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KNOW RESET – BUILDING KNOWLEDGE FOR A CONCERTED AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES

Co-financed by the European Union

Investigation in first asylum country - Tunisia / Shousha Camp

Wafa Baba

KNOW RESET Research Report 2013/02
Country of First Asylum Report



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Research Report
KNOW RESET RR 2013/02

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KNOW RESET - Building Knowledge for a Concerted and Sustainable Approach to Refugee Resettlement in the EU and its Member States

The KNOW RESET Project, which is co-financed by the European Union, is carried out by the EUI in partnership with ECRE (the European Council on Refugees and Exiles). The general objective of the project is to construct the knowledge-base necessary for good policy-making in the refugee resettlement domain in the EU and its 27 Member States. It aims to explore the potential to develop the resettlement capacity, to extend good practices and to enhance cooperation in the EU.

KNOW RESET maps and analyses frameworks and practices in the area of refugee resettlement in the 27 EU Member States. The team involved in the project, gathering members of the EUI's and ECRE's large networks, has proceeded with a systematic and comparative inventory of legal and policy frameworks and practices related to resettlement in the EU and its 27 Member States, providing the most updated set of information. The publication of comparative data and the dissemination of research results contribute to raising awareness for refugee resettlement and refugee protection in the EU and provide a knowledge-tool for policy-makers, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders interested or involved in resettlement activities and policies in the EU and countries of first asylum. The project involves too field research in Kenya, Pakistan and Tunisia, which will add to the knowledge and the assessment of resettlement practices of refugees from countries of first asylum to the EU.

KNOW RESET has resulted in the first website mapping EU involvement in refugee resettlement. It focuses on resettlement in the EU and covers the 27 Member States, involved in resettlement in one form or another, and to various degrees. It contains a unique database providing legal, administrative and policy documents as well as statistics collected from national authorities by the project team. It also includes a series of comparative tables and graphs, the country profiles of the Member States, country of first asylum reports, as well as thematic reports and policy briefs. This user-friendly website is a valuable instrument for: comparing the varied frameworks, policies and practices within the EU; for evaluating the resettlement capacity in the EU; for following the evolution of Member States' commitment in resettlement; and for assessing the impact of the Joint EU Resettlement Programme.

Results of the above activities are available for public consultation through the website of the project:
<http://www.know-reset.eu/>

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List of Contents

Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
Glossary and Acronyms	
Introduction	1
1. Comparative documentary research	1
2. An institutional survey	2
3. A qualitative investigation	2
FIRST PART : General Context	4
I. Institutional Framework.....	4
II. Refugee Populations in Shousha Camp.....	5
SECOND PART: Resettlement Process	7
I. Resettlement as a Durable Solution	7
1. Who is eligible for resettlement?	7
2. Who is not eligible for resettlement?	7
II. Resettlement according to Stakeholders: the Period of Waiting	8
1. The Resettlement Process according to UNHCR:.....	8
2. The Resettlement Process according to the UNHCR Tunis-Zarzis Team:	8
3. The Resettlement Process According to Other Stakeholders:.....	11
4. The Resettlement Process according to Refugees:.....	11
General conclusions	13
For better conditions of resettlement.....	13
Annexes.....	14

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Abstract

As part of the KNOW RESET Project, this report looks at resettlement, from country of first asylum to the host countries, especially those in the EU. To do this, we performed an extensive literature search and a qualitative survey of the refugees from the Shousha camp, UNHCR and its partners in Tunisia. We conducted this study in Tunisia from 15 June to 15 October 2012, with refugees submitted for resettlement, as well as stakeholders in the Shousha camp, in Tunis and Zarzis.

Given the complexity of the resettlement process, we have focused on the risks of non-compliance with refugees' human rights and the possible consequences in terms of the ability of refugees to integrate into their host country. Also, we suggest solutions for better resettlement conditions.

The analysis of the resettlement process reveals the limits of practices, at different levels:

- The lack of adequate information circulation between the different actors in the process.
- The highly-centralised role of UNHCR in the process.
- The imbalance of burden-sharing among countries of resettlement.
- The lack of harmonization of criteria among EU countries.
- The disengagement of some countries from the Joint EU Resettlement Programme.
- The gap between the selection criteria and the local and international contexts.
- The insufficient management of the refugees' waiting time.
- The absence of a legislative framework for asylum and/or resettlement in Tunisia.

Glossary and Acronyms

BID	Best Interests Determination
ETC	Emergency Transit Center (in Romania/Slovakia)
Ex-Libya	Refugees or asylum seekers registered with UNHCR Libya
MAF	Medical Assessment Form
RST	Resettlement
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
RFF	Resettlement Registration Form

Introduction

17 February, 2011, as a result of the civil war that broke out in Libya, thousands of people began arriving, asking for refuge at the Tunisian borders. The inhabitants of the South-Eastern region hosted the first arrivals with the help of the Tunisian authorities, who quickly implemented the first transit camp on the Ras Jdir border, on 23 February 2011. Subsequently, they had to deal with a growing numbers of refugee flows, as an outpouring of international solidarity came in to take care of those fleeing from Libya. Thus, several camps were installed between February and May 2011, the main camps are:

- The Shousha camp, installed 24 February, 2011 (UNHCR).
- The Emirati camp in Ras Jdir, installed 13 March, 2011.
- The “El Hayet” camp, installed 6 April, 2011 (IFRC).
- The Remada Camp, 10 April, 2011 (UNHCR).
- The Emirati camp, installed in Dhiba 13 April, 2011.
- The Qatari camp, installed in Tataouine 23 April, 2011.
- The “Save the children” camp, installed in Ras Jdir 9 May, 2011 (UNICEF).

Receiving, control, health, housing and various social service operations were ensured by international organizations, UNHCR’s partners under its own coordination. Aid in different areas was carried out by countries: for example, as Morocco (installation of a military hospital) and Switzerland (support for repatriation and local integration). A temporary office was operational between April and September 2011 for Libyan refugees in urban areas. Then, by July 2011, only the Shoucha camp remained operational, grouping all operations, with over 3,700 refugees and asylum seekers.

Therefore, as a special international recognition of Tunisia, the resettlement of refugees remaining in the camp, arose as the main durable solution after repatriation and the voluntary return of most of those who had fled. Given the commitment of 26 countries for a joint resettlement program¹, this study looks at the practices of resettlement from Shousha camp to the European Union.

We have formulated our study around two major questions:

1. According to what criteria are refugees chosen? And how many steps are carried out in selecting refugees for resettlement by UNHCR and by EU host countries?
2. How can we evaluate the overall process of resettlement, particularly in terms of waiting time?

To do this, we carried out a three-part survey:

1. Comparative documentary research

Official data collection from local authorities, media, NGOs, UNHCR and academic expertise. For this, we consulted the websites, newspaper articles and UNHCR editions. This research has enabled us to place the study in context, to define the various research tissues but also to note that the data provided by UNHCR is the main if not the only source of information for institutions and for the general public. This is the reason we stuck, in what follows, to statistics and internal documents from the national office of UNHCR Tunis and the external office Zarzis (cf. Annexes 1, 2, 4 and 5).

