LIBYA TRANSITION INITIATIVE 3 (LTI 3)

FINAL REPORT: MAY 10, 2017 – FEBRUARY 5, 2022

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ACRONYMS

GNA	Government of National Accord
GNU	Government of National Unity
HOR	House of Representatives
IDPs	internally displaced persons
LAAF	Libyan Arab Armed Forces
LPDF	Libyan Political Dialogue Forum
LTI	Libya Transition Initiative
LTI 3	Libya Transition Initiative 3
OTI	USAID Office of Transition Initiatives
UN	United Nations
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

The Libya Transition Initiative 3 (LTI 3) was a follow-on program launched by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) in May 2017 to support Libya's resilience to fragmentation and spoilers. LTI 3's quick-response mechanisms enabled activity implementation throughout Libya that aimed to prevent deterioration in political and security conditions while keeping space open for civilian leadership, reconciliation, and a positive political transition following years of unrest and military conflict. While programmatic objectives shifted throughout implementation to reflect the evolving political landscape, LTI 3 worked toward the following objectives:

- Maintaining stability in strategic geographic areas and sectors
- Preserving civilian institutions that provide alternative to military actors
- Strengthening momentum for moderate-led compromise
- Supporting positive efforts by other local and international stakeholders

Using a variety of mechanisms, including grants under contract, short-term technical assistance, and the direct distribution of goods and services, LTI 3 implemented $45,466,354.48 across 178 transition activities throughout Libya. The table below presents a summary of total activities and amounts disbursed by region.

OFFICE/REGION	ACTIVITY COUNT	TOTAL AMOUNT DISBURSED
Central (Misrata)	46	$15,713,294.68
Southern (Sabha)	33	$5,020,546.08
Western (Tripoli)	37	$6,066,459.24
Eastern (Benghazi)	30	$6,511,710.83
National	32	$12,154,343.65
Total	**178**	**$45,466,354.48**

During the contract, LTI 3 achieved the following high-level results:

- Forty-five projects across nearly 200 individual project sites in Sirte aimed at accelerating infrastructure and service recovery, supporting local governance bodies, responding to community priorities, and reducing the influence of extremist groups
- Eighteen activities preserving and expanding moderate civic spaces in eastern Libya by strengthening civil society organizations (CSOs) and increasing civic engagement opportunities

- Eight activities enabling the continued functioning of civilian institutions and positioning moderate actors to revive civic and socio-economic development initiatives in Misrata
- Support to wastewater, sewage, electricity, education, and roadway infrastructure to address citizen grievances and facilitate recovery in Tripoli and the South
- Twenty-five regional offices equipped to efficiently administer national elections

POLITICAL AND SECURITY CONTEXT

LTI 3 began implementation during a period of chronic instability. Forces aligned with the Government of National Accord (GNA) took full control of Tripoli, ousting pro-General National Congress militias from the capital, and the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF) seized control of significant areas of influence. In addition to political instability, Libyan citizens experienced limited cash access, struggles with basic services, and fuel insecurity, especially in the south. The United Nations (UN)-backed Libyan Political Agreement framework remained the primary tool for reconciliation efforts, yet the GNA — created under the framework — was unsuccessful in gaining public confidence due to its failure to provide stability, deliver basic services, and solve the liquidity crisis. In tandem, Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar's LAAF continued to exercise control and influence over more than half of Libya's populated territory, including in the east, large swaths of the south and key areas in the west. The Islamic State continued to exploit Libya's lack of unity and expanded their influence in marginalized communities such as Bani Walid, Sabratha, and remote southern areas.

The UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), under the then leadership of Special Representative of the Secretary General Ghassan Salamé, worked to bring rival factions back to the negotiating table to amend the Libyan Political Agreement. In September 2017, Special Representative Salamé presented a three-point action plan calling for amendments to the Libyan Political Agreement, including the adoption of a constitution alongside presidential and parliamentary elections. The GNA and LAAF continued to disagree on amendments to both the Libyan Political Agreement and the draft constitution, and the process yielded few results. The concept of holding fresh elections to break the stalemate gained both international and domestic traction. Libya's High National Electoral Commission (HNEC) oversaw voter registration between December 2017 and March 2018. Skepticism remained high among citizens for elections and the political elites representing them.

Conditions throughout Libya varied greatly by region throughout the program's first two years of implementation. In the west, fragile alliances established under the GNA held, but powerful armed groups continued to dominate the capital and lucrative fuel-smuggling and human-trafficking practices nationwide. In the east, Haftar claimed full control of Derna in July 2018, the last Islamic State stronghold in the region. Securing this territory allowed the LAAF to commit resources elsewhere and advance on Tripoli, resulting in major clashes with GNA-aligned forces. Central Libya remained largely ungoverned and prime territory for Islamic State operations. Southern Libya suffered from neglect from national governing bodies, chronic instability, tribal and ethnic rivalries, and influence from foreign fighters and extremist groups. The lack of national

unity was routinely exploited by the Islamic State and other extremist groups, creating conditions for attacks against key institutions and asymmetric attacks targeting security forces and civilians in remote and largely ungoverned central and southern areas.

The political and security landscape saw a shift in April 2019 as Haftar and LAAF forces attacked Tripoli, the GNA's internationally recognized seat of power. More than a year of intensive fighting saw casualties numbering more than 2,000, with protracted insecurity displacing more than 140,000 civilians. The offensive escalated hostilities in the western and central regions between pro- and anti-LAAF forces and impacted southern tribal power dynamics. During this time, the Islamic State exploited the security vacuum caused by increased instability to execute attacks and demonstrate continued relevance. Foreign backers continued to support the reach and visibility of the opposing governments by providing tangible resources. Several UNSMIL-led efforts to broker a ceasefire were held, including the Berlin Conference and the establishment of a Joint 5+5 Military Committee, representing both sides. Several ceasefire agreements failed due to escalating tensions on the ground, resulting in regular and flagrant breaches and ultimately hindering attempts to broker peace.

The COVID-19 global pandemic ushered in a fragile humanitarian ceasefire on March 21, 2020, but did not hold. Like other national institutions in Libya, the National Center for Disease Control in Tripoli did not have a national reach, with eastern authorities launching their own response initiatives. Confirmed COVID-19 cases throughout Libya increased, but questions surfaced on the integrity of reported numbers in all regions. The LAAF Tripoli offensive came to an end in June 2020 with the total withdrawal of combat forces. The end of active conflict saw increased tensions and periodic clashes between GNA-affiliated militias as new areas of control were disputed. It also revived UNSMIL-led efforts to broker a ceasefire with a new agreement reached on August 21, 2020. Throughout this period, Libya continued to face severe electricity outages, fuel shortages, rising costs, and bank liquidity issues. Concurrently, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to surge in Libya with the National Center for Disease Control and eastern response mechanisms introducing non-essential business closures and separate mitigation measures around travel restrictions, curfews, and schools. Lack of trust in the government and skepticism about the seriousness of the pandemic fueled noncompliance with mitigation measures in all regions.

