

# Algeria

1 April – 30 June 2019

**A joint multi-donor mission was carried out with WFP and UNICEF** from 29 April-2 May. The delegation visited activities in Laayoune camp, Awserd camp, and Nkheila.

**Seven refugees departed on resettlement to third countries;** six to **Sweden** and one to **USA**. 76 refugees were recommended for resettlement to Canada, USA, Norway and Sweden.

On 18 and 19 June, **World Refugee Day** was celebrated in Algiers and in Dakhla camp, under this year's theme, **#StepWithRefugees**.



*Activities during the UNHCR-WFP Nutrition Survey that were conducted across four camps in April. The objective of the survey was to assess the nutritional status of children under five and women of reproductive age. (see p. 2 & p. 6) © UNHCR / C. Meziani*

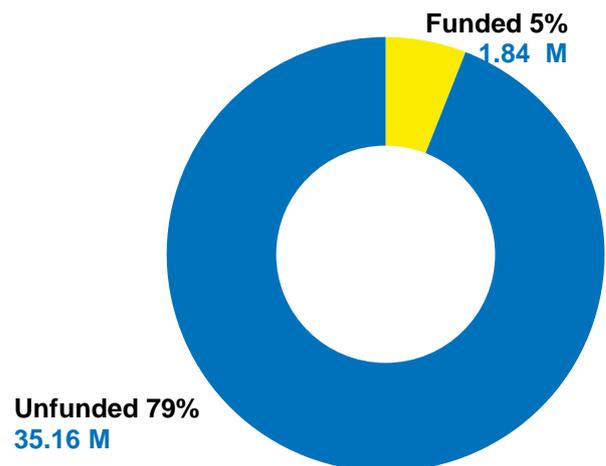


*Children in Dakhla camp, during celebrations of World Refugee Day. © UNHCR / R. Fraser*

## FUNDING

**USD 37 M** received as of 30 June 2019

requested for Algeria



## KEY INDICATORS

### ANAEMIA RATES FOR SAHRAWI REFUGEES

**50** per cent anaemia rate for children

**52** per cent anaemia rate for women

**29,972**

School-aged children in Tindouf camps were **enrolled in primary education**

# Update on Achievements

## Operational Context

UNHCR's activities in Algeria focus on providing protection and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers:

- In **Algiers**, pending the establishment of a national asylum system, **UNHCR carries out registration, conducts refugee status determination, and provides asylum-seekers and refugees with documentation.** As of 30 June 2019, **9,577 persons of concern were registered with UNHCR**, the large majority of whom originate from Syria. Integration in the urban context remains challenging for a number of refugees, who rely mostly on UNHCR assistance. UNHCR supports urban refugees with cash assistance as a contribution to their accommodation and food costs, enabling them to meet their needs in a dignified manner. UNHCR submits cases of refugees with specific needs who meet the criteria for resettlement to third countries and facilitates voluntary repatriation of refugees who decide to return home, and when conditions allow for returns in safety and dignity.
- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR continues to **provide protection and assistance to Sahrawi refugees**, who have been living in a protracted displacement situation in five camps near Tindouf for 43 years. In April 2019, **UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) carried out a nutrition survey**, the results of which show a worsening situation compared to 2016. All malnutrition indicators have significantly increased from the last survey in 2016, including global acute malnutrition, stunting, anemia in children, as well as anemia in women. The three UN agencies – UNHCR, WFP, and UNICEF – are working together on the immediate and mid-term response to this worrying situation. **UNHCR's multi-sectoral activities focus primarily on community-based protection, education, health and nutrition, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), shelter, and livelihoods.** In 2019, while continuing to provide essential humanitarian assistance, UNHCR—in coordination with WFP and the Sahrawi refugee community—is also implementing livelihoods initiatives, with a focus on youth.

