

# Evaluation of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

12 January 2026

IED-25-002



## INSPECTION AND EVALUATION DIVISION

Function *“The Office shall evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the Organization. It shall conduct programme evaluations with the purpose of establishing analytical and critical evaluations of the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, examining whether changes therein require review of the methods of delivery, the continued relevance of administrative procedures and whether the activities correspond to the mandates as they may be reflected in the approved budgets and the medium-term plan of the Organization;”* ([General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B](#)).

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## Summary

The Office of Internal Oversight Services assessed the relevance, effectiveness, and coherence of the United Nations Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) contributions to inclusive political processes and advancing consensus toward political solutions in Libya between 2020 and 2024.

Overall, the Mission's activities appropriately targeted the political, security and economic agenda of the host government. UNSMIL used its good offices as its core modality to respond to the changing Libyan context and to build consensus to bring political processes forward. Within this larger framework, UNSMIL utilized a broad range of additional modalities, including advocacy and strategic communication, ceasefire monitoring and conflict de-escalation, capacity building, and coordination, which were all generally well aligned with its mandate implementation.

While UNSMIL engaged a broad group of stakeholders in its work, it faced constraints in ensuring sufficiently inclusive engagement specifically with stakeholders at the regional and local levels. These challenges also included designing advocacy and capacity building initiatives that consistently included the diversity of all Libyan constituencies.

UNSMIL contributed to notable results in the country with regard to conflict de-escalation, support to ceasefire agreements and other political breakthroughs in moments of crisis. The Mission also increased public awareness around, and enhanced stakeholder knowledge and capacity in, the political arena. Additionally, it contributed to specific critical results related to the holding of municipal elections and the resolution of the Central Bank crisis.

Despite these results, the Mission did not fully meet the expectations of the Libyan population. Public perceptions remained anchored in the limited progress on the outcomes most critical to Libyans: national elections; reunification of national institutions supporting the formation of a unified government; further implementation of the ceasefire agreement; and economic stability. Progress in these areas continued to be hampered by the persistence of armed brigades, the absence of accountability mechanisms, the preference of some senior key stakeholders to maintain the status quo, and insufficient regional inclusivity.

At the operational level, the Mission's impact was further limited by weak internal synergies across UNSMIL components and the absence of an overarching strategic plan to guide prioritization across these components. Coordination with other United Nations Country Team (UNCT) entities did not fully harness opportunities for mutually reinforcing engagement in support of its mandate.

OIOS makes three important recommendations to UNSMIL:

1. Develop a revised, unified Mission-wide work plan
2. Develop a Mission-wide cohesive work plan that integrates all activities related to enhancing inclusivity
3. Conduct a review of the Mission's capacity building and technical advice programme of work, particularly for components engaged in security sector issues

## I. Introduction and Objective

### Evaluation Objective

1. The objective of this Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) evaluation was to assess, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, effectiveness and coherence of United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) contributions to inclusive political processes which advance consensus toward political solutions. The evaluation was conducted in conformity with the norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations System.<sup>1</sup>

### Mandate, Objectives and Modalities

2. The UNSMIL was established in 2011 after the uprising and overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi and has since undergone several mandate renewals and adjustments in response to the evolving Libyan landscape. On 31 October 2025, the Security Council adopted its most recent resolution renewing the mandate of the Mission<sup>2</sup> for one year. UNSMIL is an integrated special political mission, in full accordance with the principles of national ownership, with a mandate to exercise mediation and carry out its good offices.

3. The objective of UNSMIL is to support an inclusive political process and rights-based national reconciliation, conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, transitional justice processes and State building efforts. In fulfilling this objective, the Mission provides support to:

- Defuse tensions and prevent conflict;
- Optimize readiness for planning and implementing credible, transparent and inclusive elections;
- Advance human rights, gender equality, women's political participation and youth engagement;
- Promote security sector reform and planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); and
- Further the implementation of the October 2020 ceasefire agreement.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System | UNEG](#).

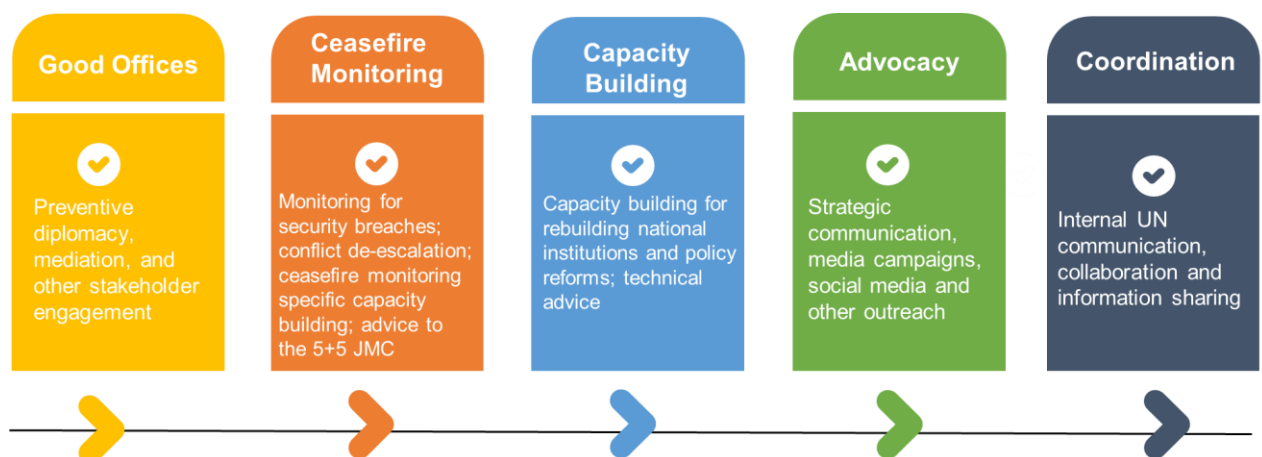
<sup>2</sup> S/RES/2796 (2025).

<sup>3</sup> A/79/6 (sect. 3)/Add.4 – Proposed budget for 2025 p.58 para 157.

4. The Mission utilizes five key modalities to implement its mandate, as shown in Figure 1 below. Examples of key activities under each modality include: <sup>4</sup>

- i. Good Offices:** The Mission facilitates consultations, meetings, and negotiations on critical issues such as elections, security sector reform and economic reform. It co-chairs working groups across these three thematic areas and engages with Libyan stakeholders to promote inclusive dialogue and consensus-building. These efforts aim to support the development of accountable institutions and the establishment of a unified, representative government.
- ii. Ceasefire Monitoring:** The Mission plays a key role in monitoring the implementation of the ceasefire agreement, including scanning for ceasefire breaches and engaging parties in conflict de-escalation activities. This includes its work with the 5+5 Joint Military Commission, as well as supporting the withdrawal of foreign forces and fighters.
- iii. Capacity Building:** The Mission delivers capacity-building and technical advice activities to enhance the capabilities of Libyan stakeholders in areas such as elections, security sector reform, economic governance and rule of law. These activities include workshops, technical advice, and knowledge-sharing forums that empower national actors to engage meaningfully in the political process.
- iv. Advocacy:** The Mission uses strategic communication activities, including media campaigns, social media outreach, and other advocacy platforms, to promote inclusive political processes and raise awareness among Libyan citizens, including women and youth. The Mission supports awareness-raising initiatives related to elections, security sector and inclusive governance.
- v. Coordination:** The Mission coordinates its work across Mission sections and with other UN entities in support of coherent delivery of assistance related to political agreements. This includes organizing coordination meetings and information-sharing activities to align efforts across the UN system and external partners. The coordination efforts are intended to contribute to efficient resource use and holistic support for Libya’s political, development, and humanitarian needs.

