



UNHCR Tunisia's Comprehensive Refugee Protection and Solutions Response

Safeguarding International Protection and Promoting Socio-Economic Inclusion of Refugees & Asylum-Seekers*

The number of refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants moving into and through Tunisia have surged to levels unseen since the 2011 revolution. In 2021, the central Mediterranean route, from North Africa to European countries such as Italy, was the deadliest maritime route in the world. New arrivals in 2022 are expected to exceed the levels seen in 2020 and 2021, with a projection of 11,000 total individuals registered with UNHCR by year-end, up from the current 9,500 figure (February 2022). Building on positive progress made in humanitarian-development-peace nexus areas, UNHCR is looking for funding to support local asylum and reception capacities in view of expanding the protection space and providing effective response with a stabilizing value where the people are.

Key Figures



80% of refugees and asylum-seekers live in urban and peri-urban areas



50% are assessed with specific needs



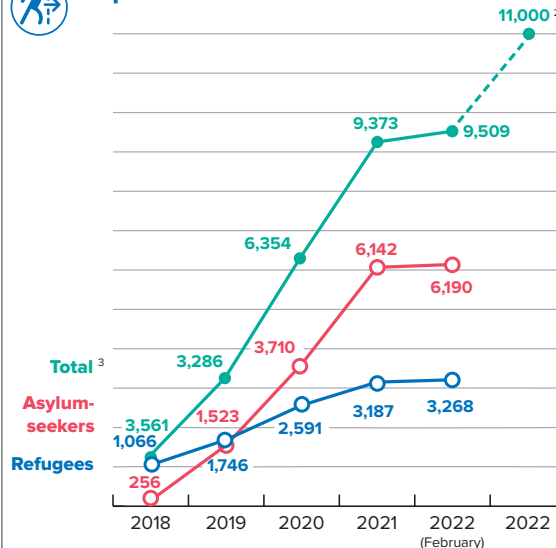
45 nationalities registered with UNHCR, up from 20 in 2019



1,500 individuals await registration (March 2022)



Population of Concern to UNHCR¹



¹ Source: UNHCR proGres database (December figures)

² This number reflects UNHCR's updated population projection by the end of 2022

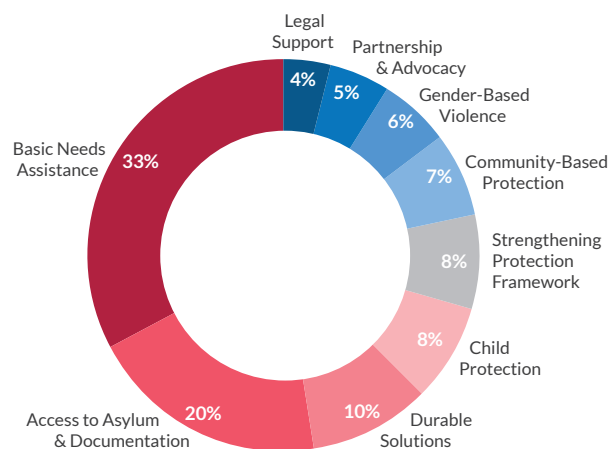
³ Includes refugees, asylum-seekers and a small number of other persons of concern

Strategic Objectives

- Continue ensuring a favorable protection environment by supporting the strengthening of the national refugee protection framework through a multi-layered and multi-stakeholder approach.
- Foster stability by improving access to and delivery of core protection and essential services for refugees and asylum-seekers.
- Reduce the risk of dangerous onwards movement through the Mediterranean Sea or return to Libya by enhancing refugee inclusion in national systems and access to self-reliance and socio-economic opportunities.
- Preserve emergency support capacities including preparedness and contingency planning to maintain a dynamic approach to the Libya situation.

2022 Strategic Priorities

\$8.5 million
in financial requirements until December 2022



* This update from March 2022 summarizes UNHCR's main priorities for Tunisia in 2022 and the key achievements in 2021. It complements country-level information, strategy, and reports available on [Global Focus](#).

