city centre and Al Shareb (East and West), to reflect the socioeconomic and cultural differences. Hence, this ABA will be referring to the following five muhallahs throughout the report: Al Mashru, Al Shareb (East and West), Ubari city centre, Al Dissa, and Al Hattiya.

## Sampling Framework

In order to achieve the objectives described previously, eight different data collection tools were deployed combining both quantitative and qualitative tools. For a full overview of the tools and

sampling frame please refer to **Annex 1**. The qualitative methods employed to map Ubari’s boundaries and muhallahs as well as key service infrastructure included KIIs and FGDs to identify governance mechanisms and stakeholders in the city; and to collect information about social cohesion dynamics and vulnerabilities such as low-income and special needs or disabilities. The quantitative component was used to inform how Ubari’s citizens engage with the identified service infrastructure and governance mechanisms; applying a bottom-up lens to the ‘city as a system’. The individual survey thus not only assessed the population’s opinion about their access to services and governance mechanisms, but also their trust in it.

Direct observation was used to map key education and health infrastructure in all neighbourhoods, including type (public vs. private), the facility names, and their operational status. Following the direct observation of service infrastructure, one FGD was carried out for each of the following three service categories: health care, education, and social services. FGD participants discussed the most pressing issues, challenges, and development priorities for each service category in Ubari. The respondents of the FGD were healthcare providers, teachers, and staff from the municipal Social Affairs Office. Furthermore, the service KIIs focused on basic utilities in Ubari, such as electricity, water, and sanitation with the main objective being to understand the challenges with regards to providing these services, where the primary issues are located, how the infrastructure works, and what the respective development priorities are. In total, four service KIIs were conducted, two with senior employees from the local office of the General Electricity Company of Libya (GECOL) and two with the local office of the General Water and Waste Company (GWWC).

To understand social cohesion and governance, an FGD was conducted with an equal number of participants from each muhallah. The FGDs focused on neighbourhood specific challenges, social cohesion dynamics, including opportunities for improvement and existing systems in place that facilitate social cohesion and community protection, as well as development priorities and representativeness of governance actors. This was further triangulated with 20 community KIIs and 11 governance KIIs including municipal council members, social council leaders, and community leaders/mukhtars. During governance KIIs, participants were inquired about governance mechanisms, engagement between governance stakeholders and citizens, social protection mechanisms, needs of various population groups, and development priorities in Ubari per muhallah as well as at a city-wide level.

Lastly, 200 citizen surveys were carried out to assess population perceptions of access to services, access to governance and security, and trust in existing mechanisms. The survey addressed citizen's engagement with services and systems in place. In order to facilitate the mapping of service catchment areas, respondents were asked where they access services. The respondents were sampled using a non-probability quota sampling with equal representation of gender distribution and muhallahs.

## Context

### Geography and location

Ubari (Awbari) is a small oasis town located in the southern Fezzan region. Ubari is situated in the Idehan Ubari of the Sahara Desert, an erg or sand sea of approximately 58,000 square kilometres. There are multiple oasis lakes in the vicinity of Ubari.<sup>18</sup>

The region's desert climate is among the harshest in the world, with short and warm winters, and extremely dry and hot summers. In the hottest summer months, the temperature will often surpass 40 degrees Celsius, while even in its wettest months the town is unlikely to witness more than 8mm of rainfall, with the largest part of the year passing by without any precipitation at all.<sup>19</sup>

The municipality is roughly 370 kilometres east of Ghat and 200 kilometres southwest of Sebha. Along the road to Sebha, travellers pass through a long string of smaller municipalities that make up the Wadi Al Hayaa valley.<sup>20</sup>

### Demography and social cohesion

Ubari has a population of roughly 35,000 people of various ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, and displacement status.<sup>21</sup> The population consists of three main groups, namely Tuareg, Tebu, and Ahali. The Ahali, also known as 'Fezzana', are Arabs with no tribal affiliation.<sup>22</sup> The Tebu and Tuareg are non-Arab ethnic minorities in Libya.

### Socioeconomic conditions

Similar to the rest of the Fezzan region, Ubari is severely affected by the economic crisis Libya has been going through since 2014, where recovery is yet to happen.<sup>23,24</sup> Economic conditions have been further aggravated by COVID-19 with 58% of households in Ubari reporting their place

of work closed due to the pandemic.<sup>25</sup>

### Security conditions

In 2014, clashes broke out between members of the Tuareg and Tebu tribes.<sup>26</sup> Today, these populations co-exist in Ubari in a 'cold peace', following the violent conflict between the two tribes that lasted from 2014 to 2016.<sup>27</sup> In 2020, 12% of households reported communal violence as one of their main safety and security concerns, the highest in the Fezzan region emphasizing the continued need for building community trust and social cohesion.<sup>28</sup>

### Demographics

#### Neighborhoods, roads and surroundings

Ubari consists of five muhallahs: Al Hattiya, Al Dissa, Ubari city centre, Al Mashru and Al Shareb (East and West). These muhallahs are made up of multiple neighbourhoods.<sup>29</sup> A reference table of the neighbourhood names can be found in **Annex 2**. As illustrated in map 1, the muhallahs are scattered, with Al Hattiya, Al Dissa, Al Mashru, geographically disconnected from Ubari city centre. Understanding these geographical characteristics and historical developments, as well as how the areas relate to each other in terms of service infrastructure and governance, is essential to informing appropriate and conflict sensitive programme development.

#### Overview of each muhallah

Operationality and accessibility of key service infrastructure, specifically education opportunities, health centres, electricity, and WASH varies across muhallahs. Similarly, respondents' perceptions of their living conditions and their access to services and these quality vary. Most notably, the majority of respondents in the citizen survey, which was developed to measure perceptions of the community and understanding trust in governance, rated the living conditions (50% of respondents) and health care service (79% of respondents) conditions poor in their muhallah (n = 210), with the vast majority of Al Mashru citizens rating the conditions of their muhallah poor (n = 42). In Al Mashru, 76% of respondents rated their living conditions poor, while 98% of respondents rated their health care services conditions poor.

## Al Dissa

Findings from the health and education FGDs highlighted that Al Dissa muhallah is suffering from weak general service provision – where public healthcare and education are considered below the quality of other muhallahs such as Ubari city centre. In general, 58% of respondents in the citizen survey rated their living conditions poor (n = 40). General living conditions were also reflected by 38% of respondents rating their housing conditions to be poor. Similarly, 58% rated public healthcare as poor and 23% rated public schools as poor. Interviews with community KIs supported this picture of the general service provision in Al Dissa with all community KIs reporting services to be of low quality or non-existent. However, together with Al Hattiya, Al Dissa is part of the two muhallahs with the fewest electricity cuts, with only 8% of respondents in Al Dissa

reporting electricity cuts. Furthermore, all the community KIs highlighted very poor economic conditions in the muhallah with employment opportunities being limited to agriculture.

The security level in the Al Dissa muhallah is reportedly higher than in the Ubari baladiya. 31% of Al Dissa respondents in the citizens survey reported that the security situation within their muhallah was good compared to only 11% of Al Dissa respondents giving the same rating for Ubari baladiya. All community KIs also highlighted the security situation within the muhallah as being good. When asked about the security situation at day and night, one community KI said that “There are no problems with movement in terms of safety and security during the day, but transport poses a problem, due to the lack of fuel.” Hence, highlighting that the main hindrances to movement during the day are not security-related but rather economic.

Map 1. Ubari baladiya and muhallahs

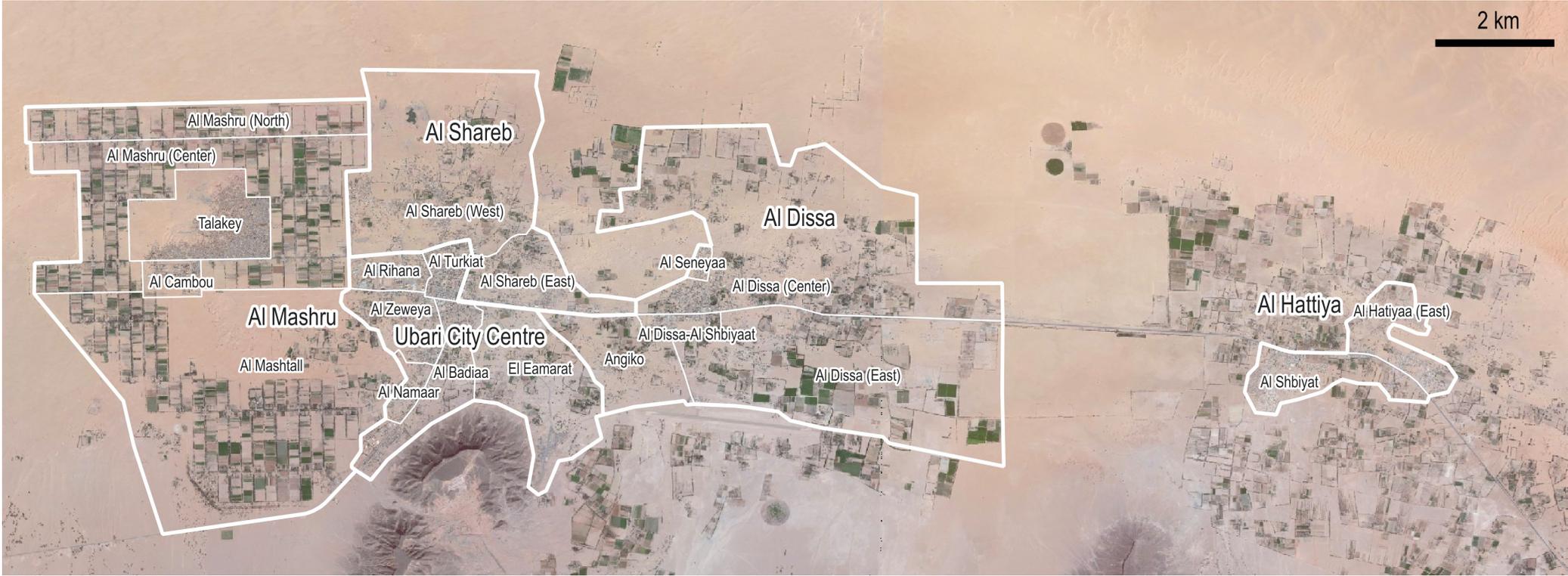
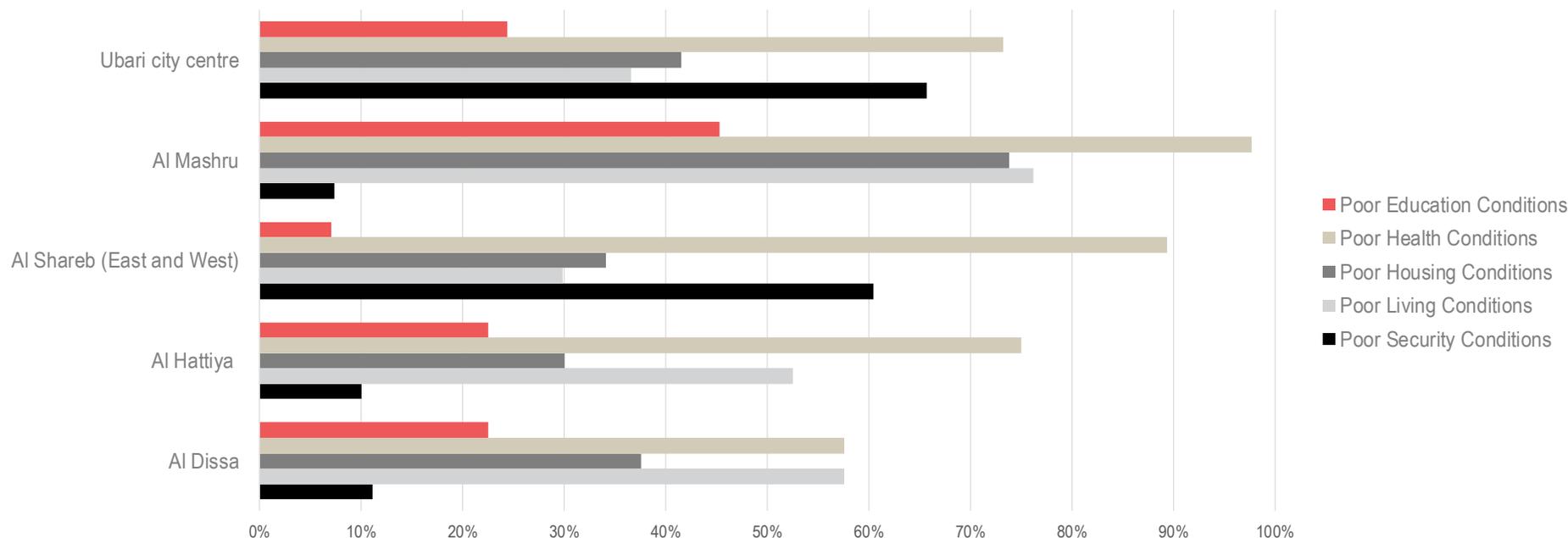


