

KEY FIGURES

220

Children, adolescents and higher education students who have been supported by UNHCR with their studies

99

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

30

Feasibility studies completed to provide refugees with the opportunity to develop an income generating activity

256

Vulnerable refugee families who benefited from cash assistance to cover basic needs

1,934

Refugees who benefitted from food vouchers or cash assistance

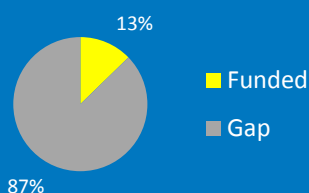
41

Refugees resettled in 2015

FUNDING

USD 4.17 million

Requested for the operation in 2015



MOROCCO

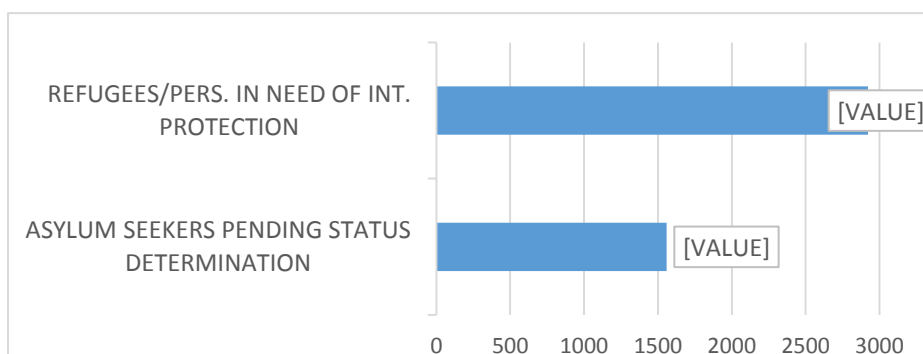
UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 July – 30 September 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 15 September the interview sessions of the ad hoc regularisation commission resumed, allowing the regularisation process of non-Syrian UNHCR-recognised refugees to continue. **As of 30 September, 594 non-Syrians were regularised**; 459 Syrians were also interviewed.
- On 9 September the Government of Morocco (GoM) celebrated the **two-year anniversary of its new migration policy** and organized a one-day seminar to take stock. The GoM presented the new migration policy as an alternative for individuals and families to restart their lives in Morocco and avoid risking the journey across the Mediterranean and/or fall prey to traffickers/smugglers. Under the new policy a number of legal, economic, social and cultural measures were taken.
- The anniversary of the Revolution of the King and the People on 20 August prompted King Mohammed VI to deliver a speech to the nation where he urged citizens to “treat refugees as guests and come to their assistance.”
- Jointly with the Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Residing Abroad and Migration Affairs (MCMREAM), UNHCR’s office in Morocco organised an exchange and awareness workshop on 23 July with 30 Moroccan NGOs on the **assistance and local integration of refugees**. The main objective of the workshop was to strengthen capacities of the MCMREAM’s partner associations and to create a network including MCMREAM and UNHCR’s partners.

Population of concern : A total of **4,481** persons of concern to UNHCR



OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Migration & Asylum: After the dismantling of ‘migrant’ settlements in the forest of Nador (February 2015) and in the Boukhalef neighbourhood in Tanger (July 2015), in August 2015 police dismantled the makeshift shelters located on the Oujda University campus where some 200 individuals were living. Some migrants and asylum seekers were released immediately; others were transported by bus to southern Moroccan localities where they were released.

On September 9, the European Commission proposed the establishment of **an emergency fund for Africa** amounting to 1.8 billion euros, to support the development of migrant/refugee transit countries as well as the development of countries of origin, including Morocco.

After a two day stay in the Casablanca airport, **Haidar, a 10-year-old Syrian refugee** was deported to Turkey last June. Following a YouTube video, in which Haidar appealed to King Mohammed VI to grant him a visa to enter Morocco, the young boy received his visa and joined his father in Morocco on 9 September.

Situation at the border with Melilla: Since late August hundreds of Syrian families have arrived at the **Beni Ansar border** between Nador and the Spanish enclave of Melilla. Authorities temporarily closed the border at various times as a result of the number of Syrians trying to enter Melilla. According to UNHCR’s partner L’Organisation marocaine des droits humains (OMDH), around 600 Syrians were sheltered in Nador in late September.