¹ U.N., A/AC.96/1108, *Progress report on resettlement*, 4 July 2012, <http://www.unhcr.org/503cce2e9.html>

2. An institutional survey

For an evaluation of the resettlement process by stakeholders at Shousha camp, namely:

- UNHCR National Office in Tunis.
- UNHCR Office in Zarzis.
- The International Medical Corps (IMC present in Shousha).
- The Danish Refugee Council (DRC present in Shousha).
- The Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW present in Shousha).
- The German Embassy in Tunis.
- Civil society: the “Boats4people” (NGO), the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (NGO) and the World Social Forum (preparatory meeting of 12-18 July, held at Monastir, Tunisia). Civil society supports rejected asylum seekers and refugees for resettlement.

We interviewed some officials and/or attended meetings and activities, as follows:

- UNHCR Tunis: Interview with an officer (July 2012).
- IMC: Recorded interviews with two doctors and one psychologist (August 2012).
- IRW: Recorded interview with the head of the unit (August 2012).
- DRC: Observation of cultural and educational activities (August 2012).
- UNHCR Zarzis: Observation of work activities and interviews (August 2012) with:
 - The head of the office,
 - 3 officers.
 - The officer in charge of security,
 - The senior protection assistant,
 - The senior resettlement assistant.
- German Embassy in Tunis: Interview with the officer in charge of refugees resettled in Germany (September 2012).

In addition, we opted initially for the distribution of a questionnaire to the Tunisian authorities in charge of the refugees, but our questionnaire was not returned. Indeed, because of events in Tunisia during the investigation, it was difficult to contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Human Rights, and, indeed, the EU embassies. In view of the comparative documentary research and interviews conducted with stakeholders in Shousha camp, we have come to think that this failure will have no impact on this work, for two reasons:

- Tunisian authorities and embassies use UNHCR statistics. Thus, information from them would essentially have repeated information we already have.
- Because of national social emergencies, the refugee issue is now very much a secondary issue for Tunisian officials. At best, we would have received a political speech.

3. A qualitative investigation

With refugees in Shousha camp during the week of 27 August, 2012. This investigation focused on resettlement procedures, the evaluation of the process and waiting time. Semi-directive Interviews with individuals and with groups were recorded in the camp:

- First group: 4 refugees submitted for resettlement, in waiting for a final decision by the receiving countries;
- Second group: 4 refugees accepted for resettlement by the host countries, awaiting departure;

- Third group: 2 refugees rejected for resettlement by the host countries. Resubmission in progress.

It should be noted that we had initially planned a larger sample, on the basis of data from the exploratory survey, conducted from June to July 2012. However, the number of interviews was, naturally, dependent on the readiness of refugees to answer our questions.

Moreover, due to clashes that took place in June 2012 between the inhabitants of the urban area of Ben Guerdane and refugees, the Shousha camp was under strict military authority. Therefore, we asked authorization from the Ministry of Defense, and on this occasion, an army officer at the camp voluntarily gave us an interview. This allowed us to identify further security and social problems related to the waiting time in the camp.

Finally, it was possible to achieve the third part of the survey thanks to UNHCR.

FIRST PART : General Context

I. Institutional Framework

Tunisia is a signatory of the UN Geneva Convention of 1951, relative to the status of refugees, its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 Convention of the OAU for Refugees in Africa. However, Tunisia had here its first large-scale humanitarian experience. For this reason, a national legal framework governing refugees and asylum seekers was lacking. Therefore, status determination fell to UNHCR, which is the only resource of information for refugees and asylum seekers in Tunisia.

In this regard, discussions were initiated to enact, with urgency, a law that would ensure the protection of refugees rejected for resettlement by the host countries, for people outside the mandate of UNHCR and for the 21 Palestinians² in the camp, who for political considerations have not been submitted for resettlement. In addition, UNHCR has been working to put in place interim solutions for the 2,739 Palestinian refugees registered with UNHCR in Libya: repatriation to Gaza; or integration in other Arab countries, by inviting these countries to cooperate more³.

In addition, the NGOs involved in the management of Shousha camp operate under the aegis of UNHCR, namely:

- The Tunisian Red Crescent (TRC), whose role is to liaise between UNHCR and refugees and asylum seekers in urban areas. The TRC also provides protection and priority treatment for the folders of vulnerable persons.
- The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) provides cultural and educational activities in the camp, preparatory actions for resettlement (information, language courses, learning the culture of the host country, preparing for interviews, help with refugee rights and help with administrative forms ... etc.).
- The International Medical Corps (IMC) provides the care and psychological support needed for camp residents.
- Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) provides logistics, sanitary and culinary help in the camp.
- We interviewed representatives of these partners about their role in the resettlement process and the impact of the waiting time on the health of refugees.

Other partners not present in the camp included:

- International Organization for Migration (IOM), which handles the departure of refugees, and which also helps to manage the flows outside the UNHCR mandate.
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC).
- Arab Institute for Human Rights.

² UNHCR Registered Shousha, July, October 2012, annexes 1, 2, 4 and 5.

³ Internal memo in March 2011.

Note 1 “*The Convention does not apply to refugees who fall under United Nations organizations other than UNHCR, such as Palestine refugees whose receive protection or assistance from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), or refugees whose status equivalent to that of nationals in their host countries.*”, UNHCR, introductory Note, August 2007, *In*, Convention and Protocol relating to the status of refugees.

Note 2 : « *Palestinian who are not within UNRWA’s areas of operation fall within UNHCR’s mandate, per Article 1D, 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. See, further, UNHCR, Revised Note on the applicability of Article 1D of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees to Palestinian Refugees, Octobre 2009* », UNHCR, March 2011, *In*, Note to Arab League Solidarity Initiative for Palestinian Refugees Formely Residing in Libya.

The UNHCR budget in 2011 for refugee programme (Pillar 1) in Tunisia, amounted to 45,742,856 US dollars⁴ against less than one million in 2010. The budget was revised to almost 35 million in 2012 given the expenditure of 2011, and less than 25 million for 2013⁵. Note here that voluntary returns to countries of origin were mainly financed by Switzerland.

II. Refugee Populations in Shousha Camp

In the beginning of 2011, Tunisia opened its borders to nearly one million citizens coming from Libya escaping the war. The mixed migratory flows, composed of more than 660,000 Libyans⁶ and 220,000 persons⁷ of thirty different nationalities, arrived in Tunisia led by Eritreans, Somalis and Sudanese. Most of them, including the Libyans, have returned to their countries of origin, after the relative calm now reigning in Libya. Following the upstream work conducted by the Tunisian authorities, UNHCR came to aid the Tunisian people and its government, with which it signed a cooperation agreement in June 2011 for three groups:

- Libyans living in host families and transit camps (90,000 people⁸ between April and July 2011 have found refuge, according to estimates from the Tunisian authorities, there remained about 60 families⁹ in April 2012).
- Asylum seekers and refugees of other nationalities hosted in the transit camp waiting for durable solutions.
- Asylum seekers and refugees living in urban areas (220 people¹⁰ in July 2011; 276 people¹¹ in April 2012; 343 people¹² in September 2012, mainly from Côte d'Ivoire).

The last two groups stood at more than 3,700 people in July 2011. Most fear a return to their country of origin, especially Sub-Saharan Africa. 323 people have been rejected for asylum for non-compliance with Geneva Convention standards¹³.