## Achievements



### PROTECTION

#### Refugees from Western Sahara

- On 19 June, **World Refugee Day was celebrated in Dakhla camp.** The event was attended by the refugee community and refugee representatives, UN agencies and NGOs. Activities included various festival events, consisting of sports (football for men and volleyball for women); projects exhibitions;



*Children gather together at World Refugee Day. © M. Bribri*

entertainment activities for children; and a visit to the museum. There were also speeches, musical performances, a play by local youths, and an award ceremony. Turnout was high, led by the entertainment activities for children, which attracted hundreds of children and their families. In the evening ceremonies, UNHCR recognized two refugees for their dedication to the community (see article on p. 11).

- UNHCR partner *Triangle Génération Humanitaire* (TGH) **conducted 800 home visits per month to provide physiotherapy services for 220 refugees with specific needs.**
- UNHCR partner *Movimiento por la Paz* (MPDL) **provided hygiene materials** to the protection centres and 150 uniforms for the detention centre in Rabouni; **conducted an awareness campaign** in the five camps on various protection topics during the month of Ramadan; and **carried out a training on fair trial, applicable laws, human right guarantees, and constitutional law** for 50 judges and 35 lawyers.
- UNHCR, through partner *Association Femmes Algériennes pour le Développement* (AFAD), and in close coordination with the Sahrawi scout and both WFP and UNICEF, **commemorated International Children's Day in Dakhla camp**, with around 200 children from the five camps participating in activities.

### Youth and Sports

- *Youth:* UNHCR, along with the local refugee community, **inaugurated the new multi-purpose hall for youth** at the Youth Union location in Rabouni. As part of the launch, the hall was equipped with furniture, computers and a sound system. UNHCR, through partner Algerian Red Crescent (ARC), delivered sports equipment and computer equipment to the refugee community.
- *Sports:* The refugee community in charge of Youth and Sports, in close coordination with ARC and funded by UNHCR, **conducted several sports activities and tournaments** that took place in the camps for young refugees, including the football championship (males), volleyball championship (females), and cycling tour. UNHCR, through ARC, recently funded the Sahrawi Volleyball Federation; as a result, the volleyball championship was launched for the first time in the camp.

### Urban Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- **From April to June, UNHCR registered 613 asylum-seekers**, including 282 Syrians, nine Palestinians, four Yemenis and 318 asylum-seekers from various sub-Saharan countries, the majority of whom are from Mali (21%), Nigeria (17%) and Cameroon (16%). **During the same period, UNHCR recognized 56 asylum-seekers as refugees.**
- **UNHCR continues to monitor and advocate with the authorities** to ensure that arrests and returns to borders of persons in an irregular situation in Algeria does not impact upon people in need of international protection.
- **UNHCR continues capacity building activities.** Two Government officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended a four-day Refugee Law Course organized by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, in cooperation with and support of UNHCR, in Sanremo, Italy from 16 to 19 April. The Head of the Algerian Office for Refugees and Stateless Persons (BAPRA) attended the 22<sup>nd</sup> training on Refugee Law in Strasbourg, France from 17 to 28 June, which was sponsored by UNHCR.
- **UNHCR in coordination with its partners provided assistance to SGBV survivors** (refugees and asylum-seekers) including orientation to appropriate services (medical, psycho-social assistance, and legal aid) through an established SGBV referral pathway. Between April and June, 19 survivors benefited from medical care and psychological support.
- **UNHCR continues to provide adequate and specialized support to children at risk**, including unaccompanied and separated children, according to their best interest. Between April and June, six Best Interest Determination (BID) reports were completed and approved by a BID panel. During the same period,

four unaccompanied refugee children were provided with shelter, food basket assistance and psycho-social support.

- **UNHCR works with a private law firm to provide free legal aid services to refugees and asylum-seekers**, including counselling, legal assistance and representation. Between April and June, thirty persons of concern to UNHCR were assisted on various matters such as issuance of birth certificates or late birth registration, residence or work permit applications, and filing complaints with the police, among others.
- **UNHCR referred six cases of unaccompanied minors to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for family tracing.**



## EDUCATION

### Refugees from Western Sahara

- UNHCR partner *Association Femmes Algériennes pour le Développement (AFAD)* conducted **awareness sessions on school hygiene** in intermediate schools in the camps, reaching 221 students.
- AFAD carried out monitoring visits to 29 DAFI students studying at Algerian universities.

