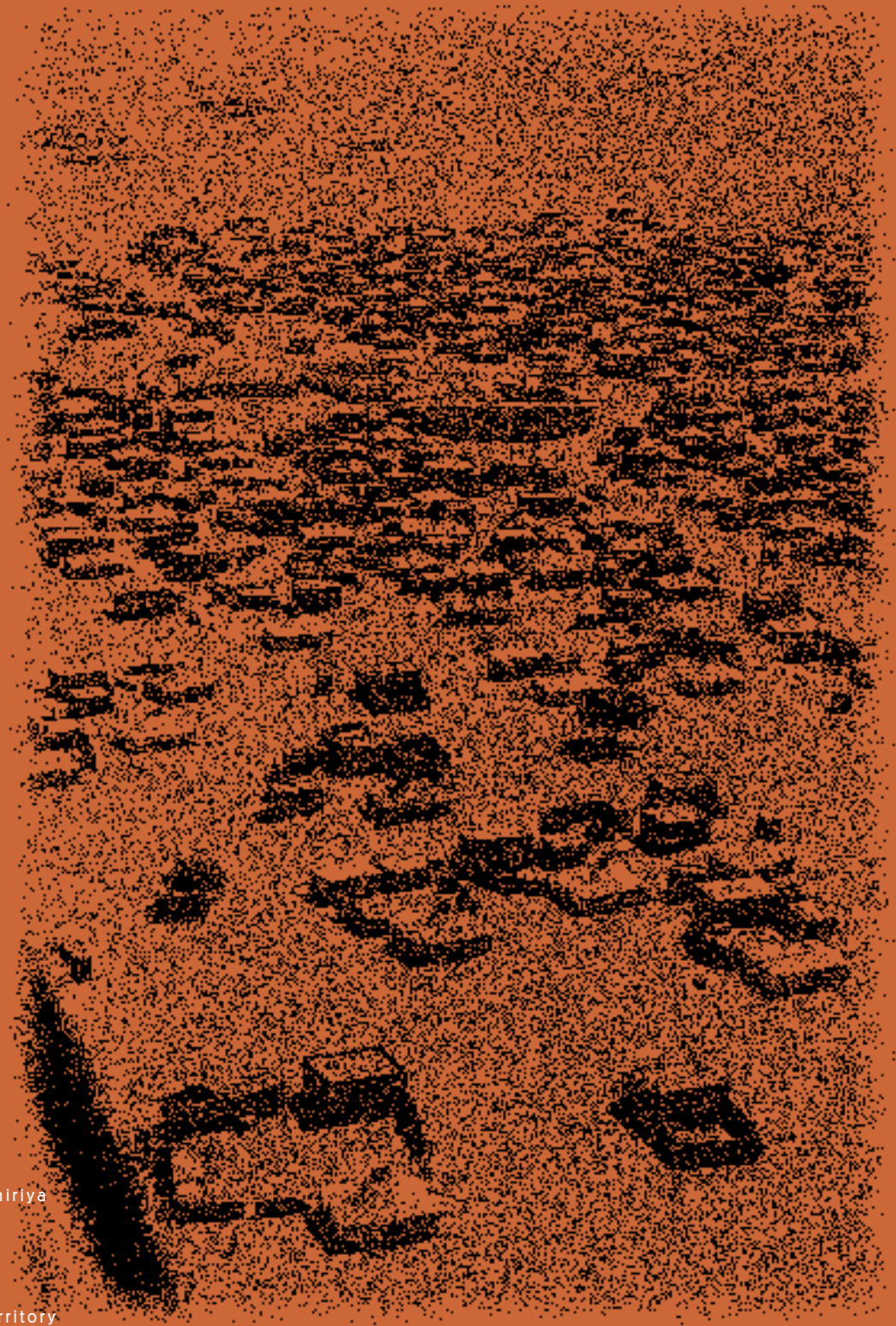


# North Africa

## Recent Developments

The overall situation of refugees in North Africa did not witness any substantial change during 2001. The North African countries continue to be a crossroads for economic migrants from African countries to Europe, and UNHCR is pursuing its efforts, in close co-operation with host countries, to identify lasting and effective solutions for ending the plight of the refugees.



Algeria  
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
Mauritania  
Morocco  
Tunisia  
Western Sahara Territory



UNHCR continues to play an integral role in the international efforts to settle the dispute over the Western Sahara Territory that erupted in 1975. However, the Office's plan to repatriate Saharan refugees residing in Tindouf camps in Algeria, has not made progress, in the absence of positive developments regarding the United Nations settlement plan.

