

# Southern Tunisia Dehiba/Remada UNHCR Update # 5



## Overview

Located in Tunisia’s southern governorate in Tataouine and close to Libya’s Western Mountains regions, Dehiba is one of the two official border points between Tunisia and Libya. Through this point, according to the Tunisian authorities, more than 30,000 Libyan refugees who originate mainly from the Western Mountains region in Libya crossed into Tunisia since the 6th of April, citing the ongoing violence and intensified fighting in their regions as the cause for their departure.

In addition, Tunisia continues to receive and assist thousands of migrant workers and refugees through Ras Ajdir border point, with the support of the UN agencies and humanitarian NGOs. As of 2 May, 326,931 persons have arrived to Tunisia, including 31,674 Tunisians, 119,254 Libyans and 176,003 nationals of other countries.

The majority of the Libyan refugees have crossed into Tunisia through unofficial mountains routes around Dehiba area. Upon entry into Tunisian territory, they stamp their documents in order to legalize their stay in the country.

It is noticed that when Dehiba crossing point is under the control of the opposition forces, Libyans cross through the official border.

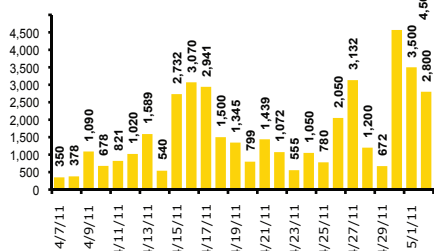
In consultation with the Tunisian authorities, on 11 April UNHCR established a camp in Remada town, 47 km north west of Dehiba, to provide shelter and assistance to the Libyan refugees. The camp, set up in a football field designated by the authorities, was initially to receive up to 1,000 people. The camp is being expanded to provide shelter to 10,000 potential new arrivals. Basic services (water, sanitation, food and protection) are available in the camp. Moreover, the UAE Red Crescent set up another camp at Dehiba town to provide shelter, food, water and health services to up to 2,000 people.

However, the majority of Libyan refugees is still being hosted by the local community in Dehiba, Remada and Tataouine areas. Youth centres, public buildings and Tunisian homes have opened their doors to the Libyan families, providing them with shelter and assistance. It is estimated that over 30,000 Libyans are now hosted by the local community.

A number of NGOs and civil society organizations are joining forces and providing shelter, food and water to the Libyan refugees through the activation of a community-based outreach network.

UNHCR is in contact with local authorities, UN agencies, local and international NGOs to coordinate the humanitarian response to Libyan refugees, including by strengthening the reception capacity of the host community.

Libyans Crossing through Dehiba



## Main developments

- Both in Zarzis and Tataouine, Libyan charity organizations managed by the Libyan diasporas, have been networking with humanitarian agencies to organize assistance to Libyan refugees and host families. List of beneficiaries is to be shared with UNHCR, in order for the latter to assess the needs on the ground and plan for interventions.

### Dehiba border point

- On 2 May, no military clashes were reported between government and opposition forces at the border area, which is currently controlled by the opposition. However, movement of troops from both sides was noticed at the border in anticipation of more attacks.

- Some 900 Libyans who are displaced on the mountains close to Dehiba were provided with food through ICRC and tents through the Tunisian army.

- On 2 May, 2,800 Libyan refugees fled to Tunisia through Dehiba border point. Up to date, 41,671 Libyans officially crossed to Tunisia. Many more Libyans are reportedly fleeing into Tunisia illegally.

### Dehiba town

- 949 Libyans are hosted in the UAE Red Crescent camp in Dehiba town as of 2 May.

- Following the military clashes between government and opposition forces for control in the border area, an unconfirmed number of Tunisian families reportedly left Dehiba town and moved further away from the border.

### Remada

- 1,100 Libyans are hosted in the UNHCR camp in Remada as of 2 May. With a stable population of some 800 people, this camp serves more as a transit facility where the majority of new arrivals stays for one to two nights and then look for accommodation with the host community with the support of the Libyan diasporas.

- A three-day sandstorm disrupted the upgrading of facilities and expansion of the camp.

### Tataouine

- The Qatari Red Crescent announced the establishment of a camp in Tataouine. On late Tuesday evening, Al Jazeera reported that an airlift shipment of tents and medical facilities arrived in Tataouine to set up a camp.

- UNHCR has now a field officer in Tataouine to coordinate the humanitarian response to Libyan refugees in southern Tunisia.

- UNHCR held a meeting with WFP and a number of Libyan charity organizations to discuss consolidation of a food package and modalities to reach out the Libyan refugees displaced within the host community. The initial target for food distribution is 20,000 people (6,000 families) and is expected to be increased.

For further information, please contact:

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