

## KEY FIGURES

**90,000**

Vulnerable Sahrawi refugees living in five camps near Tindouf

**6,489**

Persons of concern in urban areas registered with UNHCR Algiers; 5,721 are Syrians

**70**

Syrians approach UNHCR on a monthly basis for registration

**100**

Per cent of school-aged children (32,581) in Tindouf camps are enrolled in primary education

**18**

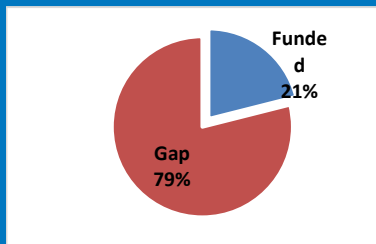
Litres of potable water available per person per day in Sahrawi refugee camps

## FUNDING

**USD 33.2 Million**

Requested for the operation

The operation is **21%** funded



## ALGERIA

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 August – 30 November

## HIGHLIGHTS

- In response to the devastating October floods in the Sahrawi refugee camps near Tindouf, UNHCR led the emergency response in all sectors as well as the ongoing rehabilitation phase.
- During the first days of the crisis, UNHCR provided 49,600 pieces of bread and 25,600 portions of cheese to the most affected residents of Dakhla camp.
- Two airlifts brought shelter and core relief items, which arrived during the last week of October and three more reached Tindouf by mid-November. The five airlifts brought a total of 4,205 tents as well as 15,822 essential life-sustaining items (fleece blankets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, plastic rolls, and plastic sheets).

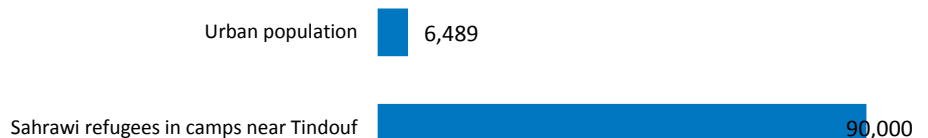
*The first of five UNHCR airlifts containing tents and core relief items arrived in Tindouf on 28 October. UNHCR/R. Fraser*



- UNHCR Algiers conducted an Age and Gender Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) Participatory Assessment with Syrian refugees in September. AGDM was conducted this year with Syrian refugee families and for single men, together with UNHCR's partners Réseau Algérien pour la défense des droits de l'enfant (NADA) and Caritas.
- The new model for the Sahrawi health information system was finalized and approved by the Sahrawi refugee community.
- UNHCR secured a building for the new Sahrawi Innovation Centre at Rabouni, targeting talented youth for scholarships and online courses that will be provided in 2016 by a Spanish University (Universidad Autonoma de Madrid).

#### Population of concern

A total of **96,489** people of concern



## UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Context

UNHCR's activities in Algeria are characterized by the protracted nature of the Sahrawi refugee community living in five camps near Tindouf, as well as a south-north mixed migration situation where 6,489 urban refugees and asylum-seekers in Algiers are registered, processed (refugee status determination-RSD) and assisted by UNHCR.

UNHCR continues to provide protection and undertake care and maintenance activities for 90,000 of the most vulnerable Sahrawi refugees living in five camps in the Tindouf region pending a durable solution to their plight. UNHCR, in coordination with WFP and the Sahrawi refugee community, launched a livelihoods initiative to establish the basis for sustainable income generating and employment opportunities. Three Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) are being implemented in 2015. Youth associations have been strengthened, particularly as related to identification of their needs (economic, psychosocial, and cultural) as well as to prepare for the development of income-generating activities.

Of particular concern in the second half of 2015 has been the food and nutritional levels of the Sahrawi refugees. In light of this, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP have been approaching donors to raise funds for this critical sector.

In Algiers, UNHCR has recognized 151 refugees originating mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, and Iraq. Some 287 registered individuals are pending RSD. There are also 5,721 Syrians, 309 Palestinians, and 21 Yemeni registered with UNHCR in Algiers.

The Government of Algeria estimates there are 43,000 Syrians present in the country. Syrians approach UNHCR to obtain a refugee certificate when their local residence permit expires. Most Syrians arrived before 2015 when the Government of Algeria introduced visa requirements for Syrian nationals and tightened border controls, particularly at borders with Tunisia and Libya. While the influx of Syrians into Algeria has decreased since early 2015, UNHCR expects it will continue to receive applications for registration from Syrian nationals.