Moreover, given the limited capacity of Tunisia and the refusal of refugees to settle in Tunisia, UNHCR has submitted almost all refugees who arrived, before 1 December 2011, for resettlement. So, 3,697 individual folders were submitted between March 2011 and April 2012. 2,037 refugees were accepted for resettlement in host countries (1,743 people) and by private sponsors (294 people) in April 2012¹⁴. The 1,660 unanswered submissions await a decision from the resettlement countries and the first departures began at the end of 2011.

⁴ UNHCR Global Report 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/4fc880ad0.html>

⁵ UNHCR Global Appeal 2012-2013, <http://www.unhcr.org/4ec2310016.html>

⁶ UNHCR Tunisia Fact Sheet, April 2012, Annex 3.

⁷ UNHCR Registered Shousha, July, October 2012, annexes 1, 2, 4 and 5.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ UNHCR Tunisia Fact Sheet, April 2012.

¹⁰ UNHCR Registered Shousha, July, October 2012, annexes 1,2, 4 and 5.

¹¹ UNHCR Tunisia Fact Sheet, April 2012.

¹² UNHCR Tunisia Fact Sheet, September 2012.

¹³ “*The provisions of this Convention shall not be applicable to persons to whom there are serious reasons for considering that:*

- a) they have committed a crime against peace, a war crime or a crime against humanity, as defined in the international instruments drawn up to make provisions about such crimes;*
- b) they have committed a serious crime law outside the country of refuge prior to his admission as a refugee;*
- c) they have been guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.”*, Article 1F, of the 1951 Convention and Protocol relating to status of refugees. (Translated from French).

¹⁴ Private sponsorships emanate from relatives of refugees living abroad (Canada, Switzerland, Italy and Poland). In September 2012, over 300 persons of concern departed thanks to private sponsorship or immigration programmes.

Taking into account responses received since April from the resettlement countries, this figure decreased, in September 2012, to 1,213 refugees waiting for an answer.

Fearing a pull factor and in order to stop the flow of illegal migrants, UNHCR has not submitted the new refugees arriving from Libya after 1 December 2011, for resettlement. These number 131 (See annexes 4 and 5). Other durable solutions have been proposed for these individuals, namely, local integration or voluntary return to countries of origin. The goal of the deterrent approach is to ensure the closure of the camp in June 2013. However, some exceptions have been granted to 25 vulnerable persons (women and unaccompanied children, suffering people whose care can be provided for in the host country ... etc.) (See annexes 4 and 5). Thus, in September 2012, the number of submissions increased to 4,024 (including appeals), newcomers are now placed outside the camp, in the Zarzis youth center.

However, UNHCR provides humanitarian support to illegal immigrants from third countries, such as: the 74 Somalis rescued by the Tunisian army in the Mediterranean 18 March, 2012 (installed in Shousha camp); or the 154 passengers of a boat coming from Libya (going to Italy) 10 September, 2012, who were installed in the Zarzis youth center.

In addition, the 281 people outside UNHCR mandate among the first arrivals continue to be sheltered in Shousha camp (see annexes 4 and 5). Their case is discussed in the media and civil society, because of the precarious living conditions and the uncertain future of these people. For example, we now follow the evolution of a “sit-in” protest, organized in Shousha camp since September, by rejected asylum seekers and refugees definitively rejected for resettlement, whose claims mark the regularization of their status, the right to resettlement and the refusal of local integration. In the meantime, a number of these people work in construction and agricultural, because of low demand for Tunisians in these two sectors.

In anticipation of these problems, UNHCR had from the beginning entered into negotiations with the Tunisian authorities in order to establish a national legal framework governing the asylum and refugee questions, as well as the facilitation of local integration. Palestinians are at the heart of these negotiations: on this subject UNHCR has been puzzled by the slowness of the government to respond.

Among the last resettled groups during November 2012, there are nine new refugees (initially rejected for asylum) who received an exceptional submission resettlement to Portugal.

Below a summary of statistics Shousha camp, provided by UNHCR (See annexes).

Persons of concern - From Mars 30, 2012 to October 12, 2012

	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Total
30/03/12	164	2,860	3,024
13/07/12	150	2,381	2,531
24/08/12	141	2,178	2,319
30/09/12	138	2,203	2,341
12/10/12	122	1,868	1,990

We distinguish in the camp, five categories of refugee candidates for resettlement:

- The refugees waiting for a resettlement response from the host countries.
- The refugees accepted for resettlement by the host countries, awaiting a departure date.
- The refugees accepted for resettlement by the host countries, awaiting departure.
- The refugees rejected for resettlement by the host countries, awaiting a response after resubmission.
- The refugees definitely rejected for resettlement by host countries, with a choice of two other durable solutions, voluntary repatriation to the country of origin, or local integration.

SECOND PART: Resettlement Process

I. Resettlement as a Durable Solution

UNHCR is engaged in a global process of refugee protection, inviting all signatories of the 1951 Convention, its 1967 Protocol and its international and regional instruments to burden share. In addition to the right to asylum, the process includes three durable complementary and non-hierarchical solutions¹⁵, namely:

- Voluntary repatriation.
- Integration (in the country of first asylum).
- Resettlement.

In general, any refugee under the mandate of UNHCR has the right to international protection. However, resettlement is a last resort. Resettlement is only organised where repatriation and/or integration in countries of first asylum is impossible. Therefore, UNHCR chooses the appropriate durable solution for refugees, individually or in groups, according to the needs and concerns of refugees (not according to their wishes).

It is furthermore stated in the UNHCR Handbook that resettlement, unlike repatriation, is not a right. It should never be an answer to a claim, or favor, or accorded out of pity or following an incident.

It is also noted that acceptance for resettlement by UNHCR must be independent of quotas of resettlement countries, and questions of the integration potential of refugees. However, a few exceptions are tolerated in the absence of prospects for other durable solutions. To this end, admission procedures shall be laid down for resettlement by UNHCR, in order to ensure the transparency of the process, to limit subjectivity stakeholders and also to combat the possibility of corruption.

1. Who is eligible for resettlement?

Besides the basic considerations, the criteria for refugee admission for resettlement by UNHCR are the following¹⁶:

- Refugees in need of legal and physical protection,
- Victims of violence and torture,
- Refugees with medical needs,
- Vulnerable women,
- Refugees following family reunion,
- Children and adolescents,
- Elderly refugees,
- Refugees without local integration prospects.

2. Who is not eligible for resettlement?

Excluded from international protection and, therefore, from resettlement, are refugees with threats hanging over them as described in Article 1F of the 1951 Convention, mentioned above. As such, the registration for the resettlement form (RRF) must contain the reasons for inclusion in international protection. Thus, the review of conformity with the exclusion clauses may, at any time, result in the

¹⁵ UNHCR Resettlement Handbook 2011

¹⁶ Ibid.

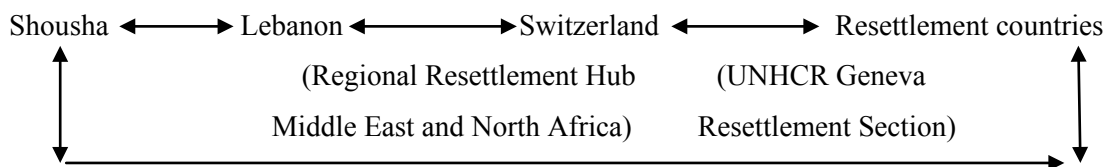
revocation or even the cancellation of erroneous initial recognition, whether for refugee status or for admission to resettlement. This rigor imposed both by UNHCR and resettlement countries aims to avoid the abuse of the institution of asylum. However, as argued above, refugees from Shousha camp have, generally, had their applications for resettlement systematically accepted by UNHCR for submission to resettlement countries. The few refusals involved cases of crime, polygamy and unaccompanied minors, where other durable solutions were offered. Then there were also refugees rejected by potential host countries.