Figure 2. % of citizens reporting poor conditions, by muhallah



## Al Hattiya

Together with Al Disa, and Al Mashru, Al Hattiya is geographically disconnected from Ubari city centre making service provisions sparser or non-existent. This was also reflected among respondents of the citizen survey respondents reports of overall living conditions in their muhallah. 30% of respondents in Al Hattiya reported housing conditions to be poor, 35% of the respondents rated the conditions of public healthcare facilities to be poor, and 23% reporting poor condition of the public school in their muhallah (n = 40). These issues were also echoed by the three interviewed community KIs. Community KIs also highlighted that there are no job opportunities in Al Hattiya and respondents must go to Ubari city centre for livelihood opportunities. 13% of respondents reported electricity cuts, which together with Al Disa are the muhallahs that are the least affected by electricity cuts.

38% of respondents considered the security situation in Al Hattiya to be at a good level, making it one of the three muhallahs along with Al Mashru (44%) and Al Disa (31%) where respondents

reported a good security situation.

## Al Mashru

Basic service infrastructure and living conditions in Al Mashru are among the worst in Ubari baladiya. 76% of respondents rated their living conditions to be poor highlighting respondents' concerns regarding the quality of their living conditions (n = 42). This coupled with 74% of respondents rating housing conditions poor, Al Mashru respondents highlighted the muhallah as having the worst conditions. All respondents surveyed rated public healthcare facilities as poor. Findings from the FGDs with healthcare personnel clarified that Al Mashru public hospital is open for vaccination, however, no other services are provided and citizens have to go to Ubari city centre or access public healthcare outside Ubari. 15% of respondents also reported that they cannot access healthcare at all. 45% of respondents rated public schools' as poor in Al Mashru,

yet again, highlighting the low quality of service provision according to respondents.

95% of respondents in Al Mashru reported electricity cuts, of which mostly happen over the Summer. According to respondents, all muhallahs in Ubari have running water in their homes, however, Al Mashru is the only muhallah where the water is not drinkable in all locations. 57% of respondents reported that the water coming from the tap in their home was not drinkable. Al Mashru is also among one of the worst affected muhallahs in terms of water outages, with 71% of respondents reporting such disruptions, and 73% of these respondents reporting that the outages were affecting them for more than 15 hours per week.

Despite low service provision and limited economic opportunities in Al Mashru, respondents reported that they felt safe within Al Mashru during the day. 44% of Al Mashru respondents considered the security situation within their muhallah to be good, the highest reported across all muhallahs. However, one community KI reported that this was only the case during the day, and that there were more risks at night.

### **Al Shareb (East and West)**

Al Shareb (East and West) are the areas of Ubari city centre that are to the East and West of the actual city centre. The distinction was made to reflect the socioeconomic and cultural differences of the two areas. It also became apparent in the citizens survey i.e. with citizens of Al Shareb (East and West) having to travel to Ubari city centre to access public healthcare and schools. 32% of respondents rated education in their muhallah as poor, however, it is worth noting that 38% of respondents did not know of public schools in their muhallah and reported children going to school in Ubari city centre instead.

Al Shareb (East and West) respondents are reportedly the most affected by electricity cuts together with respondents of Al Mashru. 91% of respondents from Al Shareb (East and West) reported electricity cuts (n = 47), and also reported that electricity cuts were more prevalent over the Summer. Similar trends to the Al Mashru muhallah were observed for access to water, where all households have access to running water in their homes, however, in Al Shareb (East and West) 66% of respondents reported water outages. Among the respondents who reported water outages, 84% reported the issue to affect them during 2 to 5 hours per week.

Only 5% of respondents of Al Shareb (East and West) reported feeling safe within their muhallah,

whereas 60% do not feel safe. Thus, Al Shareb is the muhallah where the fewest respondents feel safe and one of the muhallahs with the most respondents being concerned for the security situation and ranking it as poor, together with respondents of Ubari city centre, where 66% of respondents reported the security situation as poor (n = 41). Two of the community KIs interviewed in Al Shareb highlighted the security situation to be good.

### **Ubari City centre**

While respondents of other muhallahs reported having to go to Ubari city centre for public service provision such as health and education 73% of respondents rated public healthcare facilities as poor. On the other hand, 24% of respondents reported the schooling as good, which is the highest among muhallahs (n = 41). Electricity cuts affect Ubari city centre frequently with 83% of respondents reporting being affected. Together with Al Shareb (East and West) and Al Mashru, Ubari city centre is among the muhallahs the worst affected by electricity cuts, with 73% of respondents affected. Among the respondents who reported electricity cuts, 77% of affected respondents reported the power cuts to last between 2 to 5 hours per week.

Despite having reported better living conditions than in other muhallahs, the security situation reported by respondents was the poorest among Ubari's muhallahs, with 66% of respondents reporting the security situation to be poor, which constituted the highest percentage across all five muhallahs.

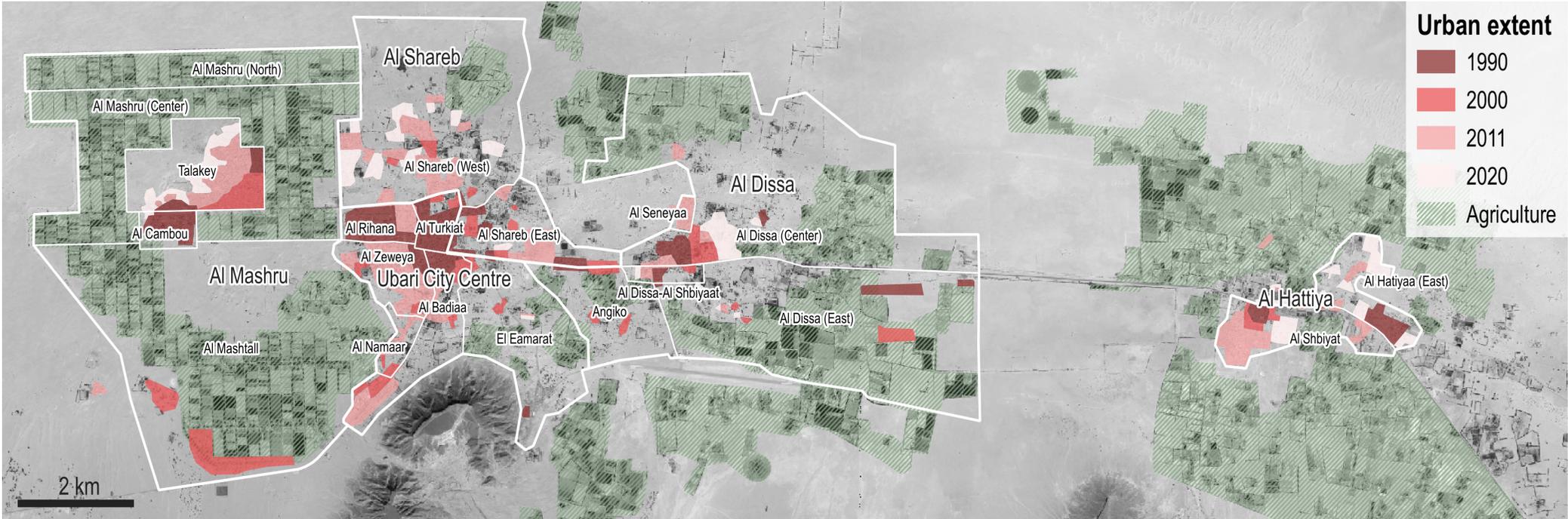
## Urban growth

Ubari has witnessed significant urban growth since the 1990s.<sup>30</sup> Urban growth did not progress from the centre to the peripheral muhallahs, but parallel and gradually in each muhallah. The areas with the most considerable urban expansion over the last 30 years are Al Shareb (East and West), and Al Mashru (see map 2). Areas within the city centre, such as the Al Turkiat neighbourhood, have faced considerable population growth over the years (see map 2).

Statements of KIs overlapped with analysis of satellite imagery of urban growth and basic utility networks, illustrate the stagnation of infrastructural development since the February revolution of 2011. Areas that developed after this period, mostly on the urban periphery, as well as areas with stark population growth, are facing the consequences of either the absence of infrastructure or lack of infrastructural capacity to cope with over usage.

Due to the stagnation of infrastructural development, areas that came to existence or grew significantly in the last 20 years, are often not officially connected to water or electricity networks. In discussions on basic infrastructure of water and electricity networks, a distinction is made between officially and 'randomly' connected areas. The latter refers to a type of connection that has been constructed without the official approval, regulation, or planning of the supervising company (in this case the General Electricity Company, the Water and Sanitation Authorities, or the municipal Project Development Office). Random connections are generally constructed by residents themselves with support of private companies, using privately purchased materials, often in extension of the official public network.

