



IRC in Libya: Overview of the Child Protection Program

Children in Libya

Given the political climate of the country for the last few years, there remains a substantial gap in services and local capacities for Child Protection (CP) and GBV services. It is estimated that around 271,000 children and caregivers are in need of CP services, and 153,000 girls and women at risk of GBV (Libya Humanitarian Response Plan 2022)

Other child safety concerns noted by include undesirable companies and unsafe environments due to armed groups' activities (BHA need assessment report 2022). IRC field visits and meetings with government officials indicates a lack of government capacity to manage cases of children.

MORE ABOUT THE IRC CP PROGRAM IN LIBYA

IRC has been strengthening community-based child protection to enhance the protection of children from violence, abuse, and exploitation in targeted locations through Information Dissemination and Awareness Raising. These includes provision of services available for children and child protection issues, provision of parenting skills training to caregivers, and training of governmental and non-governmental actors.

These trainings have focused on basic child protection and Child Protection Minimum Standard (CPMS) in Emergency, and establishment of the Child Protection Committees to support in the identification, reporting, and referral of children protection cases. Below is more on the different types of child protection programming done at the country level.

Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AOR)

IRC is an active member of Libya's Child Protection Sub-Sector (CPSS) working committee that plans, coordinates, and monitors the work of the various actors implementing CP interventions in Libya. IRC's intervention contributes to the CPSS 2022 workplan and CP service mapping. This includes contributing to the capacity building of organizations and institutions working with children at various levels through strengthening the capacity of non-CP actors and ensuring quality response and service delivery through strengthening CM and referral pathways. Every month, IRC, through the sub-sector meetings, contributes to the discussion on CP and provides feedback on the progress of the CP intervention as implemented by IRC.

Libya Context

Over a decade since the 2011 Libya revolution, protection remains at the core of the humanitarian response in Libya, with 400,000 people in need (including 120,000 IDPs and 29,000 returnees).

Women and children disproportionately affected by the conflict and at a higher risk of violence, exploitation, trafficking, gender-based violence (GBV), recruitment by armed groups and unlawful detention.

BHA needs assessment conducted by IRC noted that the Libyan civil war increased insecurity, displacement, and deteriorating living conditions, hence increasing the protection risks for children. The current social, financial, and political situation as well as the lack of, or limited, support from the government are the main contributing factors to the protection risks faced by children in their communities, and the country.

IRC is also a member of the Case Management Tasks Force (CMTF) led by Save the Children and contributes to the adaptation of the case management SOPs that will be rolled out in the entire Libya.

Child Protection committees:

IRC established and trained 36 Child Protection Committees (CPCs) in Tawergha and Abugrain on Basic Child Protection. The training aimed at improving their understanding of child protection, increasing the capacity to prevent abuse, strengthening the ability to identify child protection issues without stigmatizing or targeting the child, and increasing awareness of how to create a protective environment. It is expected that the committees, in the long run, will be able to identify, report, and refer cases of abuse for appropriate support services within the government structures and NGOs.

Government Structures

To strengthen the capacity of the Governmental and non-governmental actors. IRC provided training on basic child protection and Child Protection Minimum Standards in an Emergency to improve their knowledge and skills in child protection and ensure the delivery of quality child protection services to the children.

Local Partners

IRC continued to partner with two local CSO (Amalouna and Al Naseem) to provide quality child protection services to children, adolescents, and parents/caregivers. IRC supported Al Naseem (Local Partner) with first aid kits, fire extinguishers, furniture, and PSS materials to allow them to conduct PSS activities, the clinic for specialized mental health services, awareness sessions for children, and parents, training of adolescents on how to protect themselves.

The local partner is now conducting sessions for children, adolescents, and parenting – to reach more people. On average Al Naseem can reach about 200 children and adults. In Tripoli, Amalouna the local partner was supported with the rehabilitation of the center, furniture, and PSS materials to be able to conduct SEL and recreational activities.

Amalouna staff received training on specialized Child Protection services (Parenting, SHLS, SEL) to allow them to improve their capacity and implement quality specialized child protection services.

Community information and awareness raising:

IRC reached out to community members in Libya through Information Dissemination sessions on available child protection services (Case management, PSS, Social and Emotional Learning, and SHLS) offered by IRC and how the community can register and participate in the child protection services, and awareness sessions on Child rights, bullying, and personal hygiene. Through Information Dissemination and Awareness raising, IRC has witnessed a growing interest in its services and an increase in child protection cases being reported.

Case Management

Through the case workers, IRC provided case management services to (UAC, Physical abuse, emotional abuse, domestic violence, lack of basic services like education, health and hygiene, and trafficking). Using the Vulnerability funds, IRC was able to deliver in-kind support to children who were victims of child abuse and children at risk.

QUALITY CHILD PROTECTION SPECIALIZED SERVICES (PSS)

Parenting Skills Session:

Parents and caregivers of children aged 6-11 years old attended a series of 12 interactive sessions aimed to promote the well-being of children by improving parents' stress management, fostering positive parenting practices, and providing parents with strategies to support children's psychosocial needs. The positive outcome from these sessions has seen an increase in the number of mothers and teachers showing interest in attending the parenting sessions. For example, one mother from Abugrain who attended the sessions mobilized around 4 other caregivers, who later attended the sessions.

Now I am Stronger for Adolescent boys

IRC conducted sessions targeting adolescent boys ages 12-17 years who have been through a lot of difficulties and potentially traumatic issues, and demonstrate challenging behaviors. The sessions are meant to allow adolescents in the group to become resilient, restore symbolization and learning capacities, enhance a sense of safety, and learn how to protect themselves.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

In Misrata and Tripoli, children were registered and attended social and emotional learning classes at safe spaces and schools (Zahrat Almaden and Abugrain).

14 staff (12 females & 2 male) both from Tripoli, Misrata, and Amalouna) received Safe Healing and Learning Space Foundation training, and Social-Emotional Learning aimed at increasing their knowledge and skills on the basics of establishing SHLS, how to monitor and evaluate a safe space, caring, and predictable environment in the SHLS. The training is expected to improve the staff's facilitation skills to deliver quality SEL sessions to the children.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Abugrain Municipal, IRC distributed PSS kits to girls and boys (6-11 years old), and boys (12-17 years old) who are IDPs/Returns and couldn't have access to regular CP and PSS activities in Misrata, Abugrain, and Tawragha. Among the beneficiaries are Disabled Children, Children with PTSD, and neglected. The kits were provided to help children come out of stress, increase their focus, and reduce distraction.

Non-Structured PSS - Recreational Activities:

IRC continued to organize games and sports activities for children. These activities have the multi-fold goal of supporting the release of energy and anxiety through physical play, promoting the development of important life skills such as teamwork and cooperation, negotiation, empathy, and building networks and trusting relationships among the participants.

DONORS



IRC's global child protection programs aim to ensure that children are safe, able to exercise their rights, and cared for, in a family or family-like environment that promotes their physical, social, emotional, cognitive and economic well-being. For more information on IRC's global child protection work, visit <https://childprotectionpractitioners.org>