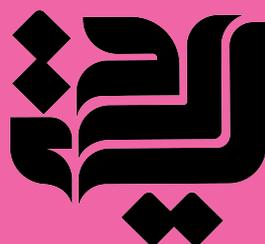


MAPPING MOVEMENTS ENVISIONING LIBYA

Doria Feminist Fund
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Objective

This review aims to

- Provide a contextual analysis of the security and political situation in Libya and its repercussions on the upcoming planned elections in December 2021
- Develop a deeper understanding of women groups active in the area of promoting women's participation in the political arena, assessing their eligibility to receive funding (ie permissions/registration to operate in Libya) and their capacity and priorities to spend out on the specified activities in a restricted time-frame (by March 2022)
- Generate a list of 8-10 eligible organizations that could be funded within the scope of the project taking into consideration the following:
 - The organizations are women and/ or young feminist led and the areas they are working in to ensure funding reaches youth/young feminists and more marginalized people
 - The groups/organizations are spread across the country to meet the requirement of ensuring national spread
- Capture insights on the capacities and previous experience of how organizations have adapted to COVID-related lockdowns and the extent to which groups have existing safeguarding or wellness processes

Research Methodology and Approach

The research integrates contextual data on challenges and inequalities facing Libyan women with primary qualitative data from women active in the local communities on their perceptions of the structural violence facing women with particular emphasis on women's participation in the political arena.

Mapping

In order to provide a holistic angle to the gender inequalities facing women active at the political level, it was decided to consult with different CSOs and stakeholders working in Libya on gender equality and women rights.

After conducting the stakeholder mapping, key informants were identified in order to get more substantial information and insights on the current situation of Libyan women.

Data Collection Tools

The tools that were used are Secondary Data Review and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with -women leads of CSOs from the various areas in Libya. Doria team and the contracted consultant conducted:

- Secondary Data Review: this includes the review of documents and other related references and material available on the security situation and women in Libya
- 6 KIIs were conducted with women representatives of women CSO registered in Libya. In addition, several online discussions were held with CSOs representatives working on women empowerment initiatives in Libya and the regions to have a better understanding on the current situation of Libya, national context, laws and policies, enabling and hindering factors for gender equality, and emerging trends.

Libya Security Situation

In light of the state of anticipation witnessed by the Libyan political arena regarding the preparation and coordination of the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections on December 24, 2021, it is expected that during the next stage, Libya will face several challenges and obstacles that prevent the success of the electoral process. This is due to the fear of many internal and external parties from rebuilding the Libyan state and saving it from the clutches of fragmentation and terrorism, since this would threaten the interests and ambitions of these forces. Based on this, it is possible to analyze and detail the existing clash between the mapping of militias and armed factions in Libya and the prominent features of the upcoming elections, in order to review the most imminent security threats and challenges facing the country.

Armed militia map

Armed militias arose in Libya after 2011, before the rule of Muammar Gaddafi was overthrown, claiming to maintain security and stability. However, after the killing of "Gaddafi", these militias did not disband themselves, but rather increased their armament, and expanded to extend their influence to many regions of the state, and penetrated into the state's security and military institutions. The country was divided into two camps, an eastern one, which includes the "National Army Forces" led by General "Khalifa Haftar", and the other, a western one, which includes a wide range of militias and armed factions divided on regional, ideological, ethnic and tribal basis.

This is in addition to mercenaries who are funded by foreign powers. The most prominent features of the map of armed terrorist militias in Libya can be reviewed as follows:

First: Militias on a regional and ideological basis

1- Tripoli militias

Al-Sarraj government availed international legitimacy as a cover for the armed terrorist militias working for it, and to circumvent international demands to dissolve all armed militias in Libya, under the pretext of establishing the so-called "National Guard" as a financially independent entity which includes various militias and armed factions in Tripoli. It was formed to assume the tasks of securing vital objectives, and guarding the presidential and sovereign headquarters, including the Libyan land, sea, and air entry ports. The most prominent armed militias in Tripoli are:

- The Special Deterrence Force: The force was formed in 2012 in the southern suburbs of the capital, Tripoli, from thousands of fighters, under the command of Lieutenant Abdel Raouf Karh, who belongs to the "Madkhali" Salafist movement. The force is based in the "Mitiga" base - the most powerful bases in the capital, Tripoli - and the Government of National Accord relied on it to provide protection and security for its headquarters, especially because those headquarters are stationed at the "Posta" base adjacent to the "Matiqa" base. This, while the deterrence force militia controls the banks, the airport road, and many major facilities, as well as the "Hadhba prison". It is worth mentioning that it has contributed to human trafficking and arms and drug smuggling into Libya. However, in an attempt by the government to legitimize the militia, the Presidential Council announced the inclusion of all its affiliates in what so-called "the deterrence apparatus to combat organized crime and extremism."

- Al-Nawasi Brigade (Eighth Force): A militia affiliated with the Ministry of Interior of the Libyan Government of National Accord, and operates as a security cover for thousands of extremists belonging to the "Libyan Fighting Group" organization, which has a Salafi-jihadi reference, and is classified as a terrorist group under the leadership of "Mustafa Kaddour." The brigade played an important role in securing government headquarters, specifically the residence of Al-Sarraj, and it enjoys direct financial support from the Central Bank of Libya.