II. Resettlement according to Stakeholders: the Period of Waiting.

1. The Resettlement Process according to UNHCR:

“Resettlement involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a country where they have sought protection in a third country which has accepted them as refugees and granted them the status of permanent residence. The status is granted protection against refoulement and provide the resettled refugee and his family or dependents access to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. It should also provide the opportunity to eventually become a naturalized citizen of the country of resettlement”¹⁷.

UNHCR has the obligation to ensure the smooth running of the resettlement process, from the initial selection, until there is guarantee of citizenship rights in the country of resettlement. A commitment of this kind necessarily involves the establishment of a huge institutional and procedural machine around the world, which we can characterize as “heavy” at times, because of the growing number of refugees. Indeed, the main path through which a dossier is submitted for resettlement, illustrates this fact:



We presume that the centralization process not only slows the mechanism, but also causes a loss of information (qualitative) and, therefore, a potential failure to understand the reality on the ground.

2. The Resettlement Process according to the UNHCR Tunis-Zarzis Team:

At external offices in Tunis and Zarzis, officers and assistants refer to Chapter 7 of the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook of 2011¹⁸, about the resettlement procedures, and to Chapter 5 in the same Handbook for the identification of needs, specific needs and the risks involved in resettlement¹⁹. Upon arrival, refugees await initial identification (**waiting time 1**), after which, resettlement operations are implemented as follows:

¹⁷ UNHCR Resettlement Handbook 2011, Chapter 1, page 2

¹⁸ UNHCR, *Basic procedures to follow in processing resettlement submissions*, <http://www.unhcr.org/3d464ee37.pdf>, In, Resettlement Hand book, chapter 7, 4 July 2011.

¹⁹ UNHCR, *Protection considerations, and the identification of resettlement needs*, <http://www.unhcr.org/3d464e176.html>, In, Resettlement Handbook, Chapter 5, 4 July 2011.

- Assessment of individual resettlement needs: case assessment and verification.
- Preparation of a resettlement submission: Interviews and preparation of documentation (including BID, MAF) and a RRF.
- UNHCR submission decision: routing of submissions.
- Resettlement country decision: preparing for state selection missions, decisions and practices.
- Post-decision: resubmissions and family unity.
- Pre-departure arrangements and monitoring.

According to the testimonies of officers and assistants to the resettlement and protection process, the systematic submission of refugee to resettlement has saved time. The initial identification took place simultaneously with the operation of eligibility for refugee status (RSD). To do this, a reinforcement team composed of several dozen international UNHCR officers helped the home team during 2011. This allowed the realisation of the first three stages of preparation for resettlement, approximately, in six months (**waiting time 2**). This was qualified as “exceptional” by our interviewees.

Let us note here that the conduct of resettlement interviews is a crucial step. Everything said by the refugee must be transcribed and evaluated by the interview officer, in the forms in the resettlement file. Some complex cases are interviewed twice.

The Resettlement Registration Form (RFF) traces the life of a refugee. This form is developed for all identified refugees. The BID (Best Interests Determination) is an additional form for minors, all of them having priority for resettlement. The MAF (Medical Assessment Form) is an additional form for serious medical cases, all of them having priority for resettlement.

These forms contain confidential personal life stories, so we did not have access rights. Nevertheless, a few RFF previews were entrusted to us. Here are marked the selection criteria mentioned above (vulnerability categories).

After obtaining data, HUB’s submission for resettlement begins. This implies a revision of the contents, then a classification of the files by resettlement countries, according to the criteria and preferences defined and communicated by them. These are, then, transmitted to the HUB of Lebanon, which, in turn, carries out the same operation again. We regret not being able to get information on this, because the regional HUB has had a new mission in Kenya since June 2012: the date of last submissions at Shousha.

The refugees we interviewed said that they had no knowledge of the countries’ criteria and the reasons for resettlement refusal from some. Deductions, of course, could be made : for example, the rejection of opinion leaders by the USA ; the interest of other countries in single women and children ; indifference towards the elderly without family ; and the preference for francophones in Canada.

Chapters about resettlement countries can be found in the 2011 UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, which gives some sense of the resettlement policies of various countries. However, this list is not exhaustive, and does not include Belgium, Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland and the UK. Out of 26 resettlement countries, only 19 participated in the resettlement of refugees from Shousha camp²⁰, among these Romania which hosts an emergency transit center (ETC).

Once submitted by UNHCR, the treatment of resettlement cases by countries of second asylum lasts up to a year. Generally, the time required by each country is divided into three phases:

²⁰ Nine resettlement countries have not participated in the resettlement of refugees from Shousha, namely, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Iceland, New Zealand and Paraguay.

- **The verification phase:** Security investigations, content and profile selections are conducted for each individual file. Only the US communicate progress of its work to refugees. At the end of this phase, an appointment for an interview with an on site delegation will be given to each refugee. (**waiting time 3**).
- **The selection phase in the country of first asylum:** Interviews are conducted individually with the coordination of UNHCR officers and the Tunisian Red Crescent. Most countries make their final decision a long time after the interviews. (**waiting time 4**).
- **The phase of preparation to departure and resettlement:** A final decision will be given, well before the departure date is communicated. (**waiting time 5**). There is often an additional wait before departure (**waiting time 6**).

Only Spain has reduced the overall waiting time, by giving the final decision immediately after interviews in June 2012, and by organizing the departure of refugees the following month. However, one of the refugees resettled in Spain reported to his friends in the camp, that the conditions of resettlement were not promising.

In 2011, the first refugees who were rejected from resettlement had the privilege of being accepted by other countries, whose criteria are more adequate and/or whose quotas not yet exhausted. In 2012, all resubmissions were conducted systematically for the same country, according to the initial submission, so few cases have been reviewed and accepted. (**waiting time 7**).

Moreover, all our interviewees agree in noting that the US is the country whose resettlement process is slowest. However, the US is the country that is the least demanding in the first submission, and which resettles the greatest number of refugees.

Germany resettled 300 refugees in 2012, 202 from the Shousha camp – out of 240 submitted by UNHCR – and 100 Iraqi Christians arriving from Turkey, who have family ties in Germany. Germany also spends a large budget on the local integration of refugees, ranging from €600,000 to a million, to promote the financial independence of refugees. According to the relevant officer at the German Embassy priority is given to refugees with potential for integration, namely, for example, those aged 18-35, high level executives (mostly Iraqi) and technicians (from Iraq, Sudan, Eritrea ...). But, Nigerian refugees were rejected because of questions over safety. These statements are confirmed by a UNHCR officer, who adds that European standards are certainly more selective: they are established by profile and special cases. We were also present at the departure of 195 refugees to Germany 3 September 2012, who, according to the refugees resettled in Germany at the embassy, will be driven to a transit camp in southern Germany before final resettlement. This group will be followed by seven other people who need to be given medical treatment in Tunisia before their departure, including a pregnant woman, with two children. This group had been awaiting departure since May 2012. The German authorities needed five weeks to treat the records, after the submission of UNHCR.