**Figure 1: UNSMIL Modalities of Mandate Implementation**



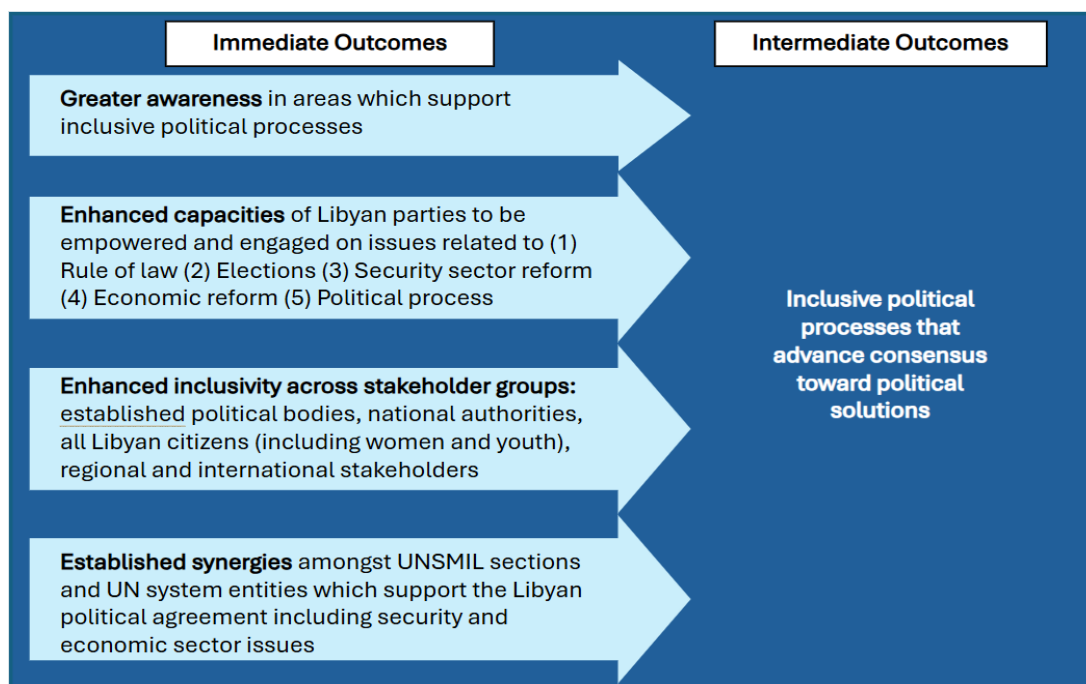
Source: OIOS document review

<sup>4</sup> Examples oriented to activities within the scope of the evaluation.

## II. Scope and Methodology

5. The evaluation scope included an assessment of the Mission’s contributions to four immediate outcomes and one overarching intermediate outcome, as depicted in Figure 2. The evaluation also examined the Mission’s overall programme design regarding its mandate implementation.

**Figure 2 – UNSMIL immediate and intermediate outcomes within evaluation scope**



Source: Evaluation Inception Paper, IED-25-022, pg. 7

6. The evaluation covered the period from January 2020 to December 2024. To maximize the relevance of the evaluation, some activities undertaken in early 2025 were included in the assessment. The evaluation used a mixed-method approach incorporating the following data sources:

Table 1: Evaluation data sources	
<b>Documents</b>	Document review of: key internal and external documents including Security Council resolutions; Secretary-General reports; Mission strategic plans and workplans; cooperation framework and other joint planning documents; budget documents; code cables; and other analytical outputs.
<b>Interviews</b>	69 interviews with 115 stakeholders and staff in total; women represented 52 percent of interviewees.
<b>UNSMIL staff survey</b>	The online survey was distributed to 405 UNSMIL staff. A total of 206 responses were received, representing a 51 per cent response rate. Women constituted 25 per cent of all respondents.
<b>External stakeholder survey</b>	The online survey was distributed in Arabic and English to 401 stakeholders. A total of 172 responses were received, representing a 43 percent response rate. Women constituted 48 percent of all respondents.

<b>Field mission</b>	In June 2025, the evaluation team undertook a data collection mission to Tripoli to gather qualitative insights by engaging UNSMIL stakeholders including government officials, political actors, civil society representatives, embassy officials and other key actors.
<b>Case studies</b>	Three thematic case studies were developed to examine the Mission’s adaptive strategies during critical junctures: (i) the conduct and facilitation of municipal elections as a mechanism for local legitimacy; (ii) ceasefire monitoring and conflict de-escalation efforts to sustain security arrangements; and (iii) the Central Bank crisis and its implications for economic governance.
<b>Observation</b>	Direct observations of Security Council meetings at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at the UNSMIL Tripoli captured real-time mandate discussions, decision-making, and stakeholder interactions. Other observations included High National Elections Commission (HNEC) component operations and National Audit Bureau operations.

### III. Evaluation Results

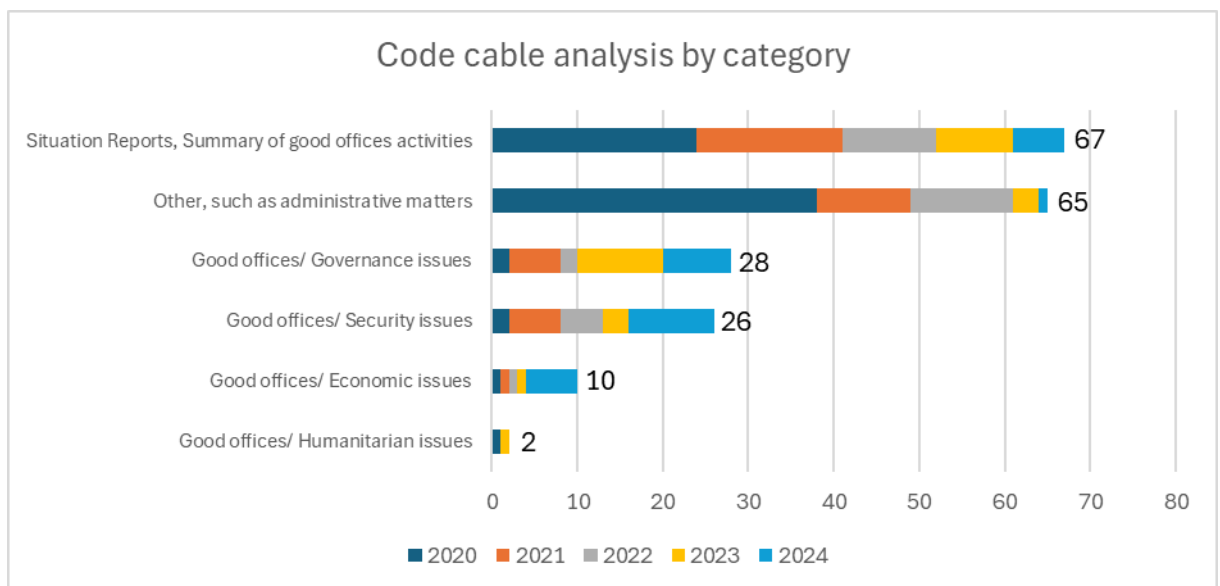
#### A. UNSMIL modalities appropriately targeted the overall political, security and economic agenda of the host government

*1.1 The Mission used its good offices modality more broadly to respond to the changing Libyan context and specifically to build consensus and bring the political process forward*

7. The UNSMIL good offices modality was foundational in enabling the Mission to respond to the complex and evolving Libyan context across multiple dimensions. Good offices activities, which included preventive diplomacy, mediation and facilitation, were utilized extensively in UNSMIL to advance consensus on political issues, including good governance. Good offices activities were cross-cutting and highly relevant in the Mission’s work to support progress on political, security, economic and humanitarian issues. Both stakeholders and staff interviewed consistently underscored that good offices activities were the Mission’s biggest value added in the host country.

