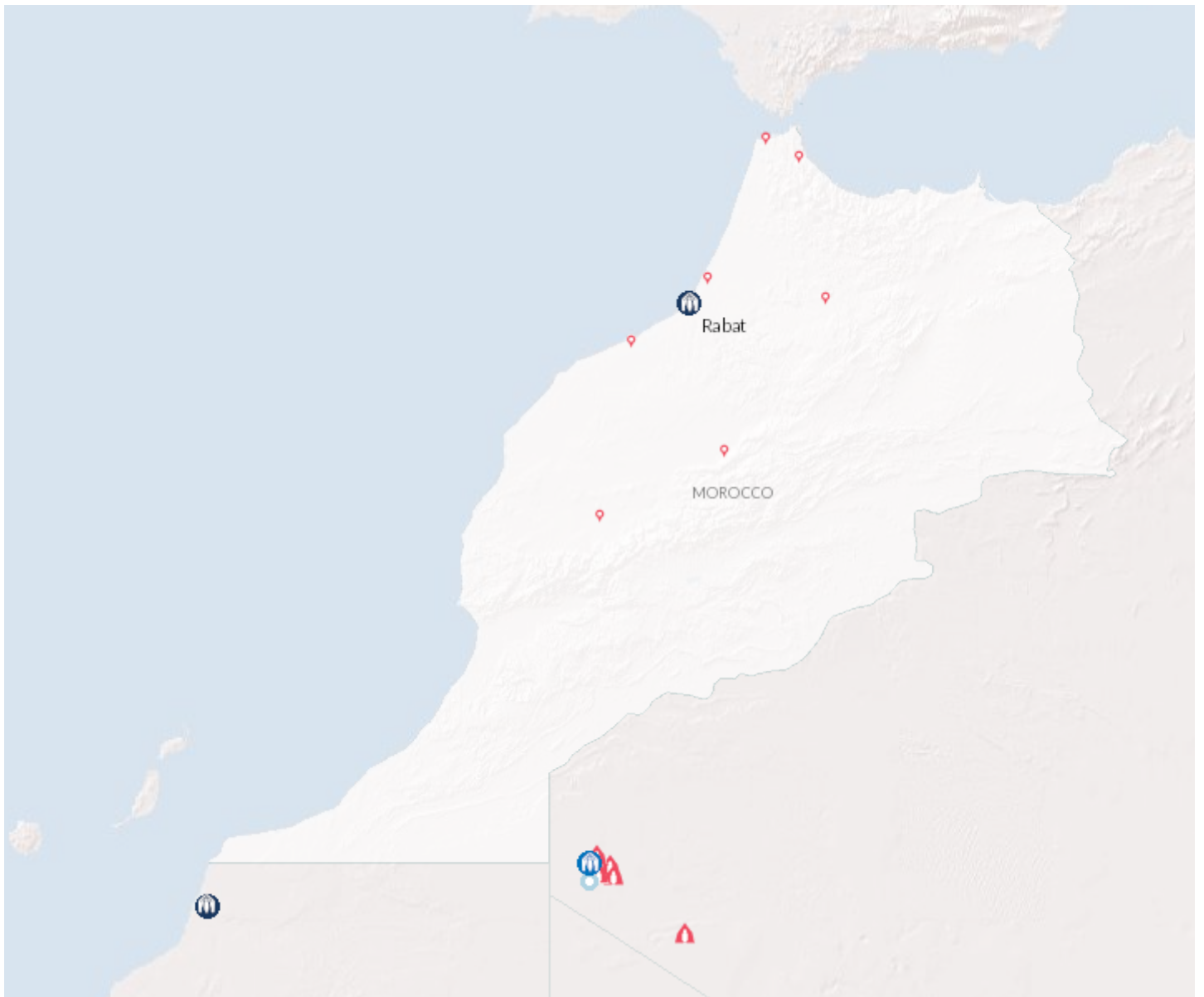


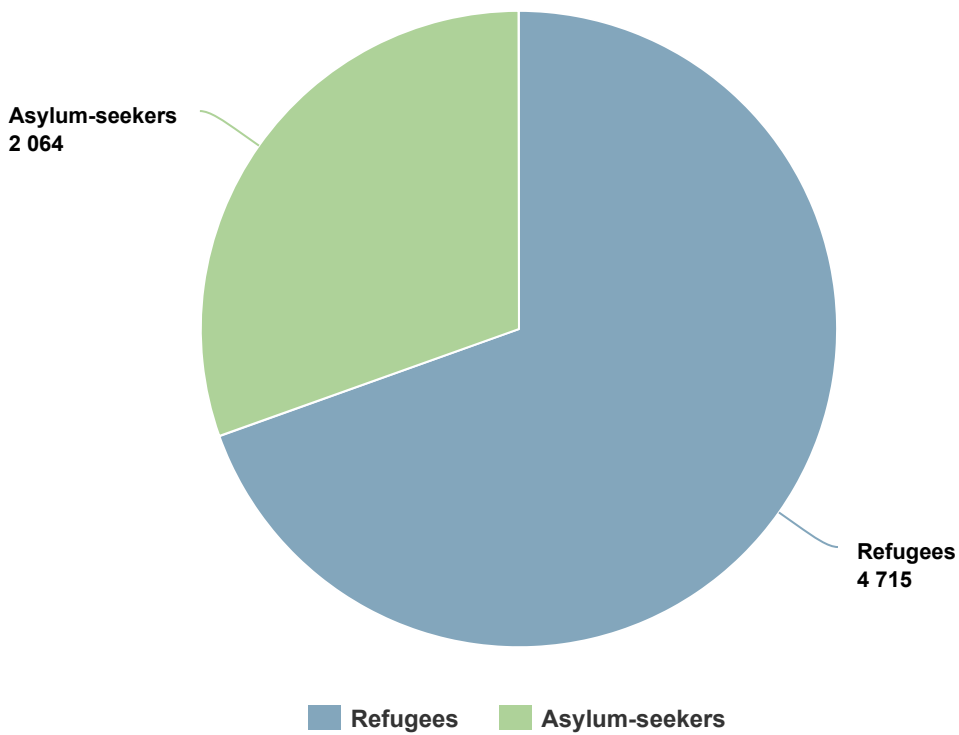
Operation: Morocco



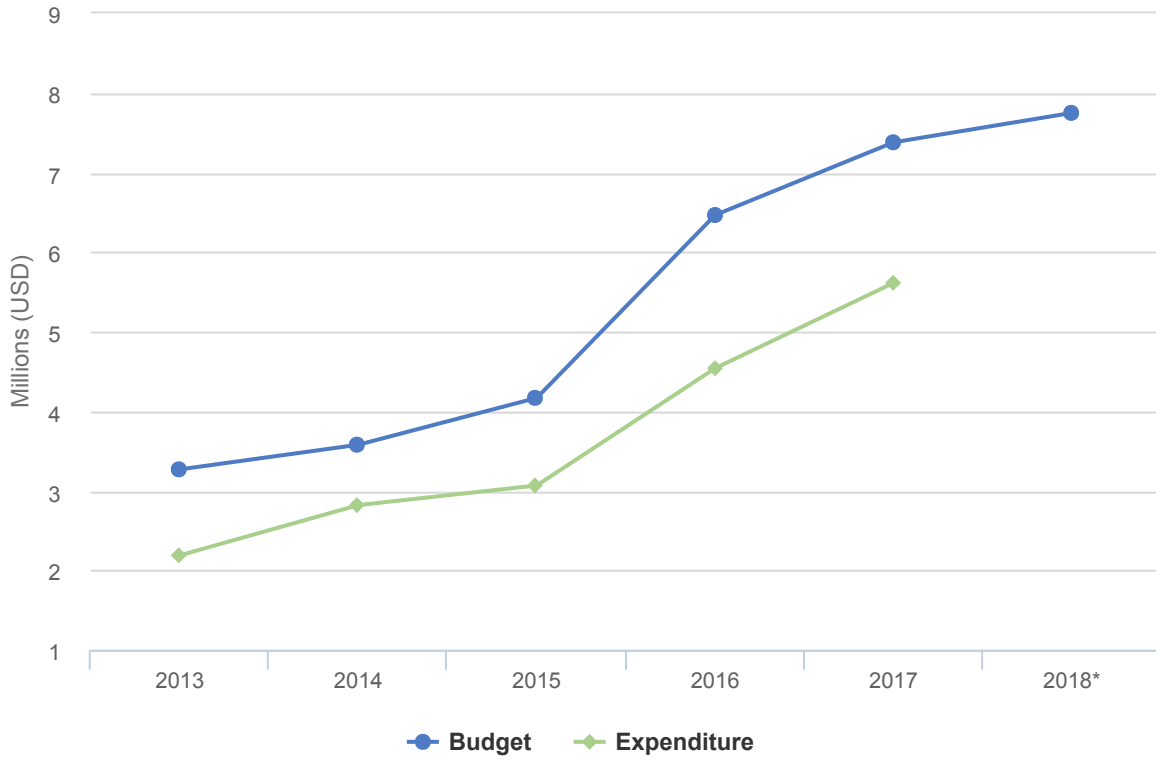
People of Concern

INCREASE IN
1% 2017

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| 2017 | 6,779 |
| 2016 | 6,733 |
| 2015 | 5,473 |



Budgets and Expenditure for Morocco



Operational context

Although having traditionally been a transit country, Morocco has also become a host country for refugees and migrants. Refugees reside in 47 cities across Morocco. This trend is positive for local integration, but also presents a challenge for the Government, UNHCR and partners to reach the most vulnerable people.

The national migration and asylum policy enables refugees to enjoy access to education, healthcare and the job market. However, gaps remained, e.g. the extension of the medical insurance scheme to refugees has been delayed.

While the submission of the draft asylum law to the Parliament was pending, UNHCR continued to register and process all asylum claims, including refugee status determination in Morocco. Asylum-seekers found by UNHCR to qualify for refugee status are subsequently