#### ***Flooding in the five Sahrawi refugee camps around Tindouf***

Heavy rains occurred in the four camps of Laayoune, Boujdour, Awserd and Smara on 17 and 18 October, and again in the more distant Dakhla camp on Monday, 19 October. The first heavy rain flooded the above-mentioned four camps, with Awserd being the worst affected. Rain and flooding immediately destroyed many of the refugees' mud-brick homes. The second heavy rain devastated Dakhla camp. The rain continued for more than one consecutive week, leaving Boujdour and Smara camps in a similar condition as Awserd and Dakhla. The rains lasted for eight consecutive days and finally stopped in the evening of 26 October.

UNHCR led the emergency response among humanitarian actors with support from the Government of Algeria, other UN agencies and partners on the ground. The most immediate and urgent needs were food and shelter. UNHCR airlifted urgently needed shelter and relief items and launched a multi-agency appeal with other agencies. UNHCR, the Government of Algeria, other UN agencies and partners provided emergency food provision while WFP prepared an emergency food distribution for all camps, as thousands of families lost their food stocks along with their houses.

For detailed information of UNHCR's emergency response during November, see the following links:

[Tindouf Floods Inter-agency Update #2 \(15 November\)](#)

[Tindouf Floods Inter-agency Update #1 \(8 November\)](#)

## Achievements

### Protection

#### Achievements and Impact

##### Algiers

UNHCR conducts registration, RSD, protection activities such as monitoring, intervening on detention cases, providing assistance to survivors of SGBV and carrying out sensitization campaigns to prevent human rights violations. UNHCR also carries out Best Interest Determination for unaccompanied minors and provides training for partners, local authorities, and government officials.

- Some 522 individuals, among whom 391 were Syrians, were registered with UNHCR from August to October. In the same period, 39 individuals/families had their refugee status determined, of which 10 were recognized by UNHCR as refugees and 29 cases were rejected.
- No. of interventions (detention): 10 interventions with the police, gendarmerie, and prosecutor's office which resulted in their release.

##### Tindouf

UNHCR is addressing the protection needs of more than 3,000 persons living with disabilities through outreach activities and regular home visits in order to identify and provide for their specific needs. During this period:

- To improve and expand the protection system and refugee networks, UNHCR continued working with volunteer youth groups such as NOVA, AFAPREDESA, that promote non-violence and peaceful dialogue within the Sahrawi refugee community. UNHCR is trying to involve these groups in all protection activities including the SGBV.

### Education

#### Achievements and Impact

##### Algiers

- Access to education for child refugees and asylum-seekers is generally free and all refugee children are enrolled at school. UNHCR provides transport, school supplies and a daily meal in schools to refugee children.

##### Tindouf

UNHCR is supporting the school system as a whole, by providing financial incentives to some 1,700 school teachers and offering material and training opportunities. 32,581 students have been enrolled in primary and intermediary school for the current school year, which began 6 September. During this period:

- UNHCR provided school materials and equipment for teachers, school administration and for the kindergartens.
- Before the floods, a joint assessment mission including UNHCR, UNICEF was done in order to identify solutions for some schools in need of urgent rehabilitation – as the roof and floors were damaged due to storms that took place during the summer break. Meanwhile, as a temporary measure, the students were attending other schools in the vicinity until an adequate solution was found.
- The recruitment of an additional five Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative Fund (DAFI) students is ongoing. This is in addition



*Eager to begin her studies, a young Sahrawi girl sits with her mother outside a primary school in Awserd camp, first week of September, during a distribution of school materials. UNHCR/V.Camara*

to the 20 students currently benefitting from DAFI scholarships in five universities in Algeria.

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

### Algiers

It is challenging for sub-Saharan children without command of Arabic to enroll the school as only one public school that teaches in French requires a level test requirements before enrolment. This makes access to education for children who arrive at the age of 15 or above very difficult. UNHCR refers children asylum-seekers to a partner organization specialized in assessing their school level and subsequent referral to the French school.



## Health

### Achievements and Impact

#### Algiers

Refugees in Algiers and other urban centres enjoy the same free access to public health-care facilities as Algerian nationals including free access to HIV/AIDS and acute respiratory infection (ARI) treatment. Certain medications as well as laboratory tests and X-Rays, which are not provided free of charge, are covered by UNHCR for mandate refugees and the most vulnerable asylum-seekers.