8. Code cable analyses provided evidence of the extensive and cross-cutting nature of good offices activities. Between 2020 and 2024, the majority (67 per cent) of the 198 substantive code cables UNSMIL sent to the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) were primarily focused on good offices activities undertaken by the Mission, as shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Analysis of code cable primary focus <sup>5</sup>**

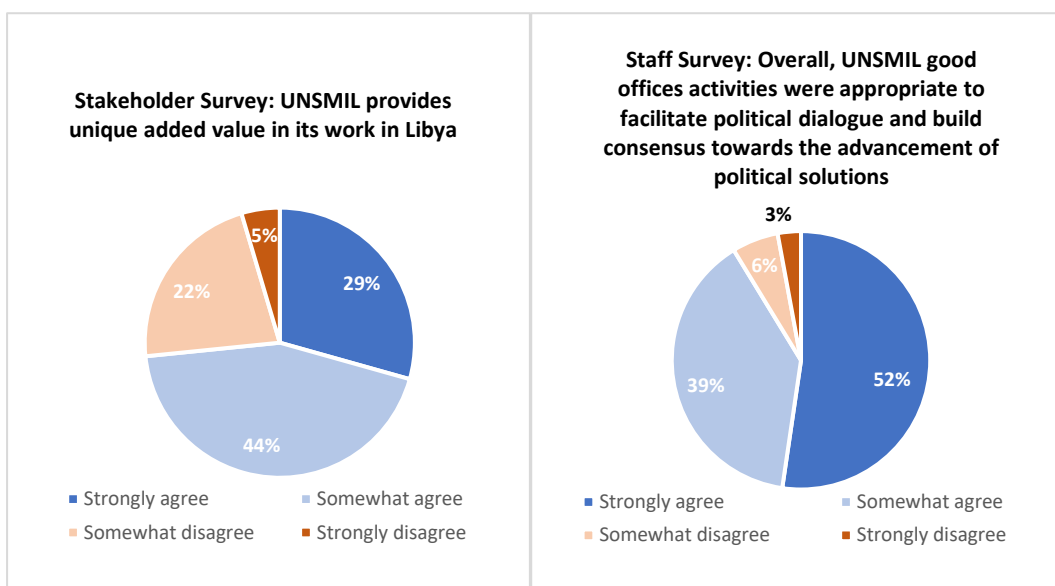


Source: OIOS document analysis

9. Stakeholders and staff surveyed perceived UNSMIL good offices to be a critical modality in implementing the Mission mandate, as shown in Figures 4 and 5 below. In interviews, they consistently underscored that UNSMIL credibility and neutrality in playing its good offices role sustained fragile peace efforts in the country.

<sup>5</sup> Administrative matters code cables primarily related to COVID-19 related memorandum, changes in staff deployment and other administrative documents.

**Figures 4 and 5: Stakeholder and staff survey feedback on the importance of UNSMIL good offices**



Source: OIOS stakeholder and staff surveys

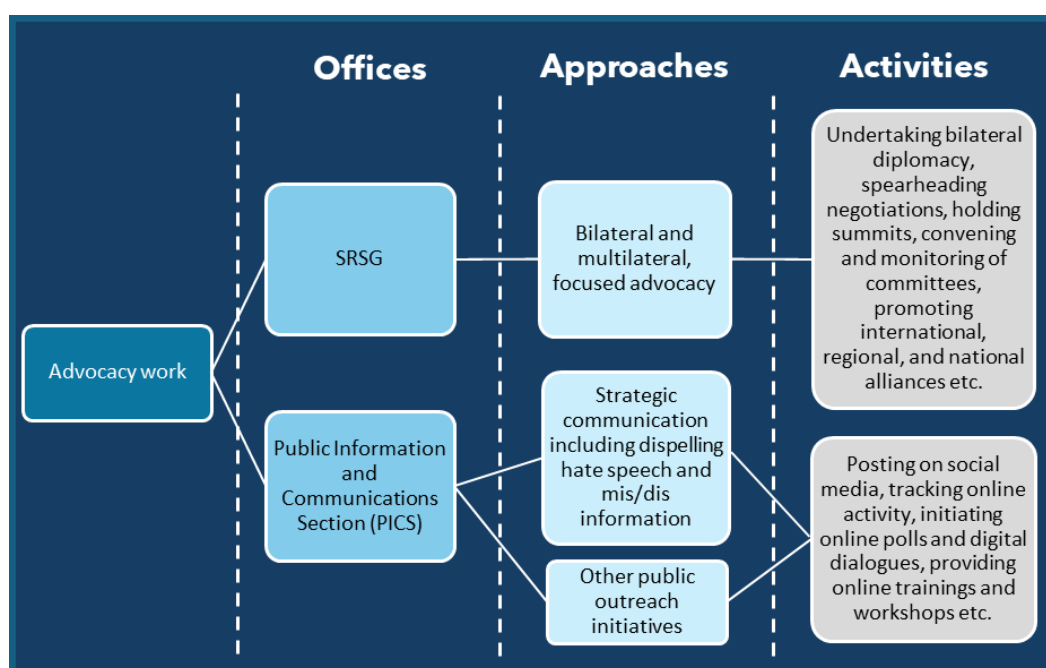
10. In operationalizing the good offices modality, the Mission sought to maximize its relevance by prioritizing the following three areas of work:

- **Monitoring and reporting** provided contextual understanding and the foundation for effective international responses.
- **Regional and international cooperation** prioritized the use of the UNSMIL convening role to engage and coordinate international and regional actors, including the African Union (AU) the European Union (EU) and the League of Arab States (LAS), thus providing a foundation for sustained engagement in key forums.
- **Preventive diplomacy and confidence building** engaged a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including national institutions and other stakeholders such as the High Council of State, House of Representatives, Presidential Council, Government of National Unity and the Libyan National Army, as well as others.

*1.2 The UNSMIL advocacy modality, particularly related to strategic communication and combatting hate speech, was generally well aligned in support of its mandate*

11. UNSMIL advocacy work was a further significant modality the Mission utilized to implement its mandate. As shown in Figure 6 below, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) operationalized this modality through bilateral and multilateral focused advocacy, while the Public Information and Communication Section (PICS) aimed to promote and protect good offices efforts through strategic communication, including using social media to dispel hate speech and disinformation. Advocacy activities were referenced in nine of eleven planned UNSMIL performance plan outputs, pointing to the integral nature of advocacy work and its centrality in supporting the Mission mandate. Additionally, most stakeholders and staff interviewed rated UNSMIL advocacy activities as relevant and positive; these activities were seen as particularly critical in generating positive momentum to support the work of UNSMIL in a country where the social media landscape is particularly vibrant and highly influential.

**Figure 6: Advocacy across UNSMIL**



Source: OIOS Advocacy and strategic review document analysis

12. The PICS developed many advocacy strategy documents which articulated the Mission’s approach to aligning advocacy activities to its mandate. These documents were well targeted, clear and addressed the changing priorities of the Mission. Examples included strategies for social media and crisis communication, as well as strategies for youth engagement programmes including Ra’idat and #You Engage.<sup>6</sup> The Ra’idat programme is a year-long training programme for young women from across Libya who wish to be or are already active in their communities as leaders and want to develop their leadership skills.<sup>7</sup> The #YouEngage initiative is a youth engagement strategy that, in its first year, aimed to involve 1,000 young Libyans in gathering recommendations on mandate issues; as part of this initiative, since May 2024 UNSMIL has held 40 workshops, discussions, and trainings with youth, both in person and online.<sup>8</sup>

13. The PICS strategic communications initiatives also bolstered good offices work. For example, UNSMIL used minority languages for congratulatory messages at key events and for communication within the context of African Union-led national reconciliation and transitional justice. Mission advocacy strategy documents also framed UNSMIL communications to address knowledge gaps among Libyans through informing and mobilizing target groups such as women, civil society, and political parties. Some of the specific knowledge gaps targeted by the strategies included lack of national understanding on:

- The political process;
- The ceasefire agreement; and
- How to combat hate speech and mis/disinformation.

14. This strategic targeting of advocacy-related communication was also evidenced by the manner in which the Mission tailored its social media channels to increase viewership and engage across specific key audiences; it did so through the use of UNSMIL YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, X and its

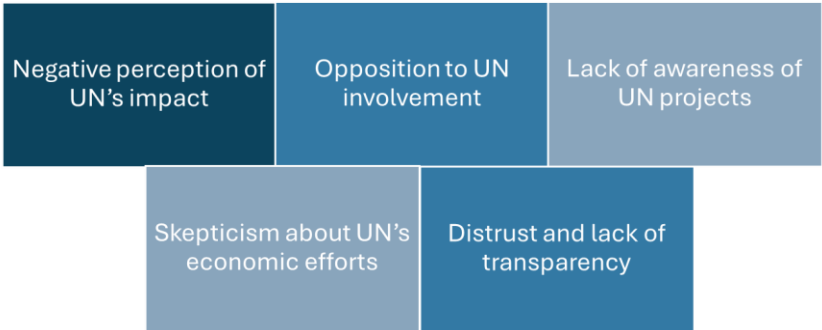
<sup>6</sup> Others included: event-based strategies, e.g. for high profile dignitary visits or incoming SRS’Gs...; strategies for combatting hate speech, dis/misinformation; a “Libya Communication Strategy,” prepared in the context of UNSMIL role as co-chair of the UN Communication group.