- The Joint/ Rapid Deterrence and Intervention Force: They are Salafi militias closer to the Salafi-jihadi movement that were formed in late 2012 within the “Abu Salim” area, which is considered a center for crime, and drug and alcohol trade, and is led by “Abdul Ghani Kikli” nicknamed “Ghneiwa”, and hold several names, including "Abu Salim Brigade", " Ghneiwa Forces", and sometimes "Central Security" due to its controlling role under the command of the Government of National Accord.
- Tripoli Revolutionaries Brigade (Central Security Service): It was established in 2011, in the city of “Nalut Al Jabaleya” (translated as the mountainous Nalut) by Mahdi Al-Harati, one of the men of Turkish President “Erdogan”. It is among the military factions that participated in the liberation of Tripoli in August 2011. It is led by Haitham Al-Tajouri and is currently operating under the name of the Central Security Agency of the Ministry of Interior in the Government of National Accord. The battalion's influence extends to the east and center of Tripoli in some areas near the airport road, and the "Matiqa" base where most of its units are stationed. The United Nations accused the battalion of being involved in human trafficking, drug smuggling, fuel smuggling and money laundering.
- Tajoura Battalions: Several armed terrorist militias are stationed in the "Tajoura" neighborhood, east of Tripoli, under the banner of the Government of National Accord. Perhaps the largest of these militias is the “Draidirat Brigade”, as an armed faction that possesses a strong military arsenal, and enjoys wide influence over the suburbs of Tajoura. This is in addition to the "133 Brigade" stationed at the eastern gate of Tripoli, which is considered the strongest and most violent militia in Tripoli, as it includes most of the militants of Tajoura, and is known as the "Baqara Militia". It is noteworthy that despite the loyalty of both the "Baqara Militia" and the "Special Deterrence Force" to the Government of National Accord, there are significant ideological differences between them.

2- Misurata militias

The city of "Misrata" is considered the economic capital for Libya. It has played a major role in launching the Libyan revolution, and was able to become the most powerful city in western Libya after overthrowing the rule of "Gaddafi", especially since many of its political and military members have occupied leadership positions in Tripoli, on top of them, "Fathi Bashagha", the Ministry of Interior in the Government of National Accord, and "Mohammed Al-Haddad", the former commander of the "Al-Halbous" brigade and the commander of the military region in Tripoli.

The Military Council of the Misrata Brigades, which serves as an umbrella grouping all the brigades, participates in the military operations that take place on the outskirts of the capital, Tripoli, and other cities. This is because it is the largest organized and cohesive military faction in western Libya, according to the size of its armed vehicles, tanks and military aircraft, alongside the Turkish and Qatari support that it receives. The most well-known Misurata militias are the following:

- Al-Faruq Militia: Founded by the terrorist “Al-Tohamy Bouzian,” one of the leaders of the “Ansar al-Sharia terrorist group”, and is considered as one of the fiercest fighting battalions in Misurata. It is considered one of the most prominent battalions affiliated to the instructions of the Mufti, "Al-Sadiq Al-Ghariani", and has officially pledged allegiance to ISIS from inside Libya.
- Al-Mursi Brigade: It was formed by the "Bashagha". It participated in the attack of "Fajr Libya" militias on the capital, Tripoli in 2014, and it is considered as the largest supporter for its founder.
- The Al-Somoud Brigade militia: It was formed within the “Fajr Libya” militia alliance, but later became independent under the name “Al-Somoud Brigade” led by Salah Badi, who is on the international terrorism list, who actually controls the majority of Misurata militias.
- The 166th Infantry Militia (the Third Force): It is a force affiliated with the Libyan Armed Forces, led by General “Jamal al-Triki”. One of the militia’s prominent positions was rejecting the decision to arrest the “Bashagha” and subject him to investigation in August 2020, when its former commander, “Mohammed Al-Hussan” threatened to dissent from the Government of National Accord and reveal the corruption if the "Bashagha" drew out of government.
- Battalion 301 (formerly the al-Halbous Brigade): founded by "Mohammed al-Halbous", one of the armed rebels who participated in the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi's regime. It is considered as one of the most powerful Misratan militias, the most supportive for the Government of National Accord, and is responsible for securing the Presidential Palace, the International Airport Road and some southern areas in the capital, Tripoli. Al-Sarraj succeeded during his reign in dividing the battalion’s loyalty and splitting its lines by appointing its former commander, “Mohammed Ali Al-Haddad” as chief of the general staff of the Al-Wefaq forces, and it has continued until now in the “Al-Dbeibeh” government.

Thus, the larger wing of the battalion became anti-“Bashagha”, and it is an indicator on the pervading of terrorist militias into leadership positions in the new governing authority.

This is in addition to many other militias loyal to the "Bashagha", who are strongly lined up pushing him to be the man of the next stage, including: the Bunyan Al-Marsous Forces, Al-Murabitin, Sherikhan, Tajin Militia, Hittin Militia, and Al-Mahjoub Brigade.

3- The militias of Sabrata, Al-Ajilat and Surman:

These cities suffer from the influence of many armed militias, especially since the withdrawal of the Libyan army. It included units associated with Al-Qaeda, ISIS and Ansar al-Sharia, and practice smuggling and human trafficking on a large scale. It is worth noting that these militias are loyal to the Government of National Accord and at great animosity with the "Bashagha" militia. While the latter sees the need to get rid of them and their crimes to appease the international community, Al-Sarraj has included them in the official bodies of the state.

Second: Militias on an ethnic and tribal basis

- Zintan militias: The city of Zintan is considered as the second most powerful military arsenal in the western region after the city of Misurata. Since its defeat during Operation “Libya Dawn” in 2014 and its expulsion from Tripoli, its brigades made up of ethnic Zintan and Berbers have restructured themselves. The two largest factions in it, namely: Al-Sawa’iq and Al-Qaqa’a, were merged into one entity called the “Special Public Security Force”. It operates within a military umbrella that includes all the armed militias in the city, under the leadership of “Osama Al-Juwaili,” the former Minister of Defense, who coordinated an agreement with the leaders of other military factions loyal to the "Sarraj" government, which granted him an amnesty to return to Tripoli.

