Involving Local Authorities
In the programming process of EU Cooperation In Libya

LOCAL AUTHORITIES ROADMAP
FOR THE 2021-2027 CYCLE OF EU COOPERATION

Headquarters:
Almansura, Tripoli, Libya
Contacts:
WhatsApp: +218-91-0038100
Emails: info@nmca.ly
website: www.nmca.ly

December 2020
Involving Libyan Local Authorities in the Process of Programming Cooperation with the European Union

Local Authorities' Road Map
For the 2021-2027 Cooperation cycle
with the European Union

(December 2020)
# Table of Contents

**FORWARD**

**LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS**........................................................................................................... 5

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** ........................................................................................................................................ 6

**INTRODUCTION** .................................................................................................................................................. 8

1. **THE CURRENT SITUATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN LIBYA** .............................................................. 10
   1.1. **NATIONAL DECENTRALIZATION POLICY** .................................................................................................. 10
   1.2. **EVALUATING THE ROLE OF LIBYAN MUNICIPALITIES IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES** 10
   1.3. **ENHANCING THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES** .................................. 11

2. **ENHANCING THE PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES** ...................................................................... 13
   2.1. **AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL** ....................................................................................................................... 13
   2.2. **AT THE LEVEL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION** ........................... 15
   2.3. **RECOMMENDATIONS** ............................................................................................................................ 18
   2.4. **FINANCING TOOLS DEDICATED TO DECENTRALIZED PARTNERSHIP** ..................................................... 18

3. **MUNICIPALITIES AND NMCA’S EXPECTED MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES** .................................................................................................. 19
   3.1. **THE CRITICAL POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ROLE OF THE NMCA** .................................................. 19
   3.2. **FUNCTIONS OF THE NMCA** .................................................................................................................... 20
   3.2.1. **SWOT Analysis of the NMCA** .............................................................................................................. 22
   3.3. **CAPACITY BUILDING** .............................................................................................................................. 22
   3.4. **GOALS OF LIBYAN MUNICIPALITIES AND OF THE NATIONAL MUNICIPAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION** .......... 24
   3.5. **ACTION PLAN OF THE NMCA** ................................................................................................................ 31
   3.5.1. **NMCA’s Action Plan to achieve its strategic goals** .................................................................................. 31
   3.6. **METHODOLOGY** ....................................................................................................................................... 35

**CONCLUSIONS** .................................................................................................................................................. 36
Forward
Libya went through many factors in which the political, economic and administrative conditions worsened, which negatively affected the performance of the work of the municipal councils in meeting the basic and primary needs of the citizen. These factors and conditions made the municipal councils mini-states within a state, so they invented and managed the crisis par excellence and achieved a large part of stability and peaceful coexistence and strengthened confidence and proved its existence.
Until the National Association of Municipal Councils was established in 2016, the impact of this division and fragmentation in the country, despite the harsh security conditions, but it gathered this challenge facing municipalities and crystallized it into work programs, plans and draft decisions and put pressure on successive governments and resolved a large part of these obstacles, so the municipalities became a voice unifying them and collects her work and sets her priorities.
The Association, with its work teams, members, and advisors, embarked on unified work that charts its way of survival and achieves its goals. Work was carried out to define priorities after describing the reality that the country is going through and limiting the threats and obstacles to preparing work programs and plans to address and avoid them. Since that time, an intensive work has been exerting pressure on governments to extract the powers and competencies of municipalities. Although the central authority clung to it, which is the right of municipalities according to Law 59/2012, events continued and continued until the League became a member of UCLG Africa, and its back was backed by experiences and abilities that many experiences with its counterparts in the world, and in the European Union are still going through. In particular, work has been done to prepare a program that defines a Roadmap for Libyan municipalities for seven years to come from 2021-2027 after studying the reality of municipalities in-depth and thorough study by the Association and its national advisor appointed by the UCLG Africa to draw a real map that translates the vision of these municipalities and what they want in the next stage from the bodies Actors locally and internationally, and how to play an essential role in the local development program and to be a primary partner in that, with both national authorities and the European Union support’s programs, and what is our role as a national association in this program, and how to be a strong partner speaking on behalf of all municipalities, reinforcing the confidence of these municipalities and pushing them to achieve decentralization and good governance based on participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability, which we all seek to achieve security, stability and citizen's well-being and meet their needs and expectations.
And here we are putting in your hands the product that lasted for many months with a group of experts and consultants who have gone through successful experiences of decentralization and we summarize the outcome of work with most Libyan municipalities and we took into account the specifics of some of them and tried, as much as possible, to focus on the most important priorities that concern the municipalities, whose work will succeed in the next stage and unify the discourse and directing unified common demands towards the supporters, according to concrete studies on the ground, based on diligent work throughout this period to keep you informed and achieve what we aspire to.
May God help us and you to do what is good for all, and may God protect our homelands and territories./.

Hussein Al Dawadi
President of the National Association of the Municipalities of Libya
# List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Meaning in English</th>
<th>Translation in Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AICS</td>
<td>Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione al Sviluppo (Italian Cooperation Agency)</td>
<td>وكالة التعاون الإيطالية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBC-Med</td>
<td>Cross Border Cooperation in the Mediterranean</td>
<td>التعاون عبر الحدود في منطقة البحر الأبيض المتوسط</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoR</td>
<td>European Committee of the Regions</td>
<td>اللجنة الأوروبية للمناطق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration</td>
<td>نزع السلاح والتسريح وإعادة الإدماج</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRI</td>
<td>Democracy Reporting International</td>
<td>المنظمة الدولية للترقى عن الديمقراطية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGTC</td>
<td>European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation</td>
<td>التجمع الأوروبي للتعاون الإقليمي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENP</td>
<td>European Neighbouring Policy</td>
<td>سياسة الجوار الأوروبية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
<td>المفوضية الأوروبية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>الاتحاد الأوروبي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUD</td>
<td>European Union Delegation</td>
<td>وفد الاتحاد الأوروبي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIZ</td>
<td>German Cooperation Agency</td>
<td>وكالة التعاون الألمانية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organisation for Migration</td>
<td>المنظمة الدولية للهجرة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFF</td>
<td>Multi-annual Financial Framework</td>
<td>الإطار المالي متعدد السنين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDCI</td>
<td>Neighbouring Development and International Cooperation Instrument</td>
<td>أداة الجوار والتنمية والتعاون الدولي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>Nicosia Initiative</td>
<td>مبادرة نيقوسيا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMCA</td>
<td>National Municipal Councils Association</td>
<td>الرابطة الوطنية للمجالس البلدية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGS</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
<td>أهداف التنمية المستدامة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCLG Africa</td>
<td>United Cities and Local Governments of Africa</td>
<td>منظمة المدن والحكومات المحلية المتحدة أفريقيا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
<td>برنامج الأمم المتحدة الإنمائي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
<td>المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>UN International Children’s Emergency Fund</td>
<td>منظمة الأمم المتحدة للطفولة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNG</td>
<td>International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities</td>
<td>وكالة التعاون الدولي التابعة لرابطة بلديات هولندا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive summary

Twenty-five years after the Barcelona Declaration and in view of strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean relations, the planned renewal of priorities for the partnership between the Southern neighboring countries and the European Union has begun. As part of the European Neighborhood Policy, these new priorities were meant to serve as a political basis for programming in the new financial instrument (the Neighborhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument, NDICI) in the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) for the period from 2021-2027.