#### Tindouf

UNHCR is supporting 60 per cent of the costs associated with medical materials and consumables in the camps and supports some 20 Sahrawi refugee doctors working in five regional camp hospitals. Jointly with WFP and the Algerian Red Crescent (ARC), UNHCR provides supplementary feeding for malnourished children and pregnant or lactating women. Additionally, UNHCR is supporting a nursing school as well as international medical commissions, and the ambulance service in the camps. During this period:

- UNHCR through Triangle Generation Humanitaire (TGH), provided 51 laboratory items in all camp and central hospitals (outside the camps). The procured products will cover all the laboratory and X-ray related needs up to the end of 2015.
- A two-day training on the rational use of laboratory reagents and supplies was held for the benefit of 14 laboratory technicians (Saharawi staff). This training also addressed the issue of preventive maintenance of laboratory and X-ray equipment in light of the hard climate conditions in the camps.
- UNHCR through Algerian Red Crescent paid 20 Saharawi medical doctors for the medical consultations they performed during July-November. An average of 70 consultations per doctor per day were performed during this period.
- The new model of Saharawi HIS (health information system) was finalized and is in place, with the support of UNHCR, Médecins du Monde (MDM) Spain and WHO.
- In August UNHCR started the third sensitisation session on HIV, targeting children enrolled in intermediate schools.
- For the 2015-2016 school year, 44 students have been admitted into the nursing school based on an entrance examination prepared by French experts in coordination with UNHCR and the Saharawi refugee community. Three specialties are duly covered in this boarding school, following a strict academic curriculum: nursing (22 students), midwifery (nine students) and technician of Paediatrics (ten students).



*UNHCR Public Health Coordinator doing an anthropometric measurement under the nutrition programme. UNHCR/M.Boulanouar*

- UNHCR partner Algerian Red Crescent made two distributions of nutrition products (plumpySup) for children with moderate acute malnutrition (around 50) and two blanket distributions of Nutributter for around 15,000 children aged between six and 56 months.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

**Algiers:** UNHCR can only cover a limited amount of the costs of medical assistance to the most vulnerable asylum-seekers, for instance for medication, surgeries, X-Ray and laboratory tests.



## Food and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

#### Tindouf

##### Actions taken during floods

Beginning on 22 October, UNHCR provided 14,500 pieces of bread (baguettes) and 25,600 portions of cheese to the most affected residents of Dakhla camp. This bread provision continued for one week, with UNHCR providing 49,600 baguettes to the affected Dakhla camp population. UNHCR also provided 2,400 bottles of drinking water for the most affected residents of Boujdour camp on 23 October. Provision of food and water was done in order to support the urgent population needs in the first days of the floods crisis.



## Water and Sanitation

### Achievements and Impact

#### Tindouf

UNHCR is supporting the water, sanitation and hygiene sector to ensure that Sahrawi refugees have safe access to water of sufficient quality and quantity and to improved sanitation and hygiene and improved WASH services in institutions, including schools and health facilities. UNHCR through its partner Solidaridad Internacional Andalucía (SIA) is supporting and enhancing the Sahrawi water management system so as to provide 18 litres of drinkable water per person per day, with the aim of reaching 20 litres per person per day. UNHCR through Triangle Generation Humanitaire (TGH) is also distributing hygiene kits for women and girls and supporting the local production of soap and bleach for the five camps. Coordination and monitoring mechanisms were recently highly strengthened, because of the floods. During this period:

- The production and distribution of bleach was carried out regularly for hospitals, dispensaries and water installations. At the end of November, UNHCR through its partner Triangle, carried out the first distribution of soap bars produced in the camps for all vulnerable refugees in Dakhla camp. The soap distribution in the other camps is scheduled during the first week of December.
- Senior Regional WASH Officer came on mission to the Sahrawi camps, from 12 to 25 November. Main objectives of the mission included monitoring implementation of the recommendations issued during the last field visit by the Senior Regional WASH Officer (Sept. 2012), meeting with all relevant WASH stakeholders to discuss progress and gaps in the WASH sector, and to recommend strategic actions to accomplish the 2015 objectives as well as strategic actions to improve implementation for 2016 projects.
- UNHCR through its partner Solidaridad Internacional Andalucía (SI-A) installed 87 family water tanks; 30 concrete water tanks have been built and distributed and the 48 remaining tanks (as the planned target) are in process.
- UNHCR through its partner SI-A installed a new water reservoir with a capacity of 240 m<sup>2</sup> for Boujdour camp to increase the storage capacity and to separate water systems in Smara and Boujdour. The connection to the new reservoir was done in November and the system been functional since the end of November.

