

# UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE - ALGERIA

1 February – 1 May 2017

## KEY FIGURES

**90,000**

Vulnerable Sahrawi refugees living in five camps near Tindouf are receiving UNHCR's assistance.

**6,030**

Persons of concern in urban areas registered with UNHCR, of which **5,361** are Syrian nationals.

On average in 2017, **276**

Syrians approach UNHCR on a monthly basis for registration

On average in 2017, **75**

Syrians are registered on a monthly basis

**32,100** of school-aged

children in Tindouf camps are enrolled in primary education.

**18** liters of potable water are

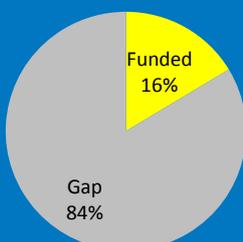
available per person per day in Sahrawi refugee camps (below the humanitarian standard of 20 liters/person/day).

## FUNDING

**USD 36 Million**

Requested for the operation

The operation is **16%** funded



## HIGHLIGHTS

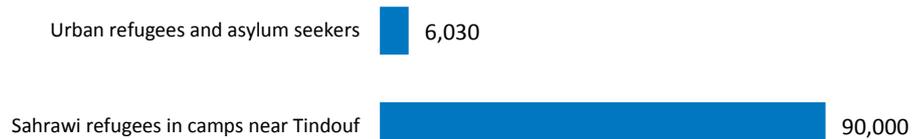
- UNHCR continues to provide Sahrawi refugees with much needed **shelters** in Tindouf camps: UNHCR completed the distribution of construction materials to more than 2,000 families affected by the October 2015 floods. In addition, **25 environmentally friendly and energy efficient houses** were constructed, as part of an innovative project led by a young Sahrawi engineer.
- In Algiers, from 16 to 20 April 2017, the Algerian High School of Magistracy hosted the **first refugee law training** in Algeria. This training was developed for judges, prosecutors and academics and included academics from Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. This is a follow up to a similar training held in Rabat, Morocco, last year, also organized in cooperation with UNHCR and the Hungarian Helsinki Committee.
- In close coordination with WFP, UNICEF and the Sahrawi refugee leadership responsible for social welfare and women's emancipation, UNHCR celebrated **International Women's Day in Tindouf** under this year's theme "Women's right to decent work".



*Sahrawi refugee women celebrating International Women's Day. © UNHCR / R. Fraser*

## Population of concern

A total of **96,030** persons of concern



## UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Context

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

- **In Algiers**, UNHCR registers, conducts status determination and assists individuals who seek international protection. In total, 6,030 persons are registered with UNHCR in urban areas, the large majority of Syrian origin (5,361 at the end of the reporting period). Those recognized as refugees by UNHCR are mostly from the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast and Mali. UNHCR provides asylum-seekers and refugees with documents for identification and protection purposes. In terms of solutions, and in the absence of voluntary repatriation and local integration, UNHCR works on resettlement of all those that are acceptable and accepted by third countries.
- **In Tindouf**, UNHCR continues to provide protection and assistance to the 90,000 most vulnerable Sahrawi refugees, who are living in a protracted displacement situation in five camps near Tindouf since over 40 years. The reduction of monthly food rations as a result of funding shortfalls, has been of particular concern over the last two years, given its impact on the nutritional health of Sahrawi refugees. In 2016, UNHCR continued its rehabilitation plan following the October 2015 floods, which devastated all five refugee camps, destroyed the mud-brick homes of 17,841 families and affected 60% per cent of public buildings. UNHCR rehabilitated four schools and built a new school. UNHCR also rehabilitated 152 shelters for persons with specific needs in 2016, and in 2017 continued distribution of construction materials to more than 2,000 affected families in Dakhla camp for the purposes of rebuilding damaged or destroyed houses. In 2017, while continuing to provide essential humanitarian assistance, UNHCR, in coordination with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Sahrawi refugee community, is strengthening livelihoods initiatives, with a focus on youth.

### Achievements

#### Protection

##### Achievements and Impact

##### Algiers

- From February to April, UNHCR registered 302 individuals, the majority from Syria. During the same period, UNHCR recognized 12 refugees.
- In April, UNHCR conducted its annual participatory assessment, to discuss with refugees about planned activities so that they best fit their needs. A total of 60 refugees participated.
- From 16-20 April, more than 40 academics, magistrates and lawyers from Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of a one week refugee law course "*Le Maghreb protège*", under the auspices of the High School of Magistracy in Algiers. The course is based on the Refugee Law Reader. It is a follow-up to a previous similar training event organized by UNHCR Morocco in April 2016.



