

## KEY FIGURES

**819**

Children, adolescents and higher education students supported by UNHCR with their studies.

**225**

Families received a home visit from UNHCR staff, partners, or refugee community workers.

**97**

Refugees benefitted from vocational training or support to develop an income generating activity.

**524**

Vulnerable refugee households received cash assistance to cover basic needs.

**141**

Refugees with chronic diseases supported to access health care.

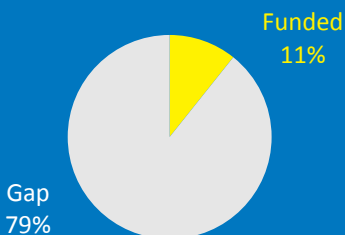
**8**

Refugees resettled to third countries.

## FUNDING

**USD 6.3 million**

Requested for the operation in 2016



## MOROCCO

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 April – 30 June 2016

## HIGHLIGHTS

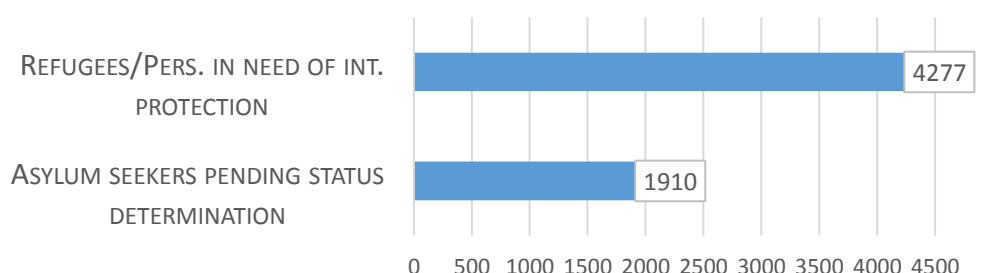
- On 20 May 2016, **Regional Goodwill Ambassador for West Africa Rokia Traore** visited the facilities of *Fondation Orient-Occident* (FOO), UNHCR's partner in Rabat, which provides education and psych-social support for unaccompanied minors, women at risk and other vulnerable refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants and Moroccans.



Rokia Traore at the FOO on 20 May 2016

- For **World Refugee Day**, UNHCR together with the Ministry of Moroccan Expatriates and Migration Affairs (*Ministère chargé des Marocains Résidant à l'Étranger et des Affaires de la Migration*, MCMREAM), FOO and *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ) organised six days of activities from 16 to 21 June 2016. Children's games, a women's intercultural cooking shop, a fashion show of clothing designed and made by refugees, traditional and modern musical concerts and a comedy show by Pie Tshibanda were part of the festivities. This culminated with the launch of the book "*Un Si Long Chemin*" ("Such a long journey") profiling the stories of 30 refugees from 10 different countries residing in Morocco and their integration efforts. More than 200 people attended the event, including government officials, members of civil society and refugees.
- On 20 May, UNHCR participated in a preparatory workshop entitled "**Climate change and questions for immigration and asylum**", organized by the Ministry of Moroccans Expatriates and Migration Affairs ahead of the MedCOP, a Mediterranean multi-actor climate conference to be held in Tangiers and the Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Marrakesh, in July and November 2016 respectively.

**Population of concern** : A total of **6,187** persons of concern to UNHCR



## OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

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### Asylum and Migration

At the 30 March 2016 High-level meeting on global responsibility sharing through pathways for admission of Syrian refugees, the Government of Morocco (GoM) committed to regularise all Syrians interviewed by the Inter-ministerial Commission on Regularisation within the *Bureau des Réfugiés et Apatrides* (BRA). Yet by the end of June 2016, this commitment has not yet been fulfilled. Though the GoM does not grant Syrians refugee status, **refugees in Morocco enjoy basic rights and have access to services** under an agreement between the Ministry of Moroccan Expatriates and Migration Affairs (MCMREAM) and the Ministry of Labour. Refugees are issued documentation from the Commission which is considered sufficient to allow refugees to remain in the country and enables access to the formal labour market.

