

TUNISIA

30 November 2019

Key figures

3,117

Persons of Concern to UNHCR

1,886

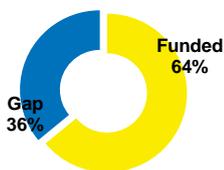
Newly registered asylum-seekers and refugees since January 2019 (following profiling)

64%

of people who arrived in Tunisia in 2019 as part of mixed population movements expressed intention to seek asylum in Tunisia

Funding

USD **7.9 M** required for 2019 operations



USD **5.0 M** received as of 26 November 2019

Highlights

During the month of November, some 194 third country nationals reached Tunisia, mostly rescued/intercepted at sea (185) and nine having crossed overland through Libya. Between 20 and 21 November, two groups of individuals (42 and 88 respectively) from Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Guinea, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Tunisia attempted sea crossings around Sfax. All of them were handed over to the National Guard and then released. On 21 November, the Tunisian Maritime Guard rescued a boat in distress, reportedly having departed Libya, with 43 individuals on board. The group comprised of mostly minors from Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia, was disembarked in Djerba and transferred to IOM facilities in Zarzis and Medenine where they received immediate assistance. UNHCR is proceeding with profiling and registration. **Since the beginning of the year, 724 third-country nationals have been referred to UNHCR as rescued/intercepted at sea, more than double the number of 2018 (290 individuals).**

On 27–28 November, UNHCR partner the Arab Institute for Human Rights organized an international seminar on “Media & Refugees: challenges and best practices”. The aim was to share experiences among journalists and media professionals from different regions (Europe, Middle East, North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa) about the way refugees and asylum issues are portrayed in the media and the extent to which this can influence public opinion. The seminar was positively welcomed by journalists who recognized the difference that could be made by presenting refugee and asylum issues in an informed manner.

Operational Response

2,926 refugees and asylum-seekers are benefitting from winter assistance in the modality of a one-time cash voucher. Most of them will use this assistance to buy winter clothes. Winter assistance is given once per year to refugees and asylum seekers registered all across Tunisia, based on needs and availability of funds.

UNHCR briefed the General Director of the National Guard of Sfax, upon the latter’s request, about UNHCR’s mandate and activities. Cooperation is expected to be strengthened with the National Guard on refugee protection. It was agreed that samples of refugee cards will be distributed to all police stations, so that the security forces can identify persons of concern to UNHCR and ensure their safety and freedom of movement. In addition, trainings on international protection will be held and cooperation during disembarkation operations will be enhanced.

Hassine (to the left) is a Syrian refugee who has been living in the Tunisian capital with his wife and three children for five years. On 21 November, he inaugurated his own business, a fast food restaurant called “Malishem” (treasure of Damascus), serving Syrian specialities, with the support of UNHCR partner Tunisian Association for Management and Social Stability who specialize in ensuring the economic inclusion of vulnerable groups.



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