In addition, the role of the embassy is only to ensure coordination between the German migration authorities and UNHCR in Tunisia. Therefore, no accurate information on the selection criteria or the Joint European Union Resettlement Programme (JEURP) is available at the Embassy.

The numbers of refugees are obviously falling, the result of progressive resettlement in host countries and repatriation. For example, at the time of writing this report, a UN HCR officer at Shousha camp told the media that most of the refugees in the camp will be resettled in the United States, Norway and Germany by the end of the year. This suggests that the number of refugees will decrease to 1,500 after the repatriation of most, especially Libyans, Egyptians and Bangladeshis.

However, the pace of operations remains slow. Indeed, during our visit to Shousha Camp at the end of August 2012, there were 2,178 refugees against 2,381 in July 2012. We also heard of the departure of 300 refugees to Germany, the USA and Canada between September and November 2012, which suggests an average of 150 departures per month, or approximately 7.5% of the number of refugees in 2012. These are low numbers given the problems encountered in the camp, and the global waiting time.

3. The Resettlement Process According to Other Stakeholders:

Other stakeholders in the Shousha camp gave us interviews and focused their answers on the management of waiting times of refugees in terms of health, safety, and services within the camp.

- Health: General practitioners suggested that waiting should be shortened to avoid complications with health problems, whether prior to arrival at camp, or caused by conditions of community life in the asylum. A psychologist talked about reactive depression as the main psychological fallout directly related to the difficulty of waiting suffered by refugees. The results are mainly insomnia, eating disorders, anxiety, nervousness, social withdrawal and loss of interest. In addition, doctors are, of course, bound by professional secrecy. They communicate patient records to UNHCR according to predetermined codes, and they in no way interfere in the selection criteria of refugees. Their role is limited to monitoring, awareness and family planning.
- Security, Protection and Services: The long stay of refugees in the camp necessarily causes security problems following intercommunity conflict : this was a problem according to the military officers present on the ground. In addition, UNHCR protection is required to manage daily life, in addition to routine work, and sometimes dramatic humanitarian emergencies, which could have been avoided with prompt resettlement. Also, the unit manager of Islamic Relief, in charge of camp management, expressed his concerns about the future of refugees waiting, after the end of its mission in the Shousha camp. Indeed, a few weeks later, we learned through the media that a series of angry protests over refugees broke out, following the departure of Islamic Relief and the announcement by UNHCR of the closing of the camp, scheduled for 30 June, 2013. Since then, refugees have been left almost to their own devices with only weekly food rations.

4. The Resettlement Process according to Refugees:

- First group interviewed: four refugees submitted for resettlement, they are waiting for a final decision.

Refugee	Arrival country	Country of origin	Submission
1 man	Libya	Somalia	U.S.A.
1 man	Libya	Eritrea	Switzerland
1 man	Libya	Ethiopia	U.S.A.
1 man	Libya	Ivory Coast	Canada

Refugees in this group have been waiting since February/April 2012 for an answer from the respective countries of submission. The final decision may be admission to resettlement, so an appointment for interview will be fixed with a delegation of the relevant country and/or establishment of the necessary forms. In the case of non admission for resettlement, there is the possibility of appeal.

Throughout the interview, refugees have continued to express their dissatisfaction with the harsh conditions of waiting, which seems sometimes to lack hope. Wardi, from Somalia, is one of the 700 arrived in March 2011, after being picked up at sea. Many of his friends, including his wife and children, died in attempting to emigrate to Italy. Then, he waited four months to submit for refugee status, that he got five months later in December 2011. He is still waiting for a response from the US, which he said, resettled much of the Somali group, then comes, Norway, Sweden, Germany, and finally Canada for some of them.

Camara, from Ivory Coast, arrived at the camp in July 2011. Camara was awarded refugee status after eight months, and has been submitted for resettlement in Canada since February 2012, after being rejected by the US.

All the interviewees confirmed that they were not consulted in the choice of resettlement countries. However, they were not unhappy about the choice: the important thing for them was to leave the camp, not to return to their home country and to start a new life.

– The second group interviewed: 4 refugees accepted for resettlement, awaiting departure

Refugee	Arrival country	Country of origin	Submission	Date of departure
1 man	Libya	Sudan	Germany	September 3, 2012
1 man	Libya	Eritrea	U.S.A.	Unknown
1 woman	Libya	Somalia	U.S.A.	Unknown
1 woman	Libya	Somalia	U.S.A.	Unknown

Refugees from this group have been awaiting resettlement since January/June 2012. Although they have received a positive response, the waiting time seems to them hard, especially because of lack of information. Indeed, refugees claim right of access to information related to the progress of their cases and prospects of resettlement. They also want more support and assistance for preparation for interviews and forms, since according to them, some were rejected because of a language problem, or illiteracy. It should be noted here, that there is an information office in the camp for refugees, which opens once a week. However, this information point remains insufficient, given the large number of refugees in the camp.

Thus, this lack of information is negative for the morale of refugees, especially as they have been waiting since February/March 2011. In fact, they had to wait from six months to a year to ask for resettlement and six months on average to receive the response of the resettlement countries. The departure date is generally eight months afterwards, for a later departure after one to three months. The longest delays are those for the U.S.A. Finally, women and children are the most affected by the long stay.

– The third group interviewed: two refugees rejected for resettlement. Appeal in progress

Refugee	Arrival country	Country of origin	Submission
1 man	Libya	Ethiopia	Spain
1 man	Libya	Sudan	U.S.A.

Both refugees interviewed are renewing their resettlement applications, for the same countries of initial submission.

Both interviewees came from Libya before December 2011, exactly one year after they were rejected for resettlement, and since then they have sunk into state of total despair.

Abdelmajid, an Ethiopian, has two wives, he had divorced one of them to be eligible for resettlement. He was, however, dismissed with his wife and three children, one of them an eighteen-year-old girl. However, his ex-wife was resettled in Spain with a child. He says he does not know the reasons for his rejection, he feels completely lost and hopes to be picked up on resubmission. However, we suspect that he was dismissed because of his problematic past in Ethiopia, about which he refused to give details.

As for Taieb from Sudan, he thinks he failed the interview because of his psychological condition and his difficulty in understanding English. He claims not to know the exact reasons for his rejection and refuses to return to Sudan, where the war is still being fought. His wish, he says, is to live in a country of peace, freedom and security.

In addition, both refugees talked a lot about difficult conditions of waiting in the camp and they regretted not having financial independence.

General conclusions

For better conditions of resettlement

20 June 2011, UNHCR celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of World Refugee Day, under the theme “One refugee without hope is too many”, yet in reality we are very far from this ideal. Indeed, UNHCR evaluates that 800,000 refugees in the world need to be resettled, while there are not more than 80,000 places a year²¹. On the other hand, burden sharing is spread unevenly between the 27 EU Member States, since the EU received 5,000 refugees between 2011/2012 (4,700 in 2010), the vast majority are hosted by the USA, Canada and Australia. Despite the resources granted by the European Refugee Fund²², European countries are restrictive with regards to resettlement.

