

ALGERIA

February 2020

UNHCR is providing international protection, assistance and services to **Sahrawi refugees** in the five camps near Tindouf in south-western Algeria.

UNHCR provides protection and assistance to **refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas**. In 2019, 109 refugees departed for resettlement to third countries.

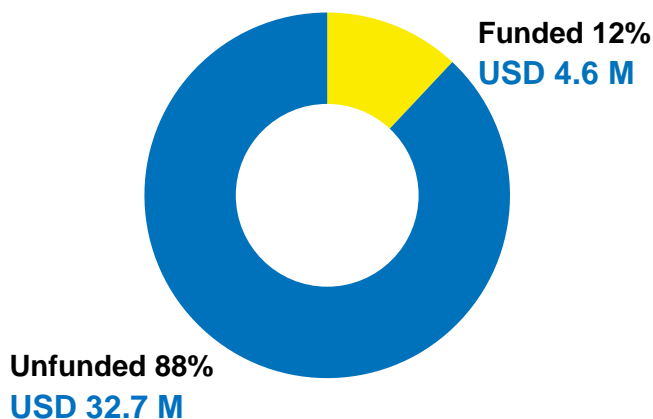
UNHCR leads the provision of humanitarian assistance to Sahrawi refugees, which involves **coordination with all humanitarian actors** in Tindouf.



Shelter remains a critical need for Sahrawi families.
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FUNDING

USD 37.4 M requested for Algeria Operation
 received as of 10 March 2020:



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

- 48 National Staff
- 10 International Staff
- 2 National UNVs

Offices:

- 1 Representation in Algiers and
- 1 Sub-Office in Tindouf



UNHCR partner Danish Refugee Council's business network workshop in Boujdour camp, attended by 18 Sahrawi refugees representing 16 businesses. © DRC / M. Nassima Aissaoui

Working with Partners

- UNHCR is a member of the United Nations Country Team and **works closely with the Algerian Government** and with **13 partners in Algeria**, three in Algiers and ten in Tindouf. UNHCR's partners are: Algerian Red Crescent (ARC), *Association des Femmes Algériennes pour le Développement* (AFAD), *Asociación de Trabajadores y Técnicos sin Fronteras* (ATTSF), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), *Humanité et Inclusion* (HI), *Enfants Réfugiés du Monde* (ERM), Green Tea Association, Movement for Peace, Disarmament & Liberty (MPDL), Oxfam, *Réseau algérien pour la défense des droits de l'enfant* (NADA), *Solidaridad Internacional Andalucía* (SI-A), *Triangle Génération Humanitaire* (TGH) and *Universidad Autonoma de Madrid* (UAM).
- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR **leads inter-agency efforts** to support the Sahrawi refugee programme in close coordination with WFP (food assistance and resilience) and UNICEF (health, education and child protection). UNHCR leads the Inter-Agency Working Group and Inter-Sector Working Group, the regular sector coordination meetings for the Protection, Livelihoods, WASH and Health sectors, in coordination with the Sahrawi refugee community, as well as participating in the Education and Food sector coordination meetings. UNHCR works closely with the Sahrawi community representatives and civil society across the five refugee camps, using a participatory-based approach.

Main Activities

Protection

- Pending the establishment of a national asylum system in Algeria, UNHCR undertakes a range of protection activities in the areas where it has access, through its offices in Algiers and Tindouf. UNHCR also provides capacity building for partners and the authorities.
- In **Tindouf** province, UNHCR assists Sahrawi refugees through strengthening the protection coordination mechanisms and participatory approaches that encourage community-based engagement, self-management and empowerment, in particular for youth, women and civil society organizations. UNHCR ensures that assistance reaches persons with specific needs. This includes specific assistance for some 3,054 persons with disabilities. UNHCR also promotes a favourable protection environment through provision of capacity building opportunities for Sahrawi legal institutions, social workers, education staff and partners; as well as support for the Sahrawi Identification Centre, which issues identification cards to those eligible.
- In **Algiers**, UNHCR conducts registration of asylum-seekers and refugee status determination, and issues documentation to asylum-seekers and refugees. In 2019, UNHCR registered 2,501 asylum seekers and recognized 235 refugees. UNHCR advocates with the authorities to strengthen the protection space for refugees and asylum-seekers, monitors and advocates for the release of refugees and asylum-seekers affected by operations of arrests and return at the borders, and provides capacity building for authorities and other partners. UNHCR provides specialized assistance to persons of concern with specific needs, including mental health and psycho-social support, housing, and cash assistance. Additionally, UNHCR raises awareness among populations of concern on the importance of birth registration and receiving birth certificates to prevent the risk of statelessness.