Following the UNSMIL-supported ceasefire agreement — signed on October 23, 2020, in Geneva — the newly formed Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) advanced attempts to determine a unified governance framework and plan for national elections. These discussions culminated in an agreement to select a unified executive authority in January 2021 and hold national elections on December 24, 2021. In February 2021, LPDF participants elected Mohamed Younes Menfi as president of the Presidential Council and Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh as prime minister, defeating the alliance formed by Fathi Bashaga and the Speaker of the House of Representatives (HOR) Ageela Saleh.

In March 2021, Prime Minister Dbeibeh submitted a proposal for the new interim Government of National Unity (GNU) that the HOR granted a vote of confidence. The GNU's top priorities included elections preparations, improving the quality of citizen services, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time, shifting power dynamics created growing instability across Libya. In greater Tripoli, tensions between GNU-affiliated militias continued to devolve into armed clashes. Key GNU-aligned security structures took on an increasing role securing the rule of law in the region while leading several raids on human-trafficking operations and militias. In the south, Sabha saw increased crime and several rounds of clashes between competing militias and tribal alliances. Ubari also faced insecurity due to GNU-LAAF clashes in November and December and several LAAF raids on Islamic State elements, some of which resulted in civilian casualties. The LAAF launched Operation Desert Shield in the south to address continued terrorism, human trafficking, and fuel smuggling. Consistent electricity and fuel shortages, attacks from extremist groups, and increasing demand for already stretched medical facilities due to COVID-19 put additional pressures on Libyans.

In the lead-up to national elections on December 24, HNEC launched a voter registration campaign in June 2021, and more than 2.86 million Libyans registered to vote. Key issues around the legal basis for elections resulted in growing concerns that elections would be delayed or their results not respected. After several rounds of discussion, including the second Berlin Conference and multiple LPDF sessions, no consensus was achieved on the constitutional or legal basis for elections. The HOR and High Council of State each drafted separate election laws. The HOR repeatedly failed to pass the GNU's draft budget, leading to growing public frustration with the government, which promised ambitious economic development and infrastructure initiatives. The HOR voted to withdraw confidence in the GNU on September 21, leaving them in place as a caretaker government — a coordinating body with limited capacity and no approved budget. This period also saw significant build-up of LAAF forces in the south due to continued instability and a series of Islamic State attacks on LAAF-aligned forces. During this time, Libya launched a vaccination campaign to battle COVID-19 in April 2021, but skepticism remains about the benefit of vaccines, preventing vaccinations.

On November 22, 2021, registration for presidential elections ended with HNEC reporting 1,524 parliamentary and 98 presidential candidates. HNEC's subsequent rejection of several high-profile candidates, such as Saif al-Islam Gaddafi and former Prime Minister Ali Zeidan, led to protracted appeals and several protests. The legitimacy of other candidates — including former Prime Minister Debeibah — highlighted continuing questions around the constitutional foundation of the nominating process and intensified the calls for delays. Amid demonstrations from those calling for elections to move forward as planned and those who wanted delays, elections did not take place on December 24. Although an initial date of January 24 was proposed, the HOR Roadmap Committee stated that holding elections will likely not happen for at least 10 to 14 months. The LTI 3 program ended its period of performance amid rising political tensions over efforts to replace the GNU and vote on a new interim prime minister.

KEY POLITICAL AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS

TIMELINE OF KEY POLITICAL AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS	
2017	
April	• USAID/OTI Awards LTI 3
May/June	• GNA-aligned forces take full control of Tripoli, ousting pro-GNA militias from capital • LAAF sizes control of Tamanhit and Jufra airbases; GNA-aligned forces leave the south
July	• LAAF declares victory against Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries in Benghazi • Islamic State ousted from Benghazi after three years of fighting
October	• Islamic State launches attack on Misrata courthouse, killing four and wounding dozens • GNA forces launch security operations in Sabratha, defeating militia after three weeks
November	• GNA forces launch security operation in Warshefana, claiming control
December	• HNEC launches voter registration for anticipated national electoral events • Haftar expresses support for national elections and declares GNA's mandate obsolete on second anniversary of Libyan Political Agreement
2018	
January	• Intense fighting forces five-day closure of Tripoli's Mitiga International Airport, leaving 20 dead
March	• LAAF launches Operation Forcing the Law in the south, issuing ultimatum for foreign missionaries to leave Libya or face military action
May	• Islamic State militants attack HNEC headquarters in Tripoli • At Paris Summit, Hafter, Serraj, Al-Mishri, and Saleh agree to elections by December 2018
June	• LAAF announces liberation of Derna
August	• Fighting erupts in capital between Tripoli militias and Seventh Brigade of Tarhouna and allies
September	• HOR adopts constitutional referendum law after multiple failed attempts to vote
November	• Italy hosts Palermo Conference without tangible results • Cash liquidity improves after economic reforms force down black-market exchange rates
2019	
February	• LAAF advances through southern Libya, taking control of cities and key infrastructure and setting sights on western Libya
April	• LAAF launches Operation Flood of Dignity offensive in Tripoli • GNA launches Operation Volcano of Rage in response • Municipal elections are postponed; national planning meeting to organize elections postponed indefinitely
June	• Severe flooding in Ghat • Attacks on National Oil Corporation infrastructure • Haftar sued for war crimes in US by four Libyan families
July	• Islamic State releases new video in Libya and vows to attack LAAF • LAAF airstrikes on Misrata airport — first confirmed hit since 2015
August	• Benghazi car-bomb attack on UN convoy kills three, wounds 10 • Clashes in Murzuq continue, killing 100 civilians and displacing 10,000
September	• 50th anniversary of Muammar Gaddafi military coup

