

## KEY FIGURES

**343**

Children, adolescents and higher education students supported by UNHCR with their studies in 2016-17

**267**

Families received a home visit from UNHCR staff, partners, or refugee community workers during the reporting period.

**103**

Refugees benefitted from vocational training or support to develop an income generating activity in 2016.

**399**

Vulnerable refugee households are receiving monthly cash assistance to cover basic needs.

**169**

Refugees with chronic diseases supported to access health care in 2016.

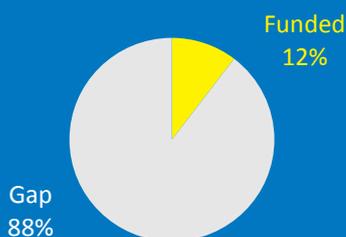
**58**

Refugees were resettled to third countries in 2016.

## FUNDING

**USD 6.4 million**

Requested for the operation in 2016



## MOROCCO

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 July – 1 October 2016

## HIGHLIGHTS

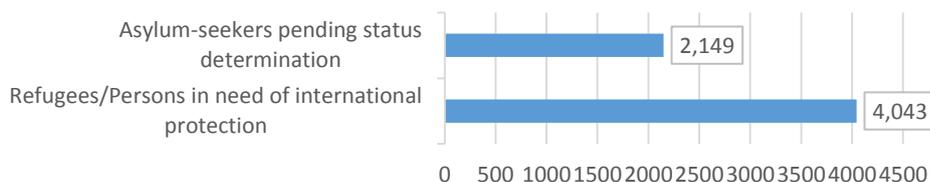
- On 9 September 2016, the Government of Morocco celebrated the third anniversary of the National Strategy on Immigration and Asylum, under the theme “The third year of the National Policy on Immigration and Asylum: Appraisal and Perspectives” (“L’An 3 de la Politique Nationale d’Immigration et d’Asile: Bilan et perspectives”). The heads of UNHCR, UNDP, UN Women, UNAIDS, UNESCO and IOM in Morocco signed a joint programme framework to support implementation of the strategy. The forum allowed participants to reflect on progress achieved to date and to identify ways to contribute to the effective implementation of the national strategy, upholding the rights and dignities of the refugees.



UNHCR Representative Mr. Jean-Paul Cavaliere alongside the heads of other UN agencies signing the joint programme framework on 9 September 2016 © UNHCR

- On 18-19 July 2016, UNHCR participated in the MedCOP Climate conference hosted in Tangiers. The objective of the MedCoP was to follow-up on the MedCoP21 commitments to fight climate change. The conference served as preparations for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 22), to be held in Marrakesh from 7-18 November 2016.

**Population of concern** : A total of **6,192** persons of concern to UNHCR



## OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

### Asylum

By the end of September 2016, UNHCR had registered 6,192 persons of concern, including 4,043 refugees and 2,149 asylum-seekers. During the third quarter, UNHCR Morocco received 777 new asylum applications, including 270 Syrians who make up about 65 percent of the total refugee population. Refugees and asylum-seekers from more than 50 countries live in 41 localities across Morocco. About 15 percent of registered refugees have specific needs including children at risk, people living with disabilities, legal and physical protection needs, serious medical conditions, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, survivors of torture, unaccompanied or separated children or women at risk.



An Iraqi refugee who works as a journalist in Morocco © M'hammed Kilito

By the end of September 2016, the commitment made by the Government of Morocco (GoM) during the 30 March 2016 High-Level Meeting on Global Responsibility Sharing to regularise all Syrians has not yet been fulfilled. Although the GoM does not grant Syrians refugee status, **refugees in Morocco enjoy basic rights and have access to services.** Refugees are issued documentation from the Inter-ministerial Commission on Regularisation within the *Bureau des Réfugiés et Apatrides* (BRA) which is sufficient to allow refugees to remain in the country and to access the formal labour market. Under an agreement between the Ministry of Moroccan Expatriates and Migration Affairs (MCMREAM) and the Ministry of Labour, Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR can validate their work contract, irrespective of whether or not they hold a residence permit.

