

Update no 25 Humanitarian Situation in Libya and the Neighbouring Countries

18 May 2011

LIBYA

Reports of fuel scarcity and high fuel prices continue in the west of Libya. Fuel scarcity has also been reported in Benghazi due to problems in the supply chain. Reports indicate that the black market prices of fuel can be as much as fifty times higher than the official price. Residents in Tripoli are queuing for petrol for days. Insecurity, cash shortages, departure of migrants and the general situation continue to cripple economic activity in Libya.

Over the past two days, rebels were reported to have advanced further west and south of Misurata, approaching the eastern end of Zlitan. Heavy fighting continues in other contested areas of the country, including the Nafusa mountains, with the protection of civilians from the conflict remains the most pressing humanitarian need. The situation in locations where fighting is ongoing is dire and shortages of medical supplies and personnel are critical.

UNHCR is leading the Protection and Shelter/NFI clusters in Libya. It is also co-leading with IOM, the Multi-Sector Group. Four Protection Cluster meetings have been held thus far in Benghazi with the first Shelter/NFI Cluster meeting scheduled for 23 May.

With the withdrawal of all UN staff from Tripoli, UNHCR international presence is limited to Benghazi and Tobruk, although life saving activities for the estimated 11,000 refugees and asylum seekers stranded in Tripoli continue through national staff and local partners. UNHCR staff and armoured vehicles will facilitate the upcoming return of the Humanitarian Coordinator to Tripoli. In Benghazi UNHCR is providing assistance to the Libyan Committee for Humanitarian Relief and local NGOs to support IDP registration and management. Particular emphasis is being placed on verifying existing data for those IDPs who had fled from Adjabia. UNHCR signed a framework agreement with LCHR in April. UNHCR also visited two IDP settlements and distributed NFIs.

Of the 11,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers in Libya prior to the conflict, over 1,400 have now been made their way to neighbouring countries. This includes 700 to Tunisia, 350 to Italy, 77 to Malta and 38 to Egypt. The total number of persons of concern to UNHCR from conflict affected countries remaining inside Libya is estimated to be some 50,000, as many did not have the opportunity, or see the reason, to access UNHCR.

TUNISIA

Dehiba, Remada (Tataouine Governorate)

Some 55,000 Libyan refugees have fled to Tunisia through this crossing. The majority are staying with host families who reside in one of the poorest areas of Tunisia. On-going fighting between Government and opposition fighters for control of the Deheba-Wazzim border point continues. The border point currently remains under the control of the opposition forces. Over the past few days, heavy shelling was reported on the Libyan side of the Dehiba border and Grad missiles landed only 500m from the border. Libyan refugees report that others are expected to cross at Dehiba when conditions permit.

60
YEARS



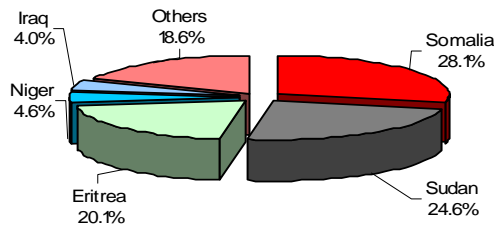
1,279 Libyan refugees are hosted in camps in Tataouine governorate, including 579 people in the UAE camp in Dehiba and another 700 in Remada camp. UNHCR is expanding the camp in Remada to host 10,000 persons.

An inter-agency mission led by UNHCR met with the authorities from Medenine and Ghabes governorates to identify relevant actors to be involved in the distribution of humanitarian assistance to Libyan refugees. According to the Tunisian authorities, some 10,430 people (1,490 families) are hosted by the local community in Medenine governorate and another 4,746 (678 families) with the local community in Ghabes governorate. UNHCR and partners have started the distribution of NFIs, food and financial assistance to families in need.

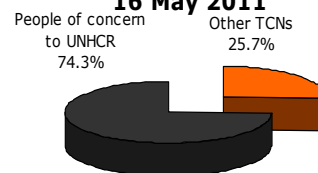
Djerba, Ras Jdir (Medenine Governorate)

On 16 May, 3,352 persons crossed the border to Tunisia through Ras Jdir border point, including 3,052 Libyans. The camp population in Ras Jdir is now 4,787, including 591 people in the IFRC camp, 1,057 in the UAE camp and another 3,139 in Shousha camp. Some 3,806 are persons of concern to UNHCR, including (969) from Eritrea, (169) from Ethiopia, (232) from Iraq, (173) from Ivory Coast, (1,351) from Somalia and (912) from Sudan.