Map 2. Urban growth since 1990s



## Mobility: Road infrastructure, fuel, and transport

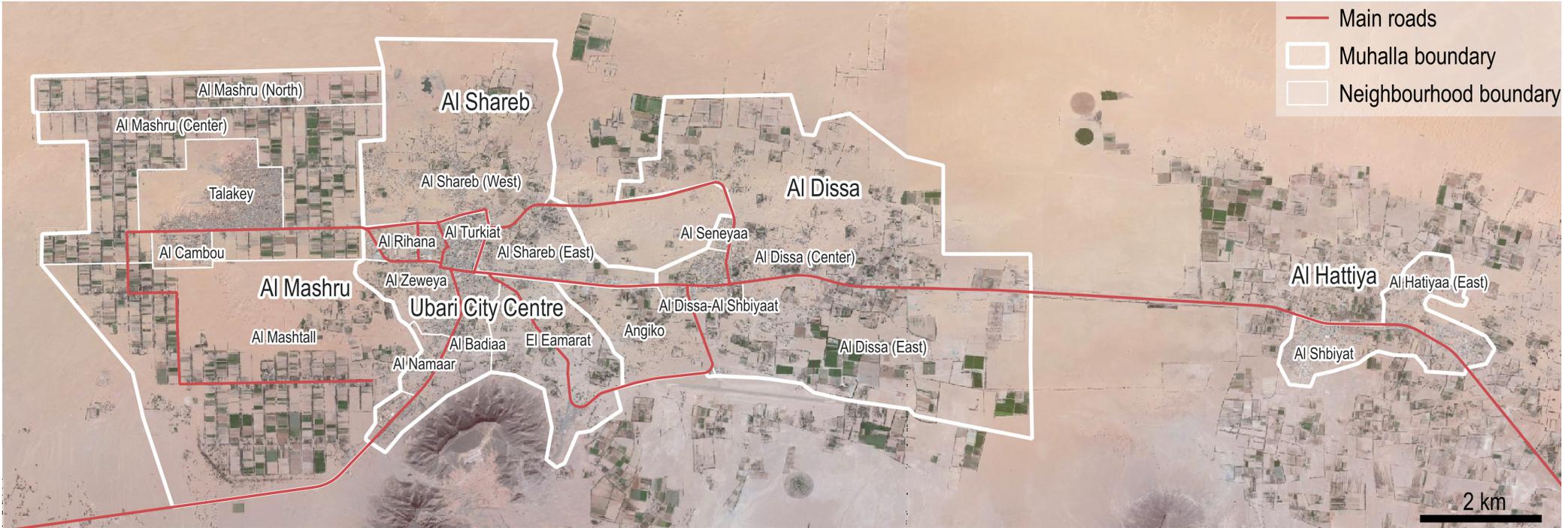
Participants of the mapping focus group discussion (MFGD) identified six main roads in and around Ubari, as highlighted in map 3. These roads are the only way to travel in or out of Ubari with the airport being closed since 2015.<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, the area is entirely dependent on this transport modality to access supplies as well as services that are not available or only limitedly available in Ubari. One health KI indicated that travel between Ubari and Sebha is complicated due to damage to public roads, which may negatively impact the well-being of Ubari’s residents.

Difficulties traveling are amplified by the barriers to accessing affordable fuel. South of Libya has been facing a fuel crisis for years, with a lack of subsidized fuel supplies and most of the fuel being sold through the parallel market, significantly increasing the cost.<sup>32</sup> Respondents across all data components indicated the difficulties and challenges faced due to the lack of (subsidized)

fuel. Due to the commercial focus on Ubari City Centre, the geographical distance can complicate access to services and governance mechanisms for populations living in the periphery.

The Airport in Ubari remains closed, but agreements and plans are made for the reopening of the airport in the near future. Ubari Airport has undergone several closures and reopenings over the years, making air travel largely unreliable. Civil society has led several initiatives for maintenance and upkeep of the airport in preparation of the airport reopening over the years, including cleaning campaigns and reconstruction efforts.<sup>33</sup> The closure of the airport limits access to and from the remote region, for essential materials and supplies to operate services in Ubari, as well as for people looking to access education, health, or other types of assistance in other regions or outside Libya.

Map 3. Main roads in Ubari



## Vertical and horizontal social cohesion

### Local governance mechanisms

Local governance mechanisms in Ubari baladiya consist of both formal and traditional governance stakeholders. Formal governance stakeholders, or bureaucratic stakeholders, include all official authorities and governing bodies that have legal jurisdiction and are formally responsible over aspects regarding governance of a certain region. This includes the municipal council as well as muhallah councils/mukhtars. While the social councils are the traditional governance bodies in Ubari, and have authority based on cultural or social history; but do not have any official legal jurisdiction.

The Ubari municipal council consists of seven members, including one female seat. The municipal council was elected after democratically held elections in April 2019.<sup>34</sup> Frequent public announcements and updates that concern Ubari municipality can be found on the municipality's public Facebook profile. The municipality holds different departments, among which are the department of Social Affairs, the department of Women's Affairs, the Security Office, and the Project Development office. Every muhallah (Ubari City Centre, Al Mashru, Al Dissa, and Al Hattiya) has its own muhallah mukhtar, or local council, which is a bureaucratic governance stakeholder on the muhallah level.<sup>35</sup> They are a part of the municipal administration, however, they do not have any executive authority.<sup>36</sup> Due to its proximity to the population, the muhallah mukhtar plays a key role acting as a link between citizens and authorities, providing political representation and advocating for local needs and issues related to availability of services.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, the muhallah mukhtar is a primary stakeholder to help obtain and maintain access to populations, as well as to understand local needs and challenges. The muhallah mukhtar generally holds responsibility over civil and administrative matters, such as the certification of legal documentation. Occasionally, the mukhtar reportedly also provides support, in coordinating operations and procedures for cash and local aid distributions, in collaboration with CSOs or NGOs.

Ubari also has five social councils, for Ahali, Tuareg, and Tebu. Social councils are traditional authorities, made up of the family elders and notables within each tribe or community.<sup>38,39</sup> As it is common in Libya, social councils in Ubari play a key role in peace and reconciliation, and hold the

responsibility in negotiating and resolving inter-tribal conflicts and social disputes. Social councils reportedly also act as a link between their community or tribe and bureaucratic authorities, and partake in political dialogue and decision-making on behalf of them.

Civil society reportedly plays an important role in Ubari. Across data collection components, the role of civil society organizations and local initiatives was frequently highlighted in light of service provision and peacebuilding and reconciliation.

### Horizontal social cohesion

Horizontal social cohesion can be understood as the readiness of population groups and communities to cooperate with each other (intra communal social cohesion) and with other communities (inter-communal social cohesion).

Following the inter-communal conflict that lasted from 2014 to 2018, the three main population groups in Ubari have reportedly co-existed in a so-called state of 'cold peace'. This implies that while the situation is stable, social tensions between the population groups remain and may possibly flare up. Accordingly, community KIs across all muhallahs highlighted the importance of peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts to improve intercommunal relations between population groups in the city, as well as within specific neighbourhoods. Several community KIs across all geographic areas indicated that the consolidation of peaceful coexistence should be considered as the foundation to development and reconstruction in the area. One community KI stated that the implementation of development projects in absence of peace and stability, can potentially lead to an increase of tensions.

When inquired how social relations can be improved within their muhallah or in the city, the responses of community KIs illustrate the need for an intersectional and integrative approach, encompassing societal, infrastructural, economic, and political factors.

First of all, community KIs reported the need for improving mutual understanding for cultural differences between communities, suggesting this could be achieved through dialogues and awareness raising sessions with citizens from different population groups. Community KIs also suggested that the organizing of more social events such as festivals and sports activities could contribute to improving intercommunal ties. The weekly market in Al Dissa muhallah was one example of an event and location where people from all groups come together on a

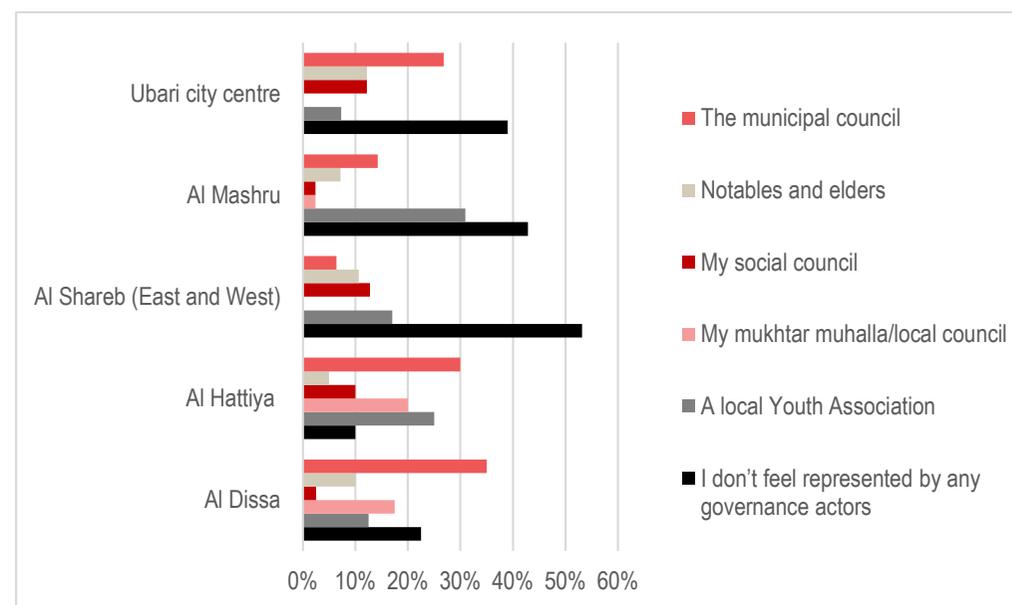
frequent basis. Both governance KIs and community KIs highlighted the valuable contribution of sports events towards social cohesion. Recent sports activities include a local marathon, an equestrian competition, and regular football events where local teams competed against each other. Governance KIs and community KIs alike explained that sports events are particularly valuable for improving community relations and breaking away from social and cultural divisions, as sports activities are attended by all population groups in society, regardless of origin, tribal or political affiliation. That said, due to cultural and religious dynamics, sports events are usually not attended by women.

However, women attend other public social events, and only 4% of the female respondents in the citizen survey (n = 101) reported that they never attended any public social events. The inclusion of women in future events, as well as awareness raising sessions on women's emancipation and rights, were also reported by several governance and community KIs to help improve social cohesion. Community KIs reported that the total number of social activities and events had gone down over the past year, due to COVID-19 outbreak. Other challenging factors in organizing activities were the lack of capacity or budget. All type of events, including dialogue and awareness raising sessions, sports activities, and cultural festivals, were reportedly mostly organized by or with the support of youth associations, sports clubs, and local CSOs. Community KIs from Al Disa highlighted the need to assure the fair geographical spread of activities overall muhallahs instead of primarily focusing on Ubari city centre, to improve access for all population groups in the municipality.

Secondly, community KIs highlighted benefits of eliminating the competition over both economic resources as well as over service infrastructure and development. KIs explained the importance of improved access to services, as well as the equal distribution of infrastructural development projects, as lack of services and unequal distribution across muhallahs and neighbourhoods could lead to increased tensions caused by competition over limited resources. It was repeatedly highlighted by community KIs that the improvement of living conditions for all population groups could ease tensions and improve tolerance and acceptance.

Accordingly, throughout the programme design and implementation phase, it is crucial that planned activities are geographically distributed across all muhallahs and population groups, with consideration for area-specific challenges and needs. In a similar vein, KIs reported the need for

Figure 3. Types of governance actors that respondents feel represented by on a local political level, by muhallah



improved economic investments and job opportunities.

## Vertical social cohesion

Vertical social cohesion refers to the readiness of population groups and governance stakeholders to cooperate with each other.<sup>40</sup> Several community KIs reported that diversifying political representation could improve intercommunal ties, illustrating the close relations between vertical and horizontal social cohesion. Community KIs stated that political dialogue sessions as well as equal distribution of decision-making positions in the municipality could increase participation.

Vertical social cohesion in Ubari remains weak. 34% of respondents (n = 210) reported that they do not feel represented by any governance body or actor at a local political level, most notably 53% of respondents in Al Shareb (East and West) (n = 47) and 43% of respondents in Al Mashru (n = 42). 22% of respondents reported that they feel represented by the municipal council at a local political level, followed by a local youth association (19% of respondents), and notables

and elders (9% of respondents), the social council (8% of respondents), and lastly, the muhallah mukhtar/local council. However, vertical cohesion is not uniform within Ubari baladiya.