	TIMELINE OF KEY POLITICAL AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS
	• LAAF airstrike on Mitiga airport injures several passengers, closes airport • Convoys of Misratan fighters arrive in Sirte • US Africa Command (AFRICOM) conducts airstrikes on Islamic State in Murzuq and Sabhaz
November	• Reports of Russian mercenaries and snipers on front lines in support of LAAF • Islamic State militants in Libya pledge allegiance to new leader, Abu Ibrahim Al-Hashemi Al-Qurashi
December	• Haftar announces "final" offensive on Tripoli • GNA formally accepts Turkey's offer of military and logistics support • Syrian fighters recruited to Libya — 1,600+ in Turkish camps for training, 300+ in Tripoli • LAAF and Greece close shipping corridor to Turkish vessels
2020	
January	• Turkish Parliament approves non-combat troop deployment to Libya • Controversial airstrike on Hadba Military College kills 30 people • More than 450 Syrian fighters reported on Tripoli front lines, 1,500+ Syrian fighters in Libya • At Berlin Conference, LAAF and GNA tentatively agree to ceasefire after Turkey-Russia discussions
February	• Haftar declares ceasefire void • Libyan Revolution anniversary on February 17 • Conclusion of Geneva 5+5 Joint Military Committee meeting; ceasefire agreement drafted
March	• GNA and LAAF agree to COVID-19 humanitarian ceasefire on March 21 • National Center for Disease Control confirms first COVID-19 case in Libya on March 24 • GNA and LAAF call for curfews, school and non-essential business closures, and border closures • UNSMIL Special Representative of the Secretary General Ghassan Salamé resigns
April	• First lockdowns and curfews announced by rival governments to prevent COVID-19 spread
May	• GNA launches offensive against Al Wattiyah Airbase, taking control on May 18 • LAAF launches more than 80 rockets at Mitiga airport and more than 70 other targets in Tripoli; Misrata airstrikes include Air College • LAAF rockets hit near Turkish Embassy in Tripoli, killing three
June	• LAAF withdraws from Tripoli, Tarhouna, Bani Walid, and Urban • GNA launches Operation Path of Victory to retake Sirte and Al Jufra • Ministry of Education delays school reopenings until mid-July • Major power outages in Tripoli cause small protests • LAAF and Wagner Group deploy troops to Sahara oilfield after halting production
July	• Protests in Benghazi over increased Turkish influence in Tripoli • Protests over electricity outages in Tripoli continue • GNA Ministry of the Interior arrests Islamic State cell in Zawiyah and suspect in Tripoli
August	• Ceasefire agreement reached on August 21
September	• Anniversary of Green Revolution (September 1) • Protests in Tripoli, Sabha, and Benghazi focused on power outages and corruption • Thinni government resigns
November	• First LPDF meeting • Attack on National Oil Corporation headquarters in Tripoli
December	• Central Bank of Libya vows to unify foreign exchange rates for Libyan Dinar
2021	
January	• UN Security Council confirms appointment of Jan Kubis as UN Libya envoy

	TIMELINE OF KEY POLITICAL AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS
	• Municipal elections held in several Tripoli suburbs; municipal election results in Hay Andalous and Tarjoura annulled following fraud suspicions
February	• Municipal election results in Tripoli invalidated due to fraud allegations • Demining begins along Sirte-Misrata Coastal Road • 10th anniversary of 2011 revolution
March	• GNU sworn in • Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh takes over as prime minister
April	• Clashes in Benghazi between LAAF affiliates • COVID-19 vaccination program begins in Libya • President of Chad killed; LAAF patrols Libyan-Chad border
May	• Draft constitution sent to LPDF • Air travel to Libya resumes; some foreign embassies reopen
June	• Second Berlin Conference held
July	• HNEC launches voter registration campaign • Libya-Tunisia boarder closed to limit spread of COVID-19 • Highest daily increase in COVID-19 cases since the start of the pandemic — at 4,061 • Sirte-Misrata Coastal Road reopens
August	• Online voter registration system closes with 2.83 million people registered • LAAF holds 81st Anniversary celebrations for Libyan Army in Benghazi
September	• US House passes Libya Stabilization Act • Clashes between Chadian Front pour l'alternance et la concorde au Tchad (FACT) and Libyan forces • Ministry of Education launches COVID-19 vaccination campaign • New presidential law passed by the HOR
October	• 5+5 Joint Military Commission held in Geneva on October 6 to draft action plan for withdrawing foreign mercenaries • Migrants at Mabani detention center protest living conditions, escalating to violence • GNU Libya Stabilization Conference held in Tripoli • 5+5 Joint Military Commission meets in Cairo to discuss removal of foreign forces in Libya • As elections near, tensions between militias increase in the western region • October 23 marks the one-year anniversary of ceasefire ending 2019/2020 Tripoli offensive
November	• HNEC offices attacked in Zawiyah, Gheryan, Zliten, Zintan, and Misrata following Saif al Islam's announced candidacy • Voter cards distributed throughout Libya • Paris Conference convened on November 12 • On November 22, registration for presidential elections closes; HNEC reports 1,524 parliamentary and 98 presidential registered candidates • HNEC rejects several presidential candidates including Saif al-Islam Gaddafi and former Prime Minister Ali Zeidan; rejected candidates expected to appeal • Tripoli Appeals Court receives two appeals to reject former Prime Minister Debeibah's candidacy as violation of LPDF roadmap and presidential election law • Calls to delay elections intensify amid claims of a lack of legal basis • Widespread protests against individual candidates
December	• Rumors surface in early December that elections will be delayed until February 15 • Demonstrations held calling for elections to take place as scheduled on December 24 • Heavy clashes in Sabha as southern region faces increasing pressure and presidential candidates push for votes • Tensions in Tripoli and Misrata increase as candidates position themselves for elections • Elections scheduled for December 24 do not occur; January 24 cited as potential new date, but the timeline will likely take several months

TIMELINE OF KEY POLITICAL AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS	
2022	
January	• UNSMIL mandate extended through April 30 • HOR Roadmap Committee states holding elections cannot happen for 10 months • Political tensions rise over HOR efforts to replace GNU and vote on new prime minister

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

LTI 3 experienced several operational shifts necessitated by changing political landscapes, security considerations, and — significantly — the COVID-19 pandemic.

LTI 3 STARTUP (MAY 2017 – AUGUST 2017)

LTI 3 began implementation with a robust startup effort and strategic review session in May 2017. The program worked to quickly fill identified long-term vacancies across offices based in each of Libya's four regions. LTI 3's operational structure maintained offices in Tripoli, Benghazi, Misrata, Sabha, remote staffing platforms in Sirte and later in Derna, and a small representational office in Tunis, Tunisia comprised of US national, third-country-national, and local Tunisian staff. The LTI 3 startup team facilitated the transition between LTI 2 and LTI 3 as long-term team members were fielded, recruited, or transitioned between programs.

FULL IMPLEMENTATION (SEPTEMBER 2017 – FEBRUARY 2020)

After startup, LTI 3 moved into full implementation — expanding the staffing footprint from what was originally envisioned to respond to evolving program needs and a strategic shift to support unified national institutions. This shift included creating an additional grants management unit based in Tripoli. This addition enabled increased programming at the national level — with one Tripoli-based grants management unit focused on national programming and another unit focused on western-region-specific programming. The program also increased staffing in the areas of compliance, finance, and engineering. During this period, senior management team members visited Libya at regular intervals to establish a firm country presence and strengthen relationships with grantees, vendors, and local stakeholders and work in-person with program team members to identify programming challenges and solutions and build morale.