### Situation at the borders

The Government of Morocco has increased controls at the border with Algeria while the Government of Algeria have constructed trenches, making crossing of the border more difficult for asylum-seekers and refugees. The general trend of declining numbers of new arrivals from earlier this year prevails, with the exception of a temporary increase of arrivals of Syrians at the end of July. While the number of arrivals of Sub-Saharanans seems to have declined only marginally, Syrian families are generally struggling to cross the border with many stranded in the border town of Magnia, Algeria. Refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants have all reported that families are separated at the border. The reinforcement of the Algerian-Moroccan border continues with the construction of a wall on the Algerian side. The concrete structure is reportedly 3.5 meters high and will cover five kilometres of the border, north of Oujda.

On 1 August 2016, a separated Syrian minor was arrested in Oujda and charged with “assisting and accommodating illegal entry”, allegedly for showing family members how to cross into Morocco. OMDH with UNHCR’s legal partner assisted the case; the minor was found innocent in court.

Seasonal highs of mixed migration were experienced during the reporting period. There were reported attempts of persons from Sub-Saharan origin entering irregularly Ceuta and Melilla, two Spanish enclaves on the northern shores of Morocco, as well as crossings of the Mediterranean. In Melilla, enforced fences and increased border controls have made entry in Morocco almost impossible, except for Syrians who continue to arrive, albeit in lower numbers than recorded in the first half of 2016.

In the third quarter of 2016, there have been a high number of boat departures from Morocco towards the Spain. Figures reflect a significant increase of sea and land arrivals to Spain during August and September 2016 which marks

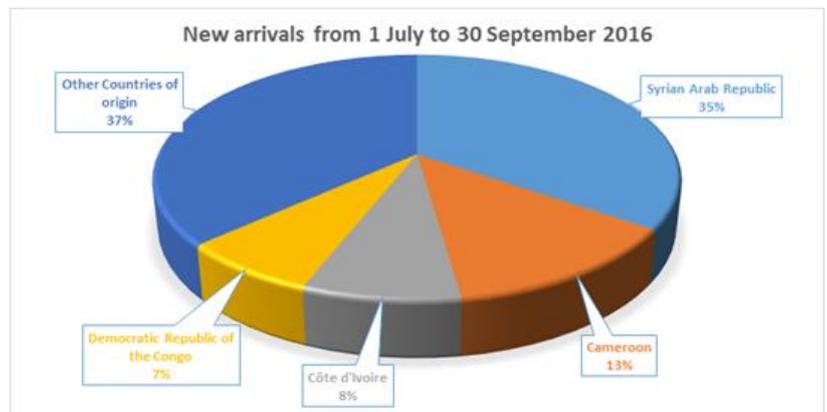
about a 70 percent increase in sea arrivals compared to the same period last year. In September alone, 1,250 persons arrived at the Spanish coast from Morocco. For Ceuta, the majority of arrivals took place by the sea or coastal route.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

### Protection

#### Registration:

- The number of **Syrian individuals** approaching UNHCR has decreased over the course of 2016, likely due to stricter border controls. For the first nine months of 2016, UNHCR registered 952 Syrian refugees, compared to 2,542 Syrians in all of 2015. Nevertheless, Syrians still make up about 65 percent of the refugee population in Morocco.
- The number of **Yemeni individuals** approaching UNHCR has decreased during the third quarter of 2016 (19 persons) compared to the first quarter (44 individuals). Since the beginning of the year, 92 Yemeni nationals approached UNHCR in total.
- The number of **asylum-seekers from other countries of origin** (non-Syrians and non-Yemenis) registering with UNHCR has decreased by nearly 8 percent between the third quarter of 2016 (777 individuals) and the second quarter of 2016 (849 individuals). The third quarter of 2016 is about 30 percent lower than the third quarter of 2015 when 1,111 registrations were received.



#### Refugee status determination (RSD):

- **1,622 new asylum applications** were received in the first nine months of 2016 compared to 950 applications throughout all of 2015. By the end of September 2016, there were a total of 1,536 asylum claims pending interviews; this means that the monthly average of new applications has more than doubled. These figures do not include Syrian and Yemeni nationals.

