

KEY FIGURES

902

People of concern to UNHCR as of 1 of November 2015

348

Of the most vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers received financial assistance in October 2015

7

Boats rescued-at-sea off Tunisian shores in 2015

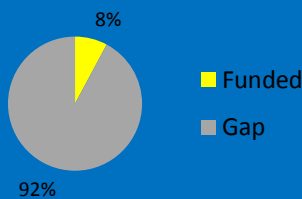
147

Individuals rescued at sea have approached UNHCR to claim asylum in Tunisia in 2015

FUNDING

USD 6.6 million

requested for the operation



PRIORITIES

- Support Tunisia to develop a comprehensive national protection system, which would allow authorities to progressively assume its responsibilities under the 1951 Convention relating to the status of Refugees.
- Provide protection and assistance to persons of concern, using a community based protection approach.

TUNISIA

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

September - October 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

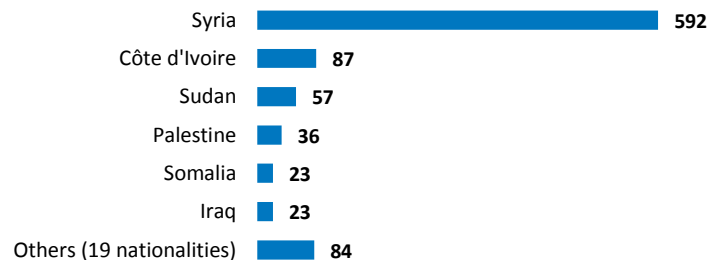
- UNHCR participated to the **IFRC-ICRC high-level Partnership on Migration**, held in Tunis on 17-18 September. UNHCR contributed to the event in several sessions as key note speakers, moderators or facilitators. UNHCR presented its perspective on the current “migration crisis” in Europe, its underlying causes and possible responses.
- UNHCR Tunisia organized with partner IADH (the Arab Institute for Human Rights) a **media workshop** for 20 Tunisian journalists on 12-14 October in Sousse. The workshop trained media professionals on human rights issues and on international protection of refugees and asylum seekers.
- UNHCR organized a **study visit to Jordan** from 5 to 9 October, for **Tunisian Health managers** to be inspired by the modalities of access to health services for refugees in urban settings in Jordan, where the host government has gained an in-depth experience on how to better address this issue.
- UNHCR participated from 23 to 25 October to the **Celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations**. An exhibition at the Bardo Museum presented UNHCR and other UN agencies’ mandates and activities in Tunisia.



Representative's meeting with H.E Mr Najem Gharsalli, Tunisian Minister of Interior that was held on 8 October, 2015 on the occasion of the donation. ©HCR/Yamouni

Population of concern

A total of **902** people of concern as of 1st November



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

Pending the adoption and implementation of an asylum law in Tunisia, UNHCR is the sole entity conducting refugee status determination in Tunisia. UNHCR is therefore focused on ensuring that persons of concern are registered, issued with UNHCR certificates, and protected against *refoulement*. UNHCR's overall objective is to support Tunisia in creating a comprehensive national protection system. Since 2011, UNHCR supported the drafting of a national asylum law and continues to carry out advocacy and capacity building initiatives in order to help Tunisian authorities finalize the text.

Achievements



Protection

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR continues to **host survivors of rescue at sea incidents** in Medenine. To address their needs, psychosocial counselling sessions as well as field visits and counselling by UNHCR staff are regularly conducted. Persons who take the risk to cross the Mediterranean are often misinformed on the risks and outcomes of making that choice. In the absence of a practical alternative to consider, many of those rescued at sea in southern Tunisia, return back to Libya within days to take the risk again. Therefore, part of UNHCR support to those rescued at sea is to provide them with a specialised support program where they have opportunity to reflect on their experience, learn about expected outcomes of taking such risks, and explore available opportunities and safer choices.
- To improve Tunisia's preparedness in case of an influx of population from Libya and to strengthen the protection space in Tunisia**, UNHCR continues to build the capacities of local authorities. This has since consisted of training for Tunisian immigration officers on protection-sensitive border management, organizing study visits and experts' assessments, as well as donating equipment. UNHCR cooperation with Tunisian authorities regarding border management was initiated in 2013, with a view to support the authorities' plans to reform its border management processes and ensure that international protection considerations would be reflected in this regard. As part of the Border Management Project, **technologically-advanced materials** (such as travel documents scanners) **were donated to the Ministry of Interior by UNHCR on 8 October 2015**.
- UNHCR's partner ADRA is channelizing job and vocational training opportunities for refugees in Tunisia.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- There is no national asylum system in place in Tunisia. UNHCR supports Tunisian authorities with the development of a national legal asylum framework, in accordance with the 1951 Geneva Convention & 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees to which Tunisia is a signatory.
- The national response for rescue at sea, notably after disembarkation, needs reinforcement. UNHCR is supporting Tunisian authorities in developing a predictable response mechanism for rescue at sea incidents.