*One week refugee law course "Le Maghreb protège 2" © UNHCR / A. Fautsch*

## Tindouf

- UNHCR conducted five different sessions gathering Sahrawi leadership, UN agencies, UNHCR staff, and partners, to advocate for expanded community engagement and to map out the existing assets and capacities in the refugee community. This is part of efforts to reinforce a community-based protection approach, to effectively put refugees at the center of the decisions that affect them.
- In close coordination with WFP, UNICEF and the refugee leadership responsible for social welfare and women's emancipation, UNHCR celebrated the 2017 International Women's Day under this year's theme "Women's right to decent work". The event included recognition of 40 Sahrawi women, for their notable work within the Sahrawi community, to highlight their efforts as role models.



A refugee women addressing the participants on the occasion of International Women's Day. © UNHCR / R. Fraser

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

### Algiers

- UNHCR's activities in urban areas are limited to Algiers province. UNHCR is exploring ways to expand its partnership network and to conduct outreach missions to persons of concern throughout the country.
- The waiting period for asylum seekers to be registered with UNCHR is currently seven months, due to limited registration capacities. UNHCR recently hired additional registration agents to reduce the waiting period.

## Education

### Achievements and Impact

#### Algiers

- In March, UNHCR and its partner *Réseau algérien pour la défense des droits de l'enfant* (NADA), in collaboration with two volunteer teachers, put in place support classes for refugee children during spring school holidays. English classes are still ongoing on a weekly basis.
- In April, UNHCR and NADA organized a one day event to raise awareness on the right of non-discrimination, which gathered 50 children and educational staff at the Lycée Descartes, as part of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March).

#### Tindouf

- At the start of April, UNHCR with partner *Association des Femmes Algériennes pour le Développement* (AFAD) began an assessments of all 34 schools in the five camps, as part of education services monitoring. The assessment will continue in September as school finished early this year due to Ramadan.

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Algiers:** Language barriers for refugee children without a good command of Arabic is a serious challenge. Some refugee children spend many hours in UNHCR-provided school transport to the only public school teaching in French. Due to limited funding, UNHCR is unable to assist asylum-seeker children with school supplies and transportation to school.



## Health and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

#### Algiers:

- UNHCR signed a new partnership agreement with the Algerian organization Green Tea. Green Tea will provide counselling to refugees and asylum seekers and accompany them to ensure access to health services.

- UNHCR has also engaged with a qualified psychologist to provide individual counselling to refugees.

#### Tindouf:

- UNHCR in conjunction with WFP, organized a four day workshop on nutrition, with participation from all ten health and nutrition partners. The final results of the 2016 nutrition survey were presented, recommendations were put forward, and the drafting of the new nutrition strategic action plan for the next two years was discussed.
- The Senior Mental Health Officer organized a seven day support mission to the camps in Tindouf. Several field visits and meetings were held, with the view of improving MHPSS service delivery in the camps. Together with the Sahrawi leadership and *Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli* (CISP) (both active in the mental health and psychosocial support program - MHPSS), UNHCR reviewed its MHPSS strategy.
- UNHCR and WHO carried out a joint mission under the tuberculosis (TB) program. Sahrawi health staff were trained on the new TB national guidelines; this enabled the positioning of a “TB response team” as well as the standardization of treatment protocols.
- UNHCR received two fully equipped ambulances, which will be assigned to Rabouni and Dakhla camp hospitals.



*A mother comforts her daughter after a painful vaccination shot – Rabouni hospital. © UNHCR / R. Fraser*



*Two new fully equipped ambulances. © UNHCR / C. Meziani.*

## Water and Sanitation (WASH)

### Achievements and Impact

#### Tindouf

- The community-led soap workshop, managed by UNHCR and its partner *Triangle Génération humaine* (TGH), produced approximately 5,000 bars of soap for use by health institutions in the camps.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR partner *Solidaridad Internacional – Andalucía* (SI-A) defined the specifications of the sand decanter, which aims to preserve the osmosis stations by reducing the quantity of sand present in water. The decanter was ordered in mid-February and was transferred to the camps.
- UNHCR standards indicate that more than 90% of households should have direct access to solid waste disposal facilities. According to the preliminary results of the 2016 WASH Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey conducted, 21% of the camp population interviewed stated that trucks do not collect garbage from the street, with the remaining population confirming that trucks very rarely pass to collect waste.



*Water distribution at household level. © UNHCR / S. Flores*

## Shelter and NFIs

### Achievements and Impact

## Algiers

- UNHCR provided accommodation along with core relief items (i.e. mattress, blankets and kitchenware) to approximately 84 vulnerable refugees. Food baskets and core relief items are distributed monthly to all urban refugees.

