

ALGERIA

July 2021

UNHCR provides protection, assistance, and services to Sahrawi refugees in the five camps near Tindouf, South West Algeria, with a focus on humanitarian, life-saving and opportunities for livelihood and self-reliance.

In Algiers, UNHCR provides protection and assistance like registration of asylum-seekers, Refugee Status Determination, issuance of documents to refugees. The activities for urban refugees include to provide cash assistance,

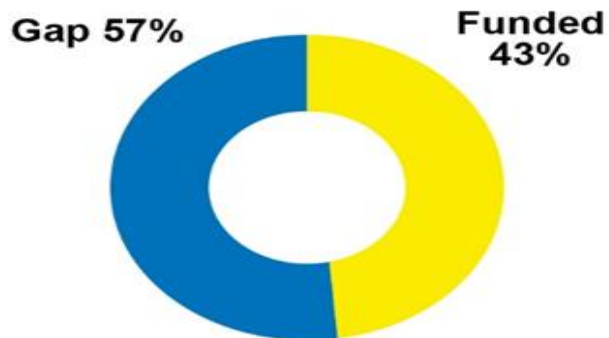
education and shelter support to refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR is working with humanitarian actors to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 for the refugees and asylum-seekers in the camps and urban areas.



A refugee is receiving treatment from a trained refugee doctor in the Sahrawi camps. © UNHCR/Eunice Ohanusi

Funding as (of 21 July 2021)

USD 40.7 M requested for Algeria Operation



COVID-19 response

Tindouf: UNHCR is playing the lead the role in responding to the pandemic in the Sahrawi refugee camps. UNHCR strengthened the remote monitoring system of daily activities in the five camps and gradually resumed a regular presence in the camps after the first and second waves while respecting COVID-19 prevention and response pro tocols. By the end of July 2021, the Sahrawi camps experienced a virulent third wave with more than 1,460 cases and 63 fatalities and the infections particularly affecting the elderly. Vaccinations for the Sahrawi refugees started in May 2021, the Algeria Government donated vaccinations to the refugees and UNHCR is supporting the vaccinations campaign by contributing to the capacity building efforts, providing incentives for refugee health workers, and logistics support. UNHCR is actively supporting in the sensitization campaign to strengthen awareness and debunk the myth and hesitancy of taking the vaccinations. More than 2,500 Saharawi refugees have responded to the need to fight the pandemic, UNHCR provided 10,000 rapid antigen tests and 50,000 masks, soap, hand sanitizer and bleach for disinfection of public places.

In Algiers: UNHCR response to urban refugees is to provide health and cash assistance. All the persons of concern to UNHCR are included in Algeria vaccination plan and in order to prevent the spread of the virus, UNHCR started issuing the renewal of asylum certificates and refugee cards through mobile teams as a contactless delivery of services to the persons of concern and to further protect the refugees from the risks of infection. The Office set communication with Persons of Concern 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**

UNHCR undertakes a range of protection activities through its offices in Algiers and Tindouf and contributes to the capacity building for partners and the authorities. In **Tindouf**, Sahrawi refugees are recognized as “*Prima Facie*”, majority of them possess documentations issued under the refugee leadership system. 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 for the refugees legal institutions, social workers teachers, physiotherapists and the payment of their incentives.

In **Algiers**, UNHCR conducts registration, Refugee Status Determination (RSD) 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 by monitoring and advocating for the release of refugees and asylum-seekers in detention and provides specialized assistance to the PoCs with specific needs, including providing mental health and psycho-social support, housing, and cash assistance. In order to prevent the risk of stateless, UNHCR raises awareness among populations of concern on the importance of **birth registration and receiving birth certificates**. UNHCR provides cash-based assistance to the most vulnerable through adapted distribution modalities such as home delivery and mobile teams to tackle the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic that have disproportionately affected refugees and asylum-seekers.

 **Education**

In Algeria, all refugees and asylum-seekers have free access to education. UNHCR and its partner NADA support the **enrollment of nearly all children in public schools every year**. In the Sahrawi camps, 36,000 refugee boys and girls were enrolled in the schools across the camps which include 8, 230 children in 31 Kindergartens, 20,877 pupils in 27 primary schools and 7,845 in 11 lower secondary schools and in Algiers 280 children were enrolled in school For 2020-2021 school year. UNHCR also provides books, transportation, school supplies, school 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 **164 tablets** to refugee children living in Algiers to support distance learning.

In **the Sahrawi camps**, 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 refugee children by providing teaching aids, stationery and books of which one book is given to each child. UNHCR contributes to the capacity building of the refugee teachers and pays **monetary incentives** for more than 1,000 refugee qualified teachers and staff. UNHCR is also supporting the need for University education by providing DAFI scholarships for 265 Sahrawi and urban refugee students for the current school year.