Several attempts of persons from Sub-Saharan origin entering irregularly Ceuta and Melilla, two Spanish enclaves on the northern shores of Morocco, took place during the reporting period. In Melilla, enforced fences and increased border controls have made entry in Morocco almost impossible, except for Syrians who continue to arrive, albeit in lower numbers than recorded in the previous six-month period. The majority of arrivals into Ceuta took place by the sea or coastal route. In the second quarter of 2016, there has been a high number of boat departures from Morocco towards the Spanish enclaves peaking at 563 arrivals in May. The boats reached the Spanish coast directly or were rescued by the coastguard in Spanish waters.

### Outreach

UNHCR continues to work with its partner Organisation Marocaine des Droits Humains (OMDH) to reach out to refugees and asylum seekers in the Oriental region. During the reporting period, they referred 310 persons from Oujda and Nador to UNHCR in Rabat for registration as asylum seekers.

UNHCR Morocco has continued its outreach activities to identify and interview asylum-seekers and assess their protection risks and humanitarian needs. On 23-24 June, a multi-functional team undertook a mission to Marrakesh to hold focus group discussions with Syrian refugees. The mission identified 16 families of 76 non-registered Syrians. They have been informed of asylum procedures in Morocco and all were scheduled for registration appointments with UNHCR in Rabat. .

### Situation at the borders

The GoM has increased controls at the border with Algeria and the Government of Algeria constructing deep trenches, making entry into the country more difficult for asylum-seekers and refugees. As a result, the number of people entering the Moroccan town of Oujda close to the border has reduced in the last few months. UNHCR's partner OMDH, refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants have reported that families are getting separated at the border and many individuals, mostly Syrians, are waiting on the Algerian side to cross into Morocco. In recent months, the costs to be smuggled across the border has increased. While the cost varies from person to person, reports suggest that individuals are paying between 1,000 to 2,000 MAD (about 100-200 USD) which has further reduced the number of arrivals compared to the first quarter of 2016. Syrians are adversely affected as they consist mostly of families with children and are less "mobile" than the Sub-Saharan population. The Sub-Saharan population continues to cross into Morocco from Algeria to the Oujda-area with numbers of around 100-200 arrivals a month. The last weeks of June saw a surge in the influx of Sub-Saharans, possibly taking advantage of perceived lower controls during Ramadan, compared to April and May 2016.

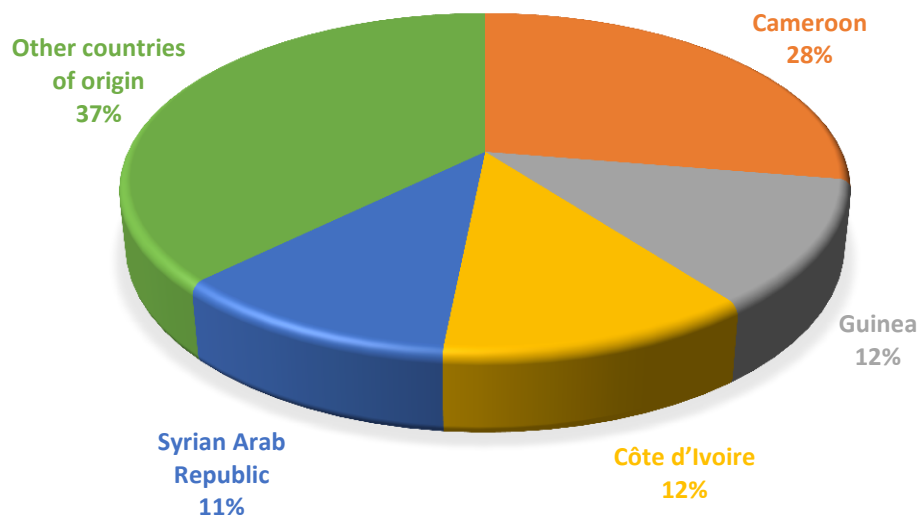
## ACHIEVEMENTS

### Protection

#### Registration:

- The number of **Syrian individuals approaching UNHCR** in the second quarter of 2016 (214 persons) decreased in comparison to the same period last year (374 persons); it also represents a significant downward trend observable since the beginning of 2016, with 217 Syrians approaching UNHCR in January 2016 down to only 37 in June. This could be linked to tighter border security at the border with Algeria.
- In contrast, the number of **Yemeni individuals** approaching UNHCR has increased during the second quarter of 2016 (44 persons, of which 25 in April alone) compared to the first quarter (29 persons). In the first half of the year 73 Yemeni nationals approached UNHCR in total.
- The number of **asylum-seekers from other countries of origin** (non-Syrians and non-Yemenis) registering with UNHCR is comparable to the same period last year: 849 persons (605 families) for the second quarter of 2016 versus 874 (459 families) for the second quarter of 2015.
- A breakdown of new requests for registration with UNHCR is as follows:

#### New arrivals from 1 April 2016 To 30 June 2016



#### Refugee status determination (RSD):

- By the end June, there are a total of **1,403 asylum claims pending interviews**: 1,224 new asylum applications were received in the first six months of 2016 compared to 950 applications throughout all of 2015. This means that the monthly average of new applications has more than doubled. It is important to note that Syrians and Yemenis do not undergo refugee status determination with UNHCR and that asylum applications are mainly from people of Sub-Saharan origin.

#### Outreach and community based activities:

- End-June, **310 asylum-seekers were referred to UNHCR for registration** by UNHCR's partner OMDH in Oujda (North Eastern Province). Nationalities include: Syria, Cameroon, Nigeria, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Central African Republic.

- During the reporting period **143 home visits took place** in Rabat, Casablanca, Sale, Kenitra, Temara and Oujda by UNHCR's partner, UNHCR staff and refugee community workers.
- Some **524 vulnerable refugee households received monthly cash assistance** from April to June 2016, the same number of households that received assistance for the first quarter of 2016.

#### Legal counselling and representation:

- **38 refugees and asylum-seekers were referred to UNHCR legal aid partner, Lemseguem, and received free legal aid and counselling.** This includes **11** females and **22** males, including **3** minors. The applicants are mainly from Cote d'Ivoire (40%), Cameroon (28%), Syria (16%), Central African Republic (16%) and Guinea (12%).
- **7** refugees were provided with legal documentation, including marriage or birth certificates, and nationality documentation.

#### Capacity building and training on asylum issues:

- On 19 April 2016, UNHCR delivered a workshop for participants from CARITAS and other civil society organisations operating in Tangiers. The workshop focused on international refugee law, including refugee status determination procedures, protection of persons with specific needs and the identification and referral of asylum-seekers. The training aimed at strengthening the partnership and coordination on asylum-related issues among relevant civil society actors in Tangiers to reduce the number of persons without an asylum claim being referred to UNHCR.
- The Global Centre for Training and Performance in Morocco, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee and UNHCR organized a training entitled "The Maghreb protects" in Rabat for university professors from Algeria, Mauritania Morocco and Tunisia to promote university education in refugee law, create a regional network of academic experts and stimulate academic exchange on refugee law at the regional level.

#### Prevention and response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV):

- To strengthen the prevention of and response to SGBV, a **multi-year UNHCR SGBV strategy** (2015-2016) is being implemented to: 1) Reduce the risk of SGBV for persons of concern; 2) Improve early detection of SGBV survivors; 3) Improve the quality of SGBV response services; 4) Strengthen interagency coordination on SGBV and collaboration with civil society organizations and stakeholders; 5) Support government/institutional capacities on SGBV. Advocacy efforts to strengthen national legislation continue through technical support in capacity development of asylum determination procedures connected to SGBV and human trafficking, and gender sensitive considerations in the application of these procedures.
- UNHCR organised a **one-day training on SGBV** for the members of the Protection Working Group in Oujda where 30 representatives from service providers, relevant institutional and national authorities participated to deepen their understanding of SGBV-related concepts and issues including interagency coordination.
- UNHCR participated in a two-day workshop organized by *Association de Lutte Contre le Sida* (ALCS) aiming to **strengthen SGBV inter-agency coordination** at the regional level while reinforcing the coordination at national level. The workshop provided a forum for UNHCR to enhance collaboration with key thematic actors with a view to improving service provision for refugees and asylum-seekers.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR referred a total of **28 SGBV survivors** to partners including *Foundation Orient-Occident* (FOO), *Association Action Urgence* (AAU), *Association de Lutte Contre le Sida* (ALCS) and legal partners for medical, psychological or legal assistance. 58 refugees received psycho-social support and specific counselling; two received medical care and six were provided legal assistance for past SGBV-related incidents. UNHCR is also providing medical assistance, including emergency preventive treatments from HIV infection under the codified management of national SGBV services, to SGBV survivors, financial assistance and safe house accommodation when necessary.