#### Community-based activities:

- During the reporting period, **427 asylum-seekers were referred to UNHCR for registration** by UNHCR's partner OMDH in Oujda (North-Eastern Province). Nationalities include: Syria, Cameroon, Nigeria, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Central African Republic.
- During the reporting period **267 home visits took place** in Rabat, Casablanca, Sale, Kenitra, Temara and Oujda by UNHCR's partner, UNHCR staff and refugee community workers.
- Some **399 vulnerable refugee households received monthly cash assistance** from July to September 2016.

#### Awareness-raising and outreach

- On 29-30 September, a multi-functional team undertook a second mission to Marrakesh to hold focus group discussions with unregistered Syrian refugees and assess their protection risks and humanitarian needs. They have been informed of asylum procedures in Morocco and all scheduled for registration appointments with UNHCR in Rabat.

### Legal counselling and representation:

- Since January 2016, some **118 refugees and asylum-seekers** were referred to UNHCR legal aid partner, Lemseguem, and received free legal aid and counselling. This figure includes **48 refugees and asylum-seekers** during the third quarter. This includes **13 females and 35 males**, including **3 minors**. The applicants are mainly from Cameroon (23%), Côte d'Ivoire (19%), Syria (13%) and the Central African Republic (16%).
- **15** refugees were provided with legal documentation, including marriage or birth certificates, and nationality documentation.

### Capacity building and training on asylum issues

- UNHCR sponsored a government official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attend a training from 20-23 September 2016 at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, Italy. The training focused on statelessness, including sharing of good practices on how to reduce and prevent statelessness and protect stateless persons.

### Prevention and response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV):

- To strengthen the prevention of and response to SGBV, a **multi-year UNHCR SGBV strategy** (2015-2016) is being implemented to: 1) Reduce the risk of SGBV for persons of concern; 2) Improve early detection of SGBV survivors; 3) Improve the quality of SGBV response services; 4) Strengthen interagency coordination on SGBV and collaboration with civil society organizations and stakeholders; 5) Support government/institutional capacities on SGBV. Advocacy efforts to strengthen national legislation continue through technical support in capacity development of asylum determination procedures connected to SGBV and human trafficking, and gender sensitive considerations in the application of these procedures.
- Since January 2016, UNHCR has identified around **110 SGBV survivors**, including **30 survivors** from 1 July to 30 September 2016, and, as appropriated referred their cases to partners including *Foundation Orient-Occident* (FOO), *Association Action Urgence* (AAU), *Association de Lutte Contre le Sida* (ALCS) and UNHCR's legal aid provider Lemseguem Law Firm for medical, psychological or legal assistance. Urgent cases were provided with medical assistance, emergency preventive treatment for HIV under the codified management of national SGBV services, psychological support, financial assistance and safe house accommodation when necessary.

### Education

- UNHCR together with implementing partner Fondation Orient-Occident, **assisted 343 children and adolescents to access to primary or secondary school in September**. FOO continues to identify children and advocate for their right for education. Education of refugees is a Global Strategy Priority and an important objective for the operation in Morocco.
- In August, FOO organised **two summer schools** in collaboration with Awrache Achabab, Tariq and Association Chabab Lyousoufia three civil society organisations working in the education sector in Morocco. More than 20 Syrians, 5 Yemenis and 25 refugees of Sub-Saharan origin attended the schools in the area of Azemmour/El Jadida and Ifrane/Azrou.
- In September, FOO held two community mobilisation meetings with the parents of refugee children. The meetings gathered **48 Arabic-speaking and 24 French-speaking refugee parents** and allowed FOO to disseminate information on UNHCR education programme in Morocco, including administrative procedures to enroll children in schools and the conditions to receive financial assistance for education. Parents discussed the main challenges related to the integration of refugee children in public schools and suggested solutions to continue to improve UNHCR education services.



## Health

- During the reporting period an average of **463 refugees were referred to primary health care centres per month**, compared to 340 average referrals during the second quarter of 2016. The increase follows an awareness-raising campaign for refugees on the medical services available through UNHCR partners.
- Since January 2016, **169 refugees with serious medical conditions** received medical assistance including refugees with chronic diseases.



## Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- By the end of September, **46 refugees benefitted from vocational training**, including **15** in beauty training, **10** in jewellery production and **21** who previously completed training in construction and mechanics and benefitted from internships with Moroccan enterprises. **16 refugees were supported to develop income-generating activities**. Since January 2016, a Joint Committee of representatives from UNHCR and *Association Marocaine d'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise* (AMAPPE) accepted **41** projects for income-generating activities in the areas of perfumery, cosmetics, clothing, dental and pastry.



## Durable Solutions

- **58 refugees departed Morocco through the resettlement programme so far in 2016:** 37 to the United States of America, 19 to Canada and two to France.
- So far in 2016, UNHCR assisted **two individuals to voluntary repatriate to their country of origin, Cote d'Ivoire**. There were no repatriation requests or departures during the reporting period.

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

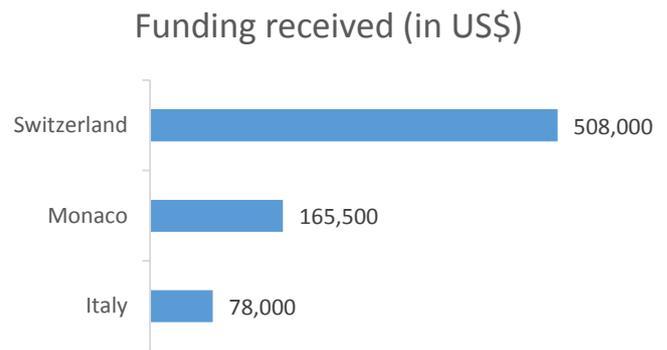
- UNHCR works closely with **Moroccan authorities**, particularly through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, as well as with the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Education, Health, Employment and the Ministry of Moroccan Expatriates and Migration Affairs.
- UNHCR works with **several non-governmental organisations** throughout Morocco, including: Fondation Orient-Occident (FOO), Association Action Urgence (AAU), Caritas, Association de Lutte contre le Sida (ALCS), Organisation Marocaine des Droits Humains (OMDH), Association Marocaine d'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise (AMAPPE). During the reporting period, UNHCR organized three monthly coordination meetings with its implementing partners in addition to site visits of project activities by the Multi-Functional Team.
- In the Oujda region, an oriental region of Morocco bordering Algeria affected by mixed migration movements, UNHCR has developed **coordination mechanisms with IOM, including a Protection Working Group** to better identify, refer and protect refugees and asylum seekers, including those with specific needs. The Protection Working Group in Oujda expanded in 2016 through the creation of thematic sub-groups: health/SGBV, trafficking, education and legal protection. Through this network of partners, UNHCR is able to reach refugees and asylum seekers in the region.
- UNHCR is a **member of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Morocco** and is involved in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), thematic groups on migration, gender, HIV-Aids, communication and monitoring and evaluation. During the reporting period, UNHCR supported the UNCT in mapping UN support to the National Immigration and Asylum Strategy (SNIA), based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in December 2015 between the MCMREAM and the UN Resident Coordinator.

- UNHCR Morocco organised a week-long public information campaign for World Humanitarian Day on 19 August on Facebook. More than **20,000 people** viewed our videos, photos and posts on the work of UNHCR staff in Morocco. UNHCR also responded to **7** requests for media interview, for a total of **48 requests in 2016**. In September, UNHCR created a twitter account. Follow us at **UNHCRMoroc** or **@UNHCRMorocco!**

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to **US\$ 751,050**.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.



### Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds to UNHCR in 2016 (in USD):

United States of America (200 M) | Sweden (78 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | Priv Donors Spain (45 M) | Norway (40 M) | Australia (31 M) | Japan (24 M) | Denmark (24 M) | United Kingdom (23 M) | Priv Donors Republic of Korea (17 M) | Priv Donors Italy (16 M) | Canada (16 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | France (14 M) | Priv Donors Japan (13 M) | Germany (13 M) | Priv Donors USA (12 M) | Priv Donors Sweden (12 M) | Italy (10 M)

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