** The budget breakdown provides a broad overview of the main areas of intervention and key activities that UNHCR will implement in Tunisia in 2022. The list is not exhaustive and the full budget by outcome and enabling areas can be viewed on [Global Focus](#).



Core Refugee Protection.

Registration, issuance of documentation, and refugee status determination will continue to be prioritized, building on individual assessments meticulously conducted by UNHCR. Specific attention will be given in delivering dedicated protection services to the most vulnerable, namely survivors of torture and sexual violence, single parents, LGBTIQ people, unaccompanied children, as well as the Syrian nomadic population. A resettlement processing capacity will be maintained for refugees whose needs cannot otherwise be addressed in Tunisia.



Basic Needs Assistance.

A standard and comprehensive package of assistance, comprising access to temporary shelter, food, education, health, including mental health, will be systematically provided to those assessed as the most vulnerable. Modalities and levels of assistance will be continuously reviewed and harmonized according to UNHCR's standard

operating procedures and in line with monitoring results.



Self-reliance and access to livelihoods opportunities.

Despite current challenges in accessing work and residency permits, connecting refugees to sustainable and viable means of self-reliance will remain a key area of intervention, drawing on existing relevant practice and multi-stakeholder engagement, to include them in the social fabric of the country and create stabilizing conditions and therefore reduce the risk of dangerous onward movements, either to Europe or back to Libya. Job placements and access to national employment services and vocational trainings will be prioritized.



Refugee inclusion and strengthening of the national protection framework.

The inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in national social protection and local safety nets is an integral part of UNHCR's strategy response. UNHCR's collaboration with central and local

public entities will be pursued to ensure further inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in public services such as child protection and protection of GBV survivors, in addition to access granted to national education and health public system. UNHCR will continue supporting strategically located municipalities to enhance their own reception and response capacities, building on the pilot one-stop-shop model launched in 2021.



Partnership and Multi-Stakeholder Engagement.

In line with the [Global Compact for Refugees](#), advocacy efforts to engage a wider number of actors to transversally integrate the whole-of-society and multisectoral approach will guide UNHCR's strategy to bridge existing gaps. Support the development of meaningful humanitarian-development-peace nexus frameworks and initiatives that rally relevant stakeholders (UN, civil society, private sector, development agencies) around strengthening national and local institutions will remain a priority.