- Al-Zawiya militias: The city of Al-Zawiya is largely based on the tribe, as the formation of militias and armed factions in it depends on family and ethnic dimensions. Among the city's militias are; The "Coast Guard" militia loyal to the Government of National Accord, led by "Abdul Rahman al-Milad", nicknamed "Al-Bidja", who was arrested by the "Bashagha" on charges of human trafficking and smuggling.

There are also many militias loyal to the Government of National Accord, such as the "Revolutionaries Chamber", "Al-Far" and "Al-Farouq", all of which formed a large alliance under the name "Criminal Investigation".

The tribal disparity extended from being merely geographical to becoming militarized through the formation of armed groups and militias affiliated with some tribes, such as the "Khadrawa" faction, which is part of the "Khadrawi" family, and it is considered one of the most powerful factions in the city.

Features of the upcoming elections

In preparation for the elections to be held on December 24, 2021, Imad Al-Sayeh, Chairman of the Electoral Commission's Board, stated that the final constitutional rule and laws related to the electoral process will be approved on September 1, 2021, after it was postponed for the third time in the last few months. He indicated that the commission is facing difficulties in starting the preparation and coordination process of the elections before adopting the final constitutional rule. Especially since the start of the elections directly without reaching the final constitutional rule on the mechanisms of candidacy and elections, and the adoption of the necessary laws may herald the country's entry into a new phase of chaos and conflicts.

It is important to note that the High National Electoral Commission (HNEC) had been established as a non-political, technical and administrative body, with independent financial control, in accordance with Law No. (3) of 2012 issued by the National Transitional Council in January 2012. It is an official body formed by the legislative authority, and is managed by Libyan cadres and expertise as a supreme authority concerned only with managing and implementing electoral processes, with the aim of strengthening democracy in Libyan society, creating an atmosphere that supports participation and transparency, and providing opportunities for all candidates and voters to bring positive changes to the Libyan political reality.

The Commission's Council consists of the Council's chairman and a number of members, and it is concerned with following up on the political and strategic situations and the mechanisms necessary to implement electoral processes in accordance with the specific standards necessary to ensure the integrity and transparency of the voting process. This is done through the formation of competent committees in accordance to the provisions of the electoral law, in addition to defining the time frame for the electoral process, setting the budget and policies to support and empower different groups

such as women and people with disabilities to ensure their participation. This is in addition to defining the appropriate mechanisms for receiving complaints and appeals related to the electoral process, and approving and announcing the results of the poll.

The media advisor to the Libyan Parliament Speaker, "Fathi Al-Marimi", confirmed that the constitutional rule on the election of the president was established by the people directly, according to several conditions stipulated by the commission for both candidates and voters. The council includes one Amazeegh woman who was elected as a representative of the minority factions.

On the level of candidates, the draft law on candidacy for the presidential elections stipulates the following:

- 1- The candidate must be a Libyan, and a Muslim of Libyan Muslim parents.
- 2- Must be of Libyan nationality and not married to a non-Libyan.
- 3- The age of the candidate on the date of opening the candidacy admission shall not be less than 40 years.
- 4- Must have at least a university degree or its equivalent.
- 5- Must not have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor breaching trust and honor.
- 6- The candidate must submit a declaration of his immovable and movable property inside and outside Libya for him, his wife and his minor children.
- 7- To submit to the commission a recommendation form from 5,000 voters certified by a certified contract editor, in accordance with the procedures set by the commission.
- 8- The candidate should not be an employee of the commission or its electoral committees or a member of one of the polling center committees.
- 9- To deposit in the account of the High National Electoral Commission an amount of 10 thousand Libyan dinars, which is not refundable.
- 10- Every civil or military employee, running for the position of head of state, shall be considered suspended from work three months before the date holding the elections, and shall have the right to return to the position in case losing the elections, and all dues shall be paid.

As for the voters, the head of the High National Electoral Commission, Counselor "Imad Al-Sayeh", stated that the total number of voters on the HNEC's database had reached 2,800,000 voters as of August 24, 2021. He also confirmed that voters will be handed special electoral cards bearing certain features that are resistant to fraud. He explained that the most important conditions for the commission regarding casting a vote during the upcoming

parliamentary and presidential elections, is that the voter must be of Libyan nationality, be at the age of 18 by December 24, 2021, and holds a Libyan national number.

As for the status of women during the upcoming electoral process, the HNEC, in cooperation with civil society organizations, seeks to enhance the effective participation of women during the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections, by ensuring their participation in all activities of the electoral process, whether as a candidate, voter or election observer, according to statements from Mohamed Al-Misbahi, President of the Libyan Empowerment Center for Research and Strategic Studies.

According to the Libya 24 News website, the HNEC announced a significant increase in the number of voters from abroad, which exceeded 6 782 during the first week of the registration system's opening. Among them (4,732) are men, and (2,140) are women.

On August 24, 2021, Al-Sayeh met the Minister of State for Women's Affairs in the Government of National Unity, Dr. Houria Khalifa Miloud, to discuss mechanisms of cooperation between the Commission and the Ministry of State for Women's Affairs, in the framework of preparations for the upcoming elections, and how to enhance women's participation pathways within the electoral process, especially in light of the establishment of the Women's Support Unit within the Commission in 2017, as part of the Unit's efforts to ensure that the Commission's internal regulations are committed to promoting gender equality and expanding the space and percentage of women's presence within electoral offices.

The repercussions of the military and political map on elections

The map of militias and armed factions in Libya and the security and military threats that they pose have casted their shadow over the political reality in Libya, especially with regard to the fate of the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections, both in terms of identifying candidates, or in terms of the possibility of holding and securing the elections in a manner that ensures a peaceful and a secure transition of power and can be presented as per the following:

1- The crisis of integrating armed militias into the military institutions:

Although Al-Dbeibeh confirmed at the beginning of his tenure, as Prime Minister of the Libyan National Unity Government, that he would work to dismantle the forces of militias and mercenaries, and prosecute those wanted.