### Urban Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- UNHCR, through its partners, continued **activities to support access to primary education for urban refugees and asylum-seekers**, facilitating their enrollment in public schools. Between April and June, 49 children (16 girls, 33 boys) registered with UNHCR were assisted with their enrollment in primary schools in Algiers and with transportation to and from school. Other assistance included the provision of school supplies, learning support, and recreational activities for 38 refugee children. Through its partners, UNHCR facilitated the enrollment of 10 refugee children (6 girls, 4 boys) in early childhood education, with particular attention to single parent families.



## HEALTH

### Refugees from Western Sahara

- UNHCR, through its partner *Triangle Génération Humanitaire (TGH)*, **distributed consumables and supplies for laboratory and X-ray departments** to all regional and central hospitals, as well as to dentistry services in the five camps.
- **All regional laboratories were equipped with specific devices to monitor patients with diabetes**, and all dispensaries (31 total) received equipment for blood pressure screening (sphygmomanometers and stethoscopes).
- **Twenty-eight students (22 nurses and six midwives) graduated from the local nursing school** located in Smara camp. This school, supported by partner *Enfants Réfugiés du Monde (ERM)*, is fully funded by UNHCR and currently enrolls 74 students.
- **Five sensitization campaigns on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs)** were carried out during this period (one per camp). Targeted groups were adolescents in intermediate and secondary schools as well as university students (on summer break). Around 450 young Saharawi students attended the sessions.
- TGH ensured the **referral of 25 patients suffering from kidney failure** to Tindouf hospital in order to get haemodialysis – three times a week per patient. Haemodialysis services are provided free of charge by Algerian authorities.

- Trainings:**
  - Fourteen laboratory technicians were trained on the main laboratory test protocols and use and maintenance of laboratory devices.**
  - Five training sessions (one per camp) on child health** were organized jointly with Algerian Red Crescent (ARC), *Medicos del Mundo* (MDM), and the Sahrawi leadership responsible for health, with 135 health workers benefitting from these sessions. Main topics covered were comprehensive management of childhood illnesses, growth monitoring and reporting, and the Health Information System.
  - A training on autism and child psychological development** was carried out in the camps by TGH, with 12 psychologists benefitting from the training. In parallel, five sensitization campaigns (one per camp) on mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) related topics were organized in partnership with TGH and the Sahrawi leadership responsible for health.

### Urban Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- Through its partner, UNHCR facilitates the **referral of refugees and asylum-seekers to public primary health care centres**. Between April and June, 295 persons of concern were received by UNHCR's partner (167 refugees and 128 asylum-seekers), 121 were accompanied to the appropriate health facilities and 174 were directed to the relevant facilities. Approximately 40% of consultations were referred to specialized (secondary) health care.
- UNHCR health partners **organized three sensitization campaigns on themes related to STIs, family planning, prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) etc.**, with 70 refugees and asylum-seekers participating.



### WATER AND SANITATION

#### Refugees from Western Sahara

- Two experts from Norwegian Engineers without Borders visited the camps at the end of April, to support **finding solutions in waste management** and in the development of a roadmap for their implementation. A number of recommendations to improve the situation will be reviewed by UNHCR.
- The draft for a multi-year WASH strategy was approved by all members of the WASH coordination working group. A WASH mission was conducted in the camps by Oxfam, as part of their global agreement with UNHCR. The two Oxfam WASH experts visited facilities in the camps and met with partners and local actors, in order to **help advance the water strategy**.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Due to the magnitude of work involved to extend the water network and lack of funding, amongst other reasons, UNHCR is only providing on average about 12 litres per person per day (L/P/D), well below the minimum international standard of 20 L/P/D.
- Extension of water networks:** Terms of Reference for a topographic survey were developed by UNHCR and shared with specialized companies to conduct a market survey. This survey will allow UNHCR to study all possibilities of extending the water network in the five camps.



*Norwegian Engineers without Borders mission: visit to a landfill site. © UNHCR / M. Kachebi*



## SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI)

### Refugees from Western Sahara

- UNHCR **distributed cooking stoves** to 1,500 households, **and new gas cylinders** to 626 households (newlywed families).