2021 Results Achieved ***

\$7.2 million
required

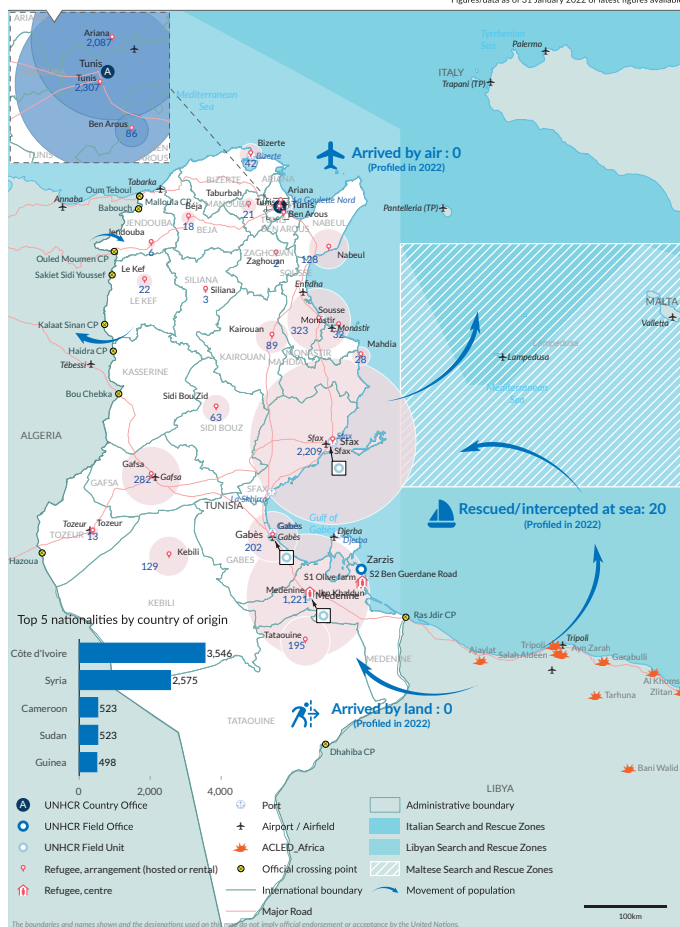
\$6.3 million
received



Core Protection Delivery Scaled Up.

Individuals registered by UNHCR reached unprecedented levels (50% increase compared to 2020), with over 3,000 newly registered persons and an expansion of the diversity of the registered population from 20 to 45 nationalities. Enhanced

Figures/data as of 31 January 2022 or latest figures available



***2021 achievements will be verified as part of the 2021 Global Report process that will be concluded by mid-2022

registration and refugee status determination processing resulted in an effective reduction of the backlog of individuals awaiting registration and steady increase of the number of recognized refugees from 2,591 in 2020 to 3,097 with an average recognition rate of 60% (with variations between nationalities). Similarly, out of the 128 vulnerable refugees identified for resettlement, 76 departed to their resettlement destinations, compared to 35 in 2020.



Border Reception Area Upgraded.

At the request of the Tunisian authorities and building on lessons learned from the 2011 refugee emergency, the rehabilitation of the Ras Jedir border area was completed in October 2021, allocating a specific reception area for up to 25,000 people in case of a possible influx from Libya. The rehabilitation works, led by UNHCR in coordination with IOM, WFP, and UNICEF, were undertaken as part of emergency-preparedness and the contingency planning efforts was finalized.



Joint UNHCR-IOM Operational Engagement.

Both agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding, formalizing, and strengthening existing collaboration in multiple areas, ranging from reception and referral of new arrivals to coordination upon disembarkation. Detailed operational procedures (SOPs) are being finalized, supplementing the MoU, and providing guidance on respective responsibilities. Other joint actions include the ongoing IOM-led project "Sports for Inclusion" aiming at fostering social cohesion between migrants, refugees, and host communities.



Enhanced Socio-Economic Inclusion of Refugees.

UNHCR invested in refugee self-reliance, notably by developing a new digital platform that connects refugees to employment and vocational training opportunities. Capacity-building programmes targeting state and local actors have also yielded positive outcomes, leading for example to the signature of a procedural manual on refugees' access to employment with the government. A one-stop-shop facility was opened in the municipality of Raoued for the reception and referral of refugees, migrants, and Tunisian returnees. Embedded within the municipality's organigramme, the one-stop-shop is a unique model, the first of its kind in Tunisia and North of Africa. As part of a partnership agreement with University of Lifelong Learning (ULV), hosted within the ministry of social affairs, 35 refugees graduated from their course in the areas of information technology, music, and handicraft.



Covid-19 Response Strengthened.

Thanks to UNHCR proactive advocacy, refugees and asylum-seekers were included in national vaccination roll-out plans and acceded COVID-19 vaccines. Material assistance was distributed to municipalities and health facilities in high-refugee concentration areas, in the form of hygiene items, PPEs, screening tents (Refugee Housing Unit) and other medical supplies and equipment. Remote protection services have been established with increased capacity via phone and hotlines including counselling and interviews. Communication and outreach activities as well as psychological support were scaled up.



Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Consolidated.

UNHCR sought increased alignment with UN partners starting with the Resident Coordinator, IOM, UNICEF, UN Habitat, UNDP, and WFP among other to coordinate the refugee response and seek opportunities for joint synergies, especially in emergency preparedness, refugee solutions, and the Covid-19 response, as reflected in the spirit of the UN Cooperation Framework 2021-2025.

With funding from



Special thanks to earmarked donors for UNHCR operations in Tunisia in 2021 and 2022

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