**Ras Jdir Camp Population -
16 May 2011
Main Nationalities**



**Ras Jdir Camp Population
16 May 2011**



Libyan refugees have reported to UNHCR that an increasing number of Libyans are waiting for an opportunity to leave Tripoli due to intensified NATO bombing, growing insecurity, including kidnapping and assaults of women and girls and forced recruitment. Recent arrivals originate from Zawia, Sebrata, Ajilat and Sorman. According to local relief organizations, there are some 2,700 Libyan refugees in Djerba hosted by the local community.

Camp population

	Ras Jdir area
IFRC camp	591
UAE camp	1,057
Shousha camp	3,139
Total	4,787

	Southern Tataouine Governorate
Remada camp	700
Deheba UAE camp	579
Total	1,279



Recent arrivals Remada Camp/Caux/UNHCR



A counselling session with the Eritrean community in Saloum @UNHCR/M.Fawe

EGYPT

Saloum Border Crossing

The number of people stranded at the Saloum border area stands now at 1,044 persons, out of which 648 (475 cases) are registered with UNHCR (375 Sudanese, 105 Eritreans, 73 Ethiopians, 73 Somalis among others). Of these some 210 have been processed for resettlement. Some 655 Palestinians have also been supported by UNHCR. The two rub-halls to relocate women and children from the Departures Hall were finalised yesterday with the long awaited transfer due to start today. Counselling sessions with the various refugee groups were held today, to explain the modalities of the transfer. The third rub-hall will be erected this week, to accommodate TCNs expected by boat in the coming days from Misrata. UNHCR is providing over 1,000 cold meals for dinner and milk for breakfast. UNHCR has been providing plastic sheets, blankets, mats, jerry cans, clothes and shoes to vulnerable persons.

Movements Across the Mediterranean

The total number of new arrivals since mid-January has increased to some 37,111 people. Among them are 24,138 Tunisians and 12,973 other nationalities, including 827 Nigeriens, 789 Eritreans, 610 Ivorians, 412 Somalis, 425 Ghanaians. Of this number 14,000 have departed from Libya.

Since the beginning of the crisis, there have been several reports of boats sinking. Based on accounts from survivors and family members, more than 1,200 people remain unaccounted for. UNHCR repeats its call to all vessels on the Mediterranean to consider all boats departing Libya to be in need of assistance. UNHCR has raised with NATO the urgent need for a proactive, preventive strategy to save lives in the Mediterranean. We continue to call for enhanced coordination and communication between NATO vessels and national coast guards to ensure that the many boats in poor condition, crowded with desperate people fleeing from Libya, can be detected and assisted before they get into distress and lives are threatened.



An Italian coastguard vessel, carrying 142 people rescued at sea after fleeing Tripoli, prepares to dock at Lampedusa harbour. /F. Noy

Humanitarian Evacuation

UNHCR contributed to the humanitarian evacuation by providing over 150 flights which moved some 30,000 persons. The cost of the UNHCR contribution to the airlift was just over USD 18 million. In the critical month of March, UNHCR contributed more flights to support the evacuation than any other agency. In addition UNHCR hosted the Humanitarian Evacuation Cell which included staff from IOM, UNHCR and WFP. The decisive international response prevented a humanitarian disaster and facilitated Tunisia and Egypt to keep their borders open. This generous approach by both Governments has proved particularly important given the increasingly protracted nature of the conflict. Likewise the composition of those fleeing Libya is changing from TCNs to be dominated by Libyans and persons of direct concern to UNHCR.

Resource Mobilization

The revised Regional Inter-Agency Flash Appeal for the Libyan Crisis was launched on 18 May by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ms. Valerie Amos, in Geneva. Requirements now amount to USD 407.8 million to provide humanitarian assistance to 1.6 million people within Libya, and 500,000 outside Libya for the period March-September 2011.

UNHCR's requirements for the Libya situation have been revised to USD 77,659,397. So far, UNHCR has received contributions in the amount of USD 47,731,659. Some 39% of the Appeal remains unfunded. Without additional contributions, a critical shortfall of funding for UNHCR's operations in Libya and neighbouring countries is likely to affect vital humanitarian assistance.

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