Accordingly, in order to benefit from the new elected leadership of the European Commission, the five presidents of international and regional associations, who represent the local authorities, submitted a memorandum to the new president of the European Union Commission in December 2019. The memorandum includes 10 proposals for enhancing the contribution of the local authorities in specifying and implementing the NDICI.

In this context, the national associations of local authorities were encouraged to prepare and submit a position paper in regard to the engagement of local authorities in the programming and implementation of the geographic component of the NDICI in their countries. In addition, they were encouraged to establish a dialogue with central governments and relevant European Union missions to highlight the strategic directions that aim to strengthen the localization of national development policies, including the policy of decentralization and the support of sustainable regional development. Under the umbrella of UCLG-Africa, the National Municipal Councils Association of Libyan (NMCA) has developed a roadmap for the participation of Libyan municipalities in the national development policy and cooperation with the European Union, which is the result of intensive consultations discussions with the national authorities and municipalities across the country as well as with the European Union Delegation in Libya.

During the consultation process, the Libyan National Municipal Councils Association (NMCA) took it upon itself to engage various stakeholders in order to create a common language, identify actual problems and needs, gather information, ensure political commitment and support, prioritize interventions, and develop strategies and potential projects.

At the local authority level, workshops were held with municipal councils directly, through virtual meetings, or through questionnaires that were distributed to determine the vision and priorities that were included in the roadmap.

Key data from previous or ongoing projects funded by institutional donors were also collected, analyzed and aggregated according to the sectors and areas established for intervention, based on information provided by the relevant national ministries and those available by international cooperation actors and the European Union.

After the consultation process, the following objectives were reached (the activities are shown in chapter 3.4):
1. **Developing the legal and political structure for local units**
   1.1. Adoption of a complete political, administrative and financial decentralized governance structure in the Constitution;
   1.2. Reviewing the legal framework in order to improve the ability of local governments to deliver services efficiently.

2. **Ensuring adequate financial resources for Local governments**
   2.1. Establish a local tax collection system;
   2.2. Improve mechanisms for allocating the central government’s resources.

3. **Strengthening the role of Local governments in managing public affairs**
   3.1. Ensure the full implementation of the powers and competencies attributed to Local governments by the law.
   3.2. Ensure the participation of local authorities in developing and implementing national policies;
   3.3. Ensure the provision of adequate human, financial and technical resources to implement the transferred powers.

4. **Achieving effective and innovative management to provide high quality standard services at the local level**
   4.1. Capacity development for local units to provide services;
   4.2. Promote integrated local and national development planning that achieves citizen’s well-being;
   4.3. Achieve a culture of governance based on innovative and sustainable policies and practices and on the principles of good and effective governance (transparency, accountability and participation) to enhance local democracy.

5. **Encouraging and facilitating local economic initiatives to promote equitable economic development**
   5.1. Lay down local economic development strategies in the regions, including specific programs and action plans;
   5.2. Achieve local economic development and enhancing Libyan economic diversification to provide job opportunities.

6. **Enhancing international cooperation and building effective partnerships**
   6.1. Providing an appropriate environment for decentralized partnership and cooperation;
   6.2. Direct international cooperation processes away from specific regional interests and towards greater influence on local governance performance and local communities’ welfare;
   6.3. Further development of the Association’s decentralized partnership with homologue institutions and local actors from Europe, the MENA region and UCLG-Africa, to share practices, experiences and actively participate in defining future common interest policies in the Mediterranean.

The support of the European Union through the Neighborhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) to empower Libyan municipalities and their National association, as well as by facilitating the decentralized partnership of similar institutions in the Euro-Mediterranean region, will further enable space to practice responsible participation. This is a mixture of collective rights, duties, accountability and social justice: the best way to reduce the risks of future tensions and conflicts in favor of sustainable and resilient local development on a large scale, not only in Libya but also regionally.
Introduction

The revolution, the rival governments and the proxy war in a lawless country have plunged Libyans into a daily battle for survival. Their well-being and livelihood have deteriorated dramatically. Many people live in pervasive insecurity under militia rule and amid continual conflict. After the revolution of 2011, Law 59 (2012) issued and then the only new law designated to local governance. Libyan municipalities were the only local elected body that took over many of the responsibilities and duties which were previously managed by central authority. The lack of experience and competences led to critical shortcomings; this can be seen in the poor quality of public services and the lack of a strategic vision for territorial socio-economic development. The current situation, characterized by conflict, has put additional pressure on municipalities as they are often the only bodies to provide services for citizens while dealing with recurrent crisis.

Municipal Councils operate on an annual budget provided by the Ministry of Local Governance. However, the budgets designated to municipalities across Libya has been irregular and unequal due to a number of reasons; Firstly, municipal budget allocations are based on the geographical size of the municipality, and the number of inhabitants and the last available national census in 2012. As a result of the local fighting and unequal opportunities across the country, Libyans have migrated and population figures have changed. Secondly, central executive and legislative authorities have been multiplied, and are internally divided, which prevents the establishment of a single national budget. Furthermore, all financial support sent by the Ministry of Local Governments has been disbursed as operating budget.

All major services, such as health care, education, infrastructure, water, electricity, and waste collection, are under the control of the local ministries, which are supposed to allocate funds to their local offices. However, these offices have received little or no funds in the recent years. Thus, inevitably the burden of meeting people’s needs and demands for the provision of services has fallen on Municipal Councils, which struggle to meet popular expectations without proper support. Even when they find resources to improve the key services listed above, Municipal Councils have difficulty dealing with the pertinent local offices due to the law does not give Councils any executive authority over them.

According to Law 59, Municipal Councils are allowed to raise local revenue through fees for municipal services, proceeds from museums and gardens, rents from local properties, and revenues from local fairs and stadiums. In addition to the limited funds gained by these resources, municipalities should receive their share of local fees, tariffs, and taxes that forming the bulk of local state revenues. Municipalities are supposed to send the entirety of these revenues to the national government, which then re-allocates a share to the municipality as stated in law. Due to incomplete legislation, which adds to the lack of organizational capacity, and institutional divisions, municipalities have not yet received any portion of these funds. This number of difficulties and burdens has pushed Libyan municipalities in creating a common structure, beyond divisions, to better lobby for structural reforms and increase efficiency at the local level. The National Association of
municipal councils has been registered as non-profit organization in 2016 to represent the local authorities’ interests before the government in Libya.

This unifying effort of Libyan Municipalities, which still needs to overcome some resistances due to some territorial tensions and country instability, would adopt a systematic approach to rolling out resilient service, delivery structures and governance mechanisms to ensure that each part of the future governance system of Libya is developing. Modeling what has been successful in some municipalities is the easiest path towards spreading that success at the local level, which in turn will provide a stable base for ministerial-level reform when it is possible. The present document consists of three sections. The first section pictures the current status of local authorities in Libya from all legal, administrative and socio-economic aspects.

