

# Tunisia

October-December  
2023

## Operational Context

**Steady number of asylum claims, mainly from Sudan, with over a fifth of applicants being unaccompanied minors.** During the reporting period, almost 7,000 individuals, mostly arriving by land, approached UNHCR and its partners, mainly in Tunis, seeking orientation and assistance. In addition to land arrivals, maritime authorities referred 11 cases from Search and Rescue operations to UNHCR.

### Key figures

**14,733** forcibly displaced people currently in Tunisia (10,748 asylum-seekers, 3,960 refugees)

**500%** increase in newly registered individuals compared to 2022

**6,614** persons assisted with food vouchers

**3,301** cases assisted with cash-based interventions

**220** children enrolled for the 2023/2024 academic year

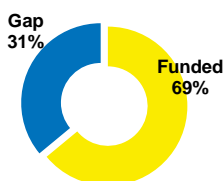
Supported **6** microprojects led by refugees

**53** refugees and asylum seekers in training programs

**13** cases resettled

### Funding

USD **11.5 M** required in 2023



USD **7.9 M** received as of 3 November 2023

UNHCR registered and issued asylum cards to 3,847 individuals, including both new arrivals and backlog cases, the majority coming from Sudan (65%) and Syria (8%), countries with non-return advisories. Over 20% were unaccompanied and separated children. Most asylum-seekers and refugees registered with UNHCR live in Tunis, Mednine and Sfax.

**Accommodation and shelter solutions remain limited.** Migrants and asylum-seekers in Tunisia continue to seek affordable temporary accommodation but given their limited financial means, many stay in open-air areas. Between the end of October and mid-November, up to 900 asylum-seekers stayed in an unfinished building in Tunis. The asylum-seekers were evicted following a security incident and while a few found accommodation, the majority remain in the streets. Since mid-September, up to 10,000 persons lingered in olive fields in rural areas near Sfax. With the beginning of the harvesting season in October, tensions arose with farmers and local authorities had to intervene. In Zarzis, around 500 asylum-seekers without means for covering accommodation have settled in an olive field adjacent to the UNHCR Office.

In the informal settlements, the limited or nonexistent access to water and sanitation facilities resulted in a deterioration of the health conditions. Having limited prospects for securing a source of income, asylum-seekers and migrants mainly rely on basic humanitarian assistance.

## Highlights of UNHCR and Partners' Response

**With a fivefold increase in asylum applications compared to 2022 and a rise in at-risk cases, UNHCR and its partners strengthened registration and assistance capacities.** UNHCR scaled up pre-registration and registration to reduce waiting periods and process the backlog of cases, prioritizing the most vulnerable profiles.

Considering the heightened risks faced by the pre-registered individuals, UNHCR distributed Food Vouchers to 6,614 persons and provided cash-based assistance to 3,301 registered cases. The five shelters run by UNHCR partner Conseil Tunisien pour les Refugies (CTR) in Tunis and Mednine are almost at their full capacity, having prioritized admission of unaccompanied minors. With the drop in temperatures, UNHCR and partners delivered winterization kits for refugees and asylum-seekers living in communal shelters in Tunis, Zarzis, and Mednine. Blankets are distributed to all individuals approaching for pre-registration; vulnerable minors also receive winter clothes.

CTR in Mednine/Zarzis offered over 4,000 medical consultations and first aid to more than 1,000 persons and referred almost 300 cases to public health services. As October marked the Breast Cancer Awareness month, CTR carried out seven sensitization events in six locations with 161 participants. Aiming at enhancing identification and accompaniment of cases with medical needs, UNHCR and CTR appointed one doctor in Tunis and another in Mednine for prescreening and referral to the public healthcare system, as well as four nurses at reception and registration locations. Further, Scouts' volunteers were deployed to three main hospitals and one dispensary in Tunis to ensure refugees and asylum-seekers have effective access to healthcare while sensitizing medical staff.

