



HIGHLIGHTS

295

Of the most vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers received financial assistance in September 2015

147

Individuals rescued-at-sea have approached UNHCR to claim asylum in Tunisia in 2015

158

Refugee children received an education grant for the 2015-16 school year (to cover costs of schools supplies and books)

So far in 2015, UNHCR trained **270** Tunisian officials on refugees and asylum seekers issues; this includes government officials, diplomats, magistrates as well as security officers.

Population of concern

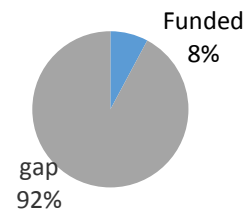
A total of **928** people of concern

By country of origin

Country	Total refugees and asylum seekers
Syria	606
Côte d'Ivoire	103
Sudan	57
Other (21 countries)	162
Total	928

Funding

USD 6.6 million requested



UNHCR Presence

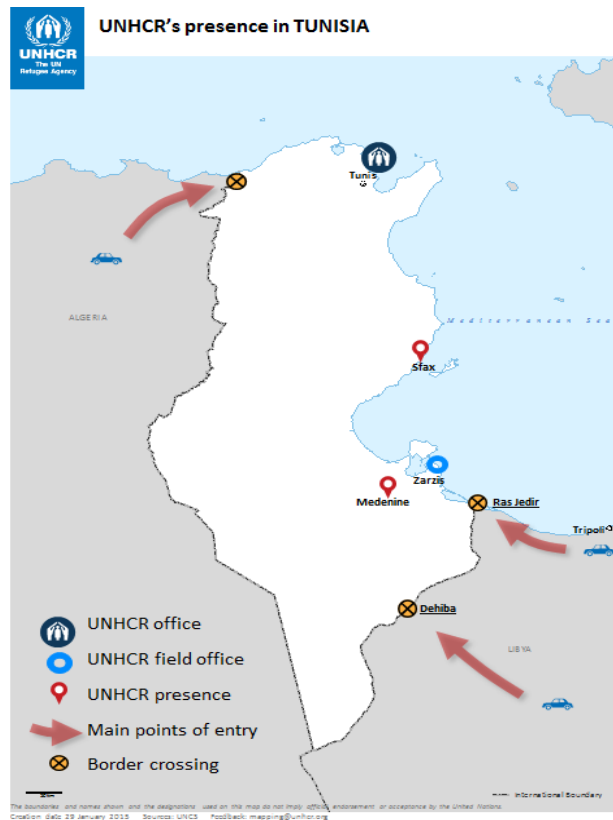
Staff :

- 18 national posts
- 4 international posts

Offices:

- 2 offices located in: Tunis (Representation), Zarzis (Field Office)

Presence of UNHCR staff in Sfax and Medenine



WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- Since 2014, upon the request of the Tunisian government and in close cooperation with UN agencies and partners, UNHCR coordinates the inter-agency preparedness efforts in the event of an influx of refugees and asylum-seekers from Libya. Working-groups were established with relevant actors to prepare sectorial plans for shelter, health, cash-based interventions for food and non-food assistance. UNHCR and partners have pre-positioned core relief items, such as mattresses and blankets. UNHCR pre-positioned registration offices (containers) close to the two official border crossings with Libya, for use as pre-registration centers if needed.
- UNHCR is closely collaborating with the Tunisian Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, Women, Family and Childhood Affairs, Justice and Employment.
- UNHCR is working with its partners the Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC), Islamic Relief Worldwide, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the Arab Institute for Human Rights (IADH) and the Tunisian Scouts. UNHCR is also cooperating with the European Commission, *France Terre d'Asile* (FTDA), the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- UNHCR is a member of the United Nations Country Team in Tunisia and as such, played an active role in the Transition Strategy for Tunisia 2011-2014 and continues to do so within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2015-2019.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Protection

- In July and August 2015, UNHCR registered 47 new asylum-seekers in Tunisia, mainly from Syria. Pending the creation of a national asylum system, UNHCR is the sole entity **conducting refugee status determination** in Tunisia. A main focus of UNHCR's protection work in Tunisia is to ensure that persons of concern are registered with UNHCR and issued with UNHCR certificates to protect them against arbitrary arrest, detention or expulsion.
- UNHCR's overall objective is to support Tunisia into **creating a comprehensive national protection system**. UNHCR provided comments on the draft asylum law shared by the Ministry of Justice in June 2014 and is organizing targeted seminars and offering refugee law training opportunities to relevant officials.
- UNHCR is also involved in **capacity building of border officials** to ensure border management that takes into account protection needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Thanks to a generous contribution from Switzerland, UNHCR, in cooperation with TRC and IOM, is supporting Tunisian authorities to develop a systematized and predictable response to rescue at sea incidents. UNHCR organized a study visit to Italy in July for Tunisian Officials to benefit from the Italian experience with regards to rescue at sea procedures and arrangements. In 2015, seven boats were rescued and disembarked in Tunisia with over 900 survivors on board – some 150 approached UNHCR.

Education

- School-aged refugee and asylum-seeker children have **access to public education in Tunisia** and UNHCR supports them by providing schools supplies and schools books. UNHCR is coordinating with the Ministry of Education to ensure that all school-aged refugee children are able to access Tunisia's education system, including those facing language barriers.

Health

- Refugees and asylum-seekers have the same **access to basic public health facilities** as Tunisian nationals. Refugees with chronic diseases (such as HIV/AIDS or cancer) have guaranteed access to Tunisian health structures. UNHCR reimburses primary healthcare and emergency care costs of refugees and asylum-seekers with special needs through its partner TRC.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- UNHCR's objective is to build the capacity of refugees to **achieve self-reliance** in Tunisia. In 2015, UNHCR, through its partner ADRA, is developing a new approach to improve livelihoods opportunities, through the creation of a start-up company offering services and hiring skilled and unskilled refugees and asylum seekers. This will also include a tailored training curriculum, which will provide "soft" vocational and technical skills to refugees and asylum seekers to help them access employment in Tunisia.

Durable Solutions

- UNHCR's strategy is to facilitate **temporary local settlement** of refugees in Tunisia through its self-reliance programme. This includes advocating for the issuance of residence permits in order to legalize their status in Tunisia. UNHCR is also supporting **voluntary repatriation** whenever possible. In Tunisia, UNHCR uses **resettlement** as a protection tool for individual sensitive cases and is supporting family reunification procedures for those eligible refugees.

UNHCR is grateful for the generous contributions from donors who have given unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions to UNHCR this year, and [Switzerland](#), which has directly contributed to the operation.