Given deteriorating security conditions throughout the first year of implementation and in response to a May 2018 management review, the program submitted a revised staffing plan in June 2018. This revision allowed the program to respond to increasing scope and complexity while maintaining maximum flexibility. Further refinements to the staffing plan were submitted in October 2018 to respond to fluctuating programmatic strategy amid conflict in Tripoli and again in October 2019 to respond to shifting programmatic and geographic priorities following a July 2019 strategy review session.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC (FROM MARCH 2020)

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Libya and Tunisia in March 2020 understandably affected the operational footprint of the program. The program closed all five offices throughout Libya and Tunisia in March 2020 and moved to a remote work environment to safeguard the health of the program team, partners, vendors, and

grantees. LTI 3 organized government-issued exemptions to travel restrictions and provided clear, preventative guidance for key staff to travel for project-related tasks like making vendor payments or delivering equipment to team members working remotely. Following a review of the pandemic in all regions, the program developed a phased office return plan. The plan incorporated careful consideration of regional infection rates, local government restrictions on movement, social distancing, hygiene requirements, and the capacity of regional health facilities, especially those involved in pandemic response. As a result, the Tunis office partially opened in June 2020 and staff throughout Libya were able to access their respective offices with pre-approval from the chief of party. Some team members experienced connectivity issues due to deteriorating infrastructure and electricity cuts. In response, the team continued to refine office-access procedures, prioritizing health and safety and increased support for internet availability for staff working from home.

Early preventative measures and guidance ensured that activities continued largely as scheduled. Program activities that called for in-person gatherings either moved forward virtually or with adjusted plans. In response to a significant liquidity crisis, LTI 3 modified and augmented routine procedures to enable quick payments despite movement limitations. Land borders between Libya and Tunisia remained closed for significant periods of time, with air travel available only intermittently. As a result, it was impossible for senior management to travel into Libya through late 2021, and staff travel between countries was significantly restrained. Given the conditions, the program conducted a remote rolling assessment in September 2020.

PREPARING FOR CLOSEOUT AND STRATEGIC PIVOT (JUNE 2021 – OCTOBER 2021)

Based upon the approved closeout plan, LTI 3 began an intentional staffing reduction in June 2021 in preparation for program closeout. One-third of staff was reduced by August 2021, with virtual goodbye events and CV-writing and interview-preparation workshops to support departing team members. LTI 3 planned program inventory disposition and approved transfer to the implementor of LTI 4 follow-on program. The team worked to expend remaining Transition Activities Pool funds under ongoing activities and prepared to continue staff reduction throughout the fall. A strategic review session was held in late September/early October 2021 focusing on US foreign policy in Libya, contextual analysis, and staff appreciation. The session had an additional benefit of helping to focus on team connection and inclusiveness during the prolonged remote-work period. The announcement of the award of the LTI 4 program in September 2021 refocused efforts on transition and maintaining team members that would shift to support the new program.

PROGRAM TRANSITION AND CLOSEOUT (NOVEMBER 2021 – FEBRUARY 2022)

LTI 3 continued operating effectively and expanded activity implementation to address key opportunities amid the ongoing and rapidly evolving political and security situation.

The program "ramped up while closing out" — completing key activities while simultaneously attending to administrative and financial closeout. Individual team members transitioned to LTI 4 according to a pre-identified schedule to maximize support to both programs.

PROGRAM STRATEGY

Throughout implementation, LTI 3's program objectives evolved to meet the needs of Libya's complex transition and support vital U.S. foreign policy objectives. A core tenant of OTI programming is to adapt implementation based on lessons learned and to remain sensitive to changes in the operating environment. LTI 3 began implementation during a period of protracted instability driven by political fighting among two regional governments, shortages of key goods and services, and Islamic State attacks that took advantage of power vacuums in remote and disadvantaged communities. Against this backdrop, maintaining resilience to further fragmentation and spoilers was a cornerstone of LTI 3 programming. By program closeout, Libya was on track for elections with an ostensibly unified — yet fragile — interim government. In this environment, bolstering conditions that enabled political compromise and expanded civic space became the driving programmatic goal.

Informed by key monitoring, evaluation, and research inputs, such as data-gathering, monitoring, and reporting mechanisms available under the Flexible Research and Analysis Platform, LTI 3 used data-informed approaches to adapt and iterate programming. LTI 3's monitoring, evaluation, and learning platform combined in-house resources with third-party research and analysis to generate, analyze, and report on program achievements. The monitoring, evaluation, and learning team monitored activities and conducted activity- and program-level evaluations against LTI 3's objectives, ensuring a rigorous and continuous feedback loop to facilitate program learning. Third-party research and analysis provided an additional layer of output verification and high-level data collection supporting program-level evaluations.

LTI 3 objectives can be broadly clustered into two interrelated implementation phases. Their strategies were informed by and tailored to hyper-local information and data-collection efforts by each regional office, ensuring that maximum impact was achieved in key geographic locations throughout Libya.

PHASE I: LIBYA IS RESILIENT TO FURTHER FRAGMENTATION AND SPOILERS

The overall programmatic approach during the first phase of programming was aimed at preventing further deterioration in Libya's political and security conditions and to keep spaces open for civilian leadership, reconciliation, and positive political transitions. "Spoilers" referred to individuals or groups — both internal and external — that presented challenges or threats to stability. "Resilience" consisted of the ability to withstand and survive political, security, and economic shocks and challenges.

Stability in strategic, conflict-affected areas improved. Under this program objective, LTI 3 sought to capitalize on windows of opportunity to accelerate recovery in areas that

recently emerged from violence or were liberated from militia or extremist-group control. To address this objective, the project worked to restore service delivery and livelihoods in areas that were sufficiently stable or emerging from instability; to repair public facilities that experienced infrastructure damage; and to assist stakeholders focused on reconciliation. Examples of work under this objective include support to municipal councils to repair damaged infrastructure (e.g., water and sanitation); provide emergency response support to displaced families (e.g., essential food items and hygiene kits); support to increase residents' awareness of service improvement and recovery initiatives; and equipping schools with basic furnishings and supplies.

Governance institutions are preserved. Based on the assumption that citizens prefer inclusive and representative governance institutions that deliver vital public goods and services, this program objective focused on supporting legitimate public institutions like elected municipal councils. Support to these institutions included assistance in responding to community priorities such as service delivery and outreach. Activities included assisting with recovery efforts in Sirte to resume regular garbage collection; provisioning IT equipment and office supplies to improve local and municipal government functioning; and supporting local institutions promoting the peaceful transfer of power.

Influence of extremist groups is reduced in strategic areas. Foreign extremist groups that had established a foothold in Libya by exploiting governance vacuums, local conflicts, marginalized communities, and areas with prior presence of extremist networks, exploiting the stalemate between the GNA and LAAF forces. To address this concern, activities focused on mitigating the threat posed by extremist groups by amplifying the work and voices of CSOs and activists. Reinforcing moderate public messaging, such as support to social media video production promoting nonviolent values, highlighted the importance of social fabrics and solidarity while also conveying the negative impact of misinformation and the actions of hard-liners.

