

ALGERIA

May 2021

UNHCR provides protection, assistance, and services to Sahrawi refugees in the five camps near Tindouf, South West Algeria, with a focus on health and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH).

In Algiers, UNHCR provides protection and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers including emergency cash assistance. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR Algeria adapted

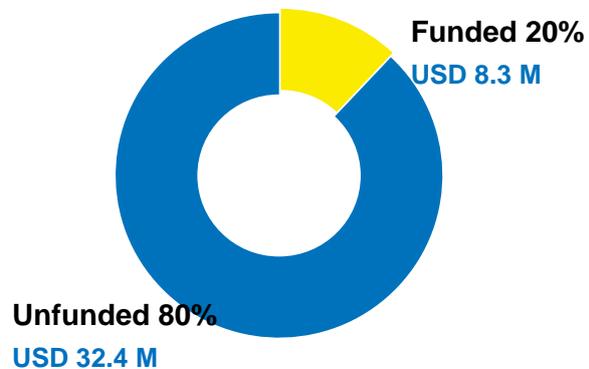
its activities to support refugees and asylum-seekers infected by the virus and impacted by the economic activities while continuing to provide lifesaving assistance.



Adwaa Rights preparing hot meals for refugees and asylum-seekers in Algiers

FUNDING

USD 40.7 M requested for Algeria Operation
 As of 25 May 2021:



COVID-19 response

Tindouf: At the beginning of the pandemic, UNHCR provided PPE (soap, bleach, mask), conducted cleaning campaign and provided lifesaving activities including health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and cooking gas to the refugees. UNHCR played the lead the role in responding to the pandemic and coordination of the PPE. UNHCR strengthened the remote monitoring system of daily activities in the five camps and gradually resumed a regular presence in the camps while respecting COVID-19 prevention and response measures. During the second wave of the virus, significant measures to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 was achieved. There is a decreasing trend in the camps; health officials continue to monitor the situation with the hope that there would not be another rebound. In April, the Government of Algeria provided 5000 vaccines for the Sahrawi refugees. The first round of the vaccination campaign ended on 15 May, and the second shot started on 10 June. A total of 767 individuals were vaccinated during the first shot of the vaccination; this represents 30% of the quantity of vaccine received from the Algerian Government. The Sahrawi authorities and health partners continue to conduct vaccination campaigns and debunk myth and hesitancy. **In Algiers,** lifesaving activities for urban refugees and asylum-seekers have been maintained, including health and cash-based assistance. While all reception and appointments are suspended due to the pandemic, UNHCR resumed the renewal of asylum certificates and refugee cards through mobile teams. The Office has reinforced communication with Persons of Concern (PoCs) through a call centre with three mobile lines operating in French, English and Arabic. Additionally, a 24 hour emergency hotline, a bulk SMS system and an online website provide information and receive feedback from refugees and asylum-seekers. (<https://help.unhcr.org/algeria/>).

 **Protection**

- Pending the establishment of a national asylum system in Algeria, **UNHCR undertakes a range of protection activities** through its offices in Algiers and Tindouf, as well as capacity building for partners and the authorities.
- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR strengthens the protection coordination mechanisms and participatory approaches that encourage community-based engagement, self-management and empowerment, particularly for youth, women and civil society organizations and ensuring specific assistance for more than 3,000 Persons with Specific Needs (PSNs) in the camps. UNHCR also promotes a favourable protection environment through the provision of capacity building opportunities for Sahrawi legal institutions, social workers, education staff and partners, as well as support for the Sahrawi Identification Centre, which issues identification cards. In addition, UNHCR and partner TGH conduct more than 40 physiotherapy sessions for families with vulnerable individuals, persons with physical, mental, and sensory disabilities and the elderly. During **homecare visits**, **social workers** provide appropriate support for their daily lives and ensure their access to UNHCR services while respecting COVID-19 prevention measures and providing **sensitization on the pandemic**.
- In **Algiers**, UNHCR conducts Refugee Status Determination (RSD) and registration and documentation of asylum-seekers while **advocating for the adoption of legislation to protect persons in need of international protection**. UNHCR strengthens the protection space for refugees and asylum-seekers, monitoring and advocating for the release of refugees and asylum-seekers in detention and provides specialized assistance to the PoCs with specific needs, including mental health and psycho-social support, housing, and cash assistance. Additionally, UNHCR raises awareness among populations of concern on the importance of **birth registration and receiving birth certificates** to prevent the risk of statelessness. To tackle the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic that have disproportionately affected refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR provides cash-based assistance to the most vulnerable through adapted distribution modalities such as home delivery and mobile teams.