Education

Achievements and Impact

- The **integration of refugee children into the Tunisian public education system** was facilitated. UNHCR's partners the Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC) in the north and Islamic Relief Tunisia (IRT) in the south provided grants for 158 enrolled refugee children to cover the purchase of books and supplies.
- Recreational activities** are organized on a daily basis in the UNHCR dormitories in Medenine, and two "go-and-see" visits were organized in September and October for refugee children and youth in the south. The objective of the visits was to help refugee youth and children discover new areas and traditions in other regions of Tunisia.



Go-and-see visit organized by UNHCR's partner IRT in Tozeur for 30 refugee children and youth, 29-31 October. ©IRT

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- While refugee children have full access to public education in Tunisia, they may face difficulties because of language barriers or as a result of an interrupted education. Continuous tutorial classes in French are needed to ease refugee children’s integration into the Tunisian curriculum. UNHCR collaborated with “Tunisie Terre d’Asile” who organizes tutorial classes in French for refugee children and adults in Tunis.

 Health

Achievements and Impact

- Refugees continue to have **access to public medical facilities** in Tunisia. UNHCR is covering the costs of primary and emergency healthcare through its partner TRC.
- Awareness raising sessions** for refugees are regularly conducted in the dormitories by UNHCR partners IRT and TRC on various topics: a session on hygiene was conducted on 8 September, while on 15 and 16 October residents of the dormitories were trained on first aid assistance and preventing domestic risks. In addition, the IRT psychosocial team conducts weekly Focus Group Discussions with refugees on stress management and communication.



First aid training conducted on 15-16 October for refugees in Medenine. ©IRT

 Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

Achievements and Impact

- In 2015, UNHCR’s partner ADRA started its project to support self-reliance and employability of refugees in Tunisia. Within this framework, a service company called IGS “International General Services” was created and has begun recruiting persons of concern to work in various fields such as maintenance (electricity and A/C). Through this project, refugees sign a one-year work contract that provides a stable income and contributes towards self-reliance.
- In Medenine and Ben Guerdane, refugees have access to language (French and English) and IT trainings.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The lack of Tunisian documentation, especially work permits, constrains refugees’ access to formal employment. UNHCR is advocating for the issuance of temporary residence and work permits while working with partners and local authorities to find practical and sustainable solutions to facilitate refugee employment.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

UNHCR works closely with Tunisian authorities, most notably the Tunisian Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, Women’s Affairs, Justice and Land Affairs and Employment. UNHCR Tunisia is working with four partners: the Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC), Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRT), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and the Arab Institute for Human Rights (IADH). UNHCR is also cooperating with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), “Tunisie Terre d’Asile” and the Scouts.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation in Tunisia amount to some **USD 0.5 million**. UNHCR is grateful for the financial support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation, and to those who have contributed to UNHCR activities with non-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds in 2015.

Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2015: United States of America (251 M) | Sweden (80 M) | United Kingdom (53 M) | Netherlands (45 M) | Norway (44 M) | Priv Donors Spain (36 M) | Denmark (28 M) | Australia (24 M) | Japan (18 M) | Canada (18 M) | Switzerland (16 M) | Priv Donors Italy (15 M) | France (14 M) | Priv Donors Republic of Korea (11 M) | Finland (10 M) | Priv Donors Japan (10 M)

Funding received (in USD)



Contacts: Julia Gouyou Beauchamps, Associate Reporting Officer, gouyou@unhcr.org Tel: +21671963383, +21658335124
Kenza Yamouni, Associate Executive Officer, yamouni@unhcr.org Tel: +21671963367, +21658335127