Given the various findings, we conclude with the following suggestions:

1. Constitutionalizing the demand for asylum in countries of first asylum,
2. Revising laws for refugees in both countries of first asylum and resettlement countries,
3. Reducing the UNHCR resettlement process around the world, through decentralization approaches and/or a better division of labour between Geneva and Lebanon. The same for resettlement countries,
4. Avoiding duplication between UNHCR and resettlement countries,
5. Standardizing E.U. criteria,
6. Harmonizing and shortening the process of resettlement in the EU,
7. Working for a better diffusion of information for refugees, Also for a better flow,
8. Increasing annual quotas, and per resettlement country in the EU,
9. Minimizing subjective factors,
10. Taking into account civil society work,
11. Adapting the selection criteria to its historical context.

²¹ UN, A/AC.96/1108, *Progress report on resettlement*, 4 July 2012, <http://www.unhcr.org/503cce2e9.html>

²² Amnesty International, press release, *EU Must Boost Refugee Resettlement*, Brussels, 28 March 2012, <http://www.amnesty.eu/en/press-releases/asylum-and-migration/0556-0556/>

Annexes

1. Persons of Concern of UNHCR in Shousha Camp – Demographics (Internal – External) – *Source UNHCR Zarzis – 13/07/2012*
2. Population Statistics for Shousha Camp – Internal – *Source UNHCR Zarzis – 13/07/2012*
3. UNHCR Tunisia Fact Sheet – *September 2012*
4. Persons of Concern of UNHCR in Shousha Camp – Demographics (Internal – External) – *Source UNHCR Zarzis – 12/10/2012*
5. Population Statistics for Shousha Camp – Internal – *Source UNHCR Zarzis – 12/10/2012*

Annex 1

Persons of Concern of UNHCR in Shousha Camp

Demographics (Internal – External)

Source UNHCR Zarzis – 13/07/2012

	All Registered	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Total Refugees & Asylum Seekers	Others**
Tunisia	2 020	1 870	149	2 019	1
EX-Libya	487	486	1	487	0
Others*	25	25	0	25	0
Totals	2 532	2 381	150	2 531	1

*:Registered with other UNHCR operation

** : Spouses of refugees or asylum seekers

Age & Gender Breakdown by Country of Origin

Country of Origin	0-4		5-11		12-17		18-59		>60		Total	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Sub Total	68	91	43	56	39	117	328	1 762	3	25	481	2 051
%	43%	57%	43%	57%	25%	75%	16%	84%	11%	89%	19%	81%
Total	159		99		156		2 090		28		2 532	
Algeria							1	1				2
Cameroon								1				1
CAR								2				2
Chad	1	1	2		2	3	4	14				27
Côte d'Ivoire								13				13
DRC								2				2
Eritrea	8	10	2	2	1	3	25	246	2	4		303
Ethiopia	13	8	2		1	1	48	111				184
Gambia						2						2
India							1					1
Iraq	9	19	13	14	11	10	82	103		8		269
Liberia								1				1
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya							1					1
Mali						2		4				6
Morocco							5					5
Nigeria							1	2				3
Pakistan		1		1		1	4	5				12
Palestine	1	1		4	2	3	3	7				21
Senegal								1				1
Somalia	20	23	6	2	2	52	80	631		2		818
Sudan	15	28	18	33	20	40	73	617	1	11		856
Syrian Arab Republic	1							1				2

Sex and Age	0-4	5-11	12-17	18-59	60+	Total	% of Total
Female	68	43	39	328	3	481	19,0%
Male	91	56	117	1 762	25	2 051	81,0%
Total	159	99	156	2 090	28	2 532	

Avg. case size 1,4 Avg. case size excluding single person cases 3,7

Ethnic Origins	Count	%
Hawiye	324	12,8%
Zaghawa	313	12,4%
Arab	240	9,5%
Massalit	160	6,3%
Oromo	156	6,2%
Tigrinya	152	6,0%
Shekhal	101	4,0%
Tigre	76	3,0%
Fur	72	2,8%
Dir	42	1,7%
Belin	39	1,5%
Ashraaf	38	1,5%
Madiban	36	1,4%
Rahan-weyn	35	1,4%
Nuba	33	1,3%
Meidob	31	1,2%
Dadjo	28	1,1%
Sahow	26	1,0%
Berti	25	1,0%
Tama	23	0,9%
Darod	23	0,9%
Rer-hamar	20	0,8%
None	18	0,7%
Ogaden	18	0,7%
Other	503	19,9%

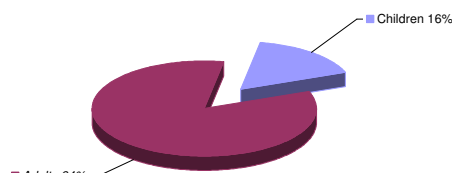
Number of families	Count	%
Total	1 853	
Female-Headed	78	4,2%
Male-Headed	1 775	95,8%

Religious Background	Count	%
Islam	2 312	91,3%
Christianity	224	8,8%
Other	26	1,0%

Specific Needs	Count	%
Serious medical condition	271	10,7%
Specific legal and physical protection needs	181	7,1%
Torture	123	4,9%
Unaccompanied or separated child	73	2,9%
Disability	59	2,3%
Woman at risk	51	2,0%
Family unity	41	1,6%
Child at risk	14	0,6%
Older person at risk	15	0,6%
Single parent	9	0,4%

One individual can have more than one specific need

Individuals (age)



Annex 2

Population Statistics for Shousha Camp

Internal

Source UNHCR Zarzis – 13/07/2012

13/07/2012

Persons of concern	Persons Not of concern	Total Residents in the Camp
2 532	281	2 813

Persons of concern to UNHCR

	All Registered	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Total Refugees & Asylum Seekers	Others**
Tunisia	2 020	1 870	149	2 019	1
EX-Libya	487	486	1	487	0
Others*	25	25	0	25	0
Totals	2 532	2 381	150	2 531	1

*:Registered with other UNHCR operation
 **: Spouses of refugees or asylum seekers

RST Departures (*)	
UNHCR resettlement departures	1159
ETC Departures	150
Non-UNHCR resettlement departures	147
Total Departures	1456

* As recorder in Progres

New arrivals registered since 1st Dec. 2011		RST process (Refugees)		RSD Process (asylum seekers)	
Total	294	Accepted by RST country	1 295	Pending 1st inst. decision	137
- Including recognized refugees	131	Submitted to RST country	830	Pending appeal	2
- incl. referred to RST	23	In HCR RST Process	1	Pending 2nd inst. decision	11
- Including finally rejected	6				

Population movement since 1st Dec. 2011

	Increases		Decreases					
	New arrivals	New births	RST Departures	Private Sponsorship	Spontaneous Departures	Voluntary Repatriation	Deaths	File Closure
Dec-11	133	6	79	9	20	-	1	103
Jan-12	56	10	44	-	12	-	-	65
Feb-12	-	11	75	-	-	6	2	80
Mar-12	-	5	99	-	-	-	-	19
Apr-12	6(**)	5	274	1	-	-	1	17
May-12*	95	9	165	3	5	6	-	-
Jun-12	1(***)	2	48	31	20	-	-	2
Jul-12	4	1	53	1	-	4	-	-
Week of 7 Jun - 13 Jul	3	-	33	-	-	-	-	-

*13 persons are waiting clearance for registration (claim to be new arrivals)