 **Education**

- In Algeria, all refugees and asylum-seekers have free access to the public education system. UNHCR and its partner NADA support the **enrollment of nearly all children in public schools every year**. UNHCR also provides transportation, school supplies, a daily meal and support classes for all essential subjects and organizes recreational activities. Moreover, UNHCR supports enrolment of children in kindergartens, focusing on households headed by single parents. UNHCR distributed **130 tablets** to refugee children living in Algiers to support distance learning. In **Tindouf**, almost all school-aged children are enrolled in primary and lower intermediate schools in the camps. **Psycho-social and mental health support** is also provided for students, including children with specific needs in specialized education centres. To ensure a safe learning environment, UNHCR supports the sector by providing equipment, stationery, books of which one book is given to each child and capacity-building and **financial incentives** for more than 1,000 education staff. To allow vulnerable refugees from the camps and urban areas to cover their daily needs and obtain a university degree, UNHCR provided DAFI scholarships for 265 Sahrawi and urban refugee students for the current school year.

 **Health and Nutrition**

- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR covers 70% of the medical costs and incentives for 40 Sahrawi refugee doctors in the five regional hospitals in the camps, funds the Sahrawi Midwife and Nursing School and offers capacity-building activities on the integrated management of childhood illnesses, psycho-social support, and non-communicable diseases. To ensure the provision of specialized health care. UNHCR supported the Sahrawi referral system by maintaining the ambulance fleets and guest houses in Algiers and Bechar. UNHCR supports the Sahrawi Health Information System and conducts, jointly with WFP, a **nutrition survey** in each camp every two years.
- Furthermore, in collaboration with WFP and the Algerian Red Crescent, UNHCR supports the supplementary **feeding program for malnourished children and pregnant or lactating women** and conducts **awareness and prevention campaigns** about anaemia, chronic malnutrition, and mental health. UNHCR also regularly provides medical supplies to all stakeholders, including the Sahrawi health system. UNHCR has also collaborated with the Algerian Red Crescent and relevant stakeholders to support Sahrawi families suffering from malnutrition.
- In **Algiers**, refugees and asylum-seekers have access to basic healthcare. UNHCR and partners provide information and facilitate access to national health facilities. Where necessary and possible, UNHCR supports medical treatment not covered by the national scheme, that include specific medications and laboratory tests. UNHCR and partner, Humanity and Inclusion (HI), provide individual psychological support, as well as assistance to persons of concern with disabilities



Food Security

- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR regularly complements the monthly food distributions provided by WFP by providing yeast for baking bread and fresh food items. UNHCR distributed 33 Metric Tons of Dates and 334,180kg of fresh food, each person received 1kg onions, 1kg potatoes and 0.5kg carrots during the month of Ramadan. In the camps, UNHCR and WFP monitor refugees' access to food through **monthly food basket monitoring** at distribution points and post-distribution monitoring at the household level.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- In the context of scarce water resources and extreme weather conditions, accessing water services in the camps near **Tindouf** is a challenge that can directly impact health, education, and daily life. UNHCR provides **about 700,000 m³ of water per year to the Sahrawi refugees** living in the camps through the operation and maintenance of existing water facilities, the installation of new facilities, and monitoring the water quality. UNHCR also continues to renew the fleet of trucks for distribution of 70% of the water, as well as reservoirs used by families to store household water. In 2020, UNHCR provided eight water trucks and developed through Oxfam a WASH strategy and multi-year plan for improving the water supply, which offers further guidance for this sector.
- UNHCR supports the **waste management system** in the camps through the procurement of garbage collection trucks, provision of necessary equipment, and payment of incentives to 82 workers. In addition, UNHCR is beginning the roll out of a plastic recycling project to reduce the quantity of solid waste.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR supports the Sahrawi refugee community in its **disinfection campaigns** to clean and sterilize areas of the camps through the provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning equipment and solutions. UNHCR and partners regularly produce **soap bars and bleach** for the chlorination of water distributed to all refugees and 123 health and education facilities. Furthermore, UNHCR provides soap bars and sanitary materials to 48,400 women and girls of reproductive age.



