

ALGERIA

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 December 2015 - 29 February 2016

KEY FIGURES

90,000

Vulnerable Sahrawi refugees living in five camps near Tindouf.

7,026

Persons of concern in urban areas registered with UNHCR of which 6,468 are Syrian nationals.

On average **170**

Syrians approach UNHCR on a monthly basis for registration

100%

of school-aged children (30,979) in Tindouf camps are enrolled in primary education.

18

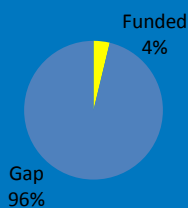
Liters of potable water are available per person per day in Sahrawi refugee camps – this is below the humanitarian standard of 20 liters.

FUNDING

USD 28.8 Million

Requested for the operation

The operation is **4%** funded



HIGHLIGHTS

- From 25 November to 10 December, UNHCR organized activities in each of the five Tindouf refugee camps as part of the campaign “16 Days of Activism against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence”.
- UNHCR hosted a donor mission from European Union Member States comprised of representatives from France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany from 9-11 February 2016



16 Days of Activism Conference with judges and lawyers, in Rabouni. UNHCR/V. Camara

to three of the five Tindouf camps. The Ambassador of the United States and the Director of the United States Office of Refugee Assistance for Africa’s (BPRM) also visited three of the five camps from 16-18 February 2016.

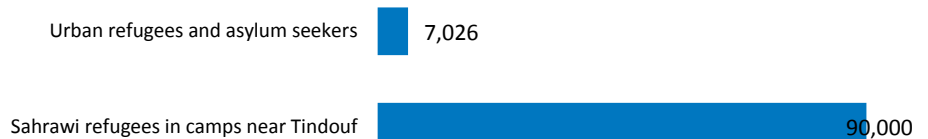


US Ambassador discussing with young Sahrawi refugees in Boujdour camp. UNHCR/R. Fraser

- To improve provision of water to Sahrawi refugees, UNHCR installed a new reservoir with a capacity of 240 cubic meters in Laayoune camp. This reservoir will increase the storage capacity of treated water and reduce the time needed to distribute treated water.

Population of concern

A total of **97,026** people of concern



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

UNHCR's activities in Algeria focus on assistance provision to the Sahrawi refugee community who live in a protracted displacement situation in five camps near Tindouf. In addition, UNHCR registers, processes asylum claims and provides targeted assistance to persons of concern in the urban context in Algiers.

In Algiers, within a broader mixed migration context, UNHCR assists some 7,000 registered urban asylum seekers and refugees. The vast majority (6,468 individuals) are from Syria, followed by Palestinians and Yemenis. Pending a national asylum system, UNHCR is processing asylum claims in Algeria and, during the reporting period, granted refugee status to 187 people originating mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (43), Côte d'Ivoire (25), Central African Republic (23) and Mali (17).

The Government of Algeria estimates that the total number of Syrians in the country amounts 43,000. Most Syrians arrived before the introduction of a visa requirement for Syrian nationals to enter Algeria in 2015. During the reporting period, an average of 170 approach UNHCR on a monthly basis for registration. This represents a steadily increase.

In Tindouf, UNHCR continues to provide protection and undertake care and maintenance activities for 90,000 vulnerable Sahrawi refugees living in all the camps. Of particular concern in 2015 was the impact of funding shortfalls on food distribution ; despite fundraising efforts, WFP had to reduce the monthly food ration distributed in 2015, thus affecting nutritional levels of Sahrawi refugees. In 2016, UNHCR continues its rehabilitation plan following the October 2015 floods which devastated all five refugee camps destroying the mud-brick homes of 17,841 families and affecting 60% per cent of public buildings. In addition to the rehabilitation of some 50 classrooms, UNHCR rehabilitation plan will improve shelters and provide materials to the most vulnerable affected families to rebuild their damaged houses. The joint appeal launched on 28 October 2015 for USD 19.8 million to cover the emergency response and rehabilitation of the camps, however, is still 40% underfunded overall, affecting rehabilitation capacities. In coordination with WFP, UNICEF and WHO, UNHCR mobilized the international community to respond to the emergency and provide urgent assistance to the camps.

In 2016, while continuing to provide essential humanitarian assistance, UNHCR in coordination with WFP and the Sahrawi refugee community will strengthen livelihoods initiatives, in particular for the youth. This includes three main components: youth empowerment, technical skills development and access to income-generating projects.

