

North Africa



Algeria

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Mauritania

Morocco

Tunisia

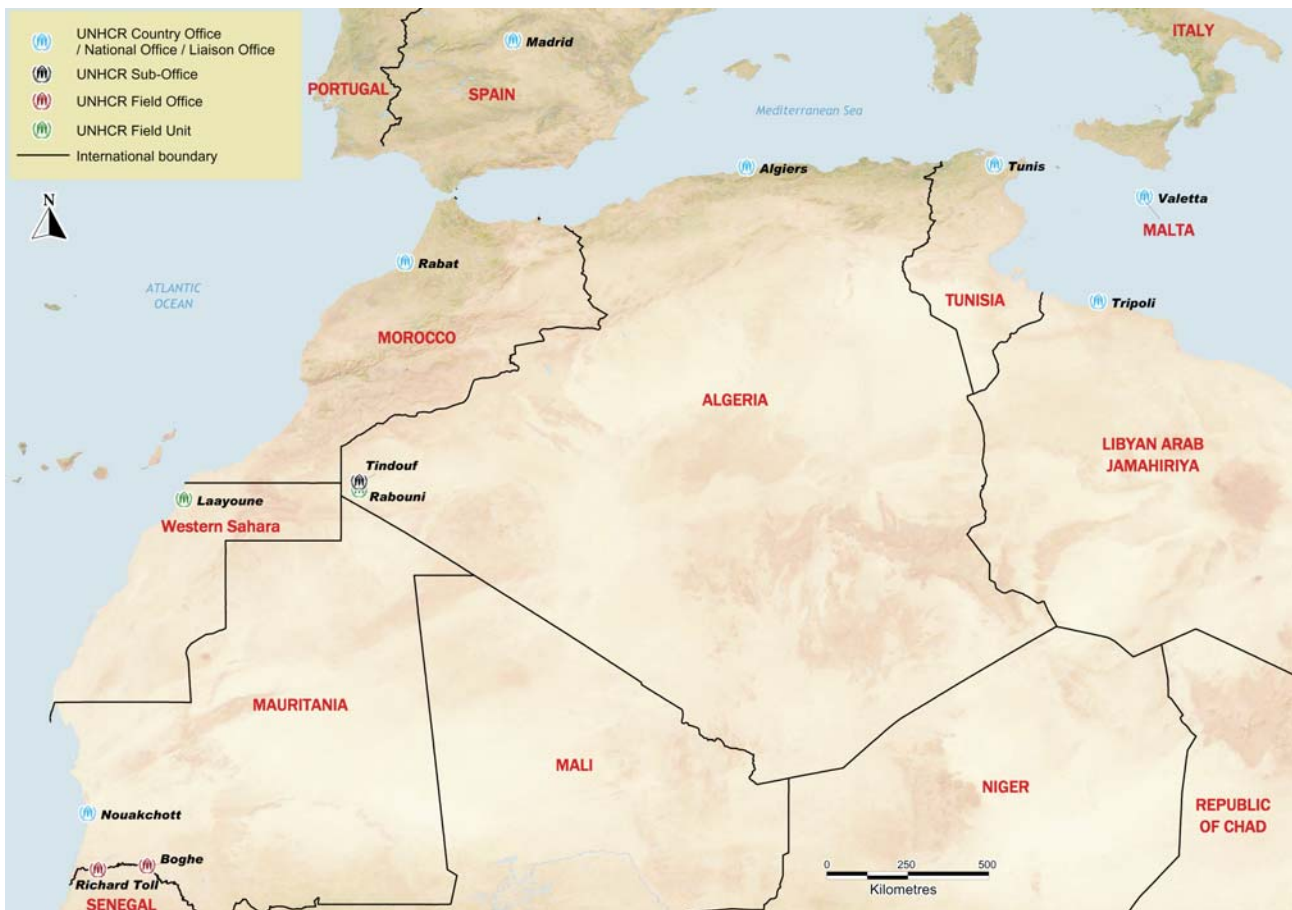
Western Sahara

A convoy of Mauritanian returnees from Senegal arriving by ferry in Mauritania.



| OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- The large mixed-migration flows moving through North Africa continued to have a significant impact on the protection space for refugees and asylum-seekers in the region. The lack of national asylum systems is a major constraint, while arrests for illegal entry and non-possession of residence permits can lead to deportation and *refoulement*.
- In a positive development, the Government of Algeria expressed interest in working with UNHCR to put in place a national asylum law. An inter-ministerial drafting committee was established for the purpose.
- UNHCR re-oriented its operation in aid of the Sahrawi camp population in Tindouf (Algeria) by increasing investments in the long-term welfare of the refugees, particularly in the sectors of health, nutrition and education. Furthermore, in consultation with the Sahrawi refugee leadership, UNHCR developed a comprehensive strategy to address protection needs in the camps. As part of this effort, new field offices are being established in all the camps.
- The family visits element of the Confidence Building Measures (CBM) programme for Sahrawi refugees and their families in the Western Sahara was halted in March 2010 due to a disagreement between the parties over the eligibility of a beneficiary. The free telephone service was also interrupted.
- In April 2010 the Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya suspended UNHCR operations in the country. High-level discussions led to an interim arrangement in June, pending the conclusion of a cooperation agreement formalizing UNHCR's presence and activities in the country.