The second section analyzes what should be done at governmental and EU level to select the best environment for local authorities in Libya to be active in determining and implementing of the National Development Cooperation Policy. The third section describes the nature and mandate of the National Association of Libyan Municipal Councils while delineating strategic objectives and priorities of Libyan Municipalities related to National development cooperation policy. Moreover, it presents the road map of the National Association to help municipalities achieving those objectives through the national government and through a better coordinated support provided by the International community.
1. The current situation of local authorities in Libya

1.1. National decentralization policy

The Law No. 59 of 2012 is considered the legal basis for organizing local administration in Libya. The law was enacted in difficult circumstances and was followed by a political division. Nevertheless, it has played a key role in unifying the country at the level of municipalities, organizing their work, harmonising their trends and identifying their demands within a uniform legal context. This law is yet still encountered by great challenges as it has transitional articles that require amendment over time, and the implementation of these articles is supposed to be amended after few years of its issue. As is the case with any positive law that needs to be constantly amended and updated in order to keep up with and follow the reality and to remedy its underlying deficiencies. The law defines the levels of local administration, as stipulated by its third article (the local administration system consists of governorates, municipalities, and districts), whereby the components of local administration in general are concerned with implementing the national Government’s general policies of a local nature through managing public utilities within its jurisdiction and monitoring its employees. However, in reality, local administrations do not take part in shaping national policies which are set predominantly by central institutions, the same institutions that are weak in terms of planning and synergy between policies coupled with the lack of a clear vision of the central Government as a whole, as everyone works in silos.

In light of these conditions, as soon as municipal councils established and begun their work, they have faced many challenges and obstacles. They are required to provide services to citizens without giving them competencies and budgets in a context of the political division that the country faces. In addition, municipal councils need to make a continuous effort to build their individual and institutional capacities. It is necessary to establish local governance structures that can provide services and improve their performance. It is also necessary to establish an effective interaction between citizens and local administrations.

1.2. Evaluating the Role of Libyan Municipalities in National Development Policies and Strategies

Sustainable development seeks to connect the three key factors; economic, social, and environmental sectors. Hence, the concept of local development emerges as a means to achieve sustainable development at the national level, as its importance lies in broadening opportunities for participation in designing plans and pinpointing the local community’s needs. Furthermore, it effectively and efficiently manages local resources, by providing services to community members and protecting the environment in accordance with good governance framework in order to improve the quality of life of these communities.

In the Libyan case and after the events of the Arab Spring in 2011, the Constitution has not been established yet, and there is no regime for governing and managing State revenues which in return, the all Libyans are required to make a greater and sustainable effort. Yet, Within the scope of these efforts and arrangements, local administrations remain a significant part of this process.
1.3. Enhancing the Role of Local Authorities in Development Policies

In order to get closely acquainted with the current situation of local administration, the influential factors on municipal councils’ performance have been extracted from the minutes of the numerous meetings of the municipalities since the beginning of their work in 2014. In addition, relevant information has been gathered from workshops, reports and meetings held by the National Association of Municipal Councils. It should be noted that these factors may be internal, lying within the municipal authority, or external factors.

**Vision, structure, and systems**

Municipalities suffer from weakness in terms of strategy. The lack of a clear vision leads municipalities to efforts and resources’ scatter, as it is seen now. To clarify this point, the municipalities do experience/encounter crises and react to them without a clear strategic thinking enabling them to work according to a carefully thought-out plan to solve problems and move forward towards achieving their goals. Additionally, the municipalities suffer from structure deficiencies, job descriptions, procedures manuals, and a lack of digital management systems. According to the McKinsey framework, the focus must be placed on these challenging factors to influence others.

**Human Resources**

Municipalities suffer from disqualifying human resources and the inability to recruit and attract experts and specialists due to the low financial rewards as well as salaries. Some municipalities went for capacity building in partnership with various actors.

**Digitization, equipment, and services**

Technology helps to catch up with advanced institutions, and this is what Libyan municipalities really lack. The municipalities in Libya have to consider many technological tools such as modern management systems, digital archiving, waste recycling, water desalination, and water treatment systems. It should be noted that there are many challenges facing municipalities, especially those that fall outside their jurisdiction, including:

**Political stability and security**

The consequences of the Conflict and political division in the country as well as poor performance and of security bodies inside the municipalities are all factors that have led to instability and impeded the implementation of municipality decisions. Such factors have also added more loads on municipalities. As a result of that, it has become difficult for municipalities to provided services to their citizens which, in return, led to citizens' dissatisfaction with municipalities’ performances.

**Political will**

There is no doubt that political will is a major and drive element in the success of any government institutions. For instance, there was will to set monthly salaries for new bodies such as the General National Congress and the Parliament. These salaries were agreed upon, approved and paid. However, this will was not available for setting the municipal council members’ salaries which were approved only after years since they started their duties. This
indicates to the lack of support and a short shrift given by the previous executive governmental and the legislative authority in promoting decentralization and supporting local administration.

**The Constitution**
The absence of a Constitution is one of the fundamental reasons for the delay in developing decentralization process. This led to atmosphere of administrative chaos and the obstruction/stop of legislations which is resulted in the absence of other local units (governorates).

**The Legislation**
The Law 59 of 2012 on Local Governance is being ignored by some government institutions. Some of the law 59’s articles contradict with general laws in the country, such as the State Public Property Law, and this contradiction has a negative, direct influence on the performance of municipalities.

**The Budget**
Municipalities are supposed to be funded by the government through the allocated budget and their own revenues. They, however, face financial obstacles such as the absence of technical standards for allocating budgets, the delays in disbursing the budgets on time, and the inability for collecting their local revenues due to the delay in approving the local revenue regulations. The budget is disbursed to the municipality by the central government. This budget is nonetheless limited and the expenditure items are only spent for operational and administrative expenses. For example, a mayor can buy a luxurious sofa, but he cannot develop street infrastructure across the municipality headquarters as it does not fall within his competence. However, in order to provide services to the citizens, some municipalities violate some regulations and this only happens in the exceptional circumstances. In some cases, the emergency budget is disbursed to municipalities, but without clear spending mechanism.

**Centralization of powers and competencies**
Municipal councils do not have adequate power to meet a wide range of citizens' needs. Even the most basic competencies that are considered to be at the core of municipal work (e.g. waste management, cleaning services, gardens, water and sanitation, and municipal guards) are within central authority’ competence and are run by ministries instead of municipal councils. Accordingly, this raises important questions: how can the local authority operate without enough power for managing the local municipal affair? How can the municipal council meet the needs and requirements of its citizens in light of this disastrous centralization?

**The lack of clear national policies**
As a result of the poor planning and the absence of a clear vision adopted by the national government gave a rise to socio-economic imbalances and unequal development for the all Municipalities in Libya.

**Open projects**
Open projects are interventions that have started under the supervision of the central authority and have not been completed by the contracted executing companies for different reasons. It is an issue that reflects low-performance rates, poor planning, management, and administrative weakness of all kinds, but most of all it affects the public opinion of municipalities’ residents. As an example, in one municipality is ongoing a housing units project linked to one of the banks
operating in the country. This project hasn’t been completed for a long time causing the increasing complaints of the citizens who are still waiting for their houses and blame the municipality for this failure.

**Arms proliferation and illegal migration**

After nearly ten years since the February revolution in 2011, Libya has not reached stability yet and the wars have continued for 5 years from 2014 to 2019 and it still casts a dark shadow on municipalities. That era has witnessed the displacement of families, the involvement of young people in fighting within armed militias, the emergence of radical mindsets as well as illegal migration of young Libyans aged between 18-30 years towards Europe. Due to such critical issues that were not tackled and addressed by the government, the solutions of these issues have become a responsibility of the municipalities and thereby they have planned for disarmament and reintegration (DDR) programs as well as establishing incubators and accelerators targeting the young population to contribute to local development.

Municipal councils in Libya are in a difficult situation in light of the recurrent crises caused by wars and conflicts, the Coronavirus epidemic, political division, the deterioration of the security situation, weak budgets, the absence of powers, and the centralization of power. However, some municipalities were strongly present in dealing with these crises with the least amount of resources.