 **Health and Nutrition**

In **Tindouf**, UNHCR supports the Sahrawi Health Information System and 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 paediatric disease, psycho-social support, and non-communicable diseases. To ensure the provision of specialized healthcare. UNHCR supports the Sahrawi referral system by maintaining the ambulance fleets and guest houses in Algiers and Bechar. UNHCR also regularly provides medicines and medical equipment to the Sahrawi health system.

Furthermore, in collaboration with WFP and the Algerian Red Crescent, UNHCR supports the supplementary **feeding programme for malnourished children and pregnant or lactating women** and conducts **awareness and prevention campaigns** about anaemia, chronic malnutrition, and mental health. 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, such as specific medications and laboratory tests. UNHCR and partner, Humanity and Inclusion (HI) provide 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 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 and jointly conduct nutrition survey in the camps. Due to COVID-19, the survey was not conducted in 2020.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

In 2021, UNHCR Algeria strategy to improve the accessibility of water to the refugees is to stop water trucking by extending water distribution in the five camps and giving more responsibilities to the refugees in terms of management and repairs. UNHCR provides **about 700,000 m³ of water per year to the Sahrawi refugees** living in the camps and has been able to maintain the supply due to management and repairs of existing water facilities, the installation of new facilities, and monitoring the water quality. UNHCR also continues to renew the fleet of trucks for the distribution of water to the refugees. In 2021, a new water chlorination was done in Awserd camp and three new submersible pumps were installed in Layoune camp as part of the strategy to make water accessible to all the PoCs.

In terms of sanitation, UNHCR supports the **waste management system** in the camps through the procurement of necessary equipment, garbage collection trucks, use of waste management innovations and payment of incentives to the refugee workers. In 2021, UNHCR purchased four new trucks which was handed over to the partner, ATTSEF, under the right of use agreement. UNHCR also supports the provision of necessary equipment, and payment of incentives to 82 refugee workers. In addition, UNHCR is beginning the roll out of a plastic recycling project to reduce the quantity of garbage waste in the environment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR supports the Sahrawi refugees in its **disinfection campaigns** to clean and sterilize areas of the camps through the provision of PPE and cleaning materials and solutions. UNHCR and partners regularly produce **soap bars and bleach** for the chlorination of water distributed to all refugees and the 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. 48% of the refugee households in the camps are in need shelter; from January to June 2021, 3,015 traditional tents accessories were provided for the refugee households which covers 21% of the humanitarian needs. UNHCR provided 1,000 efficient **cooking stoves to the refugees out of the gap of 14,000** and 67 tons of soap has been distributed to the refugee households from January to June 2021. 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 provided **Multi-Purpose Cash-based Assistance (MPCA)** to over 640 refugees and asylum-seekers from January to June 2021.



Access to Energy

In **Tindouf**, UNHCR provides safe cooking fuel energy to 28,092 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. From March to June 2021, UNHCR through ARC distributed 109,420 cooking gas cylinders (refilling) to the households with a rate of one cylinder per household.



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 ATTSEF and TGH, UNHCR maintains mechanical workshops for the maintenance and repair of the operational fleet, water trucks, programmable 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.

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. UNHCR and partners facilitate their enrolment, supporting equal access of women and girls to become independent and self-reliant.



Durable Solutions

From the beginning of January to June 2021, UNHCR recommended 35 refugees for resettlement to France Canada and Sweden. 41 refugees were submitted for resettlement to Canada and Sweden during the same period. UNHCR assisted, seven refugees to depart for family while one refugee departed for education reason.

Working with Partners

UNHCR is a member of the UN Country Team (UNCT) and works closely with the Algerian Government, WFP, UNICEF, WHO and 13 NGOs: three in **Algiers** and ten in **Tindouf**.

NGOs are: Algerian Red Crescent (ARC), *Association Femmes Action et Développement* (AFAD), *Asociación de Trabajadores y Técnicos sin Fronteras* (ATTSF), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), *Humanité et Inclusion* (HI), *Enfants Refugiés 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).

Thanks to donors who have contributed to Algeria

Operation in 2021: [United States of America](#), [Italy](#), [Norway](#), [Germany](#), [Japan](#), [Canada](#), [France](#), [H Google](#)

Thanks to major donors of unearmarked contributions in 2021

Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Netherlands 36.1 million Denmark 34.6 million | Germany 22.1 million | Switzerland 16.4 million Private donors Spain 13.3 million | Ireland 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million

Algeria | Armenia | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Portugal | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Singapore | Thailand | Turkey | Uruguay | Private donors



Follow us [@UNHCRAlgeria](#)



For more information contact:

Eunice Ohanusi, Associate External Relations Officer, Tindouf ohanusie@unhcr.org

Marina Villuendas, Assistant Reporting Officer, Algiers villuend@unhcr.org