

TUNISIA

Highlights

31 July 2020

Key figures

5,032

Persons of concern to UNHCR (asylum seekers & refugees)

1,869

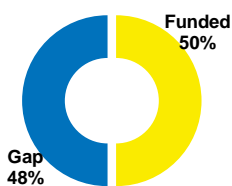
Newly registered POCs so far in 2020 as part of an enhanced backlog clearing exercise

210

Individuals were profiled so far in 2020 to assess their need for international protection

Funding

USD **11.6 M** required in 2020



USD **5.8 M** received as of 4 August 2020

As of 31 July 2020, Tunisia recorded 1,561 confirmed cases of COVID-19; with 51 deaths and 1,221 cases recovered. Active cases rose from 93 (as of 2 July) to 289 (as of 31 July 2020). Most of the new cases were detected among people repatriated from abroad after the re-opening of international borders on 27 June; while domestic infections remained very limited. Positive cases were also detected among mixed populations crossing the border from Algeria; including three Syrian refugees. UNHCR donated and installed ten Refugee Housing Units (RHU) to authorities in Kasserine Governorate to support the isolation of cases to prevent further spread of COVID-19.

During July, according to local sources, more than 100 rescue and interceptions at sea and interceptions on land operations involving more than 1,800 people (mostly Tunisian nationals) were carried out by Tunisian authorities, this represents an increase of 230% compared to June 2020 and 923% compared to 2019 figures. On 31 July, a boat in distress with 70 people on board of different nationalities (mainly Guinea, Gambia, Senegal, Nigeria) departed from Zawia (Libya) was rescued by the Tunisian Coast Guard and disembarked in Zarzis. The rescued were placed in quarantine and profiling is scheduled for August, after which, UNHCR will proceed with registration and assistance for those in need of international protection.

Operational Response

Twenty people who were rescued on 19 June 2020 in Sfax were profiled after a compulsory quarantine period. Five of them expressed their intention to seek asylum in Tunisia. They were registered and a vulnerability assessment was carried out for provision of assistance. All the rescued were hosted in "Ibn Sina" accommodation centre in Sfax (run by the Government of Tunisia).

On 1 – 2 July, UNHCR partner the Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR) organized a second workshop for the representatives of the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment. The workshop was aimed at finalizing a document of procedures for the better inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in vocational training and employment opportunities in Tunisia. Opening the workshop, the Ministry's Cabinet Chief announced a series of measures to be adopted in order to facilitate access to employment and vocational training for refugees and asylum seekers. More information is available in the attached Special Update #1.



Opening speeches at the IADH workshop with the Ministry of Employment ©UNHCR/C.Cavalcanti

Three persons detained in the Al Wardia Reception and Orientation Centre were able to access asylum procedures, be released and registered, thanks to the collaboration between UNHCR and the Direction of Borders and Foreigners (DFE).

On 24 July, UNHCR partner the Tunisian Refugee Council (CTR), together with the National Union of Tunisian Women (UNFT) invited 15 refugees and asylum seekers to present their handicrafts and artistic skills (tailoring, painting, small jewellery, photography and singing) in one of their cultural centres in Tunis, with the aim of enhancing refugee's self-reliance and livelihood opportunities.

UNHCR welcomed the timely and generous contribution from the US Government – the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration – to the Tunisia operation for protection and assistance of those in need of international protection and assistance.

UNHCR Tunisia is grateful for the support of [European Union](#) | [Italy](#) | [Luxembourg](#) | [Monaco](#) | [Netherlands](#) | [RDPP NA – EU](#) | [Switzerland](#) | [United Nations Multi-Partners Trust Fund](#) | [United States of America](#) and to those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and softly earmarked funds.