PHASE II: CONDITIONS THAT ENABLE POLITICAL COMPROMISE ARE STRENGTHENED

As the efforts of the Libyan people and UNSMIL began moving toward unified governing institutions at the national level, LTI 3's strategy shifted to support the actors, institutions, and groups facilitating political compromise. The COVID-19 pandemic also necessitated a programmatic response to amplify the efforts of government and CSO actors and unify mandated response mechanisms as well as provide relief to populations and institutions most impacted by prolonged pandemic realities.

Stability is maintained in strategic areas. Activities under this program objective sought to reduce the influence of militant and extremist groups and promote stability in key geographic locations. Examples include support to sports clubs in Sirte that create safe spaces for youth to convene; working with the Ministry of Education to provide maintenance, furniture, and classroom supplies to 14 schools in greater Tripoli while

ensuring their ability to resume studies; and supporting emergency response efforts and actors in and around Tripoli, providing food and hygiene to those displaced by conflict.

Civilian institutions that provide an alternative to military actors are preserved. Efforts in this programmatic area bolstered the impact of key actors addressing citizen concerns while promoting alternatives to military actors. Activities included support to the National Center for Disease Control in disseminating medical information through a unified communications system. This approach helped the center more effectively communicate and coordinate with regional offices and other health sector actors across the country, allowing for real-time disease detection, tracking, and prevention. Other activities included the procurement and installation of solar-power streetlights to increase security in targeted neighborhoods; support to a tourism office to organize a tourism festival; and the procurement of heavy equipment to assist in removing rubble and repairing infrastructure.

Momentum for moderate-led compromise is strengthened. To promoting moderate-led compromise, activities strengthened the role of civic actors, including: supporting a university student union in Misrata to hold business training courses and entrepreneurship competitions; working with HNEC in Sirte to provide material support for a community dialogue session for citizens to voice what they wanted from elections and increase engagement; and working with a youth group in Derna to reopen a social club and host a sports festival.

Positive efforts by other local and international stakeholders are supported. To amplify the efforts of local and international stakeholders, LTI 3 worked in several areas including beautification campaigns in Misrata; recovery efforts in Sirte; supporting UNESCO and UNDP efforts in Benghazi to rehabilitate schools; and provisioning tools and outreach materials to a local organization working to clean up rubble and debris in southern Tripoli, facilitating the return of residents after LAAF and GNA armed conflict.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Pivoting in the face of COVID-19. LTI 3 had significant experience with remote management and digital communications platforms and practices to ensure strategic alignment across five offices and two countries. However, the protracted COVID-19 pandemic and lengthy telework period presented new challenges. Unreliable and unstable telecommunications and internet connections, office closures, varying government restrictions on movement and curfews, ill-equipped home-office spaces, illness, and limited mobility all initially hampered project efforts. Centering the wellness, health, and security of program team members, partners, vendors, and communities, the program pivoted to adapt to a new operating reality.

Efforts to continue programming given the limitations of COVID-19 included:

- *Implementing informed office postures.* The program adopted strict metrics and implemented procedures to inform office operating postures. At various times during implementation, measures included full office closures, reduced access with permission, and open offices with limited staff and increased sanitation and safety measures. Enabling a hybrid approach based on close tracking of medical information and statistics optimized office access while also ensuring staff safety. Strict interaction protocols and contact tracing kept team members and project partners protected to the maximum extent possible.

- *Equipping team members with tools to work from home.* At the onset of the pandemic, the program quickly adapted to the reality that not all staff members had the requisite connectivity, space, or equipment to work from their residences. To mitigate this, the program organized and coordinated efforts to deliver current equipment and supplies from offices and to procure additional equipment for team members to work from home, operating in alignment with government curfews and movement restriction realities. LTI 3 also provided team members with connectivity and Wi-Fi devices and enabled limited and monitored access to the office to ensure that payments and other business needs were met.

- *Modifying activity implementation form and focus.* Programmatically, LTI 3 ensured that activities underway were reimagined and restructured to ensure the safety of all program partners and attendees. In some instances, this meant replacing large-scale events and meetings with online outreach, and in others it constituted working with local partners to ensure that protective equipment was available and social distancing regulations were upheld during events. LTI 3 also shifted

focus to incorporate partnerships and activities to amplify and disseminate information; equip medical professionals with the tools and supplies required; and provide everyday essentials to those most impacted by COVID-19. The program ensured that these activities also served to support wider program objectives through careful selection of partners and activities that would further program and activity objectives. Efforts in this area also saw all four OTI corners engaging in virtual rolling assessments to continue strategic implementation and direction in a remote environment where larger, in-person strategy sessions were not possible.

- *Integrating learning and adaptation into a fully remote environment.* To ensure that U.S. policy directives and context changes were shared in an expedient manner and that messaging around strategic direction remained consistent, LTI 3 built on experiences with remote management and integrated structured weekly calls with all five regional teams. This remote coordination ensured that activities remained relevant and allowed swift programmatic pivots amid regular context analysis. Weekly calls with each team also allowed frequent assumptions checks, ensured that context analysis was the basis of programming, and enabled iteration and adaptive management.

Cash liquidity and exchange rate volatility. During LTI 3's period of performance, cash liquidity remained a challenge. To address limited cash access in some regions, issues with consistent banking services, and currency and exchange-rate fluctuation, the program instituted additional measures to ensure that there was little to no impact on program operations.

- The program instituted protocols ensuring greater financial resources were available when required in all operating regions. Measures included cultivating redundant access to cash with more than one financial institution and paying vendors from Tunis when required.
- To address fluctuating exchange rates and the impact on activity budgets, LTI 3 strengthened market research and budgeting procedures and continually integrated lessons learned when creating new budgets, refreshing hyper-local procurement information.
- When the Central Bank of Libya unified exchange rates in early 2021 to counter the impact of parallel black-market systems, the program moved to denominate certain agreements in U.S. dollars to mitigate the impact of currency devaluation.

Addressing the impact of protracted conflict in Tripoli. The conflict in Tripoli impacted several staff members and caused some to relocate their families. Senior management identified the issue shortly after the conflict arose and consulted with the corporate office employee relations department on potential staff resources. This consultation resulted in several outcomes, including cost-shared relocation and return stipends for team members who met certain criteria; the promotion of staff-care resources and counseling through a corporate partnership with KonTerra; trainings around burnout

and stress management techniques; and surge support to enable program leadership to address staff care. Having multiple access points and means to address the systemic and profound impact of the prolonged conflict allowed team members the financial, logistical, and wellness resources to address conflict impact.