** Reopening of 1 case of A/S in detention in Medenine

*** Reopening of 1 case of A/S

Country of Origin and Legal Status

Country of Origin	Total		% of Total	Refugees		Asylum Seekers		Others
	Cases	Persons		Cases	Persons	Cases	Persons	Persons
Sudan	646	856	33,8%	607	792	39	64	-
Somalia	704	818	32,3%	637	747	67	71	-
Eritrea	251	303	12,0%	249	301	2	2	-
Iraq	77	269	10,6%	77	269	-	-	-
Ethiopia	114	184	7,3%	113	183	1	1	-
Chad	18	27	1,1%	15	24	3	3	-
Palestine	8	21	0,8%	8	21	-	-	-
Côte d'Ivoire	13	13	0,5%	10	10	3	3	-
Pakistan	3	12	0,5%	3	12	-	-	-
Mali	6	6	0,2%	4	4	2	2	-
Morocco	1	5	0,2%	-	4	1	1	-
Nigeria	2	3	0,1%	1	2	1	1	-
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2	2	0,1%	1	1	1	1	-
Algeria	1	2	0,1%	-	1	1	1	-
Gambia	2	2	0,1%	2	2	-	-	-
Central African Republic	2	2	0,1%	2	2	-	-	-
Syrian Arab Republic	-	2	0,1%	-	2	-	-	-
Cameroon	1	1	0,0%	1	1	-	-	-
Liberia	1	1	0,0%	1	1	-	-	-
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	-	1	0,0%	-	-	-	-	1
Senegal	1	1	0,0%	1	1	-	-	-
India	-	1	0,0%	-	1	-	-	-
Total	1 853	2 532	100,0%	1 732	2 381	121	150	1

Month of Arrival

févr-11	16	0,6%
mars-11	1 363	53,8%
avr-11	335	13,2%
mai-11	147	5,8%
juin-11	86	3,4%
juil-11	86	3,4%
août-11	59	2,3%
sept-11	42	1,7%
oct-11	124	4,9%
nov-11	20	0,8%
déc-11	130	5,1%
janv-12	25	1,0%
févr-12	10	0,4%
mars-12	61	2,4%
avr-12	7	0,3%
mai-12	19	0,8%
juin-12	2	0,1%
juil-12	-	0,0%

Ex-Libya Origins

Iraq	177
Sudan	124
Eritrea	79
Somalia	71
Ethiopia	19
Palestine	10
Chad	4
Others	1
Total	487

Persons Not of concern to UNHCR (rejected asylum seekers)

Final rejection decisions - Breakdown by Nationality

Country of Origin	Cases	Persons	% of Total
Chad	86	111	34,4%
Sudan	62	69	21,4%
Nigeria	36	41	12,7%
Côte d'Ivoire	30	30	9,3%
Ethiopia	14	18	5,6%
Mali	8	8	2,5%
Gambia	7	7	2,2%
Ghana	7	7	2,2%
Liberia	6	6	1,9%
Pakistan	3	5	1,5%
Bangladesh	3	3	0,9%
Others	16	18	5,6%
Total	278	323	

Not of Concern:

Still residing in the camp	281	87,0%
Departed	42	13,0%

Annex 3

UNHCR Tunisia Fact Sheet

September 2012



© UNHCR 2012/Hala Al-Horany- Resettlement departures from the Shousha Transit Camp to Germany

Latest Developments

- On 3 September, 195 refugees in the Shousha transit camp were resettled to Germany. The total number of refugees accepted to Germany is 201, but six had to postpone their departure for medical reasons.

- On 10 September, a boat heading from Libya to Italy disembarked 154 passengers in Tunisia. The group was not transferred to the Shousha transit camp. Rather, 100 arrivals opted to return home voluntarily with IOM and were transferred to a center in Tunis. 50 arrivals requested asylum and were transferred to a center in Zarzis. Four migrants who have not sought asylum are undecided about return and thus remain in a National Guard compound.

- The Department of Homeland Security of the United States completed its fifth and final security ride to interview 569 refugees for resettlement on 11 September. 561 refugees were pre-selected for resettlement.

- UNHCR’s Representative met with the Vice President of Tunisia’s Constituent Assembly to seek support for a reference to the right to asylum and respect for the notion of non-refoulement in the new constitution.

- UNHCR, IOM, ICMPD and the EU will participate with the Ministry of Interior in a joint assessment of Tunisia’s border management capacity.

Population of the Shousha Transit Camp September 2012			
Country of origin	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Total
Sudan	678	55	733
Somalia	647	64	711
Eritrea	214	2	216
Iraq	183	-	183
Ethiopia	117	2	119
Chad	23	3	26
Palestine	21	-	21
Côte d’Ivoire	10	3	13
Others*	30	9	39
Total refugees and asylum seekers	1,923	136	2,061
Migrants ex-Libya			280
Total population in the transit camp			2,341

* 14 different nationalities

Departures from Shousha Transit Camp (September 2012)

UNHCR Resettlement Submissions and Departures (persons)

Country	Submitted	Departures
Australia	150	110
Belgium	27	25
Canada	38	2
Denmark	28	21
Finland	30	21
France	1	1
Germany	290	195
Ireland	27	24
Netherlands	58	19
Norway	582	476
Portugal	28	23
Spain	107	80
Sweden	222	201
Switzerland	2	0
UK	10	2
USA	2,424	396
UNHCR Referral	4,024	1,596

Applications that are refused by one resettlement country can be resubmitted to another country. Final acceptance of refugees, however, is fully dependent on the decision of resettlement countries.

Refugees submitted for resettlement

- In response to the Libya crisis last year and on account of Tunisia’s own revolution, UNHCR launched the Global Resettlement Solidarity Initiative.
- By August 2012, UNHCR made 4,024 submissions (including re-submissions) to resettlement countries on behalf of refugees registered in the Shousha transit camp before December 2011. Refugees registered after that date will not automatically be referred for resettlement to prevent a pull factor.
- Resettlement countries have accepted 2,139 refugees submitted through UNHCR. 1,792 refugees have already departed (including 150 to the ETC in Romania/Slovakia).
- 1,213 refugees await a final decision from a resettlement country.

Other departures from Shousha Transit Camp

- In addition to resettlement departures, over 300 persons of concern departed for Canada, Switzerland, Italy and Poland thanks to private sponsorship or immigration programmes.

Shousha Transit Camp

In response to the 2011 Libya crisis, UNHCR began registering and assisting non-Libyan asylum seekers and refugees of 22 nationalities in a transit camp (Shousha) near the border crossing of Ras Ajdir. UNHCR and its partners provide basic humanitarian assistance while also facilitating durable solutions for the transit camp population.

Today, Shousha hosts 1,923 refugees and 136 asylum seekers. The majority of refugees in the transit camp will be accepted for resettlement. UNHCR nevertheless anticipates some 400 refugees will not be resettled and will thus be assisted to become self reliant outside the transit camp once it is closed.

There are also 280 migrants in Shousha who were not recognised as refugees after a careful review of their asylum claims by UNHCR. IOM facilitates the voluntary return and reintegration of these individuals, who do not come under UNHCR's mandate.

Urban Refugees

In Tunis, there are 84 refugees and 259 asylum seekers (mainly from Côte d'Ivoire). UNHCR processes asylum claims and provides assistance to the most vulnerable among them. Resettlement is reserved for refugees facing an immediate physical protection risk in Tunisia.

A few Libyan families who fled the conflict in 2011 still reside in urban and semi-urban areas where they have been generously accommodated by host communities, with some basic assistance from UNHCR.