<sup>7</sup> [Ra’idat | UNSMIL](#)

<sup>8</sup> [YouEngage | UNSMIL](#)

website. The PICS also created reports which included data to be used by Mission colleagues to better target its messaging. Figure 7 provides an example of a dashboard from one of these reports; it provided colleagues with an overview of data to be considered when specifically tailoring messaging to influence youth, which was a particular strategic focus due to the unfavourable perceptions of the UN by Libyan youth.

**Figure 7: Example of PICS dashboard on Libyan youth depicting their perceptions of the UN to be addressed through targeted communication**



Source: OIOS Advocacy and strategic review document analysis

15. Finally, UNSMIL tracked headlines and media readouts in traditional media, print and television for UNSMIL coverage. These practices evidenced PICS adaptability in efforts to optimize the UNSMIL digital footprint to: lead the Mission narrative in the host country; counter hate speech and dis/misinformation; promote inclusion; and manage the UNSMIL public image, including through the management of local population expectations.

*1.3 Nonetheless, UNSMIL advocacy was not always sufficiently inclusive to reach all target groups, particularly at the regional level*

16. Despite the progress noted above on advocacy-focused communications, advocacy activities were not always sufficiently inclusive of all population sub-groups, especially across regions and at the local level. To some extent this was due to the Mission's limited physical presence in a country which spans a vast geographical area, with most staff located in Tripoli.<sup>9</sup>

17. Feedback from participants in two advocacy-focused initiatives highlighted the limited inclusivity in the Mission's advocacy efforts. First, participant evaluations associated with the #YouEngage initiative, described above in paragraph 12, noted that inclusion of participants from the East and the South, in both digital and in-person events, remained insufficient. Although geographical representativeness was tracked in periodic #YouEngage evaluation dashboards, because this information was lacking in terms of comprehensiveness and consistency on disaggregated data, its usefulness in improving coverage appeared to have been limited. Similarly, interviews with participants in the Ra'idat programme, discussed in paragraph 12, also underscored that more attention to enhancing the inclusion of participants from geographically diverse backgrounds would create further opportunities for expanding mutual respect and camaraderie.

18. Both stakeholder and staff surveyed and interviewed reinforced the need for enhancing inclusivity, including in the design of Mission public outreach initiatives. They particularly remarked that a key challenge on regional representation in digital events was the limited availability of strong internet bandwidth necessary for digital participation in several parts of the country. They also noted that in-person events could not be held outside Tripoli and Benghazi due to the Mission's limited footprint. Low

<sup>9</sup> Based on OIOS analysis of data provided by UNSMIL, approximately 95 percent of UNSMIL substantive staff were located in Tripoli, with approximately 5 percent located in Benghazi and Sabha.

population density in several parts of the country further heightened the incremental cost of participation in those areas. Finally, the absence of rigorous survey of public perceptions undermined the Mission's ability to track how disparate population components were responding to UNSMIL inclusivity and engagement efforts.

*1.4 The ceasefire monitoring modality, particularly its conflict de-escalation activities, were well targeted and responsive overall, although security-related capacity building efforts were not as strategically planned*

19. The Mission utilized its ceasefire monitoring modality successfully to identify and prioritize conflict de-escalation and end conflicts. This included utilizing its good offices and security sector networks and trusted relationships, to de-escalate or end conflicts and promoting trust building, as illustrated in establishing a Truce (through committees) following the Tripoli clashes in May 2025 and supporting ceasefire agreement implementation. In this regard, combined efforts from the Ceasefire Monitoring Component (CMC), Security Institutions Service (SIS) and Joint Analysis and Reporting Section (JARS) were consistently used to detect threats and determine targeted actions. In the absence of international monitors, the Mission also gathered information by engaging counterparts such as the 5+5 Joint Military Commission (5+5 JMC) (East and West), local monitors and the Security Arrangement Subcommittee to verify reports on potential incidents and movements. This information was supplemented by open sources, such as local media reports.

20. More specifically, between the October 2020 signing of the Ceasefire Agreement and the present, there were three "triggers for potential ceasefire violations" that UNSMIL adequately targeted for de-escalation. For all three situations, stakeholders and staff interviewed confirmed that UNSMIL acted swiftly to identify the most critical actors, encouraged direct engagement among the 5+5 JMC counterparts to contain tensions and prevent escalation, and undertook other highly relevant good offices to promote de-escalation activities and end the conflicts.

21. The ceasefire monitoring modality in UNSMIL delivers against the support to the Ceasefire Agreement Implementation, which is bound by the Libyan-led, Libyan owned imperative. This is done primarily through security sector capacity building activities on planning, monitoring and reporting. Examples included: capacity building for citizen groups on how to contribute to monitoring of the ceasefire agreement; code of conduct training for security sector staff to influence behaviours and increase credibility; as well as other security sector technical assistance aimed at supporting re-unification of national security institutions.

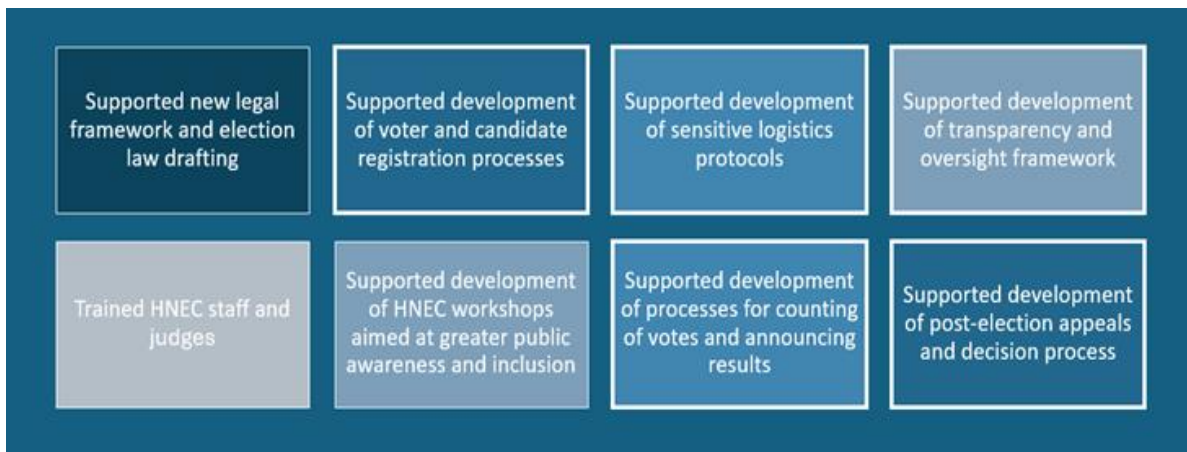
22. Stakeholder and staff survey respondents noted concerns related to the Mission's security sector capacity building programme of work. A large percentage of capacity building feedback was negative, mostly pointing to security sector work shortcomings such as overlapping focus across different workshops. This was confirmed by staff interviewees who identified it as the number one area where UNSMIL could improve. An OIOS analysis of security sector capacity building and other Mission technical assistance activities undertaken during the last six months of 2024 pointed to the potential for overlap between workshops delivered by different UNSMIL components. For example, while the CMC provided a workshop on "Promotion of ceasefire, including impact of foreign fighters" as part of its ceasefire monitoring modality, the SIS arranged a "Two-day meeting: Strengthening joint efforts in border security and prevention of violent extremism." An overarching security sector strategy linking both activities was missing, as was documentation to show how decisions were made on which types of security sector capacity building/technical assistance activities to prioritize. Some UNSMIL staff reported that some shortcomings in this area were due to the fact that their security sector mandated tasks are conducted through multifaceted engagements.

*1.5 While many UNSMIL activities undertaken as part of its capacity building modality were well targeted, they were not sufficiently inclusive and widespread*

23. Overall, the UNSMIL capacity building modality was key to implementation of the Mission’s mandate and perceived as being generally responsive to stakeholders’ priorities. Seventy-two per cent of stakeholder survey respondents agreed that UNSMIL capacity building support was adaptive and relevant to address their needs as well as to changes in the operating environment. Staff and stakeholders interviewed further noted that, overall, these UNSMIL activities were highly relevant and responsive to evolving stakeholder needs.