Working environment

With the exception of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, all States in the Maghreb have ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. However, except for Mauritania, no country has adopted a legal and institutional framework on refugees and asylum.

The common denominator faced by UNHCR offices in the subregion is a protection climate affected by mixed-migration flows, particularly from sub-Saharan countries. In addition, as more restrictive measures are put in place in Europe, countries in the sub region are increasingly becoming final destinations for mixed migration.

The lack of national asylum systems, coupled with the absence of durable solutions and limited access to livelihood

opportunities, compounds the problems facing refugees and asylum-seekers in the subregion. UNHCR provides protection and assistance to people of concern, while exploring ways to increase the protection space and pursue durable solutions where possible.

Achievements and impact

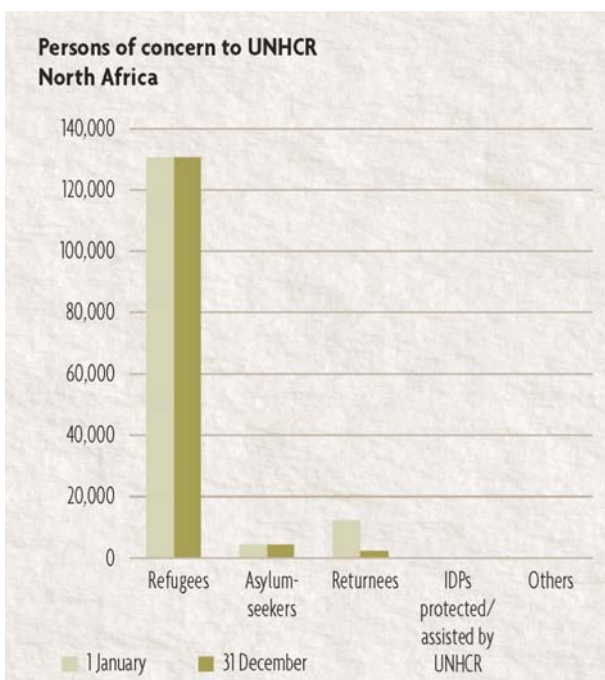
UNHCR continued its efforts to enlarge the protection space for refugees and asylum-seekers within larger migratory movements across North Africa. The 10-Point Plan of Action proved a useful framework, with its focus on innovative self-reliance programmes based on UNHCR's policy on refugees in urban contexts. UNHCR also took a more active stance on the return of rejected asylum cases, and increased its efforts to identify and, where possibly, re-admit secondary movers to the territory.

To stem the arrest, deportation and *refoulement* of people of concern, UNHCR staff made direct interventions at police stations to seek the reversal of orders of arrest and removal, while UNHCR-sponsored lawyers' networks assisted people of concern in the courts.

In Algeria, no cases of *refoulement* were reported in 2010, and UNHCR was successful in intervening on behalf of people of concern detained for illegal entry. Though refugees recognized under the Office's mandate were not issued with residence permits in Morocco, UNHCR-issued documentation was increasingly respected, enabling refugees to access health and education services as well as the informal labour market.

As a result of increased investments in the Sahrawi refugee camps in Tindouf, the nutritional status of the refugees was improved, as was the quality of education in the camps.

Progress was also achieved in the voluntary repatriation of Mauritanian refugees from Senegal. Since the beginning of the repatriation operation in January 2008, UNHCR and its partners have repatriated a total of 20,400 Mauritanian



refugees, which represents 85 per cent of the planning figure. A further 5,200 people are ready to return voluntarily once their documents have been cleared by the Government.

| Constraints |

Insecure conditions, the lack of national or regional strategies to manage mixed-migration flows, and weak or non-existent asylum structures and legal frameworks hampered UNHCR's work in the subregion. Prospects for a political solution to the Western Sahara situation remained elusive.

| Operations |

UNHCR's operation in **Algeria** is covered under a separate chapter.

In the **Libyan Arab Jamahiriya**, UNHCR resumed in June 2010 some activities for the registered caseload, which consisted of 7,925 refugees and 3,210 asylum-seekers, mainly of Eritrean, Iraqi, Palestinian and Sudanese origin. Together with its partner organization, UNHCR provided vulnerable refugees with a modest amount of financial assistance and basic living items as well as access to health care and education, including vocational training. However, new registrations, RSD interviews and visits to detention centres were suspended in accordance with government instructions. UNHCR also worked to expedite resettlement for refugees already registered for resettlement. A total of 261 individuals were submitted to resettlement countries and 11 people departed.

Mauritania is the most advanced country in North Africa in terms of a functioning asylum system. Of the 717 refugees under UNHCR's mandate, the Mauritanian authorities have recognized 111. Nearing the end of the repatriation of Mauritanian refugees from Senegal, UNHCR increasingly focused its efforts on working with the Government to consolidate a national asylum system.