Despite the municipal council providing representation for the largest group of respondents from the citizen survey, this is not the case in Al Shareb (East and West) and Al Mashru. Instead local youth organisations play a significant role in Al Mashru (34% of respondents), Al Hattiya (25% of respondents), and Al Shareb (East and West - 17% of respondents). While in Al Hattiya (20% of respondents – n = 40) and Al Dissa (18% of respondents), the local mukhtar muhallah/local council play a role in representing respondents, while not at all in the other muhallahs. Hence, these findings present different arenas for cohesion improvements within Ubari.

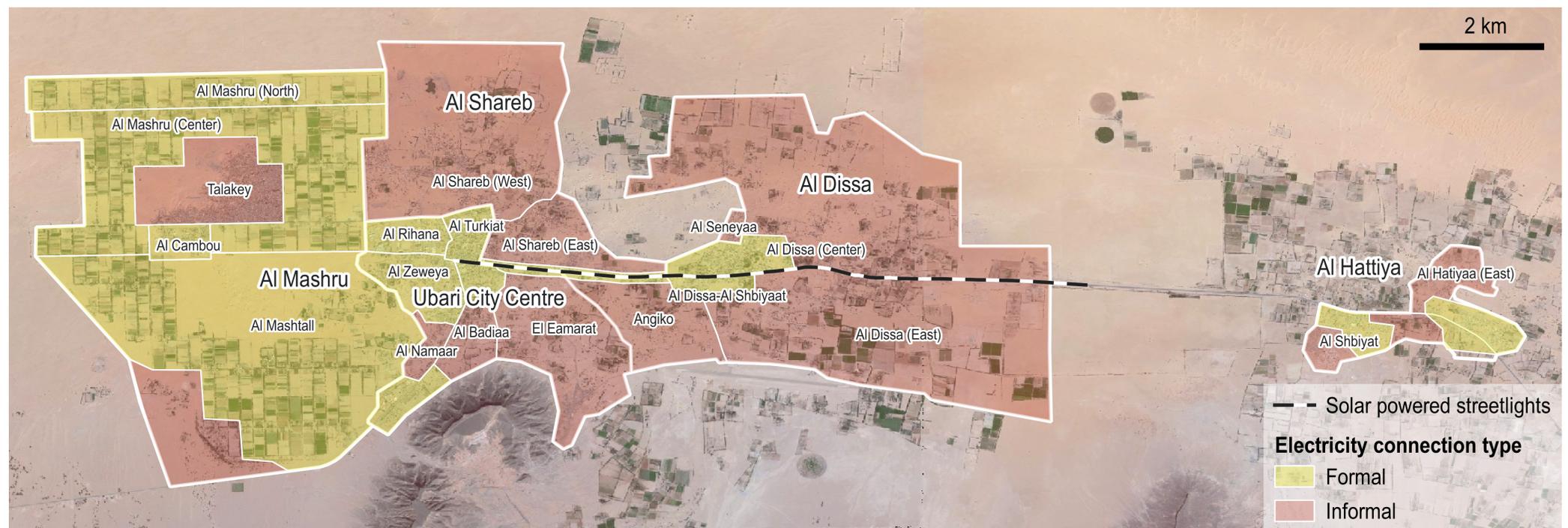
Furthermore, 26% reported that citizens can talk to their local council, social council, or municipal council if they have a concern about the situation in their muhallah. However, 14% of respondents

in Al Mashru refrained from answering this question as they considered it too sensitive. Hence, reflecting the strained vertical social cohesion in the muhallah, similarly, when asking about if respondents trust their municipalities to provide them with basic services, 50% of respondents do not want to answer the question.

Both female and male respondents in general reported the same governance actor or body as representing them at a local political level. However, most notably 55% of women in Ubari city centre (n = 20) did not feel represented at all, while all women in Al Dissa felt represented (n = 20), reflecting that gender dynamics within Ubari can differ among muhallahs and sense of representation varies.

Beyond representation at a political level, respondents were asked about who they would go to if they had a complaint about a service. In general, 68% of respondents in Ubari do not trust

Map 4. Unofficial connections to the public electricity grid



their municipality to provide them with basic services (n = 210). The low levels of representation and expectations from respondents to their municipality was also reflected when asked about where they would go to address different service issues. If there are challenges with water, sewage, waste, and/or electricity services, respondents would go to either the providers or pay a private contractor (50% of respondents). While addressing healthcare services related issues, respondents would raise their needs with the facility manager (56%), and in order to address education needs respondents would go directly to the public-school administration (85%).

## Services

### Electricity

#### Characteristics

The electricity in Ubari is sourced from the Ubari Gas Turbine Power Plant, a 640-MW capacity gas turbine power plant operated by crude oil.<sup>41</sup> The construction of the power plant was commissioned in 2007, but construction efforts had to be suspended on several occasions related to deterioration of the security situation following the February revolution in 2011. By 2017, construction of the power plant was completed. Two out of four turbines of 160-MW each were reportedly operationalized by local experts and connected to the power grid in 2018, to help alleviate rolling blackouts in the region. The electricity KIs stated that the gas turbine power plant is currently still operating at half of its capacity, with only two out of four combustion turbines feeding into the public electricity grid.

Electricity KIs indicated that Ubari has three types of power stations: one high voltage station; two medium-voltage 66/11-KV transmission stations (one in the city centre and one in Al Dissa); and 33 low-voltage 11/0.4-KV distribution stations, which distribute the power supplies throughout the city.

All neighbourhoods are reportedly connected to the public electricity network, but houses in neighbourhoods that saw much uncontrolled urban growth are largely connected to the public grid 'randomly', i.e. without the permission, regulation, or supervision from GECOL or the municipal office for Project Development (as explained under 'urban growth'). A geographical overview of 'randomly' connected neighbourhoods can be found in map 4 above.

The development and expansion of the electricity grid came to a standstill on several occasions after the February revolution in 2011, due to deteriorating security conditions and the forced evacuation of international staff working on the Ubari Power Plant.<sup>42</sup> As such, the infrastructural capacity and electricity network has not developed along with the urban expansion and population growth Ubari witnessed throughout the years. To cope with the lack of infrastructural development, citizens living in peripheral areas have increasingly connected their residences to the public grid on their own initiative with the help of private companies. Using privately purchased (or otherwise acquired) material such as wires and cables, residents tap electricity from the public power grid. Households in residencies and areas that are randomly connected to the electricity grid do not pay for electricity and the electricity company cannot disconnect them. According to electricity KIs, the inability to disconnect randomly constructed connections had to do with organizational security risks related to the population's large weapon caches.

#### Streetlight infrastructure

There are very few areas in Ubari with operational street lights or even existing infrastructure. Electricity KIs reported that there are street lights along the main road around Al Hattiya and Al Dissa, but the system is old and needs general maintenance. In 2020, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) constructed a solar powered streetlight system along the main entrance road between the airport and the city centre. According to UNDP, this has significantly changed the quality of life of residents in this area, since they were given the opportunity to have businesses remain open after dark and move around more freely during the night.<sup>43</sup>

#### Challenges

Like in the rest of Libya and especially Fezzan, residents of Ubari face frequent power outages. There are different causes to the power outages in Ubari. The available supply cannot meet the electricity demand in the region. To manage the distribution of the electricity supplies and save the network from collapse, GECOL imposes frequent rolling blackouts, also known as rotational load shedding. Frequency of rolling blackouts reportedly increases during summer, as the demand for electricity goes up as the temperatures rise, while supplies remain the same. Electricity services KIs reported the rotational load shedding affects the whole city equally. During winter, rolling blackouts occur, but not as frequently as during summer. GECOL provides daily updates on

total hours of rolling blackouts per region on their Facebook page, as well as contact details for residents around Libya to report outages.

Electricity service KIs also indicated that failure of constructions and overloading of the network lead to additional outages: areas with random connections to the electricity grid reportedly face more electricity outages than those with official connections. Accordingly, this causes a geographical disparity in frequency of power outages during winter months.

The impact of power outages and the absence of reliable electricity permeate every aspect of life in Ubari and are the root cause of a lot of service capacity gaps, as businesses and service facilities may face difficulties continuing operations without electricity. While generators can be purchased and used to cope with frequent electricity outages, this solution offers only limited possibilities for relief in Ubari, due to the difficulties accessing affordable fuel.<sup>44</sup>

## Development priorities and plans

Recent solar energy projects launched by UNDP, such as the construction of solar powered street lights<sup>45</sup> and installation of solar panels in the General Hospital,<sup>46</sup> demonstrate the benefits of alternative energy sources in Ubari and South Libya as a whole. A recent study published by the Elsevier public Health Emergency Collection showed that Libya has among the highest solar irradiations in the world, with levels reportedly sufficient to feed both Libya and Europe with solar energy.<sup>47</sup>

The Sebha ABA found that random connections complicated maintenance of the electricity grid, as well as the development of improvement plans, due to a lack of comprehensive maps of how random networks are laid out.<sup>48</sup> Based on the similarities between the context and situation, these difficulties should also be anticipated in Ubari.

## Governance stakeholders

Electricity provision in Ubari and across other baladiyas in Libya falls under the responsibility of GECOL, which is under the Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energies in Tripoli. Municipal development and reconstruction plans are generally coordinated between the local GECOL office, the ministry, the project development office, and municipal council of Ubari. The municipality

has the specific responsibility to support GECOL locally, but according to the electricity KIs the municipality currently has no capacity to do so. Both GECOL and the municipal council reported the lack of financial means to support the development of the electricity network locally.

In 2007, GECOL commissioned the Turkish company ENKA Teknik for the construction of the Ubari Gas Turbine Power Plant, in a turnkey project consisting of four 160-MW Siemens (the German company) combustion generators.<sup>49</sup> Unfortunately, after mobilization in 2010, the project was suspended on several occasions following the February revolution in 2011, due to deteriorating security situation. In 2017, the kidnapping of four ENKA employees led to the complete suspension of the project for the third time, as all Siemens and ENKA staff were evacuated.<sup>50</sup>

UNDP has implemented several infrastructure maintenance and development projects in recent years, including the construction of solar powered street lights and solar panels for the General Hospital.<sup>51</sup>