Navigating a changing political landscape and new opportunities. The GNU's appointment and intended elections inspired optimism but also presented program challenges. As LTI 3 moved into closeout, the window of opportunity presented in supporting the political transition forced several strategic pivots. The program split resources to ensure that it could respond to mounting political momentum and requests to increase support to the transition while also ensuring resources were in place for closeout. To address staff retention during the closeout period, LTI 3 promoted corporate-supported incentives to ensure that individual team members remained engaged to the maximum extent possible. Splitting resources and carefully monitoring progress against stated objectives allowed LTI 3 to closeout while ramping up activities. In in this way, LTI 3 continued activity implementation through the end of 2021 and was able to close all activities by the end of the performance period.

Transitioning to LTI 4. The award of LTI 4 required a rapid pivot from closeout to the startup and implementation of the new program. Challenges included ensuring that both programs received adequate attention, simultaneously implementing differing priorities and producing required deliverables. At the time of LTI 4's award, LTI 3 had moved swiftly through the phases of its closeout plan and was implementing a previously envisioned phased staffing drawdown. Transitioning activities, team members, and resources between LTI 3 and LTI 4 required detailed action plans, thoughtful approaches, and close coordination with USAID/OTI and other implementing partners to ensure that activity implementation continued and the program's seamless transfer between contracts.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

LTI 3's overall program approach was to prevent further deterioration in political and security conditions in Libya while preserving as much space as possible for eventual political compromise, unified civilian leadership, reconciliation, and positive political transition. The program worked in strategic communities where stability is most fragile while seizing windows of opportunity to create or strengthen conditions for political compromise and positive political progress where possible. Below, LTI 3 programming is grouped into six clusters to demonstrate high-level technical impact.

SIRTE STABILIZATION

Sirte is a strategic area given its central location, strong political minority, and vulnerability to spoilers. Geographically, Sirte sits on a fault line of the national east-west conflict. Its history as a Gaddafi stronghold made it subject to marginalization in the post-revolution transition. Sirte's vulnerability led to its 2015-2016 occupation by the Islamic State. After eight months of military operations against the Islamic State, led by Al Bunyan Al Marsous (ABAM) and later supported by U.S. airstrikes, the city and surrounding suburbs were liberated at the end of 2016 but left destroyed and inhospitable to returning citizens. LTI 3 supported the gradual recovery of Sirte to allow internally displaced populations to safely return. However, significant security, service, and governance gaps remained amid a lack of resources and support from the central government.

Early LTI 3 programming focused on the city of Sirte, where the program provided nearly $15 million in early recovery assistance to stabilize the city following its liberation from is the Islamic State. LTI launched 45 projects at nearly 200 individual project sites in Sirte to accelerate recovery, support governance bodies responding to community priorities, and reduce the influence of extremist groups. LTI 3 used a layered approach and worked with various partners, including the Sirte Municipal Council, the Sewage and Water Company, the Cleaning Company, the Engineering Syndicate, the Education Office, the Health Office, and various CSOs.

LTI 3 interventions targeted key service sectors, contributing to improved conditions that allowed the return of the majority of Sirte's internally displaced population and increased citizen satisfaction with basic services. Interventions included:

- Supplying garbage trucks and equipment to the Cleaning Company, allowing regular solid-waste collection to resume throughout the city
- Restoring wastewater and sewage-plant functionality, preventing sewage flooding throughout the city

- Repairing damaged wells and restoring running water to Sirte suburbs where 30,000 residents previously were forced to rely on costly water trucking for all home, agriculture, and business needs
- Refurbishing and equipping three medical centers in outlying areas of Sirte (Abu Ghrain, Wishka and Abu Hadi), resuming and improving healthcare for approximately 40,000 residents
- Providing supplies, furniture, and equipment (including stationery, desks, computers, printers, white boards, garbage cans and sports equipment) to Sirte's 70 primary and secondary schools, improving public school functioning for nearly 30,000 school children
- Installing modular units to replace the structurally damaged headquarters of one youth organization, providing idle adolescents with positive alternatives to extremism
- Replacing damaged streetlights along the Sirte-Misrata Coastal Road, restoring normal nighttime traffic flows and encouraging local businesses to re-open

New traffic lights and road signs in central Sirte.
PHOTO: LTI 3/Chemonics

- Replacing traffic lights and road signs at key intersections in central Sirte, restoring normal traffic patterns and reducing traffic accidents
- Replacing Islamic State logos in public places with artwork highlighting the authentic Libyan cultural heritage, promoting recovery by resuming normal social activities and demonstrating pre-Islamic State social values

EXPANDING CIVIC SPACE IN THE EAST

In the east, LTI 3 worked on expanding civic space in Benghazi and Derna by creating opportunities for civic engagement. LTI 3 determined that supporting moderate voices — in a society increasingly dominated by militants and religious fundamentalists — was the best way to create a political space that more conducive to compromise. LTI 3 support and enabled local CSOs to navigate operational restrictions, overcome internalized fear, and increase their networking and social capital. This support allowed partners to gain unprecedented public visibility and the institutional capacity to maintain and increase programming.

For example, LTI 3 partnered with a local CSO to host an art exhibition celebrating Libya's cultural identity through a moderate and open lens. The event enabled Libyan actors, singers, and artists to share their experiences with the Benghazi community, showcasing Libyan cultural identity through different mediums and attracting a

Art exhibition at Derna cultural event.
PHOTO: LTI 3/Chemonics

range of audiences. Panel discussions focused on viewing Libyan cultural identity from different perspectives and led to continued discussion on grantee social media. After participating in the event, two guest speakers were invited to an event hosted by another cultural CSO in Benghazi to discuss the challenges facing Libya's cultural scene.

LTI 3 also promoted women's participation in sports, a controversial subject in conservative communities. LTI 3 took an incremental approach over several activities, working with local partners to change social attitudes around women in sports by successfully engaging new female participants and members.

LTI 3 facilitated coordination between grantees and other stakeholders who shared the same vision, creating connections between CSOs and local governments. The program partnered with several CSOs to expand civic opportunities for Derna residents, equipping a local branch of a youth organization with outdoor gear and IT equipment to enable them to resume activities and expand membership. In February 2021, the supported youth organization organized a march to celebrate the anniversary of its founding, the first event of its kind in Derna since 2011. The event was highly visible and received a lot of positive feedback from the community. The youth group held banners displaying, "One nation, one goal," the same slogan used at the organization's national conference in December 2020, which was also supported by LTI 3. The youth group also launched a tree-planting campaign in March and plans to plant a total of 600 jasmine and orange trees around the city. Since Derna is famous for these trees historically, the initiative will help promote the Dernawi identity.

An iconic location in Derna is a social association where the Islamic State first announced its "occupation" of Libya. LTI 3 supported the association to expand community space and provided sports equipment, office furniture, and supplies. Although COVID-19 temporarily forced the association to pause sports activities, they established an active social media presence with more than 22,000 Facebook followers. LTI 3's support to enable a future reopening served as an investment in a space and forum for civic activities.