### Urban Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- UNHCR manages, through its partners, an accommodation program for urban refugees with specific needs in Algiers. Between April and June, **UNHCR provided accommodation in apartments to 126 vulnerable refugees**. During the same period, cash assistance for rent was provided to the remaining 269 refugees.



## FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

### Refugees from Western Sahara

- UNHCR continued **the provision of 5,918 metric tons (MT) of dried yeast to 28,000 Sahrawi families** on a monthly basis.
- UNHCR, through its partner Algerian Red Crescent, **contributed to the Ramadan food basket by distributing 375,000 MT of fresh food** (1 kg of onions, 1 kg of potatoes and 1 kg of carrots per individual) to 28,000 Sahrawi families.
- **In April, UNHCR and WFP carried out a nutrition survey**. The results have shown a worsening situation compared with 2016. All malnutrition indicators have significantly increased from the last survey in 2016, including global acute malnutrition (going from 4% in 2016 to 7% in 2019), stunting (from 18% in 2016 to 28%), anaemia in children (from 38% to 50%), and anaemia in women (from 43% to 52%).
- **UNHCR distributed nutrition equipment to 10 health centres**. This equipment will reinforce the growth monitoring of children at the health centres level and will help with early detection of children with acute malnutrition, stunting and anaemia.
- **UNHCR supported five sensitization campaigns** (one per camp) on nutrition related issues, with special emphasis on infant and young child feeding (exclusive breastfeeding in particular).

### Urban Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- UNHCR through its partners **distributed monthly cash assistance to 210 urban refugee households** (330 refugees in total) for the period April - June to meet their basic needs. Multi-purpose cash assistance is distributed to refugees on a quarterly basis.



## ACCESS TO ENERGY

### Refugees from Western Sahara



- **UNHCR re-filled 28,000 gas cylinders per month to all refugee families** in the five camps.
- **UNHCR has also readapted the supplies truck** provided in 2017 for the transportation of gas cylinders. The truck is operational since May.

*Gas cylinder distribution. © UNHCR / K.  
 Tarouadada*



**LIVELIHOODS AND SELF RELIANCE**

**Refugees from Western Sahara**

- A total of **557 business proposals were submitted by Sahrawi youth for grant funding** through UNHCR partner Danish Refugee Council (DRC). A thorough screening and evaluation process was held between April and June to select grant beneficiaries.
- **A multi-year strategy on vocational training has been developed** by UNHCR partner the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM) following an assessment undertaken by high-level experts earlier this year. The strategy was launched during a workshop held in Madrid on 6 June.
- **An end-of-year ceremony was organized in June to celebrate the graduation of 36 young Sahrawi male and female refugees** from vocational training centers. Similarly, in June, 38 women celebrated the completion of their vocational training in the women’s centres of Smara, Awserd and Dakhla camps.
- UNHCR has been providing, since late 2016, a **blended course on entrepreneurship** in the Sahrawi camps in partnership with the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM). The third edition of the course was completed mid-June, with the students’ presenting their entrepreneurial projects.



*Blended course on entrepreneurship, implemented by the Autonomous University of Madrid.*

- UNHCR also supports a soap factory, a sewing workshop, a tent sewing workshop, five vocational training centres, a business innovation centre, and the rehabilitation of various bakeries.

**Urban Refugees and Asylum-Seekers**

- Through its partners, **UNHCR supports the enrollment of refugees in vocational trainings and the creation of income-generating activities.** Eleven refugees were assisted with registering into public institutions providing vocational training in various fields, such as aesthetics and information technology.

**DURABLE SOLUTIONS****Urban Refugees**

- **UNHCR provides support to refugees opting for voluntary repatriation**, when conditions allow their return in safety and dignity. Individuals whose claims for asylums have not been successful are informed of the possibility of assistance by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for voluntary return to their countries of origin.
- UNHCR uses resettlement both as a protection tool and as a durable solution for urban refugees according to their needs. **Seven refugees departed through resettlement to third countries** (six to Sweden and one to USA) between April and June. Departures were arranged with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). During the same period, **76 individuals were recommended by UNHCR for resettlement** to third countries (Canada, USA, Norway and Sweden).