However, until now, he hasn't exerted any serious efforts towards that path, but rather on the contrary, there are many indications of Al-Dbeibeh 's efforts to integrate these forces into the state's security and military institutions rather than disbanding them. For example: during his recent visit to Benghazi, "Al-Dbeibeh" was accompanied by security forces made up of armed militia personnel that fought the Libyan army; he also stated during his visit to Turkey that the Syrian and Turkish forces present in Libya are legitimate in accordance to the agreement made between Ankara and the former Libyan government. This is in addition to the presence of some elements of these militias in the Ministries of Interior and Defense, and they receive salaries from the state.

In August 2021, Al-Dbeibeh held a meeting with the Committee for the Follow-up and Organization of the Supporting Forces (terrorist armed militias), which was formed by the Minister of Interior, "Fathi Bashagha", to bypass international calls to create a legal framework for dissolving the militias, withdrawing their weapons, and reintegrating their elements into the state institutions. This meeting was held in the presence of the Chief of General Staff in Tripoli, Lieutenant-General "Mohamed Al-Haddad" - who is not recognized as so by the parliament - as well as the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and the Prime Minister, in order to present a program for recruiting the supporting forces into the state's military, police, and civil institutions, despite their involvement and their gunmen in terrorist operations and crimes against the army, state institutions, and civilians.

Given that the success of the "Al-Dbeibeh" government in leading the next phase of the presidential and parliamentary elections depends on its ability to get rid of the corrupt legacy inherited from the "Al-Sarraj" government regarding these militias and mercenaries, Al-Dbeibeh's policies signify the continuation of divisions, the state of conflict between the various armed forces and factions, and the failure of the current government to resolve the crisis and establish a safe political path during the upcoming elections. This is evident as the process of integrating these forces into the state's security and military institutions is in the interest of all the factions that support destabilizing the security and stability of Libya, whether at home, led by the Justice and Construction Party, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya, or abroad, such as Turkey.

2- The conflict of powers:

The features of conflict over the powers between Field Marshal "Haftar" the commander of the Libyan army in the east, the President of the Presidential Council "Mohamed Al-Manfi", and the head of the national government "Al-Dbeibeh", began to manifest itself since Haftar launched a military operation in the south of the country to pursue elements from the terrorist organization "ISIS" in June 2021, which was rejected by the Presidential Council. The Council, and during a special statement, prohibited any military movement for any purpose, including the transfer of personnel, weapons and ammunition, which "Haftar" considered an attack on his powers to move his military forces as he wanted, without posing a threat to the country.

Then, recently, disagreements renewed, reaching the point of exchanging statements and accusations regarding the authority to issue military decisions. Where the dispute began after Haftar issued in August 2021 a number of decisions regarding the appointment and promotion of leaders and emirs of his military regions. The Presidential Council in Tripoli considered these decisions a violation for his authority approved by the political agreement in Geneva, noting that these decisions are strictly within the scope of the Presidential Council as it is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

Haftar's response came during his speech at the celebration of the 81st anniversary of the establishment of the army, saying: "The national army will not be subject to any authority that is not directly elected by the people, ... not on its behalf or under its guardianship." He stated that in case a political solution is not reached - i.e. holding the elections on its scheduled date - the National Army will seek to liberate Tripoli again from militias and criminals, similar to the military campaign launched in April 2019.

3- The emergence of Gaddafi's son:

The emergence of Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, on the political scene at this time led to many divisions between the various political and military forces, especially after he was presented as a third party in the upcoming electoral process between the eastern and western camps. It is worth noting that he enjoys popularity and positive resonance with a wide sector of tribes and cities that were and still owe allegiance to the Gaddafi era, which makes him a strong contender if he participates in the upcoming elections, and pushes many of the competing forces to take strict positions against him, and to search for mechanisms that impeded his candidacy efforts.

However, observers of the political scene believe that the mere declaration of "Saif Gaddafi" about his candidacy will lead to many divisions and conflicts, and ignite armed battles again, in addition to the possibility of the use of force by some armed factions to prevent the holding of elections in the areas they control. Perhaps the most affected camp, with fear of fragmentation with the return of "Saif Gaddafi" and his claims to run for the upcoming elections, is the eastern camp of "Haftar", especially since many of his followers are from the former regime, and his military failures during the previous period, and his failure to recover the Western areas of the country, will make him lose the momentum and popular support, which he had at the beginning of the crisis.

Questions began to arise about the extent of "Saif Gaddafi's" eligibility to run for office or not, especially by the parliament, whose president, "Aqila Saleh", sought to put obstacles to cut the way on his candidacy, through the impossible conditions for the candidates, one of which stipulates that "the candidate must not have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor breaching trust and honor". Aqila said in this regard: "A person sentenced by the International Criminal Court is not entitled to run for the presidency of the Libyan state."

However, on May 27, 2021, the Supreme Court of Libya decided to overturn the death sentence issued against "Saif Gaddafi", and accepted the cassation of the death sentence issued against him. It is worth noting that during the discussions that resulted in the formation of the current Libyan government, the current loyalists to "Saif Gaddafi" in the Parliament succeeded in adhering to the "final ruling" clause and abolishing the conditions of the elections that would have prevented him from running for office. Saif Gaddafi's recent statements came during his interview with an international newspaper, stressing that he is confident in his abilities to overcome all legal obstacles, if the majority of the Libyan people choose him to be their leader.

4- The fabrication of armed conflicts:

Some political movements tended to create armed conflicts in the Libyan West, taking advantage of the security emptiness that the region suffers due to the spread of armed militias, mercenaries, and criminal formations, especially in light of the weakness, fragility and disintegration of the security services in the West. This is part of efforts to undermine the electoral process during the next stage, and to ensure that the country slips into a new phase of wars and conflicts.

