

TUNISIA

31 August 2019

Key figures:

2,487

Persons of Concern to UNHCR

1,245

Newly registered asylum-seekers and refugees since January 2019 (following profiling)

66

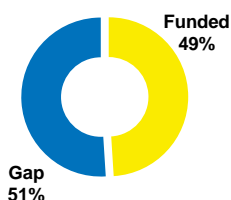
New arrivals in August as part of mixed population movements (land and sea)

1,246

New arrivals in 2019 as part of mixed population movements (land, sea and air)

Funding

USD **6.9 M** required for 2019 operations



USD **3.4 M** received as of 3 September 2019

Highlights

On 24 August, Tunisian maritime authorities rescued a boat off the coast of Zarzis with 18 individuals on board, as well as one deceased person.

The boat departed from Zwara, Libya heading to Europe and had been at sea for a week, according to survivors. The 18 rescued are from Sudan (17) and Egypt (1). Upon disembarkation in Zarzis, IOM and its partner Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC) provided non-food items and arranged for the group to be temporarily hosted in an IOM shelter in Zarzis. On 26 August, UNHCR and its partner Tunisian Refugee Council (CTR) carried out profiling. Thirteen individuals expressed a willingness to seek asylum in Tunisia and will be registered in the coming days.

As of 31 August 2019, 2,487 persons of concern were registered with UNHCR in Tunisia. Since the beginning of the year, 1,245 individuals have been registered, compared to 591 registrations for the previous year. Of the 2,487; 1,190 originate from Syria while the others come mainly from Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan. The number of asylum seekers awaiting Refugee Status Determination (RSD) continues to accrue, despite enhanced staff capacities.

Capacity building: From 26 to 31 August, a delegation composed of members of the Tunisian government (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Justice) and members of the Tunisian Parliament embarked on a study-visit to France to understand the functioning of the French asylum system and to exchange best practices on refugee and asylum issues. The delegation met with members of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, French asylum agency (OFPRA), as well as UNHCR France and its partners. Participants agreed on the need for a national asylum system in Tunisia, and committed to advocate for the adoption of such legislation.

Relocation: On 19 August, 67 asylum-seekers were relocated from an IOM shelter in Medenine – where they were temporarily hosted pending profiling – to UNHCR “Olive” shelter in Zarzis (52) and to urban areas in Medenine (15). UNHCR provided an information session to present the team, as well as outline the shelter rules and available services. Food vouchers were distributed to all relocated asylum-seekers, and basic household items were distributed to the asylum-seekers and existing residents of the shelter. Shelter capacity for accommodating new arrivals in Tunisia remains a challenge.

Community-based protection: UNHCR and partners held consultations with a group of 20 Syrian refugees residing in Gabes Governorate. Refugees highlighted several challenges, in particular relating to socio-economic inclusion. UNHCR and its partner CTR continued to sensitize the group against turning to negative coping mechanisms such as child labour, youth begging and early marriage, all of which continue to prevail. UNHCR and CTR also met with authorities to advocate for the inclusion of refugees in social programs provided by local and national institutions.

UNHCR is grateful for the support of [Italy](#) | [Luxembourg](#) | [Monaco](#) | [Netherlands](#) | [RDPP NA – EU](#) | [Switzerland](#) | [United States of America](#) and to those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and softly earmarked funds.