Education

- In line with its Refugee Education Strategy "**Education 2030: A Strategy for Refugee Inclusion**" UNHCR promotes equitable inclusion in national education systems for refugee children and youth.
- In **Tindouf**, all school-aged children are enrolled in primary and intermediate schools in the camps. UNHCR supports the sector to ensure a safe learning environment through provision of equipment, stationery, books and capacity building for education staff. UNHCR provides **financial incentives to 1,070 education staff**. UNHCR is supporting 137 university students in different universities in Algeria through the DAFI scholarship programme for the current school year. Psycho-social and mental health support are also provided for students including children with specific needs in specialized education centres.
- In **Algiers**, UNHCR supports the **enrolment of refugee and asylum-seeking children in public schools**, where access to education is free, ensuring equal access for girls and boys. UNHCR provides transportation, school supplies, and a daily meal. UNHCR also organizes recreational activities and provides refugee children with support classes for all essential subjects. UNHCR also supports enrolment in early childhood education, with particular focus on households headed by single parents.

Health and Nutrition

- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR covers 70 percent of the medical costs and incentives for **40 Sahrawi refugee doctors** in the five regional hospitals in the camps. UNHCR also covers the running costs of the **Sahrawi Midwife and Nursing School** and offers capacity building activities on the integrated management of childhood illnesses, psycho-social support, and non-communicable diseases. To treat those in need of specialized care, UNHCR

annually **supports the international visits of eight specialist medical commissions** and backs the Sahrawi referral system to send patients elsewhere in Algeria – notably by **maintaining the ambulance fleet and establishing a recovery house** in Algiers. UNHCR supports the Sahrawi Health Information System and implements, jointly with WFP, a **nutrition survey in each camp** (every two years). The last survey was completed in 2019.

- With WFP and the Algerian Red Crescent, UNHCR supports the **supplementary feeding program for malnourished children and pregnant or lactating women**. UNHCR also conducts awareness and prevention campaigns on issues such as anaemia, chronic malnutrition and mental health.
- **Refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas have access to basic healthcare**. UNHCR through its partners in Algiers provides information and facilitates access to existing national health facilities. Where necessary and possible, UNHCR supports medical treatment not covered by the national scheme e.g. specific medications and laboratory tests. UNHCR through its partner Humanity and Inclusion provides individual psychological support, as well as assistance to persons of concern with disabilities.

Food Security

- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR complements the monthly food distributions provided by WFP by adding **supplementary food products, namely yeast and fresh food**. In 2019, UNHCR distributed 375 metric tons (MT) of fresh food in Ramadan and has provided 68 MT of yeast, for baking bread. UNHCR jointly with WFP monitors refugees' access to food through monthly food basket monitoring at distribution points and post-distribution monitoring at household level.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- In Tindouf, UNHCR contributes in **providing about 700,000 m³ of water per year** to the Sahrawi refugees living in the camps through continuous and efficient operation and maintenance of existing water facilities, with the installation of new facilities, and via monitoring of the water quality at different stage of the water distribution system. UNHCR also continues to renew the fleet of trucks for the distribution of water and the reservoirs used by families to store water at household level. In 2019, UNHCR through Oxfam developed a WASH strategy and multi-year plan for improving the water supply, which offers further guidance for this sector.
- UNHCR supports the **waste management system** in the camps through the procurement of garbage collection trucks, provision of necessary equipment, and payment of incentives to 82 workers. In addition, UNHCR is beginning a project for plastic recycling in the camps to reduce the quantity of solid waste.
- UNHCR through its partner produces **soap bars and bleach** at the camp level. Soap is distributed to all refugees, including women of reproductive age and to 123 health and education facilities, and bleach is distributed for the chlorination of water, and to hospitals and dispensaries.