referred to the inter-ministerial ad hoc commission dealing with refugee regularization. Upon recognition, Moroccan authorities grant refugee cards, based on which refugees can obtain a residence permit. However, since March 2017, the regularization of refugees by the inter-ministerial commission has been on hold. Consequently, refugees remained undocumented and could not access the formal job market. UNHCR continued to advocate with the Moroccan authorities to resume the process.

In December 2016, Morocco launched a second regularization campaign for irregular migrants. The previous campaign took place in 2014 benefitting many Syrians. As regularized migrants, individuals have access to residence permits, including the right to education and formal employment.

Population trends

In 2017, the number of refugees registered by UNHCR remained stable at some 4,770. Refugees in Morocco originate from over 37 countries, the majority (63 per cent) being from Syrian Arab Republic. The number of asylum applications decreased by 20 per cent, from 3,950 in 2016 to 3,120 in 2017.

Key achievements

- Half of the new asylum applications were referred to UNHCR by NGO partners working in northern/border areas, thereby offering a safe alternative to dangerous onward movement.
- Several MoUs were signed with national institutions, such as with the Higher National School of Administration (ENSA) and Higher Institute of Information and Communication (ISIC), to promote the inclusion of refugees.
- In cooperation with the Ministry for Migration Affairs, UNHCR undertook campaigns to encourage the private sector to employ refugees.
- Successful start and implementation of the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative Fund (DAFI) in Morocco.

Unmet needs

- Due to insufficient funding, not all refugees in need of secondary medical care could be assisted. This led to serious health complications in some cases.
- Cash transfers to the most vulnerable remain very modest and some refugees resorted to negative coping mechanisms, such as prostitution.
- UNHCR was able to cover the transport costs for only one third of the most vulnerable asylum-seekers being referred from the border areas to Rabat for registration, thereby limiting the possibility for many to submit an asylum application in Morocco.