As a result of these exceptional circumstances, municipalities developed plans and programs to provide local services such as maintenance of buildings and roads, equipping administrative headquarters, maintenance of infrastructure, and serving the displaced, as municipalities have succeeded in managing the crisis in their areas according to their available capabilities, even in periods of conflict and displacement or other issues they face.

Even most municipalities today deal professionally with the Corona pandemic with all its requirements.

2. Enhancing the participation of local authorities

2.1. At the national level

The success of a number of municipalities in achieving excellence in delivering some service is seen as a first step towards an advanced stage of local governance. Therefore, it is a joint responsibility between the central government, the municipalities and the people. The most important measures required to open the door for municipal councils to advance in achieving their goals are as follows:

**Municipalities' local revenue collection system**

In order to accomplish their tasks, municipalities need to have the local revenues that will be converted into services and thus enhance citizens' confidence in the local and central institutions. The establishment of a local tax collection system, including the adoption of the local revenue regulation, is an essential step towards effective decentralization.
Transfer of competencies and main missions to the municipalities along with financial prerogatives

The transfer of power and the basic tasks that directly provide services to the citizen, such as the municipal guard, sewage, public cleanliness, waste management, slaughterhouses, cemeteries, public markets, management of state property within the municipality, and public transport, are considered to be at the core of municipal competence in most of the world's nations. Some of these competencies need to be reformed and restructured to avoid overstaffing, which forms a burden on the municipality.

It is fair to claim that some municipalities are unable to perform the mentioned tasks which is an argument often used by advocates of centralization. Instead, municipalities should be supported in practicing their roles. Moreover, the fear of spreading corruption when transferring financial mandates to municipalities is not justified. Libya's ranking in transparency reports is anyway low; therefore, there is nothing to lose. On the contrary, municipalities are to be under direct monitor, evaluation and accountability by local communities. On the other side, citizens cannot practice monitor and accountability for central authorities.

The Recruitment system

In the current situation, most of the staff in municipal councils has been on secondment to the municipality from other sectors. Due to lack of full power, municipalities are unable to directly recruit, which results in the following problems:

- Some sectors would not agree to move their qualified staff, which often results in recruiting requiring disqualified employees.
- The seconded employees often remain loyal to their original employer.
- The municipality cannot deduct their salaries or give them rewards because they receive their salaries from the original employers.
- Usually these employees search for other job opportunities, especially after they have received training from the municipal council.

Therefore, municipalities need to construct a robust recruitment system that will help them achieve their goals.

System of continuous learning, training, and capacity building

The capacity building system for local administration, including mayors, councils’ members, municipality office agents, and employees are considered the main requirements to enhance professionalism and performance at the local level in Libya.

Libyan municipalities require a support to build an effective, competent, ethical, capable, and skilled local administration to meet the expectations, needs and priorities of the population (capacity building in leadership, local governance, strategic policy development, local finance management, procedures management, human resource management, communication,
accountability, etc.). It is worth mentioning that the Association of Municipal Councils has a department specialized in this field and has some projects implemented.

**Technical and material support**

Municipalities need a support in areas that directly affect citizens, thus enhancing their confidence in the municipality, such as: waste collection - green spaces - parks - waste management and public dumps - maintenance and street lighting – adorning the city in general, as well as management systems.

**Participation, inclusiveness, citizen engagement, good governance**

It is about bringing the government closer to local actors to involve the latter in public policy decisions in order to improve the efficiency of the measures taken, while ensuring their ownership and effectiveness. Municipalities' vision, tasks, policies, and activities must be complementary at all levels in terms of organization and administration, from public service delivery to the principles of good governance (participation, representation, fair conduct of elections, inclusion, transparency and accountability).

### 2.2. At the level of the international community and the European Union

In line with Goal 11 of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda “making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”, while emphasizing the importance of urban management and planning, the European Union considers that local authorities in Libya are instrumental in enhancing the quality of basic services delivery, combating inequality, providing job opportunities, and addressing other development challenges.

To translate its principles and goals into reality, the European Union's work in support to local authorities in Libya focuses on 3 main areas:

- Promoting the institutional development of local authorities (supporting this effort through programs that contribute to building the capacities of elected councilors as well as local administration employees to ensure that they benefit from international best practices in urban planning and management).
- Supporting local economic development. The European Union is committed to promoting local economic development and providing job opportunities for young people within their communities. The European Union does fund specific programs aimed at investment in local agriculture or for the creation of small businesses.
- Improving the provision of local services. To support local authorities in providing these services to the population, the European Union is funding the rehabilitation of key infrastructure through a number of community stabilization programs.
Projects entirely dedicated to support Local Governments\textsuperscript{1}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Budget of the project</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal development in the context of mixed migration</td>
<td>€ 10 million</td>
<td>2017-2020</td>
<td>GIZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Pilot Projects in Libya: Strengthening Local Governance by Supporting Selected Municipalities</td>
<td>€ 0.6 million</td>
<td>2018-2020</td>
<td>VNG International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery, stability, and social and economic development in Libya</td>
<td>€ 50 million</td>
<td>2018-2021</td>
<td>AICS, UNDP, UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving social accountability at the local level</td>
<td>€3 million</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>VNG International, DRI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projects with components that support local authorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Budget of the project</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening local capacities for resilience and recovery (Phase 1)</td>
<td>€ 18 million</td>
<td>2017-2020</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: Managing mixed migration flows in Libya through scaling up protection and supporting local, social and economic development</td>
<td>€ 90 million</td>
<td>2017 - In progress</td>
<td>UNDP, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, GIZ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there are many local government coordination forums among international implementers, there is still a lack of coordination and harmonization between them in terms of assistance activities and types of support. Primarily, this adds to the risks of duplication of efforts in terms of assistance, ineffective service delivery, and potential conflicting activities. If capacity building frameworks are not agreed upon, municipalities may be empowered in different ways and varying degrees.

In the context of Libya's governance framework, defining a coordinated approach may provide an opportunity to bring together local and national authorities to contribute to addressing Libya's fragmented governance environment.

\textsuperscript{1} Data published on the website of the European Union Mission in Libya
Defining a coordinated approach is a particular challenge in the context of competing national authorities in Libya. The Government of National Accord and the Transitional Government are showing a growing tendency to disagreement about local government and local authorities’ policy. Given that different municipalities support two different governments, whether by choice or otherwise, there is a risk that the structures, responsibilities, and processes of the municipality will diverge as well, making the task of reunifying the governance framework in Libya more complex after the stability of the national political context.

Support to municipalities can be provided in a way that encourages municipal authorities to engage in inclusive participatory processes. By designing implementation activities to promote participatory and inclusive decision-making, by encouraging municipal associations and inter-municipal cooperation, such approaches can create or enhance sustainable support to local governance, reduce tensions between local communities, and contribute to peace at the local level.

In general, implementers face a two-fold pressure to implement projects; whether under the project obligations and funding cycles, or by donors who seek to demonstrate that they are meeting Libya’s conflict-related needs. However, focusing on delivery may cause implementers to compromise on participatory, time-consuming processes that ensure assistance is provided in a truly holistic manner, this risk perpetuating non-inclusive governance structures or strengthening actors who are already dominant and able to direct aid in their own interest, resulting in actual and perceived inequality and tensions at the local level. Activities must be delivered quickly, particularly in response to conflict or humanitarian needs. However, this must be balanced with an approach that takes into account local tensions. In particular, the amplified polarization at the local level because of the deteriorating national context in 2019 increases the stakes, since rapid and non-inclusive activities can increase local competition for control of municipalities and consequently inter-regional tensions.

