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A South Sudanese refugee child flies a kite in Jewi refugee camp in Ethiopia.

CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN SITUATION

AFRICA AND NORTH AFRICA ROUTES

Mixed movements, involving people of concern to UNHCR but also migrants, continue to affect countries in the East, West and North of Africa, as well as four main countries of arrival in Europe.

For many on the move, North or West Africa are destination regions; while for others, North Africa is a transit hub for those seeking to undertake the dangerous journey towards Europe. It is estimated that at least 15% of refugees and asylum-seekers do not stay in their country of first arrival. While border closures and other measures implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19 saw a decrease in mixed movements to Libya in early 2020, the overall number of people on the move along these routes has not significantly diminished. Sea departures from Algeria, Tunisia and Libya increased, while they slightly reduced from Morocco. UNHCR continues to work with governments and partners in the region to ensure access to territory, asylum and basic services,

working to strengthen protection systems as well as opportunities including education and vocational training that provide alternatives to risky irregular travel.

UNHCR's overall requirements for the Central Mediterranean route situation in 2020 stand at \$474.8 million. As of 25 August 2020, \$230.9 million has been received. Flexible funds received by UNHCR have allowed the organization to allocate an additional \$81.1 million to the situation, raising the current funding level to 66%. These low funding levels have forced UNHCR's operations to cut programmes across a range of sectors, including education and basic services, with further cuts anticipated in the second half of 2020.

PRIORITY COUNTRIES WITHIN THIS SITUATION



KEY POPULATION DATA (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2020)

50,645
Total irregular arrivals of refugees and migrants (Europe)

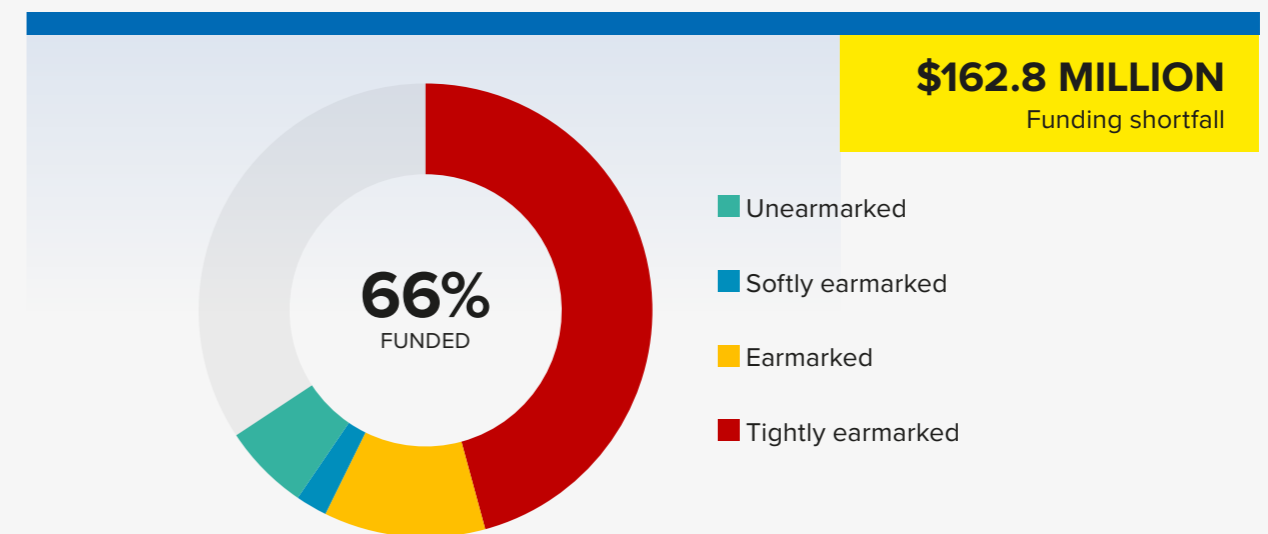
46,102
Sea arrivals (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain)