Shelter and NFIs

- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR annually provides shelter materials to the most vulnerable refugee families. A total of **1,005 family tent kits** were provided in 2019, with the aim of matching this assistance in 2020.
- In **Algiers**, UNHCR provides shelter and quarterly cash assistance to urban refugee families. In 2019, 524 refugees – including unaccompanied children, persons with disabilities and women at risk – have been assisted with safe housing or cash to pay their rent, and 432 refugees received multi-purpose cash assistance to cover their basic needs.

Access to Energy

- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR **refills gas cylinders for 28,000 Sahrawi families** on a monthly basis (covering 10 months out of 12). UNHCR provided 626 new gas cylinders and 1,500 fuel-efficient cooking stoves in 2019.

Logistics

- In **Tindouf**, **UNHCR maintains a large fleet of trucks** required to provide assistance to Sahrawi refugees and organizes the delivery of assistance from Oran harbour to Tindouf. A new waste management truck and gas distribution truck are also now in use. In 2019, UNHCR procured eight water trucks and four trucks for waste management.

Community Empowerment

- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR encourages the refugee community's involvement in humanitarian assistance programmes, with a focus on women and youth. UNHCR engages the community throughout the operational planning cycle, as well as supporting civil society groups, particularly among youth promoting protection through sports, recreation, social activities and education. A range of community feedback systems are also in place.
- In **Algiers**, focus group discussions are conducted regularly in order to better assess refugee needs and enhance community-based protection. UNHCR works with its partners to expand outreach activities to populations of

concern living in and outside of Algiers, including through telephone information, a protection hotline, and SMS (texting to phone) systems.

Self-Reliance

- In **Tindouf**, UNHCR's livelihoods strategy focuses on developing livelihoods capabilities and facilitating access to financial and productive assets for small enterprise development and employment, in addition to reinforcing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the camps. In partnership with the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM) a multi-year strategy has been developed and is under implementation to revamp vocational training in the camps.
- UNHCR supports different production workshops in the camps including a soap factory, sewing workshops, five vocational training centres, three artisanal production workshops, a business innovation centre, and the rehabilitation of various bakeries.
- Vocational training centres provide courses on auto mechanics, electricity, carpentry, sewing, pastry production, administration, languages, digital media and computers, all covering a period of 9 to 18 months.
- Through partners Danish Refugee Council, Algerian Red Crescent and UAM, UNHCR provided 30 business grants in 2019 to establish or scale up enterprises that contribute to improving the availability of products and services in the camps, in addition to coaching and business skills training to over 500 Sahrawi youth, as well as a blended course on entrepreneurship for 30 Sahrawi youth. Since 2016, over 150 businesses have been supported by UNHCR and partners, directly benefiting some 600 refugee entrepreneurs.
- In an effort to counter malnutrition in the camps, UNHCR distributed lactating goats to the refugee families most suffering from malnutrition (263 families in total) in addition to the provision of veterinary services, feed and other requirements, and monitoring of the nutritional and health status of these families in local dispensaries.
- In **Algiers**, UNHCR encourages refugees to **achieve self-reliance**, for instance through vocational trainings, and supporting equal access of women and girls. In 2019, 47 refugees (32 women, 15 men) were assisted by UNHCR's partner to enrol in and attend vocational trainings.

Durable Solutions

- In 2019, a total of 99 refugees were submitted for resettlement and 109 departed from Algeria to Canada, Norway, Sweden and the US. UNHCR assisted two refugees to repatriate to their countries of origin in safety and dignity through its voluntary repatriation programme. UNHCR also promotes complementary pathways for admission to third countries to help them attain a sustainable solution, and facilitated in 2019 the reunification of two refugees with family members in Luxembourg.

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CONTACTS

Russell Fraser, External Relations Officer, Algeria
fraser@unhcr.org, Cell +213 661 97 03 15

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www.unhcr.org – [Facebook](#) – [Twitter](#): [@unhcralgeria](#)