Among the many target groups, there is a perception that international activities are driven solely by self-interest. For example, European Union-funded activities in Libya are seen as driven by interest in curbing illegal migration flows, and in some cases, local government assistance is explicitly linked to migration. These perceptions undermine confidence in international actors and international support as a whole, including the internationally supported political process, thus undermining the effectiveness of all international assistance specified for peace promotion.

When local governance support is seen as specifically linked to migration, it can increase the resentment against migrants at the local level, migrants that many Libyans view as illegal recipients of aid.

It would be more profitable to envision strategic local development programs where migrants are naturally understood as a necessary workforce that contributes significantly to the country's development and receives in return the compensation and rights it deserves.
2.3. Recommendations

- Donors and implementers should, through existing coordination mechanisms or alongside them, convene to define a common and consistent approach to engagement with municipal authorities that are consistent with the various national authorities. Specific guidelines will provide clarity for implementers while minimizing the risks of exacerbation of conflict dynamics.

- Through existing coordination mechanisms, implementers should contribute to defining a coordinated framework for building local government capacities and engaging with central authorities. This framework should take into account the legal framework on decentralization as well as the realities of practical governance at the local level.

- Implementers should work to determine a way to ensure and strengthen the capacity of municipal authorities to engage with local communities in a truly inclusive manner.

- Donors and implementers should discuss and plan adaptive approaches to present activities, recognizing that in some cases activities may need to be modified or slowed down in order to be conflict sensitive.

- As the peace and conflict context in Libya changes, particularly at the local level, it is necessary to update the understanding of the context on a regular basis. Implementers should strengthen the capacity of municipalities to implement joint territorial analyses to share the burden of updating, maintaining analysis, and ensuring complementary understanding of the context.

2.4. Financing tools dedicated to decentralized partnership

It is important to identify operational and financial mechanisms that are more effectively able to manage decentralized North-South and South-South cooperation in support of Libyan local governance. Funds that partner local authorities manage directly to implement joint projects and operations will not only make the impact of actions more visible, but also shed light on the responsibilities of each of the parties involved in the resource’s management. One of the current tools provided by the European Union for regional cooperation that deserves to be considered for decentralized partnership with Libyan local authorities is the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC).

The European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) is a European legal instrument designed to facilitate and enhance cooperation across borders and across countries and territories through the creation of a cooperation group with legal personality. European partners supporting the Nicosia Initiative (NI), a cooperation platform currently working with Libyan local authorities that was established by the European Committee of the Regions (COR) in 2016, can create a stable cooperation framework by establishing an European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) with the aim of strengthening cooperation and partnership from bottom-up and sustainable partnership between Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) in the European Union, Member States (MS) participating in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and other regional stakeholders.
By virtue of its Statute Law, the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) may consist of members of at least two-member states of the European Union and one or more countries outside the European Union from countries in proximity of at least one of those member states. The third country is eligible to join if it shares a common land border with the member state or if it is eligible under a joint maritime program or a cross-border or other transnational program under the European Regional Cooperation Objective (Libya is eligible to the CBC-Med program).

In order for a third country to be able to participate in an EGTC, it needs to have adopted appropriate national legislation such as the EGTC provisions as a precondition. Alternatively, Libya would be required to have signed specific agreements with the concerned member state hosting the EGTC in order to enable their local and regional authorities to participate in the EGTC’s composition. The cooperation platform established by an EGTC is opportune for long-term strategic developments, such as management of public services and programs management, but it can be established also to manage a specific action or project (uni-functional task) or it may function as a cooperation platform with several missions/tasks (multi-functional objective). An EGTC can be formed with Libyan partners on the basis of a goal similar to the one which supports the existing Nicosia Initiative, which broadly aims at improving the living conditions of Libyan citizens by strengthening administrative capacity of Libyan municipalities in providing public services.

As a legal entity, the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) is entitled to receive its own budget. Whether contributing partners have sufficient financial capacity to contribute or not to the budget of the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), it is not mandatory for all members to participate financially. The contribution of each member can be determined on the basis of many factors. The EGTC approves an annual budget consisting of operating costs and, if necessary, operational costs. The administration will be subject to financial control rules and procedures in line with international auditing standards and rules applicable in the host country.

3. Municipalities and NMCA’s expected measures to enhance the effective participation of Local authorities

3.1. The critical political and institutional role of the NMCA

Libyan municipalities went through their first electoral experience at the beginning of 2014. This electoral experience was relatively successful. As soon as the municipalities began their work and continued communication with each other through official meetings and consultations, they realized the need to establish a representative body which would be independent from the central government control. The aim of such a body was to raise and unify the voice of municipalities, to work on expanding and upgrading their services in a way to ensure community development. Moreover, it would contribute in harmonizing the legislation and regulations in force in the municipalities, as well as coordinating and documenting
cooperation between municipalities in order to support increasing productive interaction in various aspects of municipal activities. Another goal was to support cooperation between National and local authorities, also, between local authorities and international bodies and organizations operating in support of local governance as well as opening channels of contacts and exchange between municipalities and their local communities, through spreading awareness on municipal activities.

One of the first meetings was held on the first of October 2014, hosted by the municipality of Sabratha, which brought together 44 municipalities. The numerous meetings and attempts to form this body continued in a context of political crisis and armed conflict, which resulted in the flourishing of several municipalities’ representative associations. On July 29, 2017, another meeting was held in the municipality of Sabratha where the problem of multiple bodies representing the municipalities was addressed. At that meeting it was agreed to unify all of them under the National Municipal Councils Association (NMCA). The president, the rapporteur and the general secretariat were elected in subsequent meetings. Works to complement the entitlements and the amendments related to the Association’s Statute in terms of criteria for holding positions, participation and membership policies will continue until the second round of local elections is completed.

3.2. Functions of the NMCA

- The main goal of the Association's activities is to defend the interests of municipalities and represent them before Parliament, Government, public administration institutions, and the international community;
- Being present through its representatives in all institutions that make decisions affecting the interests of local governments;
- Providing consultation and assistance to municipalities, either directly or upon agreements;
- Encouraging research and in-depth study of problems related to municipalities and directing their capabilities towards anticipating new trends, changes and crises in any issue related to local administration;
- Supporting initiatives aimed at introducing local institutions, spreading civil culture, and increasing citizen participation in public life;
- Providing a platform for sharing best practices and knowledge;
- Facilitating training and capacity building activities;
- Providing advice to members on all relevant topics related to local policy issues;
- Collecting and disseminating best practices with a focus on projects that promote efficiency, energy savings, innovation, and the active participation of citizens;
- Promoting and coordinating the activities of member municipalities in the field of international relations and cooperation.
Mayors are not elected to establish bodies for inter-municipal cooperation, and citizens do not seek the creation of additional complex institutions. Nonetheless, mayors and citizens are keen to see more investment in infrastructure and access to better or new public services. They want a more efficient waste collection system, accessible schools, and modern sports facilities. They want to attract private investors and create new jobs and opportunities.

In any country, there are municipal services that many municipalities do not provide even though they are competent to do so, or that they provide but ineffectively. Insufficient financial resources or insufficient capacities are the frequently cited reasons for poor service delivery. Additionally, many municipalities are too small to interest private investors. Through inter-municipal cooperation, any municipality that faces these types of challenges can join forces with other municipalities.