4,543
Land arrivals (Greece and Spain)

495
Dead and missing at sea in 2020 (estimate)

\$474.8 MILLION

UNHCR's financial requirements 2020, as of 25 August 2020



Note: given the complexity and breadth of the situation—including countries across four regions with various humanitarian or development assistance needs—precise funding figures for activities which have been cut or are at risk of being cut are difficult to obtain. Similar considerations apply to precise numbers of impacted beneficiaries which, given the geographical scope of the situation and the inherent mobility and irregular nature of travel involved, are also difficult to obtain consistently. Numbers provided are those for which reliable information is available, or which are considered relevant to illustrate the underfunded needs in the situation. Given this and the rapid evolution of the situation, any follow up should be directly with the Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean Situation or the operations concerned.

Activities that have already been reduced or cut as a consequence of underfunding

Cash assistance to vulnerable refugees in urban settings in North Africa



In most countries in North Africa, UNHCR provides only partial cash assistance for short periods. Since the beginning of 2020, due to underfunding, this already limited assistance has been cut further. Estimates suggest that between 30% to 75% of urban refugees have lost their jobs during COVID-19 pandemic, and an increasing number have been forced to move to less protected shelters as they are unable to pay their rent. Verification exercises undertaken by UNHCR indicate that cuts in cash assistance are leading some refugees to consider they have no other option than to move onward to another North African country or across the Mediterranean Sea.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
50,000 individuals

JANUARY

JUNE

Education services and vocational training in Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan



Due to lack of funding, a gradual reduction in education and developmental activities, vocational training and support for alternative care mechanisms has taken place since 2017 in countries along the East and Horn of Africa route towards North Africa, including for the “Live, Learn and Participate” project, the “Telling the Real Story” project and joint screening mechanisms for children on the move with governments and partners. Such activities are vital to meeting the needs of populations in key countries of asylum and transit and providing alternatives to dangerous onward movements. These reductions continued into 2020, compounded by shrinking asylum space, lengthy RSD procedures, and lack of staff to meet the needs of growing numbers of new arrivals, including many children (upwards of 60% in some areas), often unaccompanied and separated from family members.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
50,000 people

Assistance and services along routes in West and North Africa



Insufficient funding prevented UNHCR from expanding outreach, assistance and services to asylum-seekers and refugees along key routes as planned in the first half of 2020, particularly for those in remote areas, including in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger and Tunisia. Although partners are the first responders in hard-to-reach areas during the COVID-19 pandemic, by June 2020 some partnerships patiently developed over the last two years had to be reduced. This impacted referral mechanisms between agencies, while the lack of basic protection and assistance services—including food, shelter and psychosocial support—exposes asylum-seekers to protection risks, including human trafficking and can impact on access to asylum procedures in practice. Assistance to victims of trafficking of concern to UNHCR was extremely limited.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
300,000 individuals

A Malian refugee student plays the role of teacher at a school in Goudoubo camp, Burkina Faso.

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Activities that could be reduced or cut from August 2020

Livelihood activities in camp situations in Burkina Faso, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania and Niger



In the absence of further funding in 2020, UNHCR will not be able to prioritize or scale up livelihood activities for camp-based populations (both refugees and IDPs) to enhance resilience and self-sufficiency. This may result in increased vulnerability of displaced communities and encourage them to seek protection or livelihood opportunities elsewhere, including by embarking on dangerous irregular onward movements.

Access to family reunion in Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya and Sudan



In the absence of further funding in 2020, UNHCR will have to suspend plans to expand its initial pilot project on access to family reunion in Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya and Sudan. Access to family reunion had been considered as a key priority in UNHCR's risk mitigation strategy to prevent unaccompanied and separated children, as well as young women, from embarking on dangerous irregular onward movements, relying on smugglers and human traffickers.

Number of impacted beneficiaries: 10,000 individuals