Legislation: On 20 August, the **draft law on human trafficking**, approved by the Government Council in April, was presented to the parliamentary commission of Justice, Legislation and Human Rights. The commission is now reviewing the law before submitting it for debate to the Parliament. This law will be a significant step for Morocco to be in compliance with international standards on combatting human trafficking such as the Palermo Protocol.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Protection

Registration:

- The number of Syrian and **Yemeni individuals approaching UNHCR** also increased during the reporting period, reaching close to 45 and 10 persons per week, respectively.
- The number asylum-seekers of other nationalities that approached the office in Rabat decreased in July, August and September to less than 50 persons per month. Until July this figure was around 155 persons per month.
- At the end of September, the waiting period between first contact and registration interview was 10 weeks for both Syrian and non-Syrian asylum-seekers, due to the increase of the number of Syrians contacting the office. By early October, the team identified solutions to reduce this waiting period to 1 month maximum.

A breakdown of new requests for registration with UNHCR is as follows:

Country of origin	1 July - 30 September		Cumulative since 1 January, 2015	
	Cases	Persons	Cases	Persons
Syrians	162	653	343	1,442
Yemenis	167	289	240	416
Others	124	157	633	803
Total	453	1,099	1,216	2,661

Refugee status determination (RSD):

- The number of asylum-seeker cases pending an interview with UNHCR was 1,094 at the beginning of 2015, and 786 at the end of September.¹ The unit saw **an increase in the number of cases applying for asylum** (non-Syrian and non-Yemeni) with a peak in July with 204 applications and a decrease to 104 by September.
- The team is developing a **new approach for the programming of RSD interviews** with a differentiated procedure based on the length of time required to process the applicants. The channeling of the cases through quicker or the normal processing is determined case by case. The aim is to speed up processing times when possible.

Outreach and community based activities:

- During the reporting period, **368 asylum-seekers were referred to UNHCR** Rabat by UNHCR's partner Fondation Orient-Occident (FOO) in Oujda (north eastern province). Nationalities include: Syria (287), Cameroon (41), Mali (9), Guinea Conakry (8), Central African Republic (7), Burkina Faso (4), Nigeria (2), and other (10). OMDH referred nine irregular migrants to OIM in Oujda for assisted voluntary return, including two unaccompanied minors. Since January 2015, 728 persons (340 cases) were referred to UNHCR Rabat; 69 per cent were Syrians.
- With the notable increase of border crossings by Syrians to Melilla this year and related protection issues, UNHCR enhanced the OMDH set-up with presence in Nador and additional community outreach workers in Oujda. Regular monitoring activities are undertaken at the border with Melilla. Discussions are underway for increasing the activities in Tangier and Tetouan through operational partners present in those locations.
- During the reporting period **99 home visits took place** in Rabat, Casablanca, Sale, Kenitra, Marrakesh, and Oujda (61 by UNHCR's partner FOO and UNHCR staff; 38 by refugee community workers). There have been 220 home visits since January, surpassing the total number of home visits in 2014 (139). This upward trend is the result of UNHCR's outreach strategy aimed at covering a higher number of persons of concern. To this end, new social counsellors joined UNHCR's partner Fondation Orient-Occident (FOO), increasing the number of counsellors responsible for home visits. These home visits are automatic once a refugee requests monthly cash assistance.
- Some **256 vulnerable refugee families were assisted with regular monthly cash assistance** (July to September).
- Some 1,934 refugees benefitted from food vouchers or cash (July to September).

Legal counselling and representation:

- The number of persons of concern (refugees and asylum seekers) referred to UNHCR legal aid partner who received free legal aid and counselling was 69 (making a total of 212 persons since January). Roughly 25 per cent of those assisted are minors and 29 per cent are women or girls. The applicants are mainly from Cote d'Ivoire (26%), Democratic Republic of Congo (20%) and Syria (10%).
- Some 21 individuals were assisted during the reporting period with the provision of legal documentation, including marriage or birth certificates, and nationality documentation.