Discussions with the relevant authorities and other stakeholders on asylum and related migration issues led to the creation of a working group to develop a national asylum

strategy. To this end, an expert was engaged to work with UNHCR and the authorities to finalize the legislation. At the same time, UNHCR and its partners continued to implement reintegration activities to ensure the durability of the return from Senegal.

In **Morocco**, at the end of the year the refugee population stood at 790 refugees and 280 asylum-seekers, originating mainly from Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Iraq. No progress was made in preparations for the introduction of a legislative and institutional framework or in efforts to regularize the status of refugees recognized under UNHCR's mandate.

UNHCR continued to work with the Ministry of Justice by organizing a series of round-table discussions and training events on refugee law. The editing of a reference document for the judiciary, which includes all materials from the various training sessions conducted over the period 2008-2009, continued in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice. Interest on the part of law-enforcement bodies in joining UNHCR's programme for the promotion of refugee law created new opportunities for capacity-building and developing functioning asylum institutions. Furthermore, UNHCR promoted access to basic public services and livelihood opportunities for people of concern.

In **Tunisia**, a relatively small number of refugees and asylum-seekers are registered with UNHCR. Most reside in the capital. The Office continued to support them with some financial assistance as well as vocational training and microcredit projects to encourage self-reliance. UNHCR also organized capacity-building and training events on refugee issues. For instance, in collaboration with the Arab Institute of Human Rights, it convened a regional training conference on international protection for NGOs from North Africa. This was the first occasion for NGOs from the subregion to share experiences on asylum, refugee protection and migration in a cross-border context.

Owing to the suspension of the CBM programme for **Western Sahara**, UNHCR was able to carry out only eight family visits in 2010, benefiting just 595 people, compared to over 2,300 in 2009. Since the CBM programme began in

Budget and expenditure in North Africa | USD

Country		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	Total
Algeria	Budget	18,743,196	0	0	18,743,196
	Expenditure	12,981,737	0	0	12,981,737
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Budget	5,106,727	0	0	5,106,727
	Expenditure	2,701,314	0	0	2,701,314
Mauritania	Budget	6,915,883	17,000	1,068,568	8,001,451
	Expenditure	4,873,184	15,324	0	4,888,508
Morocco	Budget	2,443,482	0	0	2,443,482
	Expenditure	1,735,638	0	0	1,735,638
Tunisia	Budget	1,237,472	0	0	1,237,472
	Expenditure	983,607	0	0	983,607
Western Sahara	Budget	11,480,792	0	0	11,480,792
	Expenditure	2,696,078	0	0	2,696,078
Total budget		45,927,552	17,000	1,068,568	47,013,120
Total expenditure		25,971,558	15,324	0	25,986,882

2004, some 13,000 of the more than 40,000 registered individuals have benefitted from the family visits. In addition, refugees in the Tindouf camps have been able to make close to 140,000 free telephone calls to their families in the Territory.

Further to the High Commissioner's proposal to expand the CBM programme, UNHCR met with both parties in Geneva to undertake an evaluation of the existing CBM activities. During informal talks with the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara in December 2010, the parties agreed to resume the family visits and reaffirmed their agreement to expand the scope of the programme to include the exchange of visits by road.

Financial information

For 2010, the requirements for North Africa were higher than in previous years, mainly due to the inclusion of unmet needs, particularly in Algeria, where the budget was increased to improve living conditions in the camps. The rate of implementation remained low for operations that were suspended, notably in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the family visits under the CBM programme. Furthermore, the proposed expansion of the CBM programme did not materialize in 2010.

Voluntary contributions to North Africa | USD

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	All pillars	Total
NORTH AFRICA SUBREGION			
Liechtenstein		97,087	97,087
United States of America		1,500,000	1,500,000
North Africa subtotal	0	1,597,087	1,597,087
ALGERIA			
Austria	269,179		269,179
Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe (Germany)	63,532		63,532
European Commission	2,298,407		2,298,407
Italy	674,764		674,764
United States of America	803,120	3,000,000	3,803,120
Algeria subtotal	4,109,002	3,000,000	7,109,002
LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA			
European Commission	735,892		735,892
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya subtotal	735,892	0	735,892
MAURITANIA			
Spain	288,600		288,600
United States of America		1,400,000	1,400,000
OPEC Fund for International Development	1,000,000		1,000,000
Mauritania subtotal	1,288,600	1,400,000	2,688,600
MOROCCO			
Switzerland	450,565		450,565
UN Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund	106,909		106,909
Morocco subtotal	557,474	0	557,474
WESTERN SAHARA			
Finland	397,731		397,731
Germany	269,906		269,906
Italy	40,377		40,377
Spain	337,382		337,382
United States of America		800,000	800,000
Western Sahara subtotal	1,045,395	800,000	1,845,395
Total	7,736,364	6,797,087	14,533,451

Note: Includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the "New or additional activities - mandate-related" (NAM) reserve.