Emergency Floods Response

During the reporting period, UNHCR procured constructions materials to support the **rehabilitation of 2,000 family houses** affected by the October 2015 floods. Refugees will build their own semi -permanent shelters. As of 29 February, some 10 per cent of the 16,000 necessary metal sheets and 70 per cent of the 2,000 wooden beams were procured, most of them locally. Rehabilitation will begin once the 5,000 metric tonnes of cement for the construction of bricks are delivered. An 80% funding gap for shelter rehabilitation only allows focusing on the 2,000 most vulnerable families out of the 17,841 families affected. UNHCR will also **rehabilitate ten schools** (approximately 50 classrooms).



UNHCR assesses shelter needs in Sahrawi refugee camps following the floods. © UNHCR

Achievements

Protection

Achievements and Impact

Algiers

- UNHCR continues to register, conduct refugee status determination and provide assistance and protection to refugees and asylum seekers. This includes addressing the needs of persons with specific needs such as minors and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. From December 2015 to February 2016, some 538 people were registered by UNHCR of which 413 are Syrian. On 13 occasions, UNHCR liaised with the police, gendarmerie and prosecutor's office to advocate for and obtain the release of detained persons of concern.

Tindouf

- UNHCR provides 3,000 persons living with disabilities in Tindouf camps with assistance and conducts regular home visits to assess their continued needs.
- UNHCR works with volunteer youth groups to conduct sensitization activities for the refugee community, for instance on sexual and gender based violence. As part of the "16 Days of Activism against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence", UNHCR organized events in the five refugee camps as well as in Rabouni base, in collaboration with the refugee community and partners.
- UNHCR also supports empowerment of the Sahrawi refugee community: during the reporting period, UNHCR provided office supplies to the refugee Justice and Religious Affairs department.



16 Days of Activism cultural event in Awserd camp. UNHCR/V. Camara

Education

Achievements and Impact

Algiers

- All school-aged refugee children have free access to and are enrolled in school. UNHCR provides transport, school supplies and a daily meal to refugee children.

Tindouf

- All Sahrawi school-aged refugee children have free access and are enrolled in primary and intermediate schools. During the reporting period, 360 boxes of LEGO bricks were delivered to five specialised educational centres, 24 primary schools, and 30 kindergartens in all five camps by Sahrawi education staff.
- In December 2015, UNHCR met with the 24 students who participated to UNHCR's Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative Fund (DAFI), a higher education scholarship programme. The meeting enabled UNHCR to follow up on refugees' progress and needs. UNHCR continues to support the DAFI programme in 2016.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Algiers:** Language barrier is a challenge, most notably for children without a good command of Arabic, as there is only one public school teaching in French.



Health

Achievements and Impact

Algiers

- Refugees in Algiers and other urban centres enjoy the same free access to public health-care facilities including for HIV/AIDS and acute respiratory infection (ARI) treatment as Algerian nationals. UNHCR can cover the cost of certain medicines for refugees and the most vulnerable asylum-seekers such as laboratory tests and X-Rays which are not provided free of charge.

Tindouf

- UNHCR supports the whole health system in Sahrawi refugee camps by providing medical equipment and support to staff. During the reporting period, UNHCR, together with its partner Triangle (TGH), rehabilitated the dispensary of Haggounia in Laayoune camp and rehabilitated the hospital in Smara camp, equipping it with dentistry and X-ray rooms. 140 beds, mattresses and blankets were provided to the regional hospitals in the camps and the central hospital in Rabouni.
- UNHCR also conducts awareness campaigns and capacity building activities in the camps. The Algerian Women for Development Association (*Association Femmes Algériennes pour le Développement - AFAD*), UNHCR's partner, organized a sensitization session on HIV/AIDS for 380 adolescents in intermediate schools. World AIDS Day was also an occasion to raise awareness on the issue, notably on prevention. International Committee for the Development of People (*Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli - CISP*), UNHCR's partner, organized a four day training for eight psychologists on psycho-pedagogic support in schools.



Mothers are waiting for their child to be weighted during a nutritional assessment at Dakhla medical dispensary. © UNHCR/R. Fraser

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Algiers:** Due to limited funding, UNHCR can only cover a limited amount of the costs of medical assistance to the most vulnerable asylum-seekers.
- Tindouf:** The chronic under-funding situation in Tindouf camps has gradually deteriorated, hampering monthly food distribution; this is undermining on-going efforts to combat malnutrition levels in the camps.



Water and Sanitation (WASH)

Achievements and Impact

Tindouf

- A new reservoir with a capacity of 240 cubic metres was installed in Laayoune camp to increase the storage capacity of the treated water and reduce the time needed to distribute treated water.
- UNHCR supports the regular maintenance of existing water installations and regular chlorination of common water points. These activities serve to maintain and enhance the Sahrawi water management system and are carried out by UNHCR's partner *Solidaridad Internacional Andalucía (SIA)*.