Recently, some parties sought to spread rumors about the intention of terrorist groups to carry out armed operations and attacks in some cities in the Tripoli region, targeting polling stations, with the aim of luring the Libyan army into a new military battle in the West and spreading chaos and insecurity in the country. Some sources confirmed that the Muslim Brotherhood is responsible for spreading these rumors to prevent the electoral process from moving forward, which may lead to its complete withdrawal from the political scene.

In conclusion, it can be said that the continuation of the state of division and the political and armed conflict between the parties to the Libyan forces does not bode well for the holding of the parliamentary and presidential elections, whether on the dates set for them, or their success in establishing democracy, and saving the state from the clutches of collapse and conflicts. Holding the elections in light of the weakness and fragmentation of the security and military institutions, in addition to the fact that armed militias, criminal gangs and mercenaries funded by foreign powers are surrounding the polling stations, will foreshadow the failure of the electoral process, whether because citizens fear participating in the voting process for not securing the headquarters from the oppression and terror of armed factions, or because of some political groups that use their power and influence in directing the course of the electoral process in their favor, taking advantage of the spread of corruption and fragility in the state institutions.

Situation Analysis of Women in Libya

The most important challenge facing women in post-Gaddafi Libya is a lack of safety. The volatile security situation in Libya negatively affected the mobility for women and increased the incidents of sexual violence against women by armed militias. According to Amnesty International, Libyan women activists, bloggers and journalists are increasingly being silenced as they face gender-based violence in the form of physical assault, abductions, and sexual violence, as well as smear campaigns, gender-related slurs and attempts at intimidation.

Rising Movements

Facing these dire challenges, a group of 38 women called out their concerns in Geneva for the sake of being heard by the media and the international community. They declared it unacceptable and intolerable for women to be violated, silenced, and excluded as they enter the dire conditions the country held in the year 2015. In that year, this initiative by UN Women and UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs produced a Minimum Women's Peace Agenda for Libya. It called upon the Libyan government, also on the whole world, to protect "women's right to 30 percent representation in government and elected bodies, enshrining gender equality in the new constitution and reforming laws to protect women's right to live free from violence."

Nonetheless, as these initiatives always lack seriousness, it had many major drawbacks in its implementation. Therefore, it was relatively ineffective. Until this initiative, in 2015, the new draft constitution in Libya did not adequately incorporate women's rights in any way. As of 2019, the increase in non-profit organizations and callings for women's rights has promising results. For example, a 2019 United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting was set concerning Libya. The group advocate was Rida Al-Tubuly who is the founder of the nonprofit organization "Together We Build It". At the moment, five women hold important ministries in Libya's new government for the first time in the country's history.

Apart from the chaotic advent of Libyan national politics and the unstable governmental elections, let us look at its humanitarian façade in a bottom-up approach. According to the UN, more than 200,000 people are internally displaced and 1.3 million are in need of humanitarian assistance. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates there are about 636,000 migrants and refugees in the country. Also, according to the UN refugee agency UNHCR, 46,247 were registered asylum seekers and refugees. Moreover, with the ongoing pandemic and the Covid-19 disruptions, the IOM conducted fewer voluntary humanitarian returns of stranded migrants from Libya to their home countries—1,466 during the first quarter of 2020— compared with 9,800 in the same period in 2019.

On July 17, 2019, Seham Sergiwa, a Libyan psychologist elected to the Libyan parliament in 2014, was abducted by the Libyan National Army loyal to Khalifa Haftar. Since then, no serious investigation has been carried out by any Libyan authorities amid her outright disappearance and assassination.

Her disappearance also coincides with the assassination of another elected parliamentary women named Fariha Al-Barkawi, on July 17, 2014. The full-blown attack on women in Libya is a serious concern, lest not say threat, to the social stability and political constancy of the well-being of Libya, and the well-being of women, girls, and other groups.

As Libya heads towards its parliamentary elections on 24 December, the Libyan Women's Platform for Peace, as well as many other Libyan civil activists led by various groups of women, are demanding their country's largely male political class to stick to their commitment to hold parliamentary and presidential elections. The female activists, many of whom are lawyers or civil society campaigners, are a newly empowered element challenging the previously male-dominated Libyan politics. Some say these may be a light in the breakthrough of peace-building and social equality. However, they are only bits of pieces of changes in the grand scheme of things in Libya as women only hold 12% of Libya's councilors, and many women in the past who have put themselves forward have been abducted or assassinated.

One example of these breakthroughs in Libya which advocate for women's rights, peacebuilding, end of patriarchy, and so on is Amal Alnani, who heads one of IWPR's partner organizations in Libya. Alnani is the founder of "I am a Libyan Woman and My Son is a Foreigner (ILSF)". She is hoping to run for public office this year advocating for the rights of women and young people disadvantaged by a loophole in Libya's citizenship law. Women's presence can also be seen by political callings and vocations such as Zahra' Langhi. Zahra' Langhi is a leading member of the 75-member Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF). She claims that "There are political factions in Libya – an elite – that make money out of the status quo, staying in power and so do not want elections. It's another Lebanon." These are not simply women talking, but actions taking place which cut the deep ropes of patriarchal hegemony. These acts are forms of resistance which stand still in the harsh winds of gap inequality, social status, subordinating women, gender gap, and so on.

Contextual Analyses on Women's Participation in the Parliamentary Elections

Women are undermined in parliamentary representations. The following figure, taken from Gender Quotas Database, shows that the General National Congress in Libya, in 2014, had only 16% women.