## Working in Partnership

### Tindouf

- **UNHCR led three inter-sector working group (ISWG) meetings and two inter-agency working group (IAWG) meetings** to discuss inter-sectoral and strategic operational issues, respectively. The IAWG meetings included a special meeting to endorse the overall guidance note on the multi-sector strategy; and the announcement by the UNHCR Representative of an innovation campaign that will soon be launched. The ISWG meetings dealt with the development of the various sector strategies (Food, WASH, Livelihood, Protection, Education, Health), and discussion on the way forward for the innovation campaign. The ISWG is comprised of United Nations agencies UNHCR, WFP, and UNICEF; and organizations *Movimiento por la Paz* (MPDL), *Comitato internazionale per lo sviluppo dei popoli* (CISP), *Medicos del Mundo* (MDM), *Solidaridad Internacional – Andalucía* (SI-A), *Oxfam-Solidarité* (OXFAM), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and *Triangle Génération Humanitaire* (TGH). The IAWG is comprised of UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, ICRC (observer status), Sahrawi Red Crescent, European Union Humanitarian Aid (ECHO), the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), OXFAM, *Association Femmes Algériennes pour le Développement* (AFAD), CISP, MDM, and Spanish Red Cross (CRE).
- **A joint multi-donor mission was carried out successfully with WFP and UNICEF** from 29 April - 2 May, which consisted of two days of site visits and meetings in Laayoune camp, Awserd camp, Nkheila, Rabouni, and Tindouf. Twenty-two individuals from 12 countries and organizations participated in the mission: Mexico, Nigeria, UK, USA, France, Spain, AECID, Italy, Denmark, Canada and Sweden, as well as Algeria (MoFA). The delegation was joined by the three UN humanitarian agency representatives.
- **On 20 May, UNHCR, along with WFP and UNICEF, held a meeting with donors**, which was in follow-up to the multi-donor mission. In total, 20 officials from 13 representations attended: Switzerland, Brazil, Belgium, AECID, Netherlands, France, Nigeria, South Africa, USA, Italy, Mexico, Japan, and the EU. Participants raised key issues for discussion, and the three agencies shared their funding needs and priorities for 2019 and beyond.
- **On 19 June, UNHCR celebrated World Refugee Day in Dakhla camp**. The event was attended by refugee representatives, the refugee community, UN agencies and partners. Donors who attended included an official from the US Embassy and AECID (Spanish Cooperation) representatives.

### Algiers

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is UNHCR's main counterpart. UNHCR also collaborates with the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Health, Education, as well as with the national Human Rights Council, the Police and Gendarmerie.
- Through the Regional Development and Protection Programme for North Africa (RDPP NA), co-funded by the European Union and the Government of Italy, **UNHCR carries out advocacy activities involving key local authorities through capacity building and sensitization initiatives** aimed at ensuring immediate protection to the most vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees and improving the overall protection environment.



## Financial Information

As of 30 June, total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 1,844,816**

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support of:

### Earmarked contributions (USD)



Canada | Italy | Germany | Norway | Sweden |

### Other softly earmarked contributions (USD)

**Private donors Australia** 6.2 million | **Germany** 5.4 million | **Sweden** 3.3 million | **Private donors Germany** 2.8 million | **Private donors Republic of Korea** 2.2 million

Denmark | Estonia | Malta | Norway | Private donors

### Unearmarked contributions (USD)

**Sweden** 90.4 million | **Norway** 44.5 million | **Private donors Spain** 39.6 million | **Netherlands** 37.5 million | **United Kingdom** 31.7 million | **Germany** 26.7 million | **Denmark** 24.4 million | **Private donors Republic of Korea** 17.3 million | **Switzerland** 15.1 million

Algeria | Argentina | Australia | Austria | Azerbaijan | Belgium | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Iceland | Indonesia | Kuwait | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | Sri Lanka | Thailand | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

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## ***Two Refugees Recognized at World Refugee Day in Dakhla Camp*** *Dakhla Camp*

Hosted by Algeria, refugees from Western Sahara in Dakhla camp—one of five Sahrawi refugee camps in the south-west of the country—are without access to natural resources, yet they are still rich. This article is about two of their treasures hidden in plain sight.