Taken together, these activities helped promote a return to normalcy in Derna while countering the city's image as a hub for violent extremism.

PROMOTING ALTERNATIVES TO MILITARIZATION

When Haftar launched the LAAF offensive in April 2019 to capture Tripoli, Misrata mobilized to defend the capital and safeguard the gains from the 2011 revolution. Life in Misrata came to a halt with the imposition of emergency law and the mobilization of fighters to the front lines of the GNA-LAAF conflict. During this time, the war effort dominated media and public life and monopolized funding streams, making it nearly impossible for activists, businesses, youth, or civic actors to operate.

To adapt and respond to this emerging context, LTI 3 designed a series of activities aimed at strengthening civil society and civilian-governance actors in Misrata. The LTI 3 team believed these actors were well poised to promote alternatives to military influence and prioritization in civic life.

Although LTI 3 previously worked in Misrata, the city was not a programmatic focus before 2019, as it was more accessible to other donors and LTI 3 was focusing on areas where the program had a comparative advantage. Because of the 2019 conflict in Tripoli, LTI 3 shifted strategic focus to Misrata to ensure that assistance remained relevant and geographically balanced amid a fluid context.

LTI 3 focused on empowering neutral civilian actors to respond to community needs and provide alternatives to militarization. LTI 3's early activities in Misrata included the beautification of Tripoli Street and supporting the Misrata Cleaning Company to tackle the garbage crisis. The two activities resulted in visible changes in the cleanliness and presentability of public spaces in the

Freshly painted road on Tripoli Street in Misrata.
PHOTO: Local Municipal Partner

city, which helped revive public life and give war-weary Misratans a sense of hope. The lighting of Tripoli Street was particularly impactful given its visibility both on the ground and on traditional and social media. The activity created immense social media buzz and was later replicated in other parts of the city by volunteers and CSOs through private fundraising. Seeing beautiful images of city life at a time of emergency and loss at the front lines struck a chord with Misratans, inspiring renewed pride in their city. The activity resulted in increased crowds in the activity's target area and the reopening of shops at night. Social media coverage of and reactions to the lighting ceremony reflected the message that Misrata is a city of peace. The symbolism of the target area as a shopping hub and the subsequent reopening of stores and crowds at night reinforced a

peaceful image of Misrata at a strategic time when conflict was ongoing in Abu Grain and Tripoli.

COVID-19 further paralyzed civic and economic life in 2020. LTI 3 supported a women-led organization to provide meals for medical staff. As tensions in nearby Abu Grain grew between Misratan and LAAF forces, LTI 3 equipped a group of young creatives to deliver

Mobile classroom installation in Abu Slim.
PHOTO: Municipality of Abu Slim

a peace message and highlight the negative effects of militarization on society. The group produced a series of videos that aimed to raise awareness about the dangers of war on youth and children and about the LPDF. As lockdowns began to ease in fall 2020 and in parallel with LPDF negotiations in Tunis, LTI 3 kicked off a series of economic-recovery and community-development initiatives with civil society actors that were inactive during the 2019 conflict. LTI 3 partners forged partnerships with local government stakeholders to support the recovery of the education sector after years of neglect and to provide university students with economic opportunities. Finally, shortly after the formation of the GNU and appointment of Prime Minister Dbeibah, LTI 3 leveraged the changing political atmosphere to raise the profile of independent CSOs actively engaging the political process. The program seized a rare moment of political openness to raise the previously off-limit topic of rapprochement with the eastern region through a series of dialogue sessions with civil society and key Misratan stakeholders.

Overall, activities in this cluster were designed to activate the work of civil society as a neutral, independent sociopolitical force. Many activities intentionally created networking opportunities given the programmatic assumption that civic activists can gain strength in numbers.

TRIPOLI RECOVERY

After the Tripoli conflict, LTI 3 started tackling recovery issues and then turned attention to service restoration through local authorities. LTI 3's initial interventions addressed immediate recovery needs, which included home rehabilitation, rubble removal, and facilitating the safe return of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The program was concerned about the impact of grievances resulting from IDP influxes and the conflict's disruption of services. IDP movement into 'safer' neighborhoods in Tripoli strained infrastructure and increased the frustration of host and IDP communities. The deterioration of already-weak, conflict-affected services throughout Tripoli was considered a top priority.

LTI 3 first assisted a local volunteering initiative to help IDPs of south Tripoli to permanently return by rehabilitating homes and conducting cleaning and rubble removal

campaigns. LTI 3 also provided mobile classrooms and support to schools across Tripoli. During LAAF's Tripoli offensive, more than 300,000 people were displaced, and many took refuge in schools. Due to damaged school buildings, many students were forced into already crowded classrooms located in safer areas. Overcrowding placed a significant burden on teachers, administrators, students, and frustrated residents. COVID-19 added an additional challenge. In response, LTI 3 provided mobile classrooms to 14 schools across Tripoli to help ease overcrowding. These prefabricated classrooms will ensure education access for IDPs and host communities until the local government can rehabilitate damaged school facilities. LTI 3 also provided the same 14 schools with furniture, classroom supplies, and maintenance support. By equipping local schools and providing additional classroom space, the activity enabled schools to accept more students and apply social distancing in response to COVID-19. An estimated 10,500 students and teachers benefited from increased capacity to hold instruction.

LTI 3 also provided solar power equipment to Tripoli's Abu Slim neighborhood to improve electricity access. The area of Abu Slim in southern Tripoli was especially hard hit by the GNA-LAAF conflict. As displaced residents returned home, they faced unexploded ordinances and damaged buildings and electricity infrastructure. LTI 3 provided support to the local electricity company to improve electricity services and strengthen the resilience of returnees. LTI 3 procured solar-powered streetlights for the company to install in locations identified by a municipal council in coordination with *mukhtars* (local leaders) and community members. Six hundred solar lights were installed at six schools, 18 health clinics, and 80 residential buildings, helping make targeted areas safer. These new streetlights benefited 3,200 neighborhood residents and commuters from the surrounding area. LTI 3 support helped improve security in Abu Slim and highlighted the benefits of civilian-led inclusive processes to residents.