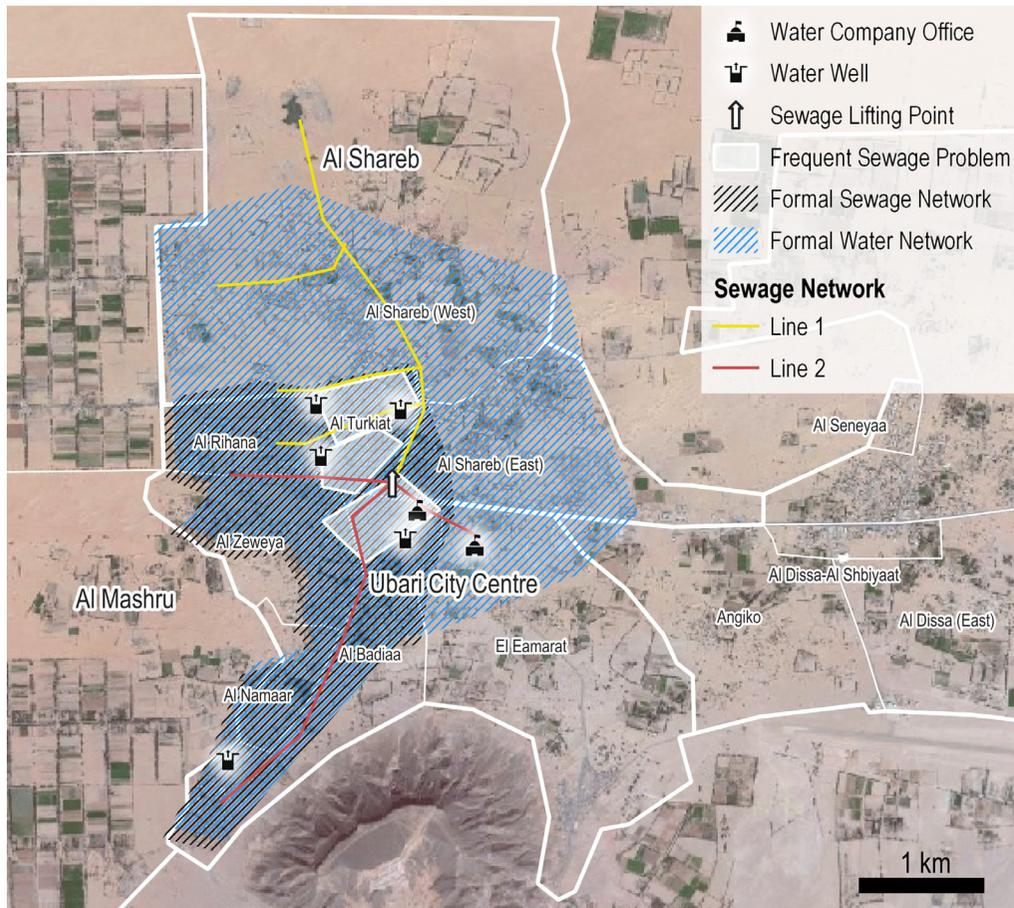
## Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

### Characteristics

#### Water network

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services KIs reported that only the main neighbourhoods in the Ubari city centre and Al Eamarat are connected to the public water network.

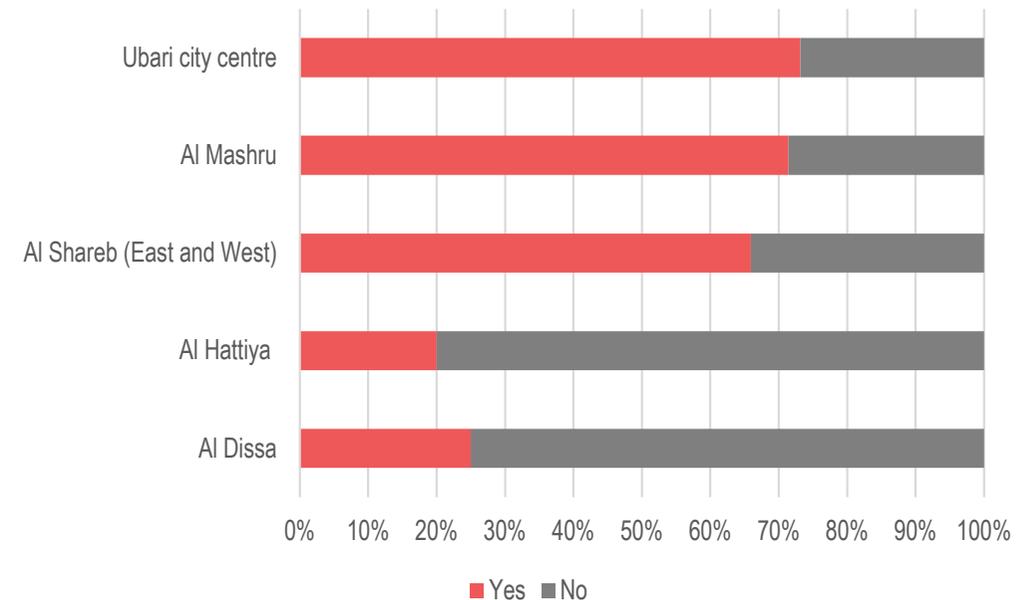
Map 5. Water and sewage network connected and unconnected areas



Other neighbourhoods are self-reliant for their water needs. Areas on the periphery of Ubari baladiya face the most difficulties in accessing water. Al Dissa and Al Hattiya are the furthest removed from the network. In areas that are not connected to the public grid, a local network is directly connected to the nearest water sources, or buildings are connected to the nearest water sources, which can be either agricultural wells or public wells.

Generally, households in Ubari can access water from the public network, however, some households do rely on a public water network that does not meet their needs. WASH service KIs reported that 75% of households in Ubari have access to water in their residence through the public water network, or through 'secondary sources'. 15% of the population is often not reached by the public water network due to leaks in the network (along the lines) or because of the weak pressure. These estimates were reaffirmed by the answers from the citizen's survey. The last 10% do not get water from the network because they are too far removed from the network or from secondary water sources. These estimates from WASH service KIs correspond with data from the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA), where 15% of households in Ubari reported

Figure 4. % of respondents experiencing public water network disruptions, by muhallah



that they rely on the public water network but either never or rarely had access in the past 7 days.<sup>52</sup>

Comparing accessibility to the water network with the water being possible to drink, however, show a different picture for respondents of Al Mashru, where 57% of respondents reported the water coming from the public water network not being possible to drink (n = 42). While 52% of respondents reported that they experience cuts from the public water network, however, it differs from muhallah to muhallah with Al Mashru respondents being the worst affected. 71% of respondents in Al Mashru reported water cuts, and 52% reported water cuts to last for more than 15 hours per week.

### Sewage and sanitation

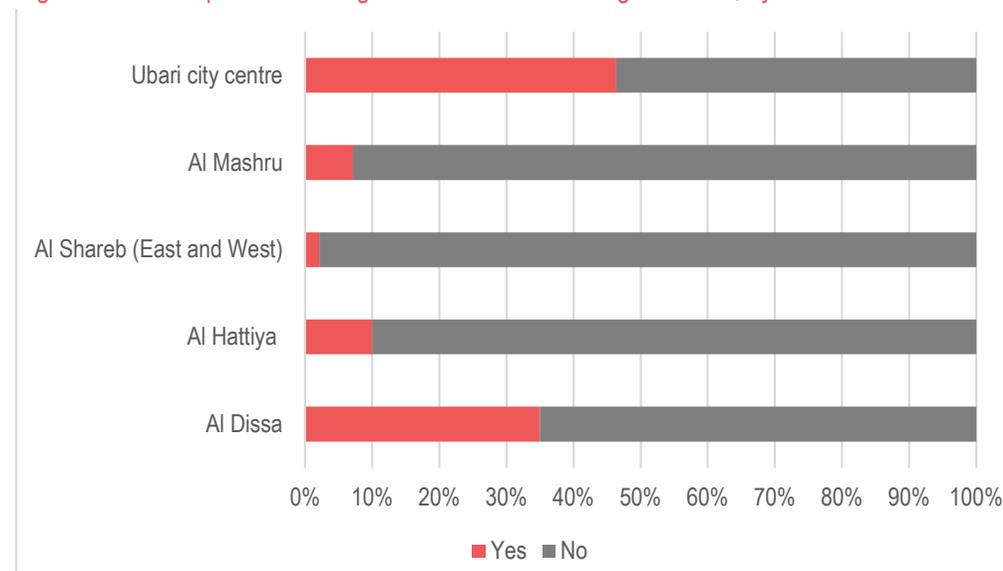
Only about half of the municipality is connected to the sewage network; the city centre and peripheral neighbourhoods. The only neighbourhoods covered are the Al Eamarat, the Turkish neighbourhood, the city centre, a small part of the municipal district (baladiya), and some parts of Al Dissa. Areas that are not connected include: Al Mashru, majority of Al Dissa, Zawiya, Al Shareb (East and West). 80% of respondents reported not being connected to the sewage system (n = 210). Areas that are not connected rely on black wells.<sup>53</sup> However, only 54% of respondents reported having a private black well. There is no operational treatment facility in Ubari, but black well water is disposed of in a sewage dump behind the Al Shareb neighbourhood. WASH KIs reported that there is only one municipal vacuum truck and one operated by a private company, hence presenting a large challenge for meeting respondents' daily sewage and sanitation needs.

The sewage drainage network consists of two lines – an old and a new pipeline. The old line covers the city centre and few neighbourhoods in the periphery up to the sewage dump in Al Shareb (East and West). The new line only covers residential buildings and is connected to the first line, however, they are constructed on different levels.

### Challenges

The operational failure and lack of functioning sewage networks was reportedly one of the major infrastructural challenges that required attention according to KIs across all data collection components. WASH KIs indicated that the water and sewage network is weak, due to the use of

Figure 5. % of respondents being connected to the sewage network, by muhallah



poor materials and equipment that have aged and gotten damaged. The network is approximately 40 years old and is not working properly anymore. Additionally, there is not enough budget to maintain the system and purchase materials with higher longevity.

Uncontrolled urban growth in Ubari city centre and the periphery have put increased pressure on the system. Especially in densely populated areas, the infrastructure cannot keep up with the population growth, thus resulting in damages to the network. Hence, when flooding occurs, the impact in densely populated areas is aggravated. The Al Eamarat neighbourhood has a big population, and consequently the network has gotten damaged.

### Development priorities and plans

Development priorities and plans for Ubari should be to expand the formal connection of the water network and build upon the sewage system, such that more respondents would have access to the public system and respondents WASH needs can be better met. Short-term development priorities particularly for sewage systems would be investments in additional vacuum trucks for black wells to ensure respondents' sanitation needs are met, while medium to long-term development priorities ought to be development of the sewage network such that more of Ubari's

respondents would be connected to the public sewage network, and that the network would be updated with higher quality materials with longer longevity.

### Governance stakeholders

According to WASH KIs, GWWC together with the city's infrastructure office is in close contact to discuss solutions for challenges respondents face, however, this is only at a preliminary scoping stage and discussions are happening without any implementation plan for any potential projects. The project implementation apparatus lies with the executive office, which hires private companies for any construction work. Despite such standstill in expanding the network, 50% of respondents would contact the public company or a service provider to fix any challenges with water, sewage, and/or waste (n = 210). However, 67% of respondents in Al Mashru reported that there is nowhere to go with these types of complaints (n = 42). Hence, it seems that there is a

disconnect of vertical social cohesion for respondents to be heard when encountering problems with public utilities such as water, sewage, and/or waste.

### Health

#### Characteristics

The health sector in Ubari is under a lot of strain and needs urgent improvement and support. Health KIs and data collection through direct observation showed that there are currently five public health facilities in Ubari, one of which is the General Hospital located in Ubari city centre, as illustrated in map 6. FGD participants reported that while some facilities need maintenance or construction work, public health clinics are generally in good condition. However, facilities are only partially or non-operational due to a lack of medical staff or equipment. According to FGD participants, the General Hospital is the only public facility currently providing health services.

Map 6. Health and education facilities



The General Hospital in Ubari was recently renovated by UNDP, providing the hospital with solar panels to mitigate the consequences of frequent electricity outages.<sup>54</sup>

Based on operational updates from the health sector from January 2021, Al Dissa healthcare is partially functioning, and Al Mashru public hospital is open for vaccination, while Al Hattiya public hospital and Ubari Polyclinic are closed. However, health FGD participants as well as community KIs reported that public health services in Al Mashru, Al Dissa, and Al Hattiya are either insufficient or non-existent.

