TUNISIA

31 January 2021

Key figures

6,744 persons of concern to UNHCR (asylum-seekers & refugees)

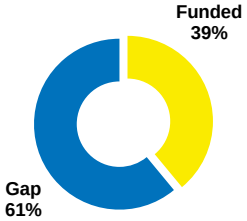
660 refugee and asylum-seeking households received cash assistance

62 refugees and asylum-seekers attended language classes (English, French and Tunisian dialect)

11 refugees departed on resettlement in Sweden and France

Funding

USD **9.0 M** required in 2021



USD **3.4 M** received as of 27 January 2021

Operational Context

As UNHCR began its new programming year, partnership agreements were renewed with the Tunisian Refugee Council (CTR), the Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR) and the Tunisian Association for Management and Social Stability (TAMSS), covering the full spectrum of protection, assistance, advocacy and capacity-building activities. Building on achievements in 2020 and lessons learned, UNHCR's 2021 strategic response will be geared towards improving refugees' and asylum-seekers' socio-economic inclusion, while expanding access to fundamental rights and basic social services. The 2021 programme will be implemented together with governmental and civil society entities, and in line with the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees.

As of 31 January, Tunisia recorded 209,000 cases of COVID-19, including 157,000 recoveries and 6,754 deaths. Tunisia's Government opted for a targeted lockdown, which includes a nationwide curfew to limit the spread of the disease, and measures to limit physical presence in workplaces, including teleworking. To comply with these measures, most group activities for refugees and asylum-seekers were suspended or carried out through reduced presence, while in-office presence for UNHCR staff remained limited to 50 per cent.

Operational Response

UNHCR carried out advocacy for the inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in the COVID-19 national vaccination campaign, scheduled to start in February 2021. UNHCR addressed a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to this end and conducted parallel advocacy with WHO and the UN Resident Coordinator.

The Regional Directorate of Public Health of Medenine governorate conducted a COVID-19 screening among the residents of Zarzis and Medenine shelters. Twenty-eight residents have been tested as of end of January. Additionally, 40 refugees and asylum-seekers in Tataouine Governorate were screened for hypertension and diabetes and received counselling on COVID-19 prevention. In Sfax, 15 apartments hosting refugees and asylum-seekers were also sterilized. Masks and oximeters were distributed to the residents (some 50 individuals).

On 18 January, UNHCR in collaboration with RADROS (a network of local NGOs) and the Municipality of Sfax distributed items to protect against COVID-19. The distribution included disinfection/sanitizing products, PPE, and waste disposal items. The municipality of Sfax will distribute the material among healthcare units, local associations, and local civil networks. The material will benefit all communities, including refugees and asylum-seekers who are present in high numbers in the area**.** Also in Sfax, UNHCR donated disinfection products and PPE such as masks, thermometers, and sanitizing products to local NGO SOS Children's Village in Mahres town, which hosts around 15 refugees and asylum-seeker children. Local associations also provided both food and non-food items for 15 refugee and asylum-seeking children in the area.

In late December, UNHCR Tunisia donated disinfection material and personal protective equipment including rubber boots, masks, white coats, disinfection products to the municipalities of Raoued and Ariana (Grand Tunis) for the prevention of COVID-19. The donation will benefit all parts of the population, including refugees and asylum-seekers present in high numbers in the area.

UNHCR Tunisia launched a dedicated Help Webpage for refugees and asylum-seekers, where they can retrieve reliable information on protection topics and

assistance services provided by UNHCR across the country. The webpage will be made available in multiple languages.

Flexible Funding: Providing Aid When it's Needed, and Where it's Needed.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted heavily on the lives of the most vulnerable communities around the world, notably refugees and asylum-seekers. Thanks to flexible funding from donors, UNHCR was able to adapt its response across Tunisia to provide emergency assistance such as temporary shelter, psychological counselling, registration, and food support.

Unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions for 2020*:

Private Donors Australia | Canada | Denmark | Germany | Private Donors Germany | France | Ireland | Italy | Private Donors Italy | Japan | Private Donors Japan | Private Donors Lebanon | Netherlands | Norway | Private Donors Republic of Korea | Spain | Private Donors Spain | Sweden | Private Donors Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | Private Donors United Kingdom | Private Donors UAE | USA | Private Donors USA |

**As of 5 January 2021*

Thank you donors of flexible funding

3 settimane fa · Visualizzazioni: 369

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UNHCR Tunisia is grateful for the support of: European Union | Monaco | Netherlands | RDPP NA – EU | Switzerland.

UNHCR is also grateful to those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and softly earmarked funds.

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