## Tindouf

- Sahrawi refugees finalized the construction of 25 environmentally friendly and energy efficient shelters, which used plastic bottles filled with sand. This is an innovative [project](#) led by a young Sahrawi engineer and supported by UNHCR's Innovation fund.
- UNHCR, through partner Algeria Red Crescent (ARC), distributed 651 timber beams in Dakhla camp, completing the distribution of construction materials to the 2,000 families affected by the October 2015 floods. In total, 1,600 tons of cement were distributed in Laayoune, Smara and Awserd camps, reaching around 2,000 families in need of shelter support

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Algiers:** In the urban context in Algiers, accommodation for persons of concern is costly and a constant challenge, especially for refugees and asylum-seekers from sub-Saharan countries. Many live in sub-standard accommodation.
- **Tindouf:** Refugees often have to incur additional expenses to complete the building of their tents. Those from the younger generations are not necessarily equipped with the skills to stitch fabric together, which leaves the task to fall on and burden elderly female refugees.



## Livelihoods and Self-Reliance

### Achievements and Impact

#### Tindouf

- A total of 37 youth-led micro and small businesses/enterprises have been established in the five camps; 13 in collaboration with Oxfam Belgium and 24 with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). These projects are diverse, ranging from free-range egg and livestock production, bakeries, and child-friendly recreational areas, to rental of wedding equipment, tailoring services, and a women's driving school. In 2017, all projects are being monitored and technically supported, to ensure their sustainability.
- In partnership with the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM), UNHCR is offering an e-learning course on entrepreneurship at the Innovation Centre in Rabouni, allowing 30 young refugees to develop their skills in communication and business planning and management. They will earn a university certificate upon completion.
- Vocational training centres supported by UNHCR in partnership with InfoCom, continue to offer training to young Sahrawi men and women in the areas of construction, car mechanics, sewing, ICT and administration.



*Oxfam Agricultural project at 9 June location. © UNHCR / R. Fraser*



## Durable Solutions

### Achievements and Impact

#### Algiers

- In March, five refugees departed for resettlement to the USA.

## Working in Partnership

### Algiers

- In February and April, representatives from the Algerian civil society participated in workshops in Amman for the establishment of the MENA civil society network for refugees. In Algeria, UNHCR facilitated two meetings for the Algerian Civil Society Network.
- The annual ICRC–UNHCR protection consultations took place in April, involving respective protection teams, familiarizing respective colleagues with mandates, activities and procedures in order to ensure efficient cooperation e.g. in tracing and identifying persons of concern in detention.

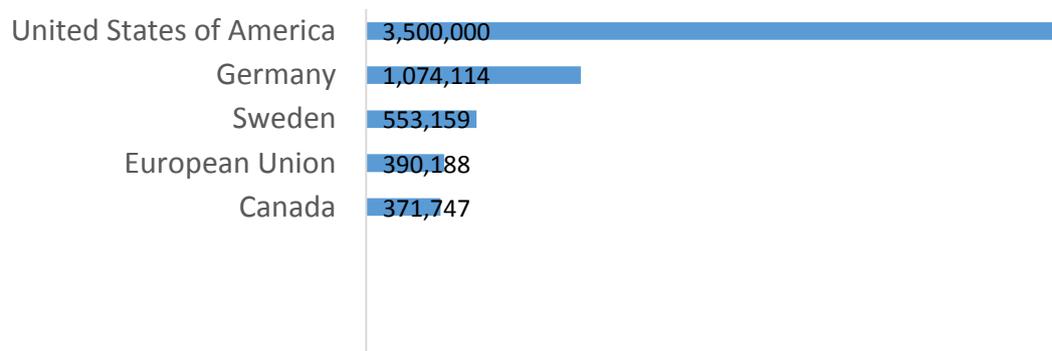
### Tindouf

The Inter-Sector Working Group, led by UNHCR, met twice to discuss inter-sector issues and allow for improved coordination at the inter-sectoral level. Existing members include WFP, UNICEF, Movement for Peace, Disarmament & Liberty (MPDL), *Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli* (CISP), *Médicos del Mundo* (MDM), *Solidaridad Internacional – Andalucía* (SI-A), and Oxfam Belgium.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 5.9 M**

### Funding received in 2017 (USD)



Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2017:

United States of America (95 M) | Sweden (76 M) | Netherlands (52 M) | Norway (41 M) | Denmark (23 M) | Australia (19 M) | Priv Donors Spain (18 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | Germany (12 M)

Thanks to other donors of unrestricted and regional funds

Algeria | Austria | Belgium | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Canada | Chile | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Indonesia | Ireland | Korea | Kuwait | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Morocco | New Zealand | Qatar | Singapore | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Zambia | Private Donors

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