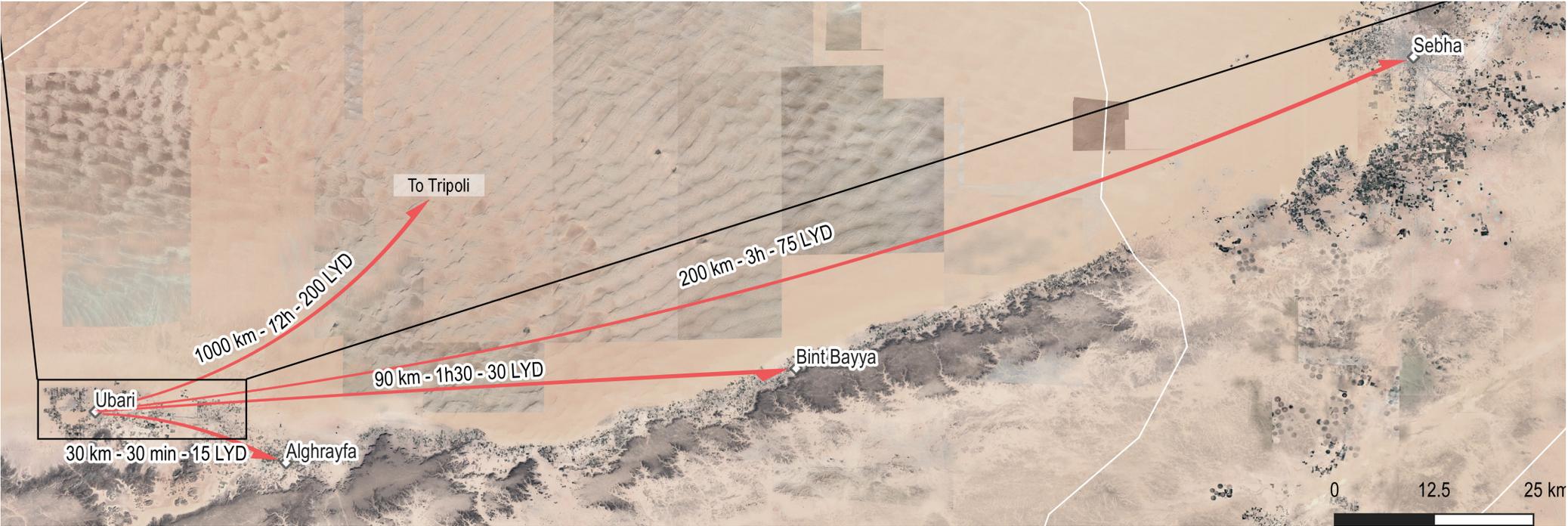
In terms of access requirements, FGD participants reported that everyone in Ubari can access public healthcare and that patients are not obliged to provide legal documents, except in case of childbirth in order to prove paternity. FGD participants highlighted that the same requirements apply to IDPs and migrants.

There are currently no COVID-19 isolation facilities in Ubari, nor is there any testing capacity. The nearest isolation centres can be found in Al Grefa and Bintt Baya municipality, at respectively about 30 and 60 kilometres from Ubari. For COVID-19 testing, samples can be taken in Ubari, but these have to be transported to Al Grefa, Bint Bayya, or Sebha for results. Transport of samples and personnel are complicated, due to barriers to accessing affordable fuel and transportation.

### Challenges

The most pressing issue in the public health sector in Ubari is the lack of resources, including medical and administrative staff, medical supplies and equipment, as well as medicine. Ubari General Hospital is currently the only location that has medical staff, albeit not sufficient to meet the needs of the population. FGD participants reported that the following services are currently unavailable or insufficiently available in Ubari: gynaecology and obstetrics; optometry

Map 7. Routes and price estimates



and ophthalmology; orthopedics; cardiology; oncology; and radiology. Furthermore, the blood bank in Ubari is currently non-operational. While the blood bank reportedly has sufficient beds and refrigerators, it is reportedly in need of trained medical staff and supplies, as well as donors.

## Lack of staff

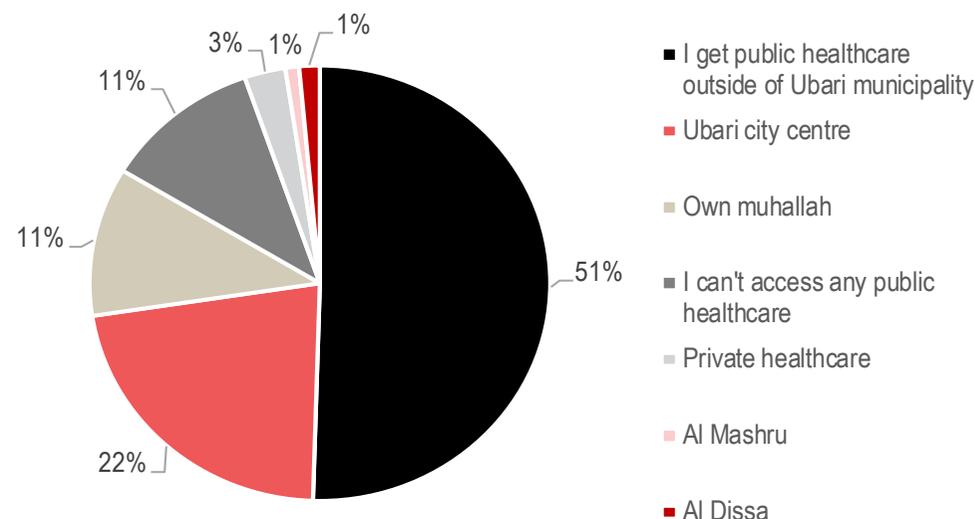
The lack of doctors and the subsequent lack of services was among the most frequently reported challenges within the public health sector in Ubari. FGD participants indicated that the mismanagement of human resources in the public sector laid at the source of the problem. FGD participants explained that the same doctors that are employed in public health facilities, also perform services in private health facilities. Consequently, doctors reportedly fail to attend their shifts in the public health facilities. Additionally, medical staff as well as administrative staff face difficulties reaching facilities, due to security and transportation difficulties. The difficulty to attract and maintain medical professionals has led to the lack of many services being available locally. FGD participants indicated that due to the lack of specialists, it is currently also unassessed which equipment is needed for specialist services to be provided adequately.

Due to the lack of public medical services, Ubari residents often seek medical attention in either private clinics or outside of Ubari. There are several private clinics in Ubari, but FGD participants reported that these clinics often lack the necessary equipment, and one participant indicated that safety standards are below par. For those seeking medical services outside Ubari, the most frequently reported destinations were Al Ghrayfa, Sebha, Misrata, and Tripoli. Health and social protection FGD participants, both indicated that health services for people with special needs, such as physiotherapy, could not be accessed in Ubari and were only available in Al Ghrayfa. Health FGD participants also reported that in the past, respondents of Ubari travelled abroad for healthcare, for instance to Tunisia. However, this had become increasingly difficult as it became significantly more expensive since the devaluation of the LYD.<sup>55</sup>

Generally, seeking medical assistance in private clinics or outside Ubari is difficult, due to the closure of the airport, transportation costs, and lack of fuel. Therefore, low-income households may face difficulties receiving medical help for services that are not available in public services within the municipality. 50% of respondents reported that they have to go outside Ubari to see a doctor, while 22% would go to Ubari city centre to be able to access a doctor outside their

muhallah, and 11% report not being able to access a doctor at all (n = 210).

Figure 6. Access to healthcare facilities



## Development priorities and plans

Poor quality and lack of health services were highlighted by respondents across all data collection components, and improvement of the health sector was among the most frequently reported development priorities for Ubari as a whole.

Health FGD participants and community KIs indicated that expansion of the health sector needs immediate attention. The suggestion is that non-operational public health facilities in Al Hattiya, Al Dissa, Al Mashru and Ubari city centre should be operationalized to increase population access to public health services as well as take off the pressure from the Ubari General Hospital.

Health FGD participants highlighted that in order to attract and retain more healthcare workers and medical staff, improvements of HR regulations were paramount, including better benefits and higher salaries.

## Governance stakeholders

Health FGD participants indicated that there is no clear coordination structure within the health sector in Ubari. Health FGD participants reported that the municipal council in Ubari has not yet reinstated a municipal health department since the end of the war in 2018. Through consolidation of governance KIs and health FGD participants, the primary health actors in Ubari that were identified include the Ubari Health Services Centre, which is currently located in Al Ghrayfa, the director of the Ubari General Hospital, and the general managers of public and private health facilities. Furthermore, two health FGD participants also mentioned UNDP and Repsol as primary health actors in Ubari potentially due to UNDP renovation of the General Hospital in Ubari, providing the hospital with solar panels to mitigate the consequences of frequent electricity outages.<sup>56</sup>

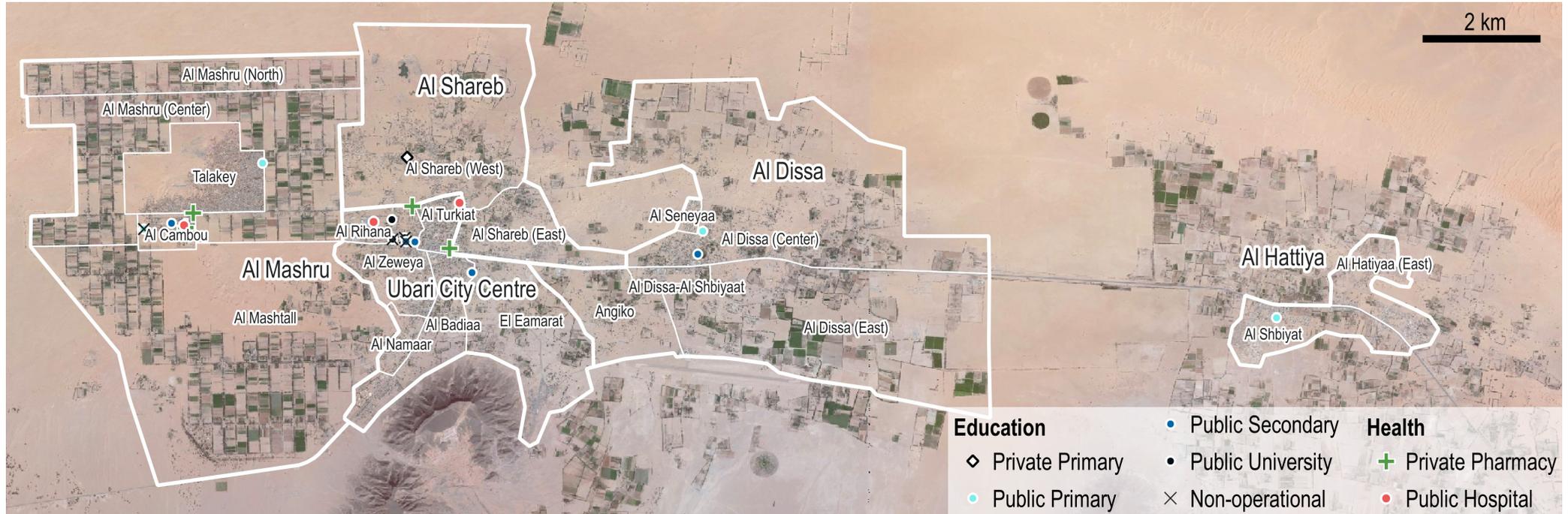
## Education

### Characteristics

There are four primary schools in Ubari in respective Al Mashru, Al Hattiya, Al Dissa, and one private primary school in Al Shareb (East and West), while there are four secondary schools with one in Al Mashru, two in Ubari city centre, and one in Al Dissa. FGD participants unanimously reported that for children to be able to attend primary and public school in Ubari legal documentation is required. 35% of households in Ubari are missing some form of legal documentation, therefore some children in Ubari will be excluded from accessing primary and secondary education.<sup>57</sup>

Costs associated with attending public education in Ubari include school supplies, uniforms, as well as transportation. Two FGD participants highlighted particularly that high fuel prices have

Map 8. Health and education facilities



a large impact on the prices for transportation and can similarly cause large fluctuations in the costs of sending children to school. Data from the JMMI from March 2021 found that the median price for 1L gasoline is 1.75 LYD, making fuel prices in Ubari the 3rd highest in the country, thus forcing potential vulnerable households residing far from education facilities to spend a significant proportion of their income on transportation.<sup>58</sup>

Ubari has two universities, The Ubari College of Education and the Sharia Law University, both located in Ubari City Centre.<sup>59,60</sup> Access to higher education is limited to individuals with documentation of a Libyan birth certificate and family booklet, while only documented migrants and refugees that have a residency certificate will be able to enrol at the universities.