Total seats:	188
Total Women:	30
%Women:	16
Election Year:	2014
Electoral System:	Parallel

Another figure, as shown below, done by the Gender Quotas Database identifies the lack of gender parity between males and females:

	Legal source	Details
Quota type: Legislated Candidate Quotas	Electoral law	The General National Congress consists of 200 members, 120 of whom are elected by majority, based on a first-past-the-post system for single-member districts, where the winner is the candidate with the most votes. For multi-member districts, a single non-transferable vote system is adopted. The remaining 80 members are elected by proportional representation from closed electoral lists, presented by political entities in multi-member constituencies. According to Article 15 of the 2012 Law on the Election of the National General Congress, on the lists of candidates submitted by parties for the proportional representation contest, 'candidates shall be arranged on the basis of alternation among male and female candidates, vertically and horizontally. Lists that do not respect such principle shall not be accepted. The Commission shall publish samples showing the format of such lists and the method used to arrange the candidates within them'.
Legal sanctions for non-compliance	Electoral law	Lists that do not respect the principle of alternation between male and female candidates shall not be accepted. (Article 15 (2))
Rank order/placement rules	Electoral law	'Candidates are listed based on gender rotation, both horizontal and vertical.' (Article 15 (1)).
Is the provision of direct public funding to political parties related to gender equality among candidates?	Not applicable	See more in International IDEA's Political Finance database
Are there provisions for other financial advantages to encourage gender equality in political parties?	No	See more in International IDEA's Political Finance database

What this shows is that during the 2012 legislative elections, 545 women candidates were nominated by political parties, compared to 662 male candidates. However, only 85 women ran as individual candidates out of a total of 2,501. Also, no municipal council in the country has women councilors in excess of the one-seat quota. This very low number of individual women candidates confirmed the fact that when law is elided, the inclusion of women in party lists represented only 3 per cent of the total number of candidates running individually, whereas when the law required that women be placed vertically and horizontally on the party lists, they formed 45 per cent of the total number of party candidates. In other words, when the law is elided in parliamentary elections in Libya, almost third of the women running for electoral positions are omitted and neglected, even though they represent almost half of the males running for positions.

Women's role and their political presence are increasing in certain areas and neglected in others, such as the neglect of women's participations in post-2011 political agreements, including the Libyan Political Agreement signed in Skhirat in 2015, the dialogue in Bouznika in September of 2020, and the Libyan Joint Military Commission (JMC) talks in Geneva in October 2020.

The 2014 Elections

To understand deeply the intricate problems of the upcoming elections in Libya, one must look at the last general elections in the year 2014. This overview of history might shed light on what could happen, the changes or continuities, in the upcoming elections.

In the 2014 elections in Libya, through a three-stage process between Dec. 1, 2013 and Jan. 23, 2014, a total of 1,101,541 Libyans registered to vote, of which 449,501 were women. By any estimate, less than 50 percent of eligible voters registered to participate in the elections, and less than half of the 2.8 million Libyans who registered for the General National Congress elections registered to vote for the Constitutional Drafting Assembly elections. There was a radical decrease in the number of voters and the people who voted. This decrease can be seen when the commission estimated that just under 50 percent of registered voters cast their ballots. The majority system was used for the 2014 elections, replacing the mixed electoral system used in 2012. 32 of the 200 seats are reserved for women. In other words, and amid violence, only 1.1 million of some 3.5 million eligible voters registered to vote in 2014, a sharp decrease from the 2.8 million registered in 2012. Even so, turnout of registered voters dropped from 62% in 2012 to 42% in 2014.

Out of 649 registered candidates, only 64 were women. Fifty-four of these women contested seats reserved for female candidates, one contested a seat reserved for the Tebu, and the remaining nine competed for open seats. Electoral stakeholders informed The Carter Center that women faced more difficulties than their male counterparts in registering to vote and campaign and that female voters would have benefited from more targeted voter education

While the elections represent a needed institutional step forward for Libya, the procedural difficulties and the low levels of participation underscore the urgent need for further political dialogue to ensure that all Libyans continue to be a part of the transition process and can contribute to the shaping of the future state.

First-Hand Statistics

The below figure demonstrates the gender division of labor in the African continent, including North Libya. As per figure, it shows that the extreme and disingenuous gender parity. No women are allowed to participate in any type of 'all male dominated' peacebuilding. 0% of women have any positions in economic planning, foreign, justice, and security positions. This is reflected in the government where only 16% of women hold parliamentary chairs. This helps us understand how the fabric of society in Libya is constituted.

Country	Region	Economic Planning	Foreign /Justice/ Security	Social	Women in cabinet	% women in parliament
Rwanda	East	67%	0%	80%	60%	61%
South Africa	Southern	53%	50%	60%	54%	46%
Ethiopia	Horn	33%	50%	75%	45%	39%
Senegal	West	32%	0%	22%	25%	43%
Congo	Central	17%	0%	67%	24%	11%
Eswatini	Southern	8%	33%	67%	22%	10%
South Sudan	East	6%	29%	50%	21%	28%
Nigeria	West	13%	0%	36%	19%	6%
Somalia	Horn	14%	0%	40%	17%	24%
Cameroon	Central	0%	20%	29%	14%	34%
Libya	North	0%	0%	29%	13%	16%
Egypt	North	9%	0%	14%	10%	27%

This next table allows us to deeply understand the gender division not only in the fabric of society and in peacebuilding, but also, and more importantly, in the government itself.

Country	Region	2000			2010			2020		
		Lower house			Lower house			Lower house		
		Seats	Women	%W	Seats	Women	%W	Seats	Women	%W
Total Southern		1887	331	18%	2652	613	23%	2638	716	28%
Egypt	North	454	9	2%	512	65	13%	591	162	27%
Algeria	North	380	30	8%	389	30	8%	462	120	26%
Morocco	North	325	2	1%	325	34	10%	395	81	21%
Mauritania	North	79	3	4%	95	21	22%	153	31	20%
Libya	North			ND	468	36	8%	188	30	16%
Tunisia	North	182	21	12%	214	59	28%	217	57	26%
Total North		1420	65	5%	2003	245	12%	2006	481	24%

What interests us here is the rather low increase of women from 2010 to 2020. This increase, from 8% to 16% enables us to project what might happen in the 2021 elections. This increase might be an indication that might turn the tables. It gives hope of a rise of women representation not only in society, but in actual positions taking leading roles in building a better future for Libya.