 Education

- UNHCR together with implementing partner FOO, **assisted 732 children and adolescents to access to primary or secondary school** compared to 473 in the first quarter of 2016. Education of refugees is an important objective for the operation in Morocco.
- 87 refugee students from Central African Republic, Yemen Syria, Iraq, Cote d'Ivoire and Afghanistan received scholarships** for higher education to cover part of the University fees.

 Health

- During the reporting period an average of **340 refugees were referred to primary health care centres per month**, compared to 210 average referrals during the first quarter of 2016.
- During the reporting period **121 refugees with chronic diseases benefitted from appropriate health care** on a regular basis.

 Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- By the end of June, **46 refugees benefitted from vocational training**: 15 in beauty training, 10 in jewellery production and 21 accomplished their professional training and benefitted from internships with Moroccan enterprises.
- Another **10 refugees were supported to develop their income-generating activities** in the areas of clothing, shoemaking, catering, calligraphy and graphic design. In the meantime, enterprise counsellors conducted **41** feasibility studies to assess the submitted income generating projects, such as perfumery, cosmetics, clothing and pastry-making and submitted these studies to the Joint Committee, composed of UNHCR and its partner *Association Marocaine d'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise (AMAPPE)*. Since January, the Joint Committee accepted **41** projects for income generating activity submitted by refugees being on track to achieve an objective of **70** projects by the end of 2016.

 Durable Solutions

- 38 refugees departed Morocco through the resettlement programme**: 21 to the United States of America, 15 to Canada and two to France.

	Identified for resettlement		Submitted for resettlement		Departed on resettlement	
	Families	Persons	Families	Persons	Families	Persons
<b>1 Jan. – 30 March</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1 April – 30 June</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Cumulative (2016)</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>38</b>

- UNHCR assisted **two individuals to voluntary repatriate to their country of origin, Cote d'Ivoire**.

Countries	Repatriation requests		Departed on repatriation	
	Families	Persons	Families	Persons
<b>1 Jan. – 30 March</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1 April – 30 June</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Cumulative (2016)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

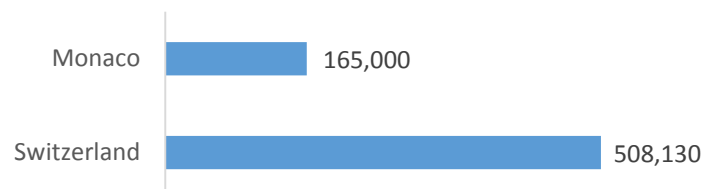
- UNHCR works closely with **Moroccan authorities**, particularly through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, as well as with the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Education, Health, Employment and the Ministry of Moroccan Expatriates and Migration Affairs.
- UNHCR works with **several non-governmental organisations** throughout Morocco, including: Fondation Orient-Occident (FOO), Association Action Urgence (AAU), Caritas, Association de Lutte contre le Sida (ALCS), Organisation Marocaine des Droits Humains (OMDH), Association Marocaine d'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise (AMAPPE). During the reporting period, UNHCR organized three monthly coordination meetings with its implementing partners in addition to site visits of project activities by the Multi-Functional Team.
- In the Oujda region, an oriental region of Morocco bordering Algeria affected by mixed migration movements, UNHCR has developed **coordination mechanisms with IOM, including the Protection Working Group** to better identify, refer and protect refugees and asylum seekers, including those with specific needs. The Protection Working Group in Oujda expanded in 2016 through the creation of thematic sub-groups: health/SGBV, trafficking, education and legal protection. Through this network of partners, UNHCR is able to reach refugees and asylum seekers in the region.
- UNHCR is a **member of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Morocco** and is involved in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), thematic groups on migration, gender, HIV-Aids, communication and monitoring and evaluation. During the reporting period, UNHCR supported the UNCT in mapping UN support to the National Immigration and Asylum Strategy (SNIA), based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in December 2015 between the MCMREAM and the UN Resident Coordinator.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to **US\$ 672,965**.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

### Funding received (in US\$)



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