Shelter and NFIs

- To cover the increasing needs of shelter in the **Sahrawi refugee camps**, UNHCR annually provides **shelter materials** to the most vulnerable refugee families. In 2020, a total of 2,010 family tent kits were provided, and over 3,700 new and efficient **cooking stoves** were distributed. Furthermore, UNHCR provided more than 263,000 **second-hand clothes** donated by UNIQLO for the entire population.
- In **Algiers**, to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and allow refugees and asylum-seekers to cover basic needs like housing, food, hygiene, and nutrition, UNHCR expanded its quarterly **Multi-Purpose Cash-based Assistance** programme. From March 2020 to January 2021, over 1,170 refugees and asylum-seekers benefited from MPCA through adapted distribution modalities such as home delivery by mobile teams.



Access to Energy

In **Tindouf**, UNHCR provides safe cooking fuel energy to 28,000 Sahrawi families in the form of one gas cylinder per household per month, thereby preventing the use of fossil fuel to cook. Safe cooking energy covers 60% of the population needs.



Logistics

- To ensure the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance in **Tindouf**, UNHCR maintains a large fleet of trucks and organizes the delivery of assistance from Oran harbour to Tindouf. Through partner ATTsF and TGH, UNHCR maintains mechanical workshops for the maintenance and repair of the operational fleet, water trucks, programme vehicles, ambulance, garbage collection trucks and generators.



Self-reliance

- UNHCR's **livelihoods strategy** in **Tindouf** focuses on developing skills and facilitating access to financial and productive assets for small enterprise development and employment, in addition to reinforcing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the camps. UNHCR supports **production workshops** in the camps, including a soap factory, sewing workshops, five vocational training centres, and a business innovation centre.
- In partnership with the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM), a multi-year strategy has been developed and is under implementation to revamp vocational training in the camps. **Vocational training centres** provide 9-to-18-month courses on auto mechanics, electricity, carpentry, sewing, pastry production, administration, languages,

digital media and computers. A total of 272 young refugees registered for diploma-based Vocational Training in 2020, and 100 women have registered for vocational training in the women centres.

- Since 2016, over 150 businesses have been supported by UNHCR and partners, directly benefiting some 600 refugee entrepreneurs. With support from UNHCR's **Community Connectivity Fund**, an Android app to facilitate trade within the camps was developed based on a refugees' original idea. The App has more than 4,000 users, more than 1,000 items and services advertised, and more than 800 sales made through the App since its release in April 2020. UNHCR through DRC, provides strengthened existing businesses support the establishment of youth-led businesses which meet local needs and enhanced the development of entrepreneurial ecosystem in the camps.
- In **Algiers**, asylum-seekers and refugees have free access to public vocational training centres since 2018. UNHCR and partners facilitate their enrolment, supporting equal access of women and girls to become independent and self-reliant.

Durable Solutions

- In 2020, UNHCR **Algiers** recommended 80 refugees for resettlement to third countries, including Canada and France, but only four refugees could depart due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, departures resumed in 2021 and 47 persons of concern left for resettlement in January 2021. UNHCR also promotes complementary pathways for admission to third countries to help more refugees attain sustainable solutions. In 2020 facilitated the departure of five refugees for family reunification to France and Spain.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR is a member of the UN Country Team (UNCT) and works closely with the Algerian Government, WFP, UNICEF and 13 partners; three in **Algiers** and ten in **Tindouf**. UNHCR's partners are: Algerian Red Crescent (ARC), *Association des Femmes Algériennes pour le Développement* (AFAD), *Asociación de Trabajadores y Técnicos sin Fronteras* (ATTSF), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), *Humanité et Inclusion* (HI), *Enfants Réfugiés du Monde* (ERM), Green Tea Association, Movement for Peace, Disarmament & Liberty (MPDL), Oxfam, *Réseau algérien pour la défense des droits de l'enfant* (NADA), *Solidaridad Internacional Andalucía* (SI-A), *Triangle Génération Humanitaire* (TGH) and *Universidad Autonoma de Madrid* (UAM).
- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR leads **inter-agency efforts to support the Sahrawi refugee programme** in close coordination with WFP providing food assistance and resilience and UNICEF providing health, education, and child protection. **UNHCR leads the Inter-Agency Working Group and Inter-Sector Working Group**, the regular sector coordination meetings for the Protection, Livelihoods, WASH and Health sectors, in coordination with the Sahrawi refugee community, as well as participating in the Education and Food sector coordination meetings. UNHCR works closely with Sahrawi community representatives and civil society across the five refugee camps. UNHCR is coordinating the response to COVID-19 in the Sahrawi refugee camps with the Sahrawi and Tindouf departments in charge of health.

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 Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Netherlands 36.1 million
 Denmark 34.6 million | Germany 22.1 million | Switzerland 16.4 million
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