UNHCR and CTR supported the enrollment of 220 refugee children in public schools for the current academic year, providing a one-time education grant and school kits in collaboration with UNICEF.

**Sustained outreach activities to identify key priorities for fostering resilience at the community level.** UNHCR continues holding regular focus group discussions with asylum-seekers to gather their experience, intentions and prioritized needs to shape protection and operational actions together with partners. CTR organized 10 focus group discussions with 130 new arrivals in Tunis. In Sfax, UNHCR partner Tunisian Association for Management and Social Stability (TAMSS) gathered with 14 asylum-seekers to provide orientation on access to formal employment.

Aside from community dialogues, UNHCR and CTR organized eight recreational activities involving 161 asylum-seekers and refugees, aiming at laying the ground for group cohesion. In December, within the Sports for Inclusion initiative led by IOM, UNHCR supported the participation of 10 refugee children in football matches with young aspiring coaches including migrants and members of the local community in Soukra. UNHCR also supported the participation of 20 refugee women and children in workshops and sports competitions together with Tunisian women and children in Djerba to foster child participation in recreational activities.

**Supported livelihoods prospects for refugees and asylum-seekers, including training opportunities and micro-project initiatives, while reinforcing partnerships with the private sector.** TAMSS offered additional support to six micro-projects overseen by refugees and asylum-seekers to enhance their capacities. TAMSS also organized workshops with the private sector, in Tunis and in Zarzis, to promote refugees' self-reliance and resilience.

The number of beneficiaries part of the partnership with GoMyCode continued to expand; as of November 2023, 42 persons are studying Full Stack and Web Development programs. On November 24, GoMyCode organized a career event to provide advice on job applications and interviews. Further, in collaboration with the local association ATEDE, CTR launched an initiative to train 11 women in practical beauty industry skills while offering self-care and mental well-being advice.

**Coordination with stakeholders to strengthen refugees' and asylum-seekers' access to basic services.** In October, the Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC) organized a field mission to border regions with Algeria, and Sidi Bouzid, the main transit point from the Algerian border to Sfax. The mission allowed participating UN Agencies to refine the UN response plan developed to support TRC's national strategy. In November, UNHCR organized a field mission to Zarzis and Mednine together with WHO and UNICEF to assess access to health and WASH services for refugees and asylum-seekers. The aim is support to local health authorities, in coordination with the Ministry of Health. UNHCR is also liaising with NGOs to enhance referral mechanisms and provision of assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers with medical needs.

In addition to this, in November, UNHCR and its partner the Arab Institute for Human Rights organized a training for 17 Mosaique FM radio correspondents focused on international refugee standards. UNHCR led a session on UNHCR's communications guidelines, principles and best practices to follow when reporting on refugee-related issues. Further, UNHCR continues collaboration with the Faculty of Law of Tunis, participating in activities to disseminate UNHCR mandate and international standards on asylum. UNHCR also facilitated a discussion on communication and advocacy regarding international protection for 40 students of the Master's in Social Economy Organizations at the Institute of Management in Tunis.

## UNHCR Global News

On 20 November, UNHCR launched its [Global Appeal 2024](#), providing a comprehensive and detailed narrative on the needs foreseen, UNHCR's plans, and required financial support to guarantee an effective response leaving no one behind.

### KEY FIGURES



UNHCR requires  
**\$10.622 billion**



to support an expected  
**130.8 million**  
forcibly displaced and  
stateless people



in  
**133**  
countries and territories

**Special thanks to earmarked donors for UNHCR operation in Tunisia** France | Italy | Monaco | Netherlands | RDPP NA – EU | Switzerland | United States of America | Other private donors. **Thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked and unearmarked funds in 2023** Belgium | Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | Other Private Donors.

**CONTACT** | [Alba Marcellan](#), Interagency Coordination Officer, [marcella@unhcr.org](mailto:marcella@unhcr.org)

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