During his speech on World Refugee Day, UNHCR Representative Agostino Mulas said, “The situation in the Sahrawi camps is unique, as it is the refugees who are running their own services, unlike almost all other refugee situations. Community-based protection—the approach we are using—would not be possible without the strong and effective participation of the refugee community.”

You will not find a better example of community service in the five camps of Tindouf province than that of Ali Mbarek Ali and Mumna Mami Merzouk, both of whom live and work in Dakhla camp where World Refugee Day was celebrated this year. Both were honoured by UNHCR for their contributions during this occasion.

Ali has been the technician for Dakhla camp since 1979, when he was in his early twenties. After studying auto mechanics in the place of his birth, the territory of Western Sahara, he was already an expert by the time he arrived to Dakhla camp. His current responsibilities include maintaining the electricity grid, repairing equipment, and training two young apprentice technicians under his tutelage. Indeed, the evening ceremonies for World Refugee Day would not have occurred without his support behind the scenes. So much has changed since he arrived to the camps. One of the biggest recent developments was the provision of electricity to Dakhla camp by the Algerian Government in 2016. Prior to this, Ali was working with one generator, provided by UNHCR, to cover the whole camp’s electrical needs. With electrification of the camp, Ali is busier than ever.



***Ali Mbarek Ali repairing an air conditioner in his workshop. Air conditioners are some of the most important pieces of equipment in the camps, as summer temperatures can approach 50 degrees Celsius. Since 2016, Dakhla camp has been electrified, an action from the Algerian Government. Only one of the five camps—Laayoune camp—has not been electrified.***

© UNHCR / R. Fraser

Mumna Mami Merzouk is one of only two midwives in Dakhla camp. By her estimation, she has delivered more than 2,000 babies since her early days as a nurse and later as a midwife. This may be a conservative estimate, as she was assisting with deliveries as a nurse beginning in the late 1980s.

To say that their work is important is an understatement. Ali is aware of his work's impact. As he says, "I consider my work like those of people in the health sector, in the water sector – it has an effect on the health of society. I have the same goal as them. Everything I do is for the people; for my society and community, and for their continuity."

Mumna is known as 'Mzeriga', and as 'Grandmother' to the thousands of children she has brought into the world. Aside from this wonderful legacy, Mzeriga has had another important effect in contributing to women's safe deliveries in the camp. In the past, most births took place in the home. Now almost all are in either a camp dispensary or the camp hospital – a result of public health education by the Sahrawi health experts, including sensitization efforts from midwives like Mzeriga.

In Dakhla camp, routine births are facilitated by a midwife with the presence of a nurse. Only if there are complications or critical situations will a doctor be present. Mzeriga is most proud of the great trust placed in her by the women. In some cases, she said, women have even risked their lives by staying in the camp for her to oversee the delivery, rather than traveling to Rabouni Hospital or to Tindouf Hospital. Although her satisfaction with her work is high, Mzeriga is saddened that the work takes her away from her family. The mother of six tells us, "I follow every woman's case until she delivers, so I don't have time to look after my children."



*Mumna Mami Merzouk, or 'Mzeriga', is well known in Dakhla camp, where the community is grateful for her work. As she says, "Many mothers tell their children, 'That's the one who delivered you'".*

© UNHCR / R. Fraser

According to Mzeriga, Dakhla camp needs at least nine midwives. Asked about her plans for the future, Mzeriga has no intention of leaving Dakhla camp, where she

enjoys her role as a midwife. "The people here still need me. I am here, and ready to teach the new midwives."

Ali, the technician, gives a similar answer. A young 73, he has no plans for retirement. "Unless I go back, there is no retirement. Unless I am in a better place, like my homeland, it is not an option."

Neither Ali nor Mzeriga were born into a refugee-like situation, but both have been refugees for almost 44 years. Where others are thinking of retirement, Ali would rather remain part of a solution for himself, his family, his people. "We are under the UN's responsibility, they need to find something for us. At some point, it needs to stop."