This last table below, done by the African Barometer in 2021, shows two things. First, the sub-total economic planning in Libya is a disaster. There is not even one female in this cabinet. The second thing this table shows is the surprising increase of the sub-total justice and security planning in Libya, where women hold the social affairs position (Faida Mansour) and the Women's Affairs and Development position (Asma al-Usta). This also may reflect upon the 2021 upcoming elections that there is an increase in the interest of women participation and women effectivity in the government.

Sub-total Economic/Planning Libya		0	4	4	0%
Defence	Salah Eddine al-Namrush		1	1	
Justice	Juma Abdullah Drissi		1	1	
Martyrs, Wounded and Missing	Mohanad Younes		1	1	
Migrants and Displaced	Yousef Abubakr Jalalah		1	1	
National Reconciliation	Abdeljawad Faraj Al-Obaidi		1	1	
Sub-total Justice/ Security/ Libya		0	5	5	0%
Institutional Reform	Mohammed Ben Younes		1	1	
Interior	Fathi Bashagha		1	1	
Education	Fawzi Bomeriz		1	1	
Health	Khalifa Al- Bakoush		1	1	
Social Affairs	Faida Mansour El-Shafi	1		1	
Labour	Al-Mahdi Al-Amin		1	1	
Women's Affairs and Development	Asma al-Usta	1		1	
Sub-total Social Libya		2	5	7	29%
Total Libya		2	14	16	13%

Women's rights and voices are being lost every day in Libya. Gender based violence, discrimination, and hate speech towards women still dominate the grounds of the Libyan social superstructure. Furthermore, traditional family laws maintained a discriminatory stance toward the position of women in Libya, notably disadvantaging women in areas concerning marriage, divorce, child custody and laws against sexual violence.

One example of gender-based violence is seen explicitly in the law. Rape and sexual assault may fall under Libya's adultery laws, which are codified in the penal code and Law No. 70 of 1973. Article 4 of the penal code prescribes a five-year maximum prison sentence for consensual sexual relations outside of marriage. Because victims of sexual assault can be prosecuted under these laws, they are discouraged from seeking justice. Thus, pressing charges for rape can result in prison sentences for the girls or women.

Key Observations from the KII interviews

- Women's insecurity in Libya represents one of the main factors that challenge gender equality and the status quo, hindering the reconciliation and peace process. It's not only that militarization and insecurity restrict women's and girls' movement, war has also amplified the culture of discrimination against women in terms of early marriage, GBV, and sexual harassment. Women in Libya have faced systemic violence from governmental bodies, militias, and at the level of community and household.
- Problems surrounding female participation in the social, economic and political life is multi-faceted. Socially, women are still viewed as weak, futile and therefore belong in the domestic life or at the very most, permitted to work in a limited number of capacities. workplace. Female participation in the political process faces massive challenges and threats. The majority of Libyan women are still reluctant to delve into the political life.
- Women who are selected by the political parties usually abide by their parties' agenda and have no commitment to women's rights agenda. However, this doesn't deny the fact that many women are taking the risk and striving to induce change in the political scene and are advocating for the adoption of a feminist agenda.
- Young Libyan women's participation in political and livelihood opportunities are impeded by the intense social backlash which often occurs to high visible women. Violence, threats, and even killings and forced disappearance are leveled at women who venture beyond traditional gender roles. Activists report that many women are afraid to post online because of online harassment, bullying and unwanted discussions.
- Many of CSO believe that elections won't be held in December, but they reiterate that there is an opportunity to build on the momentum and capitalize on the efforts of CSOs and international community to create an enabling for women's participation in the political arena.
- CSOs prioritize capacity building and advocacy activities to promote women's participation in the political life and indicate that COVID-19 restrictions didn't impede women from connecting, but on the contrary opened the space for more virtual interaction.

- CSOs contacted within the scope of this research indicated that activities to be implemented within the scope of this project could be implemented by March 2022.

The rise of civil rights movements, LGBTQI movements, feminist organizations, non-profit governmental organizations, and many more is very promising and indicates imminent change. The illuminative presence and manifestation of these movements calling for the rights of women will play a deep and huge role in the 2021 general elections in Libya; it will change the needle. Networking and solidarity between the various women and queer groups is only a starting point for imagining alternative futures for the women in Libya.

Challenges Faced within the Scope of the Research:

- Tight timeline
- Limited information on availability of safeguarding policies.

Recommended Activities

- Advocacy activities to amend laws, policies, and criminalize all types of violence against women.
- Advocacy activities to enact temporary special measurements (TSMs) to increase women's representation in national and municipal councils along with the inclusion of women in special committees, judicial system and syndicates.
- Capacity building programs targeting women active in the local communities, civil society organizations' representatives, and women human rights defenders, on advocacy and campaigning, networking and alliance building, digital communication, governance and existing legal structures.
- Lobbying to combat all forms of harassments and threats faced by women active in the public life and advocating to disrupt the prevalent social norms that condemn women activists.
- Supporting women's collective agency by enabling the creation of women networks. There is a need for women activists to join efforts in order to galvanize their ability to push forward the feminist agenda in Libya. Bridging the gap between the women groups themselves and between the women groups and International organizations and donors is a priority.