##### Actions taken during floods

UNHCR, the Sahrawi refugee community actors in WASH, WASH partners, as well as the Algerian local authorities are working intensely during the emergency response in all Sahrawi camps. UNHCR leads the WASH sector.

- To guarantee a continuous water supply, three laboratory teams were formed (one for Dakhla camp, one for Laayoune and Awserd camps, and another for Smara and Boujdour camps) to ensure regular chlorination, close monitoring and frequent analysis of the water quality in the five camps.
- Aside from the discontinuity of the production of water during one day at Dakhla and Boujdour camps because of the malfunction of the electrical system, water has been provided continuously for all refugees.
- WASH actors ensured safe wastewater management through clean and safe sanitary facilities (toilets), to preserve the aquifer and prevent and/or reduce the spread of waterborne diseases (diarrhea and cholera). The evacuation of stagnant water was carried out by pumping out rainwater, and some flooded zones (where water could not be evacuated) were filled with sand, with open drainage channels created to deviate and evacuate the rainwater.
- In close collaboration with public health colleagues, MDM, and the Sahrawi refugee community actors in WASH, sensitisation messages on hygiene and common WASH related diseases were reinforced.

## Emergency Shelter and NFIs

### Achievements and Impact

#### Algiers

UNHCR provides shelter, a monthly food basket and NFIs to urban refugee families, based on vulnerability assessments.

#### Tindouf

UNHCR is providing shelter and essential basic items to the most vulnerable refugees, and is working with the Sahrawi refugee community and the Algerian Red Crescent (ARC) in this sector. Distribution of the traditional Sahrawi tent materials in all the camps (2,328 total) has already occurred for 2015 (in June).

#### Actions taken during floods

- The first two airlifts bringing shelters and core relief items arrived on 28 and 30 October, respectively. These two airlifts brought 900 family tents, 10,350 fleece blankets, 2,000 jerry cans, 1,834 kitchen sets, 319 plastic rolls, and 1,319 plastic sheets. Distribution of the items began on 1 November. Three more airlifts arrived in November, bringing 3,305 additional tents. All tents were distributed to vulnerable families in the five camps.
- UNHCR carried out a shelter assessment to determine the amount of damaged houses in need of reconstruction, as part of the long term shelter response to this crisis, in all five camps. The multi-agency assessment team consisted of staff and volunteers from multiple agencies and NGOs, including Algerian Red Crescent and the Sahrawi refugee community. The assessment was a huge undertaking, requiring very detailed and precise data collection. The assessment was concluded in November.

## Access to Energy

### Achievements and Impact

#### Tindouf

UNHCR is refilling gas cylinders for 27,000 Sahrawi families every month. UNHCR contributes gas for eight of the 12 months. UNHCR also distributes cooking stoves (1,600 are scheduled to be distributed in December 2015).

*September gas distribution in Smara camp.  
UNHCR/H.Mahmoud*



## Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

### Achievements and Impact

#### Tindouf

UNHCR supports community empowerment and is helping some refugees achieve self-reliance. UNHCR supports four women's centres. Sahrawi women are well represented in all sectoral departments, including in executive positions (25%). UNHCR is also supporting youth centres, a library, and cultural activities and workshops on the rights of Sahrawi women and the preservation of Sahrawi cultural heritage. During this period:

- UNHCR in collaboration with the Sahrawi refugee community and Triangle (TGH) organized focus group discussions with social workers in Awserd, Laayoune and Boujdour camps in August. As a result of the evaluation, the social workers will be provided with trainings in social work as well as the provision of home based care trainings, including physiotherapy.
- 413 persons with specific needs (bedridden elderly and individuals suffering from cerebral palsy) were provided with diapers through Triangle (TGH).
- The vocational and skills training centers opened on 13 September. However, there is still a need to replace the damaged equipment of the centres in order to have them fully operational.