ADDRESSING GRIEVANCES IN THE SOUTH

Southern Libya suffers from marginalization, chronic instability, fragile local political institutions, severely damaged infrastructure, porous borders, and longstanding tribal and ethnic rivalries. Extremist groups, including Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Islamic State, have exploited the south's porous borders and lawlessness to expand their role in human trafficking and smuggling networks and establish training and logistics hubs in ungoverned spaces. With competing governments attempting to secure key facilities and community support on the more populous Libyan coastline, the south was subject to marginalization and years of neglect by both governments. Amid chronic instability, fragile and poorly maintained infrastructure caused major disruptions in services, contributed to growing anger and perceptions of marginalization, and prompted angry citizens to block roads and access to the country's critical oil fields. Such unaddressed grievances have contributed to violent protests, the closure of oil fields and key roads by protestors, the sabotage of infrastructure nodes in areas controlled by rivals, and armed clashes. In the south, LTI 3 focused on geographic areas and populations where unresolved grievances were likely to contribute to violence in areas near key population centers and infrastructure, including Sabha and Ubari. In

addition to addressing service delivery failures that sparked violent protests, LTI 3 empowered local and national governance institutions to address community priorities.

A sanitation company team drains a flooded road in Sabha's Almahdiah neighborhood.
PHOTO: LTI 3/Chemonics

Sabha's wastewater system suffered significant damage due to conflict, and years of neglect compounded systemic issues. As a result, many neighborhoods suffered from a sewage overflow that paralyzed day-to-day life and threatened the city's stability. To address the overflow crisis, LTI 3 provided eight mobile pumps to draw wastewater from congested manholes and pumps into other functional systems, thus reducing flooding. Doing so has significantly reduced sewage overspill in many communities. In February 2021, the local sanitation company launched a cleaning campaign in the Almahdiah neighborhood in cooperation with the public services company. The area had been especially affected by wastewater flooding, which led to health and sanitation issues and displaced some residents whose houses collapsed due to erosion. The collaboration between the two public works organizations was seamless. The sanitation company cleaned blocked pipes and pumped wastewater, and the services company removed debris. As a result, the road was reopened to cars after being closed for more than three years. The activity inspired residents and national service providers, who contributed trees and led a beautification campaign targeting the same street, and an electricity company subsequently repaired the lighting in the area. The initiative provided a model for constructive collaboration between the community and local entities that aimed to improve living conditions to decrease residents' feeling of neglect.

LTI 3 also delivered 26 generators to the public water company and neighborhood councils in Sabha to address water cuts in 13 neighborhoods. The installed generators were frequently used between April and May 2020 (Ramadan) to overcome the city's water crisis at a time when electricity cuts were reaching 12 hour per day. According to mukhtar testimonies, the activity provided an important opportunity for local authorities to address a major issue in the city after years of neglect and marginalization.

In Ubari, many residents live without power for days or weeks at time. The town has a power plant, but it functions at limited capacity. Lack of funding and resources, coupled with the security situation, have prevented needed maintenance and repairs. Although the plant supplies power to more populated cities on the coast, Ubari faces extended electricity cuts, contributing to residents' frustration. To address this grievance, LTI 3 provided support to a municipal council to install solar power units at 11 medical centers, the municipal council building, and the Ubari airport. Locations were selected

to ensure that all tribal communities benefited from the support. This alternative power source ensures the continuation of vital services — such as healthcare — even during power cuts. The solar unit at the airport provides a secondary power source for runway lighting, supporting existing airport infrastructure and resources to maintain 24-hour electricity, which is required to obtain the routing license for international flights to transit through Ubari. The installation of these solar power units benefited 1,000 staff at medical centers, municipal council, and the airport as well as 35,000 Ubari residents.

ELECTIONS PREPAREDNESS

LPDF's roadmap represented a significant opportunity for Libya to work toward a lasting political solution to the conflict between the GNA and LAAF. With elections planned for December 2021, LTI 3 aimed to support mandated institutions including HNEC and the Civil Registry Authority to be prepared for administering credible elections on time.

Newly equipped HNEC operations room.
PHOTO: LTI 3/Chemonics

LTI 3 provided a variety of support to HNEC to help prepare for elections. LTI 3 equipped HNEC's 25 regional offices across Libya with essential IT equipment to efficiently administer elections. The support enabled HNEC to maintain its presence and reach in key communities ahead of elections. In addition to expanding HNEC access to local communities, USAID/OTI support also strengthened HNEC's capacity to administer secure, well-coordinated elections. LTI 3 equipped HNEC's security branch with IT equipment and office furniture and provided support for the installation of their server and networking setup. The security branch, run by HNEC and the Ministry of Interior, coordinates with relevant national bodies to ensure the security of the electoral process, from voter registration to the announcement of election results. This support helped prepare the security branch and strengthened HNEC's ability to administer elections effectively and safely.

Finally, LTI 3 helped the Civil Registry Authority administer credible elections on time by supplying its head office in Tripoli with the necessary IT infrastructure (including computers, printers, and software) to synchronize its IT systems with HNEC's. This timely support ensured that HNEC could pull the required information to update the voter registry, issue voter cards, and confirm voter eligibility on election day.

THE WAY FORWARD

LTI 3 closeout ran in tandem with LTI 4 startup efforts for a period of five months. The conception and award of LTI 4 demonstrates a continuing investment and interest by the U. S. government in concert with the United Nations and other international partners to assist Libyans with the work of transition. Particularly given the delay of national elections and the resulting potential for instability, continuing the path toward a unified government capable of providing a stable and secure nation for all citizens is paramount. LTI 3 strategic focuses were fluid as GNA confidence was already being reduced at the start of the program, with further inaction resulting in the GNA being seen as an ineffective government. With this, LTI 3 quickly refocused to provide greater municipal-level support to demonstrate positive governance and prevent increased risk associated with nonconfidence in governance structures.

While the failure to hold planned national elections and a potential new government are frustrating for many Libyans, they present important opportunities for future USAID/OTI programming. Libya's transition has deviated from the original LPDF roadmap, with elections unlikely in the UNSMIL-proposed timeline for June 2022. With new timelines proposed by the HOR, it is important to maintain momentum toward an electoral process while being cautious of election fatigue. As Libya moves into a new phase with the potential for Libyan-led initiatives to succeed, demilitarization will be a key factor to ensuring longer-term stability, and LTI 4 will actively support initiatives that provide alternatives to militarization.

With this in mind, and as programming continues with LTI 4, strategic focus will shift to strengthening the conditions for a revived political transition and to enhancing the space for inclusion, participation, and reconciliation, all while ensuring stability is maintained. To achieve this goal, LTI 4 will program under mutually reinforcing objectives. These objectives include ensuring stability is maintained in strategic areas; increasing opportunities for positive political participation; and reducing division and polarization. LTI 4 will design and implement activities clusters addressing Libya's fluid and complex environment with flexibility and speed, especially in strategic areas where tangible grievances exist and/or threats of instability undermine positive political progress.

LTI 4 is well placed to prioritize operational flexibility and meet the changing landscape given the significant lessons learned on prior programs. Lessons learned around supporting the national government during prior implementation will inform which strategies should be replicated and which to avoid. Moving forward, new programming will ensure that lessons learned are frequently revisited and incorporated into future programming to ensure the application of continual learning while yielding the most meaningful and impactful results.