The NMCA’s role in supporting inter-municipal cooperation can be very important, even if its expertise is generally limited. Municipalities have more confidence in the Association because it represents their interests and can rely on best practices. The Association has its own channels of communication with the central government, the parliament, and the networks of supporters. The Association’s support is also usually less expensive than using private consultants.

The Association could support the municipalities by:

i. Conducting training courses on inter-municipal cooperation;
ii. Organizing communication between practitioners of inter-municipal cooperation;
iii. Encouraging the most advanced municipalities to become pioneers and promoting the idea of inter-municipal cooperation with other municipalities;
iv. Advocating for inter-municipal cooperation through seminars and conferences;
v. Accrediting inter-municipal cooperation experts who are able to assist municipalities, especially in providing guidance for implementing feasibility studies and establishing the appropriate legal framework;
vi. Providing legal, financial, administrative, and technical advice;
vii. Influencing the media and drawing their attention to the importance of cooperation dynamics between municipalities and to the successful experiences of this cooperation.
3.2.1. SWOT Analysis of the NMCA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The political will and engagement.</td>
<td>- Lack of funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Availability of experts who are able to work</td>
<td>- Weak organizational structure and systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Existence of shared values and a participatory management style</td>
<td>- Strategy still under development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Political neutrality.</td>
<td>- Not enough members among Eastern municipalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Good relationships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Association is working to integrate all the Municipalities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Existence of a sound expertise on Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The political vacuum and the absence of the central government’s role in support and development.</td>
<td>- The political vacuum threatens the survival of municipalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The international trend towards supporting local administrations, also after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.</td>
<td>- Political division prevents some municipalities from joining the Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relative stability, generalized and lasting cease fire, and established dialogue</td>
<td>- The issuance of decisions that may hinder the work of the Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Need to build municipalities’ capacities and systems in a Post-Conflict context.</td>
<td>- The negative role of some members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Delayed economic reform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Low awareness of some municipal councils about the role of the Association.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3. Capacity building

The development of effective and democratic local government is a process that requires time and perseverant leadership at multiple levels of organizations. In this process, the National Municipal Councils Association, by virtue of its central representative position and supporting functions, may play an important role in enhancing municipal performance and participatory local development, building on public accountability and social capital present in local communities. However, this is only possible ideally if the National Municipal Councils Association is operating effectively and independently in a participatory manner, and can do so in an environment that generally supports its role as the lever of self-directed local development.

Nowadays, the concept of capacity building has become comprehensive. The focus is not only on developing the capabilities of individuals, but also on strengthening the capacities of institutions to perform, in order to be able to achieve a set of common goals. The environment in which enterprises operate is also becoming increasingly important. Human resources, skills, the institutional set-up, the organizational culture, as well as the various aspirations and
strategies, but also political considerations are all interrelated elements that must be understood to assess capacity needs and define their development processes. This fully applies to Libyan municipalities and their Association, for which capacity development is a permanent need and a final end in itself. Increasing urbanization, changing climate and its impacts, enhanced decentralization of powers, changing people's requirements and evoliving, and even changing social and economic developments, push Libyan municipalities and their Association to periodically review their capacities.

In this context and on the basis of these considerations, the National Municipal Councils Association requires organizational and advocacy capacities as well as professional skills in the areas of leadership ability, administrative ability and technical ability to provide higher quality services such as: strengthening policy research and the role of advocacy in enhancing the financial sustainability of local governments; improving services for members of the National Municipal Councils Association; and strengthening local governance by expanding the scope of best practices at the local level.

**Leadership ability** includes formulating and disseminating an authentic political vision and mission, based on knowledge, experience and close relationship with members; Collaboration with relevant stakeholders and their relationship with them, including national civil society organizations for policymakers, the private sector, development partners, etc.; inspiring and motivating relevant stakeholders and developing a strong reputation as a reliable and knowledgeable partner.

**Administrative capacity** includes supporting the Association's governing structures, managing and strengthening its staff and developing its standards of operations.

**Technical skills** include training the Association’s staff on policy and policy frameworks (understanding how the policy system works and how policies are developed); Understanding policy cycles (learning about relevant policy cycles at the local and national levels in order to understand when advocacy activities need to be organized to have an impact);

**Strategic partnerships**: The Association must be aware of the relevant stakeholders in the field and know their role and location; knowing the stakeholders who may support (allies) or oppose (enemies); Motivating and inspiring potential allies to support specific advocacy activities. As far as the capacity building strategy is concerned, the Association will look closely at the experience of ten Libyan municipalities and universities that have already been operating for three years under the Nicosia Initiative to create a decentralized continuous learning system for local administrators and elected representatives. This strategy includes an approach developed based on a joint needs’ assessment of municipalities and universities to address the day-to-day problems of local administrations in Libya. In addition, the strategy includes involving Libyan universities in providing training, and in giving to local officials continuous and decentralized opportunities to expand their capabilities according to a changing environment and new requirements from local communities. The main component of this approach is the establishment of a community of practices to promote peer-to-peer learning and the exchange
of knowledge and experiences between Libyan municipalities on the one hand, and between them and their homologues in the Euro-Mediterranean region, on the other.

### 3.4. Goals of Libyan Municipalities and of the National Municipal Councils Association

Municipalities aspire achieving the following goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing the legal and political structure for local units</td>
<td>Adoption of a complete political, administrative and financial decentralized governance structure in the Constitution</td>
<td>- The Association organizes consultative meetings to discuss the current draft constitution and review other constitutions regarding the local government structure in the country. Prepare structured proposals for effective decentralization based on the experiences of municipalities in the past years. - Reach a consensus of municipalities in all regions of the country on a comprehensive decentralized system that guarantees the fair distribution of powers and resources through a series of workshops organized by the Association. The Association organizes advocacy campaigns to encourage citizens to participate in the constitutional referendum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing the legal framework in order to improve the ability of local governments to deliver services efficiently</td>
<td>- Review local government policies and relevant laws and regulations and support the implementation of the competencies that the law attributes to local administration units. - Utilise the general election window to influence discussion on enhancing local government capacity to deliver services - Improve service delivery through</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Ensure adequate financial resources for local governments | Establish a local tax collection system | - Participate in reforming the Financial revenues collection system  
- Ensure the collection of duties, revenues, royalties and rents in accordance with Articles 49-51 of the Local Government Law No. 59 of 2012. |
| Improve mechanisms for allocating the central government’s resources | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Strengthening the role of local governments in managing public affairs | Ensure the full implementation of the powers attributed to local governments by the law. | Identify and address the factors that impede municipalities’ full implementation of the current responsibilities, while reviewing the relevant laws and regulations.  
Empower local governments to implement the powers attributed by Law 59 of 2012 in the process of transferring additional priority functions (Municipal Guard - General Services Company - Water and Sanitation) to municipalities with related adequate financial mandates.  
The Association establishes committees of member municipalities, which, in coordination with the central government, look into delegating powers and making amendments based |

| | | |
| Ensure the participation of Local authorities in developing national policies | on the principle of Subsidiarity.
- Establish a timetable for expanding the functions carried out by the municipalities (forming a committee composed of: The Supreme Committee for the Transfer of Functions - the Association of Municipal Councils - the High Council for Local Administration) |