## Challenges

The Fezzan region, including Ubari, has historically been neglected by political and economic actors resulting in relatively weak public services.<sup>61,62</sup> Overall, public primary and secondary education facilities in Ubari suffer from lack of resources and investment in education facilities, which in turn have resulted in lack of maintenance of damaged buildings, limited number of classes, lack of education materials as well as sanitation infrastructure problems such as water outages and clogging. In addition to structural education challenges, the majority of FGD participants highlighted the economic situation of households and the challenges faced when it comes to ability to pay for the transportation of children to school. Majority of FGD participants highlighted issues of sanitation infrastructure, while all FGD participants highlighted concerns for lack of resources and investment in education in Ubari. As a result, households that can afford private education facilities transfer their children to private schools in Ubari.

Furthermore, a minority of FGD participants raised concerns for children's safety on their way to school including harassment and kidnappings. Extreme protection concerns were mentioned such as risks of kidnapping of children on their way to school. Concerns of kidnapping of children in Ubari were mentioned by a minority of households in the 2020 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment. 11% of households reported concerns for boys being kidnapped, while 8% of households reported concerns of kidnapping of girls in Ubari.<sup>63</sup>

The Ubari College of Education and the Sharia Law University are the only two options for students to obtain a higher education in Ubari. Hence, a minority of FGD participants raised

concerns for lack of universities and specializations available for students causing students to move to Tripoli or Misrata for further education.

## Development priorities and plans

Poor quality of education facilities was highlighted by all FGD participants with the need for the improvement of the education sector prioritizing maintenance of buildings and sanitation infrastructure. Two FGD participants also highlighted that to improve education service provision, teachers need to be paid a living wage in order to attract and retain teachers, ensuring the quality and number of classes being provided to children.

## Governance stakeholders

Governance KIs unanimously identified that the main education governance stakeholder in Ubari is the Ubari Municipal Education Supervision Office. The Ubari Municipal Education Supervision Office employs about 30-40 people and has the responsibility for the curriculum for primary and secondary schools. It is affiliated with the Ministry of Education and follows central control in Al Jufra.<sup>64</sup> A minority of governance KIs also informed that the Municipal Council through the Office of Programs is the governance stakeholder responsible for the development apparatus including maintenance and renovation operations. Furthermore, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), through its local implementing partner Al Safwa, are the only international and national NGOs active in Ubari. However, none of the Education FGD participants had knowledge of these activities.

Furthermore, two governance KIs mentioned Sebha University as a main education governance stakeholder in Ubari. Sebha University is the higher education institution behind the Ubari College of Education.<sup>65</sup> Hence, indicating a strong influence on the tertiary education programs available in Ubari baladiya as one of the only two universities.

## Social affairs

### Characteristics

Welfare and social services are organized by the municipal Social Affairs Office and executed

by departments of the Social Solidarity Fund Ubari Branch, and the Social Security Fund Ubari Branch. Despite social services being organized by the municipality, it is worth noting that among the 40% of respondents that reported having needed social services (n = 84), only 7% had accessed such social services (n = 14).

### **Social Security Fund**

As in the rest of Libya, the Social Security Fund is in charge of pensions and retirements. Social security pensions are based on contributions paid by individuals or their public sector employer and disbursed after retirement or death, or when the individual is left unable to perform their work and earn an income. If the individual is employed in the public sector, their employer will pay their monthly contributions from a percentage of the salary. If the individual is employed in the private sector or self-employed, he or she is themselves responsible for paying the monthly contributions to the fund in order to receive a pension upon retirement. As explained by FGD participants, privately employed or self-employed individuals will need to submit legal documents including identity papers, documentation from the civil registry and mukhtar muhallah, proof of business ownership (if applicable) and a set of pass photos to the social security service office. For the pension to be turned out upon retirement, the individual will have to provide the social security service office with proof of business ownership or employment, as well as proof and overview of paid monthly contributions. The Social security service centre is located in the city centre of Ubari.

FGD participants indicated that in case of the death of the rightful receiver, the pension will be turned over to his or her spouse and/or direct descendants. Orphans whose parents had the right to a pension from the social security fund will also receive the pension. Social Affairs FGD participants indicated that sons are entitled to receiving the pension up until the age of 18 or until they find employment, and daughters are entitled to receiving the pension until they get married, find employment, or pass away.

### **Social Solidarity Fund**

The Social Solidarity Fund, or the Zakat Fund, supports vulnerable Libyan population groups. This can include service provision and support for people with special needs, as well as providing a basic pension for people who are not covered by the Social Security Fund. Based on findings

from the Social Affairs FGD, the primary target population for the social solidarity branch in Ubari are adults and children with special needs and/or physical disabilities. Accordingly, in order to receive support from the social solidarity fund, people are required to provide a recent medical support form from a health specialist, documents from the civil registry, birth certificate and/or an identity card, a letter from the Ministry of Finance stating that there is no income or commercial license, and pass photos. One FGD participant also stated that the presence of a medical committee might be required upon registration, in order to assess the severity of the disability.

The Social Solidarity Fund can provide basic pensions to unemployed people with special needs or disabilities. One FGD participant reported that families with children with special needs receive an additional pension of 450 LYD. There are no services in Ubari municipality for adults or children with special needs or physical disabilities, but FGD participants stated that there are several education centres and a rehabilitation centre available in Al Ghrayfa, set up by the Social Solidarity Fund. Additionally, while orphans whose parents paid contribution to the Social Security Fund will receive their pension, orphans whose parents did not pay contribution or whose parents remain unidentified will be provided for by the Social Solidarity Fund. FGD participants indicated that the Ubari branch of the Social Solidarity Fund has also provided ad-hoc financial and in-kind support to IDPs.

### **Challenges**

There are three primary structural challenges with regard to welfare and social services provision in Ubari. Firstly, there are not enough services for vulnerable population groups due to the municipality's budget deficit. Secondly, the Social Solidarity Fund's office is located in Al Ghrayfa making it either expensive or inaccessible for some groups in Ubari to register for the services. Third, and lastly, families must provide a recent medical support form from a health specialist to access the Social Solidarity Fund's services, which can prove difficult with lack of medical specialists in Ubari.

A challenge that cuts across service provision for most vulnerable households is the cost of transportation to reach a particular service, and access to services such as support for people with special needs and pensions not covered by the Social Security Fund can only be accessed through registration at the Social Solidarity Fund's office in Al Ghrayfa. Data from the JMMI from

March 2021 found that the median price for 1L gasoline is 1.75 LYD, making fuel prices in Ubari the 3rd highest in the country, thus forcing potential vulnerable households not residing in Al Ghrayfa to spend a significant proportion of their income on transportation.<sup>66</sup>

## Development priorities and plans

There are two main service development priorities for the social service sector in Ubari. Firstly, social protection FGD participants highlighted that priorities include the development of an online database for the Social Security Fund which would integrate modern technologies into the Fund's work and ensure more efficient database management and provide a solid basis for needs analysis. Such needs analysis will make the Social Security Fund better equipped for understanding the needs of the respondents of Ubari through and provide better targeted services for respondents, thus ensuring efficient use of their limited resources. Secondly, development priorities and plans include horizontal expansion of offices to increase the accessibility of social services to ensure that the most vulnerable households needing the services the most will be able to access them, and reducing the barriers related to transportation.

## Governance stakeholders

The primary governance stakeholders in Ubari are the municipal Social Affairs Office, and executed by the Social Security and the Social Solidarity Fund providing respectively pensions and retirements, and provision and support for people with special needs. In addition to national governance stakeholders, both INGOs and local CSOs are active in Ubari.

Governance KIs reported knowledge of a number of INGOs being active in Ubari including UNDP, World Food Programme (WFP), International Organization for Migration (IOM), USAID, ACTED, UNICEF, Peaceful Change Initiative, and Red Cross and Red Crescent. Majority of governance KIs mention UNDP and their activities within infrastructure in Ubari, highlighting their visible presence in the mantika. This finding was echoed by seven community KIs when asked to highlight the three main assistance programmes in their community reaffirming UNDP presence in Ubari, however, the community KIs also highlight that these improvements are limited to Ubari city centre. Furthermore, UNDP's currently ongoing maintenance work on the Social Studies Centre in Ubari and the planned activities on training of specialists to work in social services

at the centre were mentioned in the social protection FGD. Similarly, WFP work through local implementation partner Al Taher Al Zawy/Zaawi with food distributions were mentioned among governance KIs. This finding was echoed by three of community KIs when asked to highlight the three main assistance programmes in their community. One governance KI also mentioned IOM's peacebuilding and migration activities. These activities were also mentioned by a community KIs when asked to highlight the three main assistance programmes in their community, particularly the aid provided to the Tebu community by Abwab Al Salam Charity organization with the support of the IOM. Red Cross and Red Crescent activities were also highlighted by five community KIs when asked to highlight the three main assistance programmes in their community, where COVID-19 awareness campaign was mentioned.

Governance KIs also reported on the activities of local NGOs and CSOs in Ubari. These include Ubari Youth League/Association and Al Hattiya Youth Association, Azjer, Al Shafei Al Ansari Human Rights Association, South Organization for Peace and Electoral Awareness, Hama Al-Diyar Society for Development and Electoral Awareness and Al Taher Al Zawy/Zaawi. Four governance KIs mentioned the Ubari Youth League having a prominent role in the city with both providing workshops to reduce tribal post-war tensions and providing services and help such as cleaning, restoration, maintenance assistance, and similar tasks related to infrastructure activities.

Six community KIs when asked about the main assistance programmes in their community highlighted their activities. Thus, highlighting how their activities are recognised across different actors in Ubari. Two governance KIs reported Azjer as being an active CSO in Ubari with educational workshops on community rights for women and violence against women in the community as well as providing peacebuilding in the city among communities on working on youth capacity building. These activities were also mentioned by four community KIs when asked to highlight the three main assistance programmes in their community. South Organization for Peace and Electoral Awareness, Hamat Al-Diyar Society for Development and Electoral Awareness were mentioned by one governance KI for their work on electoral processes in the municipality and peacebuilding activities. Furthermore, Houmat Al Diyar Charity organization were mentioned by five community KIs when asked about the main assistance programmes in their community highlighting their activities on cultural events and societal change within the municipality.