24. The most significant capacity building support UNSMIL provided was through substantive, targeted, and on-going technical assistance, particularly regarding election preparation. The Mission’s specific support on municipal elections illustrated this assessment. Through continuous and embedded engagement with the Libyan High National Elections Commission (HNEC), UNSMIL delivered highly responsive and comprehensive technical assistance throughout 2023 and 2024, as HNEC undertook the challenging and critical election preparation for elections across multiple districts in Libya. Figure 8 outlines the range of technical assistance provided in this example.

**Figure 8 – HNEC Technical Assistance provided by UNSMIL**



Source: OIOS Municipal elections case study analysis

25. Nevertheless, stakeholders reported that the Mission’s capacity building activities were not always sufficiently widespread or inclusive. Seventy per cent of staff survey respondents who commented on UNSMIL capacity building, including technical assistance, questioned the adequacy of the scale and inclusiveness of these activities. Specifically, staff and stakeholders surveyed and interviewed perceived that some of these activities:

- Were insufficiently targeted to the local context;
- Did not include enough participants across the East, West and South; and
- Did not consistently reach marginalized groups and engage with different societal actors.

**B. The Mission contributed to the Libyan political process by raising awareness, enhancing capacities and facilitating dialogue, which led to several positive political outcomes**

*2.1 UNSMIL effectively increased awareness around political developments and ceasefire agreements*

26. UNSMIL was generally effective in raising awareness around several political processes, including elections, ceasefire agreements, governance and other security sector issues. A majority of stakeholder

survey respondents (56 per cent) rated UNSMIL advocacy efforts as effective in this regard and indicated that they fostered dialogue and raised awareness of political processes. As one example, the annual report for the UNSMIL “Promoting Elections for the People of Libya (PEPOL)” initiative confirmed that several initiatives led by UNSMIL directly contributed to raising the awareness of Libyan citizens, particularly youth and women, in understanding how to exercise their rights and obligations in an inclusive, stable and reconciled society.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, UNSMIL targeted a broad nature of audiences - including the National Students Union, different political parties, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), media, persons with disabilities, and women’s groups - to cast a wide net when increasing political awareness.

27. Beyond stakeholder assessments, UNSMIL self-reported performance data from 2020 to 2024 demonstrated the Mission’s continuous and strengthened efforts in support of enhanced awareness of political processes. These data are presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: UNSMIL performance data demonstrating enhanced awareness of political processes, as measured by the increasing number of awareness raising events**

<b>Key Performance Indicators Addressing Awareness Raising</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable and inclusive participation and direct access to political and democratic processes, with access by women, youth and minorities, guaranteed and protected under the constitution and subsidiary legislation (indicator 1.3)</li> <li>• Access to political process (youth and women crosscutting issues): Equitable access to political and democratic processes, including access by women and young people, guaranteed and protected under the constitution (indicator 2)</li> <li>• Youth, Peace and Security (YPS): Mainstreaming of the YPS agenda in community engagement approaches, political strategies, and mandate implementation (indicator 11)</li> </ul>
<b>Performance Assessments by Year (as measured by # of awareness raising outputs)</b>	
<b>2020</b>	1. Organized a multi-stakeholder consultation process with women’s groups and activists that produced recommendations taken up by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum and the leadership of the new interim Government of National Unity to have at least 30 per cent of government leadership positions filled by women.
<b>2021</b>	No Data Available
<b>2022</b>	1. Continued to work on establishing a coordination group of young leaders to develop an advocacy manifesto and platform
<b>2023</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Launched "Training future leaders of Libya" initiative (30 young Libyan women developed skills in human rights, legislation and policies to promote the participation of women and counter hate speech)</li> <li>2. Endorsement of the “Inclusive Mediation and Peace Building Processes in Libya: Protection and Participation of Women (UNSMIL Plan 2023 – 2025)”</li> </ol>
<b>2024</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Targeted advocacy increased women's voter registration to 29% and facilitated 42% of new registrations within a month</li> <li>2. Regional learning exchange equipped 14 parliamentarians with legal reforms strategies, leading to actionable recommendations for advocating a 30% quota for women in elections</li> <li>3. Empowerment of the 760 Network for Women Candidates</li> </ol>

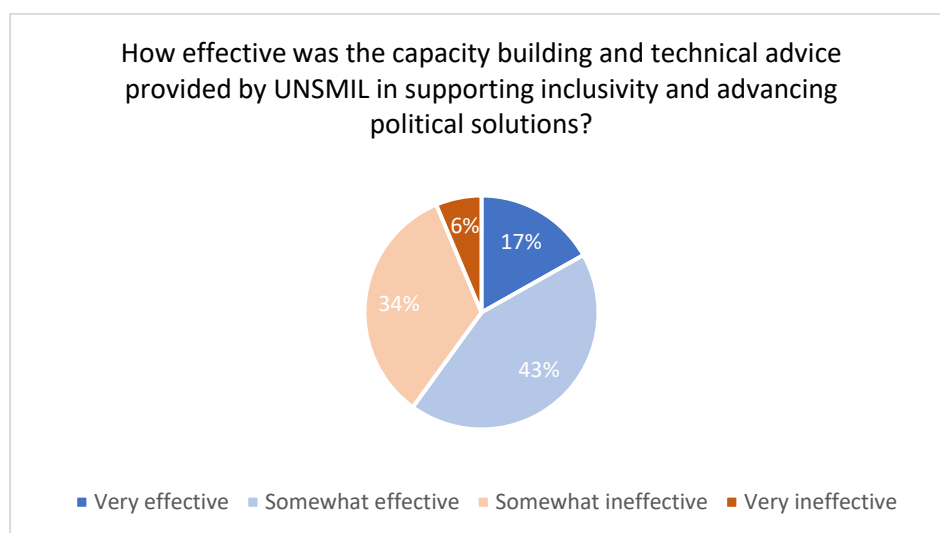
Source: OIOS UNSMIL performance data analysis. Data in table aligns most directly with (1) UNSMIL RBB performance indicator 1.3 (2) UNSMIL outputs 2 and 11 (3) UNSDCF Output 1.1.3.

<sup>10</sup> An initiative that both UNSMIL and UNDP engaged in. According to project documents, duration of the project was from 2018-2025 with a total budget of USD 55,569,980. Major donors included the EU, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, with smaller contributions made by France, Government of Libya, and Japan. [PEPOL Annual Report 2023](#).

## 2.2 UNSMIL enhanced stakeholders' knowledge and capacities to further advance political solutions and facilitate security agreements

28. Staff and stakeholder feedback on efforts to build knowledge and capacity was generally positive. Most stakeholder survey respondents (60 per cent) indicated that UNSMIL was effective overall in utilizing capacity building and technical assistance in this regard, as shown in Figure 9.

**Figure 9: Stakeholder survey perceptions on effectiveness of capacity building/technical advice in support of inclusive political solutions**



Source: OIOS Stakeholder survey

29. In addition to raising general awareness among Libyans at large, UNSMIL utilized capacity building and technical assistance initiatives to enhance understanding and capacities of specific stakeholder groups in support of de-escalation, inclusivity and the advancement of political solutions. For example, during the last six months of 2024, to advance security issues, UNSMIL engaged in 13 capacity building/ technical assistance initiatives to build capacities and enhance knowledge. These included conducting seminars, large consultative meetings, and East – West coordination with a broad range of different audiences such as the Ministries of Defence and Interior; the Presidential Council; armed groups; executive authorities; legislative branches; and CSOs. Substantive areas covered in these initiatives included:

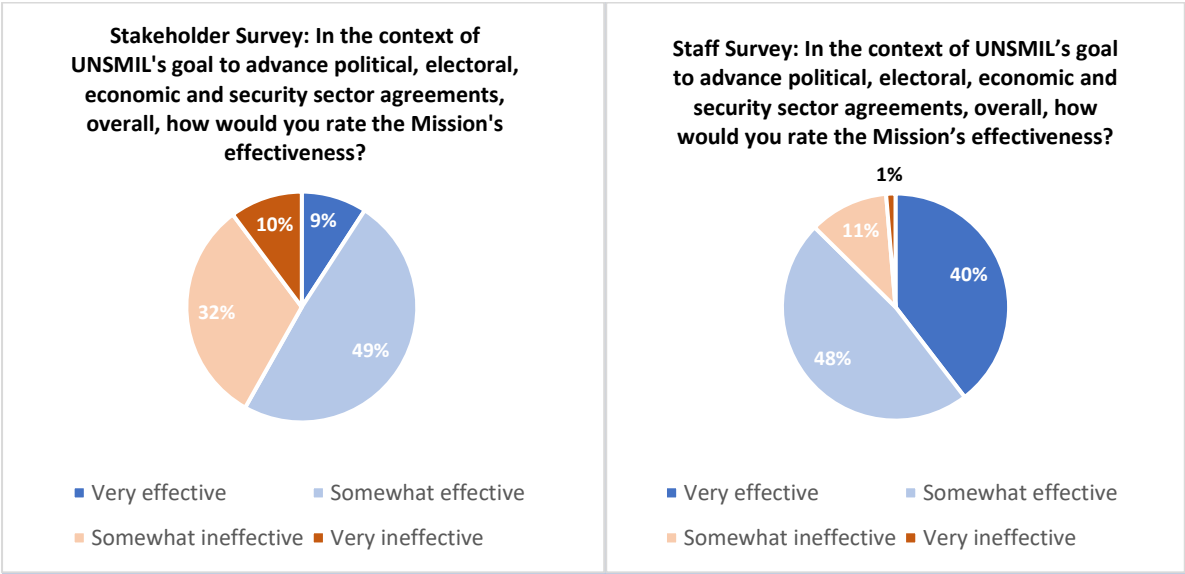
- Security sector reform legislation
- Code of conduct for armed actors
- The role of CSOs in supporting the ceasefire
- The role of youth in supporting the ceasefire
- Support of mercenary withdrawal and border security
- Support of electoral security mechanisms
- Technical support to the 5+5 JMC

30. Furthermore, the 2022 annual progress report on “Promoting Elections for the People of Libya” (PEPOL) reported 30 related trainings, workshops, and documentary outputs produced in the year 2022 alone, which enhanced the knowledge of Libyans regarding electoral processes, thus contributing to higher rates of voter registration. Similarly, Ra’idat programme workshop participants interviewed reported that their understanding of the political domain had increased due to the workshop. HNEC stakeholders interviewed also confirmed that UNSMIL technical assistance benefited them directly and contributed to enhancing the capacities of HNEC in their efforts to facilitate an inclusive, impartial and credible electoral process among Libyans.

2.3 UNSMIL contributed to critical results related to the holding of municipal elections, conflict de-escalation and Central Bank crisis negotiations

31. Overall, on the question of UNSMIL effectiveness in advancing political - including electoral, security and economic sector - agreements, most staff and a majority but fewer stakeholder survey respondents perceived UNSMIL to be effective, as shown in Figures 10 and 11. The Mission demonstrated its effectiveness in this regard with contributions to three different outcomes - municipal elections, conflict de-escalation and resolution of the Central Bank Crisis - which will be discussed in greater detail on paragraphs 32 to 39 below.

**Figures 10 and 11: Stakeholder and Staff survey perceptions on UNSMIL effectiveness in advancing political and related sector agreements**

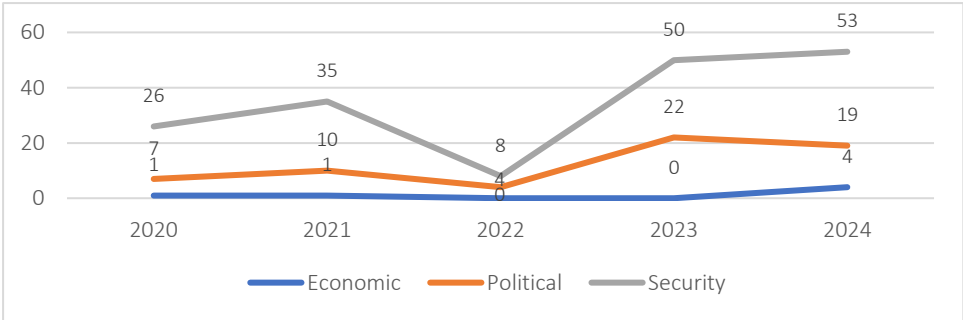


Sources: OIOS stakeholder and staff surveys

**Contributions to Municipal Elections**

32. Regarding this key political process, UNSMIL demonstrated agility, responsiveness and effectiveness in supporting Libya’s evolving electoral landscape. In July 2023, UNSMIL quickly pivoted from national to municipal election support at the request of HNEC. Figure 12 shows that between 2022 and 2024, the number of political meetings that UNSMIL facilitated, many in support of municipal elections, increased four-fold. UNSMIL supported the holding of municipal elections through increased initiation and facilitation of political meetings across key stakeholder groups, as well as other key Libyan political, military, and civilian stakeholders.

**Figure 12: Number of UNSMIL-facilitated key meetings by issue area 2020-2024**



33. In support of municipal elections, UNSMIL also coordinated regular meetings with HNEC leadership and provided technical assistance. Examples of this included: supporting the development of legal frameworks, voter registration systems, and biometric technologies. Figure 13 provides a snapshot of UNSMIL support to these critical Libyan-led municipal elections.

**Figure 13: Key components of UNSMIL municipal election support, 2024-2025**



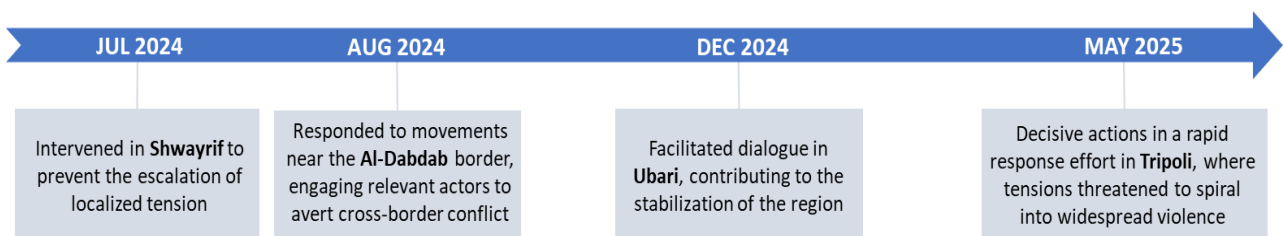
Source: OIOS municipal elections case study analysis

34. Overall, the Mission’s support was instrumental in ensuring the credibility, inclusivity, and transparency of the municipal electoral process, thereby contributing toward overall progress on Libyan political issues. Targeted support provided by the Mission played a critical role in the successful holding of municipal elections in 58 (of 143) municipalities in November 2024, where there was a 77 per cent registered voter participation.<sup>11</sup> A second cluster of elections were held in August 2024, where 34 municipalities ended up voting;<sup>12</sup> voter turnout was at 71 per cent.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the first woman mayor was elected in December 2024, and women accounted for 27 per cent of the candidates nominated to run for seats in phase two.<sup>14</sup>

**Contributions to Conflict De-Escalation, including Truce Negotiations**

35. On security issues, UNSMIL contributions to conflict de-escalation and truce negotiations were also significant. The Mission played a central role in facilitating de-escalation in several high-risk areas, as seen in Figure 14. In this regard, one of the Mission’s most recent contributions is exemplified by the establishment of the Tripoli Truce (May 2025), Security Arrangements Committee (SAC) and follow-up committees.

**Figure 14: UNSMIL interventions to target conflict de-escalation and truce negotiations**



Source: OIOS conflict de-escalation and ceasefire monitoring case study analysis

<sup>11</sup> [Can Municipal Polls Help Break Libya’s Political Deadlock?](#) Washington Institute, Oct. 3, 2025.

<sup>12</sup> A lower number of elections than originally planned.

<sup>13</sup> [Libya awaits official results](#) The Arab Weekly, Aug 19, 2025.

<sup>14</sup> [Equal participation](#) UNDP, March 8, 2025; Of note, according to regulations, up to three seats in every municipal council may be reserved for women.