In the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (Libya), UNHCR conducted a workshop in Tripoli to raise awareness amongst Government and NGOs officials on UNHCR's mandate and

The situation of refugees in Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania remains relatively stable. UNHCR enhanced its presence to assist the authorities in host countries to develop national legislation for dealing with refugees and asylum issues.

### Strategic Objectives

In 2002, UNHCR will continue to provide international protection and basic assistance to the most needy refugees in camps and urban areas. At the same time, the Office will pursue the development of an exit strategy from protracted refugee situations by assisting Governments and national NGOs to build up their capacity to meet refugees' and asylum-seekers'

needs and to increase awareness of refugee problems. Another objective of UNHCR is to explore the potential for raising funds from governments and non-governmental organisations in the region, particularly in Libya.

In close co-ordination with the United Nations Department for Peace Keeping Operations (UNDPKO), the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and the office of the Special Representative of Secretary General for Western Sahara, UNHCR will pursue its efforts to end the plight of Saharan refugees in Algeria and in Mauritania.

### Operations

In Algeria, UNHCR will continue to provide protection and assistance to the most needy of the 165,000 Saharan refugees (Government estimates) residing in four camps in the Tindouf area. UNHCR focuses its assistance on refugee women and children who represent the majority of the refugees. The assistance includes the provision of medical supplies and supplementary food for children and lactating women, potable water, shelter material and education facilities. UNHCR's attempts to significantly improve the quality and quantity of water represent a major challenge in the harsh desert environment of



Algeria: Western Saharan refugees in Dakhla camp, Tindouf region. *UNHCR/A. Hollmann.*

Tindouf. The newly established network of co-ordination between UNHCR and the Government of Algeria, donor representatives, ECHO, refugees and implementing partners will continue to be developed.

In the **Libyan Arab Jamahiriya**, UNHCR will continue to work closely with the Government and national NGOs to assist and protect the 30,000 Palestinian and 3,000 Somali refugees in the country. Although not yet a signatory to the 1951 Convention, the Government of Libya is maintaining a co-operative attitude with UNHCR. The Office intends to continue organising workshops with the Government and NGOs to increase awareness of UNHCR's mandate and operations within and outside of Libya. UNHCR will also pursue its efforts to encourage more Libyan NGOs to contribute to refugee programmes across the world. Subject to an improvement in the security situation in the country of origin, UNHCR will assist in repatriating Somali refugees.

In **Mauritania**, UNHCR's main objective is to assist the most vulnerable refugees from Sierra Leone and Mali. The population movement from Mali to Mauritania has significantly decreased in 2001. The Office will pursue its efforts with the Government to explore ways to integrate some 3,500 refugees from Mali residing in the border area who are not willing to return home. The registration of 26,416 Saharan refugees found eligible to vote by MINURSO has been completed. In response to a request from the Government, UNHCR will provide legal and technical support for the drafting of national legislation regarding refugee issues in the country.

In **Morocco**, UNHCR will continue to work closely with the Government and national NGOs to provide protection and assistance to a small number of urban refugees residing in Rabat and Casablanca. UNHCR undertook a comprehensive review of its humanitarian assistance to refugees, with the object of promoting self-reliance among refugees through training, income generation and encouragement to integrate in the host country society. Other lasting solutions such as repatriation and resettlement are also being sought. A senior liaison officer has been appointed to assist the Government to adopt and implement national refugee legislation.

In **Tunisia**, UNHCR's enhanced presence will help the Government to find appropriate solutions to the problems of refugees and to establish national legislation on refugee issues. UNHCR's direct assistance to refugees in Tunisia targets the most vulnerable amongst refugee women and children and includes the provision of health care, shelters, education and social counselling. UNHCR will continue to assist in resettling refugees accepted by receiving countries.

In the **Western Sahara Territory**, UNHCR continues to work in close co-operation with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General and MINURSO on all

issues related to the implementation of the United Nations settlement plan. In anticipation of the eventual return of refugees from Tindouf (Algeria) and Mauritania, UNHCR has finalised a comprehensive assessment of the existing infrastructure (including housing, water and health) in the Territory. However, the current circumstances in the Territory do not allow for a voluntary repatriation.

BUDGET (USD)	
Country	Annual Programme
Algeria	4,623,099
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	1,122,370
Mauritania	307,362
Morocco	433,287
Tunisia	317,894
Western Sahara Territory	309,242
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,113,254</b>