Identified Registered Women CSOs from the various regions of Libya

WASHM Women Studies Center

Dr. Abeer Amnina

Type: Feminist Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

Operating area: Benghazi – Eastern Libya

Email: mrkzwashim2019@gmail.com

Social Media Link: https://www.facebook.com/206691372738566/about/?ref=page_internal

Community to Support Women Participation in Decision Making

Judge Amal Bokaikes

Type: Community Organization

Operating area: Benghazi – Eastern Libya

Email: info@cswdm.com

Website: <http://www.cwsdm.com/>

Social Media Link: https://www.facebook.com/206691372738566/about/?ref=page_internal

Lawyers for Justice in Libya

Asmaa Khalifa

Type: Organization

Operating area: Tripoli

Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7609 6734

Website: <https://www.libyanjustice.org/>

Email: INFO@LIBYANJUSTICE.ORG

Atwar Organization for Research and Community Development

Dr. Turkia Al Waar

Operating area: Tajoura city - central Libya

Type: Non-governmental Organization

Email: Turkia@atwar.org.ly

Social Media Link: <https://www.facebook.com/atwarorgnisation/>

Nataj Foundation

Type: Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

Operating area: Benghazi

Telephone: +218 91-7389364

Email: natajorganization@gmail.com

Social Media Link: <https://www.facebook.com/NatajOrganization/>

Libyan Amazons

Khadija Sadik Biskra

Type: Organization

Operating area: Benghazi – Eastern Libya

Telephone: +218 91-0933396

Email: amazonat_libya@yahoo.com

Social Media Link: <https://www.facebook.com/LibyanAmazons>

EL LABBAH Women Charity Association

Mabroka Al Shahat

Type: Nonprofit Organization (NGO)

Operating area: Gallo city - southeast Libya

Activity: Empowering and supporting women in the political process through awareness campaigns

Social Media Link: <https://www.facebook.com/mbroka914143891/>

Telephone: 0914143891

Email: mbroka914143891@gmail.com

Meras Organization for Development

Basma Orfali

Type: Nonprofit Organization

Operating area: Benghazi

Email: meras.org.deve@gmail.com

Social Media Link: <https://www.facebook.com/meraslibya/>

The BADER group (translated as take the initiative)

Salma Gwider

Type: Civil Society Organization

Activity: implementing capacity building, TOTs, elections.

Operating Area: Tripoli

Chairman: Mrs Salma Gwider

Telephone: +21892 6052718 - +218915052781

Social Media Link: <https://www.facebook.com/GroupBader/>

Email: baderlibya99@gmail.com

Legal Status: duly registered with the Commission of Civil Society since 2012 under number 66.

Best practice: Dubal won the 2018 Nader entrepreneurship award in Tripoli, due to their efforts in promoting environmentally safe fertilizer and how to use organic by products in Libya. <https://www.facebook.com/usembas-sytripoli/photos/a.241731185889960/2270600799669645/?type=3&theater> - <https://www.facebook.com/dubally>

Jusoor Center for Studies and Development

Operating Area: Across the country

Contact Person: Hala Bugaigis

Email: h.bugaighis@jusoor.ly

Social Platform: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/hala-bugaighis-3081099/>

Website: <https://jusoorly.wordpress.com/>

Social Media Link: <https://www.facebook.com/jusoorLY/>

Women Forum For Development

Founder: Antsar Greo

Operating area: Al-Zawiya city, western Libya

Telephone: WhatsApp +218928046986

Social Media Links: <https://www.facebook.com/WomansForumforDevelopment/>

Activity: women empowerment, elections, rights, gender etc... works to support women and to raise their awareness on women's rights within the society, and to empower them politically, economically and socially.

Al Nour Organizations

Eman Al Nour

Operating area: Sebha

Activity: concerned mainly with working on women's rights issues

Email: aalnoun@yahoo.com

I Am a Libyan Woman But My Child Is A Foreigner

Amal Alnani

Type: civil and charity organization.

Operating Area: South

Activity: It works on consolidation of citizenship rights and defending the rights of the children of Libyan women who are married to non-Libyans. It provides humanitarian and civil assistances, support, and charity for these citizens. They also work with Tuareg women on other issues.

Email: amalanani102@gmail.com

Deds - معها

Ghalia Sassi

Activity: advocacy on women's political participation

Phone: +218919992501

Libyan Women Union

Director: Magda Al Wafati

Operating Area: Across the country

Revived after 2011, the oldest CSO that worked on the women's rights issues and has branches across the country.

Telephone: +218917026043

Youth & Women Empowerment Forum

Type: Non-governmental

Operating Area: Tripoli & Benghazi, Libya

Funding: Euromed

Activity: Violence, Civil and political rights, Economy, Employment

Telephone: 00218944831224

Address email: info@wyef.org.ly

Social Media Link: <https://www.facebook.com/wyef.org.ly/>

Website: <https://www.euromedwomen.foundation/pg/en/profile/ermwf.me-jola968>

Tamazight Women Movement

Type: feminist Non-profit Organization

Operating Area: Tripoli, Libya

Activity: Feminism, Violence, Health, Emotional, sexual life, Civil and political rights

Telephone: +218927367258

Address email: info@twmlibya.org

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/tamazightwomanmovement/>

Voice of Libyan Women (VLW)

Type: non-governmental organization

Activity: women's rights

Operating Area: Zawia

Founder: Alaa Murabit

Website: <http://www.vlwlibya.org/>

Together we build it

Activity: Gender Based Violence, gender research, reporting to the international mechanism on human rights, and capacity building for Libyan groups and actors on peacebuilding

Type: Non-profit Organization

Founded: on September 2011

Founded: on September 2011

Website: <https://togetherwebuildit.org/>

Operating Area: National level covering the west, east and south of Libya

Initiatives implemented by this organization:

The 1325 Network which is the first civil society Network in Libya that gathers diverse groups of organizations and individual male and female activists to work specifically on women peace and security in the country.

The Libyan Network to Support and Empower Women

Activity: Employed women, Women entrepreneurs, Immigrant and refugee women

Operating Area : Tripoli, Libya

Telephone : 218922278931

Address email : Libyannet.women@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/120363958667355/>