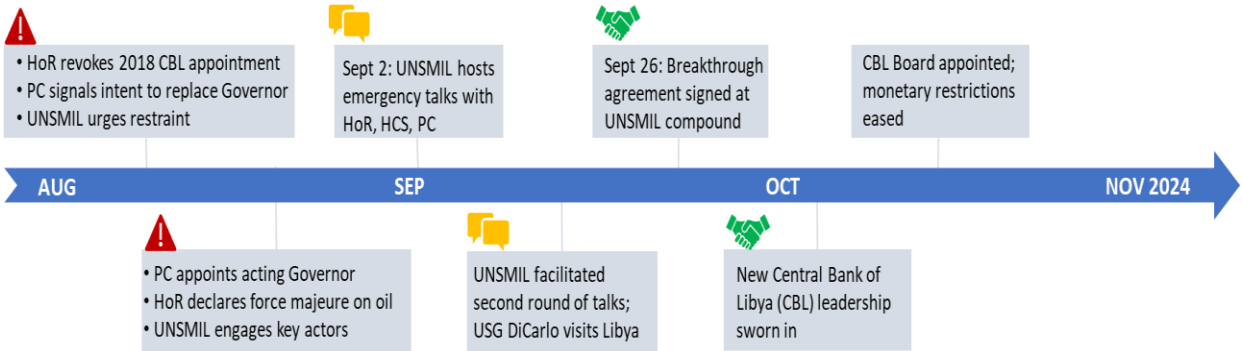
36. UNSMIL staff noted that conflict prevention is a major peace and stability mandate of the Mission. UNSMIL interventions reported above were effective largely because of the foundation the Mission built to proactively prevent conflict through sustained and frequent engagement, support ceasefire monitoring and continually engage key security and diplomatic counterparts. Stakeholders interviewed consistently described UNSMIL as a trusted intermediary and highlighted its demonstrated ability to de-escalate tensions through tailored conflict resolution strategies, rapid mobilization of key actors, discreet diplomacy and useful public messaging. They and staff noted that, without UNSMIL security sector actions, Libya would likely have experienced greater instability and additional violence.

**Contributions to the Resolution of the Central Bank Crisis**

37. In 2024, UNSMIL played a pivotal role in resolving the leadership crisis at the Central Bank of Libya, which threatened financial stability and risked deepened political divisions. Recognizing the urgency, the Mission convened emergency talks and negotiations in September with all sides, led by the Deputy SRS for Political Affairs and supported by the USG for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

38. When formal negotiations stalled, the Mission shifted to backchannel diplomacy, introducing a signature-based consensus model that rebuilt trust among the parties. Public statements were also issued to calm tensions in Tripoli, helping to prevent violence and create space for dialogue. By October, a breakthrough agreement was signed at UNSMIL premises, leading to the swearing-in of new Central Bank leadership and appointment of the Board. Figure 15 provides a snapshot of some key components of UNSMIL support in resolving the Central Bank crisis.

**Figure 15: Critical milestones and key actions taken by UNSMIL to resolve the Central Bank crisis**



*OIOS Central Bank case study analysis*

39. Specific UNSMIL contributions to the resolution of the Central Bank crisis included supporting the lifting of monetary restrictions, appreciation of the Libyan dinar, and resumption of oil exports, all of which demonstrated the Mission’s adaptability, effectiveness, and impact in a short but critical period. Figure 16 below provides further details on UNSMIL outcome contributions.

**Figure 16: Three Central Bank crisis outcomes towards which UNSMIL contributed**

Crisis De-escalation	Institutional Reform	Economic Stabilization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public statements raised awareness and calmed tensions</li><li>• Armed groups replaced with regular forces</li><li>• Prevented outbreak of violence in Tripoli</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appointment of Governor &amp; Deputy</li><li>• Reactivation of Central Bank of Libya (CBL) Board after 10 years</li><li>• Launch of 90-day strategic plan + legal reforms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dinar appreciated from 8.0 to 5.9 LYD/USD</li><li>• Oil production rose from 194k to 1.3M bpd</li><li>• CBL resumed operations and lifted restrictions</li></ul>

*OIOS Central Bank case study analysis*

### C. While UNSMIL contributions advanced political processes, longer-term political solutions were not achieved

#### *Key political milestones were not reached*

40. Despite UNSMIL commitment to advancing national dialogue, facilitating consensus, and supporting institutional reform, its interventions did not lead to significant progress on the Security Council Resolution mandate to achieve longer-term political solutions. More specifically, the following key political milestones did not materialize:

- National elections
- Reunification of national institutions
- Further implementation of ceasefire agreement
- Agreement on the way forward on a unified national government
- Economic stability

41. Stakeholders and staff interviewed and surveyed pointed to a variety of challenging impediments which were deterrents to long-term political solutions. These included but were not limited to the persistence of and lack of sanctions for active armed brigades; the absence of clear accountability mechanisms; and the preference on the part of some key stakeholders for keeping the status quo. Interview and survey respondents also identified external political dynamics as playing a significant role in impeding progress. Most of these references related to foreign interference and divided international interests; Member States with interests in Libya were perceived as often pursuing competing priorities ranging from oil export and migration control to support for armed factions, which at times undermined the coherence of UN-led efforts. This geopolitical fragmentation created an environment in which parallel initiatives and uncoordinated regional efforts often proliferated, adversely impacting the space within which UNSMIL exercised its good offices and prevented consolidated gains to build momentum toward a comprehensive political settlement.

42. The Mission has recognized these risks and sought to mitigate them by engaging armed actors through dialogue, strengthening community-level confidence-building measures, and advocating for accountability mechanisms, including targeted sanctions, in coordination with international partners.

#### *3.2 The Mission did not fully meet the expectations of the Libyan population*

43. Libyan expectations regarding the work of UNSMIL were not fully met, particularly regarding the Mission's inclusivity across regional, cultural, tribal, ethnic and/or political parties. Many stakeholders and staff interviewed identified gaps in the Mission's outreach. When asked for recommendations on what

UNSMIL could do better, the second most frequent response was related to enhancing participation, with an emphasis on the need to enhance inclusion at the local level and among women and youth.

44. In particular, civil society organizations voiced the opinion that the Mission’s regional presence, local reach, and inclusion of marginalized groups was falling well below what Libyans expected. Out of the 15 CSO representatives interviewed, two-thirds (10 of 15) cited concerns related to the specific inclusivity gaps outlined in Table 3.

**Table 3: Most frequently cited inclusivity gaps by CSO member interviewees**

Inclusivity Unmet Expectation:	
1.	Underrepresentation and/or undervaluing of local CSOs, including regional disparities and southern marginalization
2.	Underrepresentation of women and women’s political participation
3.	Insufficient institutional responsiveness and follow-up in response to CSO engagement
4.	Unconducive environment within the Mission undermining inclusivity
5.	Tokenistic and selective engagement practices
6.	Overemphasis on political elites and armed actors

Source: OIOS CSO interviews

45. To address these inclusivity concerns, the Mission recognized the need to expand its outreach and engage a broader list of constituencies across Libya’s East, West and South, including at local levels. However, given that nearly all UNSMIL staff continued to work in Tripoli, as noted in para 16, and also given the documented unwillingness of some authorities and conflict parties to engage with the Mission, as well as security and logistical challenges, the Mission faced significant constraints in expanding its outreach and engaging with the East and the South of the country. Despite these constraints, recent developments did address the issue. In 2025 UNSMIL supported a nation-wide consultation in the context of the Advisory Committee outcomes document, which marked a new approach to strengthen inclusivity by gathering the views of 26,000 Libyans from diverse groups on how UNSMIL should support the political process to move the country forward.

**D. Limited synergies across UNSMIL components, as well as with other United Nations Country Team entities, resulted in a fragmented approach to the Mission’s work**

*4.1 The Mission lacked an over-arching Mission strategic plan*

46. There was a lack of an overall strategy to guide Mission operations. OIOS identified<sup>15</sup> approximately 75 separate Mission planning documents associated with the evaluation period; these included: vision papers; thematic strategies; component workplans; SG reports; strategic review preparation documents; resolution mandate documents; and mandate implementation reports. However, collectively these documents did not demonstrate a cohesive, overarching, Mission-wide strategic approach, nor did they sufficiently prioritise between different activities or delineate responsibilities across Mission components. Frequent SRSR/ DSRG turnover in past years has also likely contributed to this lack of strategic coherence.