| Ensure the provision of adequate human, financial and technical resources to implement the transferred powers and competencies | The recognition of municipalities as the main actor in the national development process (economic - social - sustainable), through advocacy campaigns with the concerned authorities
- Affirming the Association role as the voice of the municipalities, by enhancing the transparency of its systems and procedures and setting standards for holding its leadership positions.
- Advocate for the allocation of a percentage of the Central Government’s revenues to municipalities that is congruent with the transferred powers.
- Establishing models of organizational structures for local governments and enabling municipalities to appoint suitable employees in the areas they deem important to provide better services.
- Provide municipalities with job classification and responsibility centers at the municipal level.
- Provide-procedural and technical support to the municipalities and to the Association. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achieve effective and innovative management to provide high quality standard services at the local level</td>
<td>Capacity development for local units to provide services</td>
<td>- Conduct a study to determine the various taxes and royalties and determine their quantity based on regions' peculiarities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote integrated local and national development planning that achieves citizen's well-being</td>
<td>- Develop a national strategy to empower and support the capacities of municipalities based on a participatory approach that considers their needs. &lt;br&gt; - Establish appropriate mechanisms for sustainable financing of capacity development activities for effective decentralization and local governance, taking into account the specificities of municipalities. &lt;br&gt; - Implement a decentralized system of continuous learning for local officials and elected representatives based on a curriculum developed jointly with Libyan universities (Nicosia Initiative practice). &lt;br&gt; - Ensure adequate and continuous coordination to develop the capacities of local authorities by stakeholders in various fields with the National Municipal Councils Association.</td>
<td>- Establish legal frameworks for local development planning. &lt;br&gt; - Create a systemic framework, include participatory diagnostic, and set standards for development planning. &lt;br&gt; - Create an effective local monitoring and evaluation system for municipalities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Achieve a culture of governance based on innovative and sustainable policies and practices based on the principles of good governance (transparency, accountability and participation) to enhance local democracy.

- Achieve better representation at the local level by closely supervising the efficiency of the electoral system, enhancing the participation of women and youth, and encouraging the participation of vulnerable groups.
- Enhance transparency and community participation by providing the necessary mechanisms to access relevant information and administrative documents.
- Develop technical tools, information and communication technologies, and draw a comprehensive digital transformation plan that reduces administrative paperwork procedures and enhances efficiency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage and facilitate local economic initiatives to promote equitable economic development</td>
<td>Lay down local economic development strategies in the regions, including specific programs and action plans</td>
<td>- Through the Community of Practices, identifying strategic development priorities for group of territories with similar specificities and potential especially linked to the development of green and circular economy. Fostering match-making with potential competence partners;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Achieve local economic development and enhancing Libyan economic diversification to provide job opportunities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under the supervision of the Association -Harnessing decentralized cooperation programs based on projects that have an impact on the development of municipalities and the well-being of local communities. -Establish coordination and monitoring mechanisms at the level of the Association members in order to increase the efficiency and impact of local economic investments. -Seek technical assistance to establish business accelerators, which will link municipalities and strengthen partnership and cooperation with the private sector, investors, academia, donors, and partner NGOs. And, obviously, European and Mediterranean municipalities and local authorities (through the European Committee of the Regions, among others) as well as African local governments (through United Cities and Local Governments of Africa). -Adopt inclusive immigration policies in local economic development, in line with Libya's history of labor migration (there were 2.5 million migrant workers working in Libya prior to 2011).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Enhance international cooperation and build effective partnerships | Providing an appropriate environment for decentralized partnership and cooperation | - Establishing the legal framework for decentralized cooperation.  
- Building the necessary institutional framework for implementation, follow-up and data collection.  
- Provide the necessary support for decentralized cooperation |
| | Direct international cooperation processes away from specific regional interests and towards greater influence on local governance performance and local communities’ welfare | - Create a database for all actors and projects that focus on local governance in Libya, the related resources allocated and their geographical and sectoral distribution.  
- Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms based on key performance indicators, to measure the effectiveness of the aid provided and suggest adjustments if needed  
- Using decentralized cooperation programs and diversifying them as a strategic tool to influence local development. |
| | Further development of the Association's decentralized partnership with homologue institutions and local actors from Europe, the MENA region and UCLG-Africa, to share practices, experiences and actively participate in defining future common interest policies in the Mediterranean. | - Use the practice communities as a platform for communication with homologue international institutions and actors in the field of cooperation to better coordinate their activities towards Libyan local governance and improve the impact of any project for the benefit of all, and mostly for those who are more marginalized.  
- Participating in relevant international seminars and conferences where regional policies related to green economy, climate change and innovative strategies for |
3.5. Action Plan of the NMCA

There is a need to vigorously ensure the implementation of the decentralization reform in order to achieve the vision of local governance and to push towards the inclusion of decentralization governance in the Libyan Constitution.

The goal of the road map is to boost the decentralization process with the aim of strengthening municipal councils that will improve public service delivery. The strengthening of municipalities’ service delivery is the core of the road map.

The road map focuses on key strategic areas that directly relate to decentralization’s objectives and it seeks to build on the accomplished gains and deals with the remaining gaps in each area.

The road map serves as a rallying point for all support interventions and a tool for creating a shared understanding about implementation of activities around decentralization in Libya.

3.5.1. NMCA’s Action Plan to achieve its strategic goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of the Association in the Constitution as a non-profit Organization for legal entities (municipalities) to protect and promote their common interests.</td>
<td>- Advocate with the concerned authorities through ad hoc meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the role of the association among municipalities as a neutral entity and strengthening the Association's relationship with the national Government’s institutions.</td>
<td>- Conducting annual training courses for municipalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Conducting a national dialogue every three months in the three main regions of Libya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Involving representatives of the municipalities in the external activities of the association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Conducting an annual dialogue with a number of service ministries to develop municipal plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Strengthening the role of the association as the voice of the municipalities by enhancing the transparency of its systems and procedures and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Finding sustainable sources of income for the Association. | by setting standards for holding its leadership positions.  
- Regularly advocate with the concerned authorities.  
- Collecting municipal membership fees within 3 months.  
- Cooperating with international organizations to support the National Association.  
- Creating an investment department to sustain the Association's sources of income.  
- Attracting local and international technical expertise in areas related to local governance.  
- Updating the training needs of the municipalities regularly.  
- Developing trainings agenda, time frame and venue.  
- Conducting Feasibility study concerning planned training costs.  
- Identifying the target employees to be engaged in the training.  
- Holding seminars on the importance of citizens’ participation in decision-making (it is proposed to hold 15 seminars in 15 municipalities during the first year).  
- Designing Measures to monitor and evaluate the performance of municipalities, as well as to support them for improvement over time.  
- Supporting municipalities to establish clear mechanisms to organize the administrative tasks of the mayor and members of municipal councils, based on the approved organizational structure.  
- Supporting its members to develop and disseminate a clear vision and mission, and to prepare and adopt an action strategy with community participation.  
- Pressuring the Ministry of Local Government to improve the employment policies of the municipalities, especially with regard to putting job descriptions for all jobs and adopting transparent principles and values of integrity for employment.  

| Supporting municipal councils in building their capacities and investing in knowledge, education, training, and Peer Learning |  

---
Supporting Local democracy.

- Holding seminars on the importance of citizens’ engagement and participation in decision-making (30 seminars are proposed to be held in 30 municipalities during the first year).
- Supporting municipalities in reforming their relationship with the public by operating a "Shura Council" and organizing periodic meetings with the mayor of the municipality and councils to animate municipal meetings and expand citizen participation.
- Supporting the preparation of a "citizen's budget", which is a means of informing citizens about municipal budgets in an easy way which is concise, understandable and accessible to ordinary citizens. As a result, citizens will have the opportunity to participate in decision-making and social accountability, as well as sharing responsibilities with municipalities and learn about their status.
- Placing a Pressure on the central government to launch a direct focused public awareness campaigns about the rights and responsibilities of citizens towards the municipalities’ dues, especially paying taxes and the citizens' right to hold municipalities accountable. Other rights include access to information, participation in planning, setting priorities and solving problems;
- Enhancing the role of civil society organizations in spreading the culture of community accountability and its importance in improving the quality of municipal services and their impact on the development process.