Sexual and gender-based violence:

- To increase prevention of and protection against SGBV, a **multi-year UNHCR SGBV strategy** (2015-2016) was put in place to: 1) Reduce the risk of SGBV for persons of concern; 2) Improve early detection of SGBV survivors of concern; 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.

¹ The figures mentioned do not include Syrian and Yemeni refugees, who are considered, on a prima facie basis, to be in need of international protection.

- Nine SGBV survivors in need of protection and assistance were hosted in protection houses managed by UNHCR's partner FOO. Four survivors of SGBV were referred for legal assistance.
- **12 visits** were conducted by the *Fondation Orient-Occident* for monitoring the situation in safe houses.

Education

- UNHCR and its education partner, the *Fondation Orient-Occident*, **assisted 188 children and adolescents to access to primary/secondary school**, (Jan- Sept), compared to 110 in December 2014. This increase is partly due to outreach made towards Syrian families in the oriental region to support the enrolment of Syrian children and adolescents in public schools.
- As part of its integration projects, the MCMREAM organised a summer camp for 100 migrant and refugee children. The MCMREAM requested UNHCR's assistance to identify 50 Arabic-speaking refugee children who joined the summer camp.
- Some 12 refugee students were provided scholarships for higher education.



Children enjoying summer camp as part of MCMREAM's project, supported by UNHCR. UNHCR/ M. Oukhatar

Health

- During the reporting period an average of 84 refugees per month were referred to primary health care centres.
- During the reporting period 117 refugees with chronic diseases benefitted from appropriate health care.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- Some 24 refugees benefitted from vocational training and 25 refugees were selected to receive six months training and three month internships in early October.
- **Income generating activities developed by 28 refugees were accepted by UNHCR and partners**, making a total of 49 in 2015.
- Feasibility studies to determine the practicality of proposed income generating projects were conducted by the enterprise counselors to assess commercial projects such as perfumery, cosmetics, spare parts, clothing, motor oils, catering (cheese, vegetables) and pastry. The team prepared 30 additional feasibility studies, bringing the number of feasibility studies to 80 in 2015.

- Ten refugees were supported to develop their income generating projects in the fields of clothing, shoemaking, catering, and perfumery, for a total of 20 in 2015.

On 27 July, 19 refugees graduated from the ‘Office de la Formation Professionnelle et de la Promotion du Travail’, the national operator for vocational trainings in Morocco. The refugees completed a six-month training with OFPPT trainers and a three-month internship with a Moroccan company. UNHCR/ A. Berginc



Durable Solutions

- Of the **12 refugees who departed Morocco through resettlement**, 11 went to Canada and 1 to the USA.

	Identified for resettlement		Submitted for resettlement		Cases departed	
	Cases	Persons	Cases	Persons	Cases	Persons
1 July – 30 Sept	13	22	32	32	7	12
Cumulative (2015)	65	83	43	52	28	41

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- On 8 September, a meeting of the Protection Working Group (PWG) took place in Oujda. IOM and UNHCR presented to the PWG the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the referral of victims of human trafficking. These SOPs aimed at better identifying this vulnerable group in the oriental region through establishing focal points within PWG organisational members.
- On 24 July, UNHCR Morocco facilitated a training session for Caritas Morocco to raise awareness on UNHCR’s mandate and specific needs of refugees. Eight persons joined the session from all the Moroccan Caritas centres (Rabat, Casablanca, and Tangier).

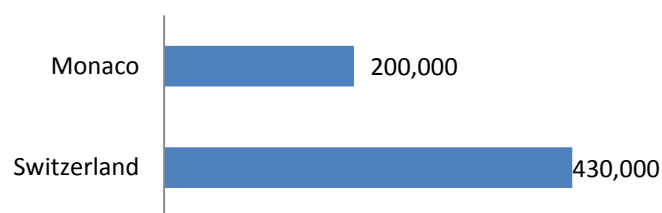
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The earmarked recorded contributions for UNHCR operations in Morocco in 2015 amount to

530,260 USD.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors (**Switzerland and Monaco**) who have contributed directly 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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