## Conclusion

This ABA was developed to understand the interlinkages between urban structures such as service provision and governance mechanisms in Ubari and promote the development of evidence-based conflict-sensitive interventions. To better understand local needs, international actors have to understand cities as a system, rather than analysing needs on a sector-by-sector basis because municipalities have considerable administrative authority and responsibility for core service provision. Furthermore, Libya is a diverse country, where community dynamics vary from city to city, which emphasize the need for an area-based approach to ensure a tailored engagement. Thus, the assessment focused on vertical and horizontal social cohesion dynamics, service provision, and governance stakeholders' dynamics.

## Structural challenges

The findings of the assessment indicate that service infrastructure and provision exist to a certain extent but are weak and significant differences are apparent between muhallahs. Particularly, areas with significant urban expansion over the last 30 years and areas that developed after the 2011 revolution, mostly on the urban periphery, have suffered from the absence of infrastructure or lack of infrastructural capacity to cope with the over usage of the utility networks. These muhallahs include Al Shareb (East and West) and Al Mashru with the Al Mashru neighbourhood having faced a particularly stark unregulated growth since the 1990s. To overcome the infrastructural development stagnation in the urban periphery and meet households' needs, respondents have resorted to connecting their homes to the water and electricity networks with help from private companies.

There is a clear need for urban planning efforts across Ubari baladiya. The ad-hoc development of 'randomly' connected areas to the public electricity grid challenge both the maintenance of the electricity grid and the development of improvement plans due to both the lack of comprehensive maps of how random network are laid out and organizational security risks from disconnecting 'randomly' connected areas that are related to the widespread weaponization of the population.

Supporting muhallahs in the urban periphery with increased access to consistent electricity, drinkable water from the public water network, connections to a functional sewage network, health and education services may be a conflict-sensitive avenue to decrease disparity between

communities.

## Social cohesion

The structural challenges in Ubari have resulted in the most vulnerable populations being in peripheral muhallahs, where service delivery is less than par to central Ubari. Thus, the need for the provision of services equally across muhallahs will be a determining factor in easing tensions and improving intercommunal tolerance and acceptance. Service provision and social cohesion were found to be linked with the importance of peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts to improve intercommunal relations between populations groups across Ubari. Dialogues and awareness raising sessions were suggested as a way forward to improve mutual understanding for cultural differences between communities. Additionally, social events such as festivals and sports activities have previously shown to bridge cultural differences and bring together population groups.

## Development priorities and opportunities

The difference between service provision and quality highlighted in structural challenges indicate the gap between urban planning and urban growth and the stagnation of infrastructural development since the revolution of February 2011. Thus, there is both short- and long-term opportunities for development projects in Ubari:

- Ubari's geographical location provides a great potential for **renewable energy** options that could relieve the electricity grid with additional supply of energy to meet the demand.
- While short-term development priorities particularly for **sewage systems** would be investments in additional vacuum trucks for black wells to ensure respondents' needs, medium- to long-term development priorities ought to be development of the sewage network such that more of Ubari's respondents would be connected to the public sewage network.
- Both for health and education services one core development priority mentioned was to ensure a **living wage** and proper compensation of workers to avoid further brain drain to outside of Ubari.
- Findings also clearly highlighted the need for immediate expansion of the **health sector**. The suggestion is that non-operational public health facilities in Al Hattiya, Al Dissa, Al Mashru,

and Ubari city centre should be operationalized to increase population access to public health services as well as take off the pressure from the Ubari General Hospital.

- Lastly, the findings of the assessment clearly suggested that **access to social protection** could be expanded with an online database for the Social Security Fund. Integrating modern technologies into the Fund's work and ensuring more **efficient database management** would provide a solid base for needs analysis. Such needs analysis will make the Social Security Fund better equipped for understanding the needs of the respondents of Ubari and provide better targeted services, thus ensuring efficient use of their limited resources.

In order for the above mentioned development priorities and opportunities to be addressed by the international humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors present in Ubari baladiya, vertical and horizontal cohesion should be considered to ensure communities feel represented in the decision-making, and international actors engage with relevant local stakeholders in order to put together a sustainable stabilization plan for Ubari.

**In conclusion**, the findings illustrate the need for urban planning and the expansion of service provision including utilities. Both short- and long-term needs exist in Ubari with the need for ensuring drinkable water across all muhallahs, while ensuring development plans and priorities are developed to expand service and utility provision and quality in also peripheral muhallahs. Strengthened social cohesion through equal geographical development projects as well as peacebuilding and reconciliation activities are necessary to improve intercommunal relations between populations groups across Ubari. Hence, international organizations seeking to effectively operate in Ubari ought to consider both equal access to essential services across muhallahs and intercommunal ties. Equal access to essential services across all muhallahs would be one way to ensure improved intercommunal social cohesion, while improvements of vertical social cohesion would be another way to ensure improved horizontal social cohesion as i.e. diversification of political representation could improve intercommunal ties.

## Annex 1:

## Overview of tools and sampling frame

LABEL	METHOD	OBJECTIVE	STRUCTURE	NUMBER OF SURVEYS	INFORMANT TYPE	SAMPLING
SCOPING MUNICIPAL FGD	CITY/INSTITUTION LEVEL	UNDERSTAND MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES AND INFORMATION GAPS TO INFORM RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	SEMI-STRUCTURED	1	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEMBERS	PURPOSIVE
MFGD	MFGD	DELINEATE NEIGHBOURHOOD BOUNDARIES AND IDENTIFY SMALLEST GEOGRAPHIC UNITS WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY AND MUHALLAHS	SEMI-STRUCTURED: PARTICIPATORY MAPPING AND FGD TOOL	1	UBARI RESIDENTS	PURPOSIVE
DIRECT OBSERVATION	DIRECT OBSERVATION	MAP LOCATION OF KEY INFRASTRUCTURE IN EACH NEIGHBOURHOOD AND OPERATIONAL STATUS	STRUCTURED	10 (TBC)	UBARI RESIDENTS	PURPOSIVE
SERVICE FGD	CITY/INSTITUTION LEVEL FGD	ASSESS HEALTH SERVICES, IDENTIFY CHALLENGES REGARDING PROVISION AND ACCESS, DOCUMENT PRIORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS	SEMI-STRUCTURED	1	HEALTH ADMINISTRATORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS	PURPOSIVE & SNOWBALLING
SERVICE FGD	CITY/INSTITUTION LEVEL FGD <sup>57</sup>	ASSESS EDUCATION SERVICES, IDENTIFY CHALLENGES REGARDING PROVISION AND ACCESS, DOCUMENT PRIORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS	SEMI-STRUCTURED	1	EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS SERVICE PROVIDERS	PURPOSIVE & SNOWBALLING
SERVICE FGD	CITY/INSTITUTION LEVEL FGD	ASSESS PROTECTION AND SOCIAL SERVICES, IDENTIFY CHALLENGES REGARDING PROVISION AND ACCESS, DOCUMENT PRIORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS	SEMI-STRUCTURED	1	SOCIAL WORKERS AND ADMINISTRATORS	PURPOSIVE & SNOWBALLING

SERVICE KIIs	CITY/INSTITUTION LEVEL, MAPPING KII	MAP ELECTRICITY ACCESS, IDENTIFY CHALLENGES REGARDING PROVISION AND ACCESS, DOCUMENT PRIORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS	SEMI-STRUCTURED: PARTICIPATORY MAPPING, KII TOOL	2	ELECTRICITY SERVICE PROVIDERS, PUBLIC COMPANY EMPLOYEES	PURPOSIVE & SNOW-BALLING
SERVICE KIIs	CITY/INSTITUTION LEVEL, MAPPING KII	IDENTIFY CHALLENGES WITH WATER AND SANITATION IN UBARI, REGARDING WATER SUPPLY AND SEWAGE MANAGEMENT, DOCUMENT PRIORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS	SEMI-STRUCTURED: PARTICIPATORY MAPPING, KII TOOL	2	WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS, PUBLIC COMPANY EMPLOYEES	PURPOSIVE & SNOW-BALLING
GOVERNANCE KIIs	CITY/INSTITUTION LEVEL	IDENTIFY INTERLINKAGE BETWEEN FORMAL AND TRADITIONAL GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS ON A CITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL, AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES ACCORDING TO GOVERNANCE STAKEHOLDERS	SEMI-STRUCTURED	11	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEMBERS, SOCIAL COUNCIL MEMBERS, COMMUNITY LEADERS (MUKHTARS)	PURPOSIVE & SNOW-BALLING
COMMUNITY KIIs	COMMUNITY/ MUHALLAH -LEVEL KIIs	DISCUSS NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL SOCIAL COHESION DYNAMICS, COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING, AND COMMUNITY PROTECTION MECHANISMS	SEMI-STRUCTURED	20	NEIGHBOURHOOD REPRESENTATIVES, COMMUNITY LEADERS, INFLUENTIAL PERSONS, SERVICE ADMINISTRATORS, ETC.	PURPOSIVE & SNOW-BALLING; DISAGGREGATED BY NEIGHBOURHOOD
CITIZEN SURVEY	INDIVIDUAL LEVEL	IDENTIFY PERCEPTIONS OF ACCESS AND TRUST IN DECISION-MAKING MECHANISMS OVER SERVICES AND SECURITY, AND ASSESS ACCESS TO SERVICES	STRUCTURED	210 (APPROXIMATELY 40 PER MUHALLAH WITH EQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF MEN AND WOMAN)	CITY RESIDENTS	PURPOSIVE, DISAGGREGATED BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND GENDER

## Annex 2:

## Overview of neighbourhoods and tribes

TRIBAL COMPOSITION	BIOLOGY NUMBERS	RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS	MUNICIPALITY/ MUHALLAH
70% TUAREG 30% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION	N1	AL SHAREB (WEST)	AL SHAREB
50% TUAREG 50% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION	N13 + N14	AL SHAREB (EAST)	
70% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION 20% TUAREG 10% TEBU	N5	AL EAMARAT	UBARI CITY CENTRE
90% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION	N4	AL TURKIAT	
80% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION	N2	AL RIHANA	
90% TEBU	N7	AL NAMAAR	
70% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION 20% TUAREG 10% TEBU	N6	AL ZEWEYA	
40% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION 60% TEBU	N8	AL BADIAA	
70% TUAREG 30% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION	N12	AL MASHRU (NORTH)	AL MASHRU
90% TUAREG	N11	AL MASHRU (CENTRE)	
60% TUAREG 40% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION	N10	AL CAMBOU	
95% TUAREG	N3	TALAKY	
60% TUAREG 40% TEBU	-	AL MASHRU/AL MASHTALL	

90% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION	N15	AL DISSA (CENTRE)	AL DISSA	AL DISSA
50% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION 50% TEBU	N18	AL DISSA (EAST)		
80% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION	N17	AL DISSA – AL SHBIYAAT		
90% TEBU	N21	ANGIKO		
90% TEBU	N16	AL SENEYAA		
50% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION 50% TUAREG	N19	AL HATIYAA (EAST)	AL HATIYAA	AL HATIYAA
50% AHALI/FEZZANA'/ARABS WITH NO TRIBAL AFFILIATION 50% TUAREG	N20	AL SHBIYAT		

### Annex 3: Terms and references

Please refer to the full terms of reference [here](#)

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