Reviewing and developing legislation and working to achieve effective local governance.

- Conducting workshops that involve experts to review and adapt the law to address concrete problems
- Preparing a white paper (policies) to develop solutions to the obstacles facing the implementation of decentralization
- Supporting the modernization and development of municipal financial and administrative laws and regulations; Work closely with the government and the Ministry of Finance to expedite the preparation and development of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developing an effective and easy cooperation mechanism with international organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Conducting studies on similar cases from neighboring countries and make study visits and exchange experiences within 6 months.  
- Prepare a development proposal that go in line with Libyan situation.  
- Submitting the proposal to the General Assembly of the Association for review and approval.  
- Enhancing the participation of municipalities and other stakeholders in monitoring and evaluating the SDGs at the national level.  
- Supporting municipalities in collecting, monitoring and evaluating data at the local level.  
- Collecting, monitoring and analyzing data at the local level.  
- Developing a set of local performance indicators for the regions.  
- Participating in monitoring and evaluating sustainable development achievements. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advocacy and representation of municipalities before the central authorities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - The first and second months: Training 5 working groups on advocacy.  
- The third and fourth months: launching an advocacy campaign concerning the implementation of Law 59 of 2012. |
Proposed Way forward for Road map implementation

Several activities need to be undertaken to ensure effective implementation of the road map:

✓ Adopt a road map through formal and clear procedures.
✓ Distribute and publicize the road map widely for reform by December, 2020. It is important to have both Arabic and English versions.
✓ Use the roadmap to highlight the significance of decentralization as a way of strengthening municipal councils in achieving sustainable development goals at local level in order to increase communities’ welfare.
✓ Share the results of consultation and the roadmap with all concerned authorities at the governmental and legislative level.
✓ Develop an Implementation Plan of the road map to act as an inter-institutional coordination mechanism
✓ Evaluate what is already being supported and organize a roundtable discussion with concerned authorities at local and central level and other interested development partners to gain support for the implementation of the key areas of the roadmap.

3.6. Methodology

The participatory approach is appropriate for the Libyan context, especially at this stage. Participatory process and associated methodologies provide a useful ground for expressing local needs and aspirations and defining development actions, taking into account the political division in the country.

During the consultation process, actions have been taken by various stakeholders in order to create a common language, identify actual problems and needs, collect information, ensure political commitment and support, prioritize interventions, determine strategies and potential projects.

For the sake of identifying the vision and the priorities of local authorities, face-to-face and virtual workshops have been held with municipal councils and questionnaires have been distributed to them. All information included in the road map-based data obtained from data-collection procedures mentioned above.

Furthermore, meetings have been also held with the Minister of Local Governance, the Director of the Department of Provincial and Municipal Affairs in the Ministry, the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Local Administration, the Supreme Committee for Transfer of Functions, the International Cooperation Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the head of the Local Governance Committee in the House of Representatives.

Main data from previous or on-going funded projects by sponsors have been also collected, compiled and analysed according to sectors and thematic areas of intervention, based on the information provided by the concerned national ministries and those made available by International cooperation actors and the European Union.
Conclusions

The adoption of the 2013 EC Communication “Empowering Local Authorities in Partner Countries for Enhancing governance and more Effective Development Outcomes” represents a real shift in the recognition of local authorities as effective actors in the country by the EU Commission. The institution of New Neighboring Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) provides Local authorities and their associations with the opportunity to define the most appropriate support that the EU can provide them to increase the efficiency of local governance both in terms of community welfare and local sustainable development.

The need for a participatory decision-making process based on adapting development strategies for local needs makes it necessary to see and perceive development from a local perspective. Achievement of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) would be only done in Libya through a full support to local authorities, independent local bodies and non-profit organizations. That is, local governance processes, where public institutions, civil society and citizens can build close relationships, are relevant to provide services in many sectors as well as ensuring sustainability and effectiveness of local development strategies. Nevertheless, Libyan municipalities do not often participate in consultations on national strategies or sectors’ policies. They are not also given the mandate or the institutional authority and financial capacity to design and implement local development such as social services, local infrastructure, local economic development initiatives, and natural resource management.

The local government system in Libya is regarded a suitable system to deal with the crises that the country is experiencing. However, this approach of management requires financial and human resources to function properly. It also needs effective development, training plans and adequate efforts to enhance the concept of local governance and transfer the administrative and financial power to the municipalities to develop their areas. Finally, it requires putting an end to the overlapping of power between municipalities and ministries.

Municipalities nowadays encounter many challenges, most of which are related to citizens’ everyday life; including a shortage of cooking gas, frequent power cuts, and insufficient drinking water. Indeed, the country has long been going through a critical security crisis that has negatively affected citizens. In such situation, the municipalities as a unified body can play a key role towards stabilization Libya.

The EU Neighborhood Development and International Cooperation Tool (NDICI) is considered an opportunity to support these local institutions to contribute to the development of decentralization in the country and efficiently provide local public services. From this perspective, local and international partner governments can help Libyan partners to the joint cooperation in various fields, minimize their communities and municipalities’ issues and ensure the success of decentralization processes. Accordingly, decentralized cooperation focuses on supporting institutions more than supporting projects. It also concentrates on the sustainability of cooperation for accomplishing common interests. The modern visions of the connection between development and security have shaped a new role for cities in conflict resolution. From this view, development generates security and vice versa and development mainly begins with good governance which would turn into a major goal of national policies.
The Libyan National Municipal Councils Association can enhance the role of Libyan city diplomacy in preventing or reducing the conflict whether it is on-going conflict or post-conflict activities in the case of development support, top-down initiatives do not always result in the best outcomes and thereby central governments should play a facilitative rather than directive role. Certainly, the Libyan National Association of Municipal Councils is highly interested to have partnership agreements between its members and their counterparts in the Euro-Mediterranean region. This will definitely enhance the political impact of Libyan cities on local economic development that see the green circular economy, digitalization and smart cities, and diversifying opportunities in the market as the most vulnerable components of society.

In the Libyan context, ending the political and administrative division between East, West, and South is significant to establish a foundation for strengthening effective local governance in the country and help the country to eliminate this difficult transitional stage. EU support for NMCA can lead this process from the local level, provided that it is awarded a full recognition at the national and local level, as well as adequate means to be independent and productive with the best qualified human resources. The tasks, as previously mentioned in this document, are manifold and complex and are mainly concerned with linking the local communities to their nearest level of management, and establish a framework for multi-level collaborative governance. In many occasions, it has been emphasized that the main drivers of economic development and prosperity in society are cities. This is neither surprising nor recent phenomenon. However, for a city to be powerful and influential, the elected officials have to strive to create a suitable environment for living, working, and mutual interaction.

Thomas Jefferson rightly affirmed that “the government closest to the people serves the people best.” The EU NDICI support to the full empowerment of Libyan municipalities and their National association, also through facilitating Decentralized partnership of homologues institutions in the euro-Mediterranean area, will further enable the space to exercise responsible participation. This is a combination of collective rights, duties, accountability and social justice: the best way to minimize risks of future tensions and conflict and favor widespread sustainable local development not only in Libya but also regionally.