- Triangle, UNHCR’s partner, distributed soap to the refugee population in all five camps during the reporting period. Production and distribution of bleach was also carried out regularly to hospitals, dispensaries and water installations.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The average 18 litres per person and per day distributed to Sahrawi refugees is below the international minimum standard of 20 litres per person per day. Extending the water system network, improving sources of water and strengthening waste management system are essential, especially considering the harsh environment.

Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

Algiers

- UNHCR provides shelter, a monthly food basket and non-food items (NFIs) to some 100 urban refugee families, based on vulnerability assessments.

Tindouf

- UNHCR procured construction materials to support 2,000 most vulnerable households affected by the October 2015 floods. This is in addition to the distribution of traditional Sahrawi tent materials (*khaimas*) which UNHCR distributes yearly; 2,328 tents were distributed in total in June 2015. Almost 18,000 families, however, were affected by the floods in October thus destroying the tents.
- UNHCR distributed 15,217 hygiene kits which include shampoo, sanitary napkins, and soap-powder in Laayoune and Dakhla camps.

Access to Energy

Achievements and Impact

Tindouf

- UNHCR distributed 1,600 cooking stoves in December 2015 as part of UNHCR’s assistance to improve access to energy for Sahrawi refugees. On a monthly basis, UNHCR refills gas cylinders for 27,000 Sahrawi families and providing gas for eight months a year – the remaining months are being covered by partners.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

Achievements and Impact

Tindouf

- A “*Point de vente*” (sales outlet) in Rabouni for the Vocational Training Centres was inaugurated to display and sell products manufactured in the vocational training centres by Sahrawi youth. This aims at strengthening self-reliance and improving livelihoods opportunities for refugees.
- UNHCR provided furniture (tables, chairs, IT equipment) to three women’s centres in Dakhla, Smara and Awserd camps. UNHCR also distributed musical equipment to two cultural centres, in Laayoune and Smara camps. This aims at empowering the refugee community through support



Young woman in a ceramics workshop in Laayoune camp – Februarv 2016 © UNHCR/R. Fraser

to women and youth centres, libraries and cultural centres in Tindouf camps.

- UNHCR also supports capacity building of Sahrawi refugees on issues such as women’s rights. On the occasion of the commemoration day of Sahrawi Women on 18 February, UNHCR provided material on family protection to the Sahrawi Women’s Union for an awareness-raising lecture for 150 social workers from the refugee community.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Lack of economic opportunities especially for youth is a real challenge in Tindouf camps. UNHCR is implementing an action plan to strengthen self-reliance and to improve livelihoods opportunities for refugees through income-generating activities and access to employment. These activities are crucial but can only be sustainable and successful if adequately supported.

Working in Partnership

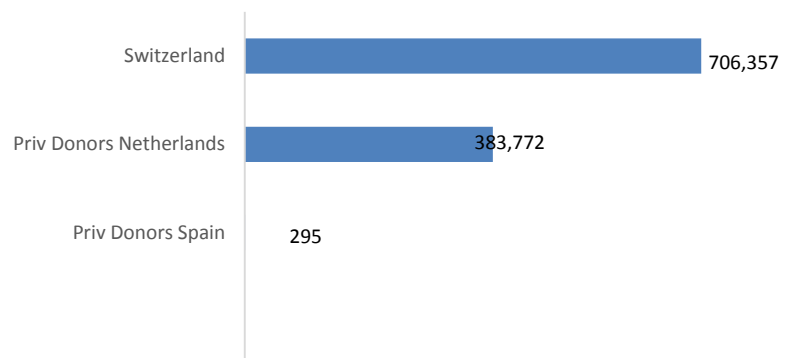
UNHCR works with 12 partners in Algiers and Tindouf and in the Sahrawi refugee community. UNHCR’s government counterpart is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Division for Human Rights, Social Development and Cultural, Scientific and Technical Affairs. UNHCR also works closely with the Bureau for Refugees and Stateless Persons (BAPRA) which falls under the Division of the Legal and Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

UNHCR works closely with the World Food Programme (WFP) for food assistance and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in health and education and youth activities to support the Sahrawi refugee programmes in Tindouf. In Tindouf UNHCR is the lead humanitarian agency for inter-agency coordination efforts and specifically leads monthly sector coordination meetings for WASH, Shelter Response sectors as well as Health in coordination with the Sahrawi refugee community.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 1 million**.

Funding received in 2016 (USD)



Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2016:

Sweden (78 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | Norway (40 M) | Australia (31 M) | Denmark (24 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | Germany (13 M)

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