47. There was a lack of holistic planning within the Mission, as well as evidence of coordination gaps across the work of individual Mission components. Negative staff survey feedback on coordination between different UNSMIL components outnumbered positive feedback by a factor of three. UNSMIL strategic planning documents and work plans revealed a disconnect between activities being undertaken by different Mission components; this was also reported in Security Council requested strategic reviews and United Nations Sustainable Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) evaluations. This lack of a holistic orientation and insufficient internal coordination manifested itself in fragmented approaches to mandate

<sup>15</sup> Based on review of documents provided to OIOS in response to an OIOS data request.

implementation, particularly in areas requiring cross-component collaboration such as ceasefire monitoring, political dialogue facilitation, and transitional governance support. Using the example of ceasefire activities, the differentiated roles between the CMC, SIS and JARs were not adequately understood; these Mission components all worked on security issues, with similar activity areas and staff seeking to engage many of the same stakeholders. The two quotes below represent common sentiment from staff interviewed on the question of overall coordination across UNSMIL components.

<p><b>“There is no roadmap for implementation of unit level activities; this leads to fragmented, uncoordinated operational decision making.”</b> <i>UNSMIL staff interviewee</i></p>	<p><b>“You have to limit strictly the mandates across components... it has to be disaggregated in terms of the mandate. [Now] section mandate overlap is there so coordination cannot happen well.”</b> <i>UNSMIL staff interviewee</i></p>
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48. Coordination with other United Nations Country Team (UNCT) entities was also limited. UNSDCF planning documents provided evidence of a well-documented and an increasingly robust foundation for joint planning between the special political Mission and other United Nations Country Team (UNCT) entities. Despite this, staff and stakeholders interviewed reported that coherent programming between UNSMIL and other UNCT entities was not always achieved. For example, both staff from the Mission and staff from other members of the UNCT reported that joint planning goals outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and related planning documents often resulted in information sharing exercises rather than coordination of jointly implemented activities. This weakened the UN ability to present a cohesive support package to national counterparts and contributed to fragmented messaging on critical issues such as institutional reform, civic participation and reconciliation. Similarly, key female external stakeholders also provided feedback on the lack of holistic engagement between UNSMIL and UNDP on gender-focused outreach programmes.

49. Nevertheless, several examples of joint work demonstrated that meaningful integration between UNSMIL and other UNCT entities occurred in a few specific areas. The Youth Engagement Ra’idat program discussed above in para 12, led by UNSMIL and supported by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women, and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), was a notable example of multi-agency collaboration aimed at promoting youth participation in political processes. Similarly, the UNDP/UNSMIL electoral support team was described as fully integrated, with stakeholders noting that the division of labour between substantive and operational roles was, overall, well-managed and invisible to external counterparts.

#### IV. Conclusion

50. UNSMIL has made substantive contributions to advancing Libya’s interlinked economic, political and security challenges. It has played a critical and catalytic role by mitigating political and security risks, as well as sustaining dialogue and preventing escalation through timely identification of priority threats, strategic diplomacy, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and flexible negotiation frameworks. In the face of entrenched challenges and emerging crises, the Mission’s agility and focused support has also helped to resolve acute crises when they emerged. In this regard, the Mission has been uniquely positioned to support Libya’s path toward peace, stability, and democratic governance

51. Nonetheless, public sentiment is anchored in the perception that little progress has been made on the outcomes most critical to Libyans: national elections; reunification of national institutions, including a unified government; further implementation of the ceasefire agreement; and economic stability. While these outcomes have not been fully reached, without UNSMIL, the risk of conflict escalation in the country - further jeopardizing their achievement - would be higher.

52. In the context of fiscal austerity and high expectations, it is imperative that the Mission reassess its strategic approach, including how decisions are made and which operational activities to prioritize. The UN 80 initiative, Security Council Review recommendations, findings from the recent UNSMIL staffing review and recent Advisory Committee recommendations and recently developed Libyan Political Roadmap present the ideal context and timing to address this strategic planning and operational decision-making gap. In doing so, the Mission will have even greater impact for the Libyan population.

## V. Recommendations

53. The Inspection and Evaluation Division of OIOS makes three important recommendations to UNSMIL.

### **Recommendation 1 (Results A, C, D)**

54. Building on all available planning documentation, including the mission concept, UNSMIL should **develop a revised, unified Mission-wide work plan** that prioritizes the political process.

Considerations could include:

- Strengthening prioritisation of activities
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Balancing long-term political planning and crisis response
- Enhancing and focusing joint planning and implementation with the UNCT within the UNSDCF
- Integrating ongoing requirements for efficiency and improvement

**Indicator of implementation:** Revised Mission-wide work plan developed that prioritises the political process.

**Expected change:** The work of the mission will be more strategic and unified, leading to greater efficiency and impact.

### **Recommendation 2 (Results A and C)**

55. Building upon the significant inclusivity initiatives UNSMIL has already undertaken, UNSMIL should **develop a Mission-wide cohesive work plan that integrates all activities related to enhancing inclusivity**

Considerations could include:

- Prioritisation and efficiency considerations in the context of resource limitations
- Integrating the Security Council Strategic Review recommendations to re-balance the Mission's geographic balance and to support inclusive dialogue mechanisms
- Building on recent strategic communication and advocacy work, including successful initiatives that have increased the representation of youth, women and civil society

**Indicator of implementation:** Mission-wide cohesive work plan that integrates all activities related to inclusivity.

**Expected change:** The work of the Mission related to advancing inclusivity will be strengthened.

### **Recommendation 3 (Results A and C)**

56. UNSMIL should **conduct a review of the Mission’s capacity building and technical advice programme of work, particularly for components engaged in security issues**, which could inform a possible redesign of this work.

Considerations could include:

- Conducting an inventory of capacity building/ technical advice requests, activities and available resources to assess the cost-benefit value relative to other strategic priorities
- Clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of UNSMIL components engaged in security sector work; specifically, the Ceasefire Monitoring Component (CMC) and Security Institutions Service (SIS)
- Exploring possible organizational re-structuring and re-prioritisation to increase coherence and efficiency

**Indicator of implementation:** Review of capacity building and technical assistance programme of work of security sector issues conducted.

**Expected change:** A more strategic and unified approach to delivering the Mission’s programme of work, including a possible re-design of its security sector capacity building and technical assistance programme of work.

## VI. Management Response

United Nations



الأمم المتحدة

United Nations Support Mission in Libya  
بعثة الأمم المتحدة للدعم في ليبيا

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: 7 January 2026  
Ref: UNSMIL/COS/2026/001

**To:** Ms. Demetra Arapakos, Director  
Inspection and Evaluation Division, OIOS  
  
Mr. Juan Carlos Peña, Chief of Section  
Inspection and Evaluation Division, OIOS

**From:** Hanna Serwaa Tetteh *stephanie koury* OIC UNSMIL  
Special Representative of the Secretary-General

**Subject: Draft Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the Evaluation of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya**

1. Thank you for your memorandum of 24 December 2025, by which you transmitted for your review and response the draft report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Inspection and Evaluation Division (IED), on the Evaluation of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.
2. I reviewed the draft report and its recommendations and am pleased to confirm that the United Nations Support Mission in Libya accepts them. As requested, please find attached the completed recommendation action template.
3. In case of any questions and for further follow up on the implementation of the recommendations, please reach out to the UNSMIL Chief of Staff, Mr. Marco Kalbusch ([marco.kalbusch@un.org](mailto:marco.kalbusch@un.org), copy to: [unsmil-ocos@un.org](mailto:unsmil-ocos@un.org)).
4. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Ellen Vinkey and Ms. Jiayi He for their professionalism, commitment and teamwork. The inclusive approach through the evaluation process and their openness to receive our inputs are greatly appreciated.
5. Thank you and best regards.

**Cc:** Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, USG, DPPA  
Ms. Stephanie Koury, DSRSG-Political, UNSMIL  
Ms. Ulrika Richardson, DSRSG/RC, UNSMIL  
Ms. Emma Fernandez Delgado, UNSMIL  
Mr. Marco Kalbusch, UNSMIL  
Ms. Nao Kawaguchi, UNSMIL  
Ms. Angelica Sofia Norberg, UNSMIL