*UNHCR Field Associate monitoring the diaper distribution for persons with specific needs in Boujdour camp. UNHCR/K.Belgacem*

**Livelihoods:** UNHCR is implementing an action plan to strengthen the self-reliance and livelihoods activities focusing on youth in order to improve their opportunities, and has reviewed already planned projects to integrate into these same projects an approach of income generation and access to employment for Sahrawi refugees. UNHCR will try to involve, to the extent possible, Sahrawi workers and companies. During this period:

- UNHCR secured a building for the planned Innovation Centre at Rabouni, and started implementation of the Innovation Centre as a pilot project that will create the possibility for youth to do online courses and university studies with a pool of Spanish universities in Madrid, led by Universidad Autonoma de Madrid.
- Through Oxfam, UNHCR supports income generation projects targeting 100 youth.
- UNHCR has started implementation of two existing bakeries that will operate as income-generating projects.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

The October heavy rains affected livelihoods including markets. Shop-buildings collapsed, with some completely destroyed. The few shops constructed with permanent structures withstood the impact of the rain. Many shop food stocks were ruined, except some (i.e. canned goods, etc.) that withstood the impact. Livestock sheds were destroyed, forcing some families with tents to stay together with small livestock in a single tent. Livestock casualties were reported, but the impact of livestock death has not been measured. The market assessment that was planned for this period was postponed due to the floods emergency. It is now planned for early 2016.

## Durable Solutions

### Achievements and Impact

## Algiers

UNHCR is seeking durable solutions for refugees through assisting voluntary return or resettlement to a third country.

- During the reporting period, 15 refugees departed for resettlement to the USA and UNHCR submitted another 16 resettlement cases to the United States in September.

## Working in Partnership

UNHCR works with 11 partners in Algiers and Tindouf including the Sahrawi refugee community. UNHCR’s overall government focal point is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Division for Human Rights, Social Development and Cultural, Scientific and Technical Affairs. UNHCR also works closely with the Bureau for Refugees and Stateless Persons (BAPRA), which is under the Division of the Legal and Consular Affairs of the same Ministry.

UNHCR collaborates with other UN agencies supporting the Sahrawi refugee programmes in Tindouf including WFP in food assistance, and UNICEF in health and education and youth activities. UNHCR in Tindouf is the lead humanitarian agency for inter-agency efforts, and also leads monthly sectoral coordination meetings in Protection, Community Services, Health, and WASH sectors.

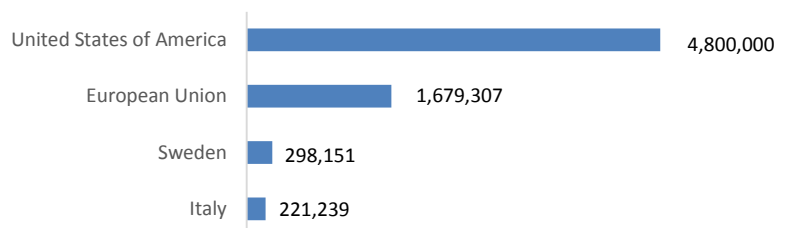
## Tindouf

- During the reporting period, the UNHCR Senior Coordination Adviser arrived to strengthen the inter-agency coordination structure. As a result of this support, UNHCR established two working groups, one at the inter-agency level and another at the inter-sector level.
- UNHCR established a flood response coordination group, which first met on 20 October, composed of all relevant actors, and is led by UNHCR. During October, this group met on a daily basis. UNHCR produced and shared a regular flood response update amongst all members, and also produced and shared a distribution table, capturing all food and non-food distributions by all actors.
- As part of the UN’s efforts to mobilize the international community to respond to meet the urgent funding requirements of the flood emergency, UNHCR with WFP, UNICEF and WHO organized a donors' briefing on Tindouf floods on 26 October. The agencies briefed the donors on the situation and response, which was followed up with a joint appeal, launched on 28 October for USD 19,896 million to cover the emergency response.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 7 million**.

Funding received in 2015 (million USD)



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 (41 M) | Denmark (28 M) | Australia (24 M) | Japan (18 M) | Canada (18 M) | Priv Donors Italy (16 M) | Switzerland (16 M) | France (14 M) | Priv Donors Republic of Korea (12 M) | Priv Donors Japan (11 M) | Finland (10 M)

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