Groups of Syrians have also entered Tunisia recently, but have not yet approached UNHCR. A mapping of the Syrian population is thus underway with CRT to determine their protection needs.

Collaboration and Partnerships

Government Collaboration

UNHCR is collaborating closely with the Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, Women's Affairs, Justice, Human Rights and Employment.

Implementing Partners

- Tunisian Red Crescent (CRT)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW)
- International Medical Corps (IMC)
- France Terre d'Asile (FTDA)
- Arab Institute for Human Rights (IADH)
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

UN Coordination

UNHCR is a member of the UN Country Team and plays an active role in the UN's Transition Strategy for Tunisia, as lead agency with IOM for emergency preparedness and response.

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UNHCR Presence in Tunisia

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) started its operations in Tunisia upon request of the Tunisian Government in 1957 to assist several thousand Algerian refugees and established an Honorary Representation in 1963. Following the signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Tunisia and UNHCR on 18 June 2011, UNHCR's first Representative was appointed on 15 September 2011.

Operational Background

During the Libya crisis in 2011, UNHCR supported the generous relief effort of the Tunisian government and people for the hundreds of thousands of persons fleeing the violence in Libya. This emergency operation and Tunisia's post-revolutionary climate enabled UNHCR to engage the newly elected Government and non-state actors to work towards a more favourable protection environment for refugees and to explore the potential for a legal and institutional framework for asylum.

National Legal Framework

Tunisia is signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. It has also ratified the 1969 OAU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. A national legal framework for asylum has yet to be enacted but is currently under discussion with the authorities. For the time being, UNHCR remains the sole entity undertaking refugee status determination.

Objectives

UNHCR Tunisia's overall aim is to ensure a favourable protection environment through:

1. Supporting the government to establish a national asylum law and system.
2. Registering, documenting and counseling persons of concern.
3. Undertaking refugee status determination.
4. Targetting assistance to vulnerable refugees.
5. Facilitating durable solutions for refugees.
6. Promoting a constructive and sustainable engagement from the authorities on international protection.
7. Strengthening and collaborating with civil society.

UNHCR Tunisia Offices and Staffing

UNHCR has two offices in Tunisia. The Country Office in Tunis also acts as a UNHCR Regional Technical Hub for UNHCR offices in North Africa

- Country Office in Tunis:
13 national staff, 5 international staff
- Regional Technical Hub for North Africa in Tunis:
6 international staff
- Field Office in Zarzis:
23 national staff, 10 international staff

Budget

- 2012: USD 27.2 million (requirements)
- 2011: USD 33.3 million (expenditures)

Annex 4

Persons of Concern of UNHCR in Shousha Camp

Demographics (Internal – External)

Source UNHCR Zarzis – 12/10/2012

	All Registered	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Total Refugees & Asylum Seekers	Others**
Tunisia	1 660	1 537	121	1 658	2
EX-Libya	313	312	1	313	0
Others*	19	19	0	19	0
Totals	1 992	1 868	122	1 990	2

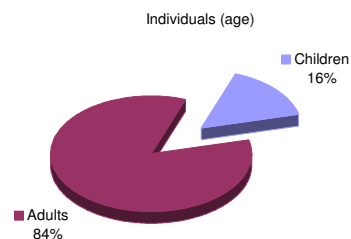
*:Registered with other UNHCR operation
 **: Spouses of refugees or asylum seekers

Age & Gender Breakdown by Country of Origin

Country of Origin	0-4		5-11		12-17		18-59		>60		Total	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Sub Total	49	75	29	36	25	97	211	1 450	2	18	316	1 676
%	40%	60%	45%	55%	20%	80%	13%	87%	10%	90%	16%	84%
Total	124		65		122		1 661		20		1 992	
Algeria							1	1				2
Cameroon								1				1
CAR								2				2
Chad	1	1	2		2	3	3	13				25
Côte d'Ivoire						1		13				14
DRC	1	1				2	1	1				6
Eritrea	3	4	1		1	3	13	175	1	3		204
Ethiopia	9	2	2			2	25	77				117
Gambia						2						2
Guinea Conakry						2						2
India							1					1
Iraq	7	12	8	9	7	5	49	70		4		171
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya							1					1
Mali						4		4				8
Morocco							2					2
Nigeria								1				1
Pakistan		2		1			2	3				8
Palestine	1	1		4	2	3	3	7				21
Senegal								1				1
Somalia	17	24	1		1	44	58	539		2		686
Sudan	9	28	15	22	12	26	52	541	1	9		715
Syrian Arab Republic	1							1				2

Sex and Age	0-4	5-11	12-17	18-59	60+	Total	% of Total
Female	49	28	26	211	2	316	15,9%
Male	75	36	96	1 451	18	1 676	84,1%
Total	124	64	122	1 662	20	1 992	
	6,2%	3,2%	6,1%	83,4%	1,0%		

Avg. case size 1,3 Avg. case size excluding single person cases 3,8



Ethnic Origins	Count	Percentage
Hawiye	274	13,8%
Zaghawa	263	13,2%
Arab	159	8,0%
Massalit	137	6,9%
Tigrinya	107	5,4%
Oromo	98	4,9%
Shekhal	85	4,3%
Fur	62	3,1%
Tigre	47	2,4%
Dir	35	1,8%
Madiban	32	1,6%
Rahan-weyn	32	1,6%
Ashraaf, Ashraf	28	1,4%
Meidob	27	1,4%
Nuba	26	1,3%
Belin	24	1,2%
Dadjo	23	1,2%
Berti	22	1,1%
Tama	21	1,1%
Sahow	21	1,1%
Darod	19	1,0%
Ogaden	18	0,9%
None	13	0,7%
Rer-hamar	13	0,7%
Other	406	20,4%

Number of families	Count	Percentage
Total	1 534	
Female-Headed	50	3,3%
Male-Headed	1 484	96,7%

Religious Background	Count	Percentage
Islam	1 825	91,6%
Christianity	156	7,8%
Other	11	0,6%

Specific Needs	Count	Percentage
Serious medical condition	210	10,5%
Specific legal and physical protection needs	141	7,1%
Torture	99	5,0%
Unaccompanied or separated child	67	3,4%
Disability	46	2,3%
Family unity	33	1,7%
Woman at risk	33	1,7%
Older person at risk	13	0,7%
Child at risk	9	0,5%
Single parent	5	0,3%

One individual can have more than one specific need

Annex 5

Population Statistics for Shousha Camp

Internal – External

Source UNHCR Zarzis – 12/10/2012

12/10/2012

Persons of concern	Persons Not of concern	Total Residents in the Camp
1 992	281	2 273
87,64%	12,36%	100%

Persons of concern to UNHCR

	All Registered	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Total Refugees & Asylum Seekers	Others**
Tunisia	1 660	1 537	121	1 658	2
EX-Libya	313	312	1	313	0
Others*	19	19	0	19	0
Totals	1 992	1 868	122	1 990	2

*: Registered with other UNHCR operation
 **: Spouses of refugees or asylum seekers

RST Departures (*)

UNHCR resettlement departures	1712
ETC Departures	150
Non-UNHCR resettlement departures	145
Total Departures	2007

* As recorded in Progress

New arrivals registered since 1st Dec. 2011	RST process (Refugees)	RSD Process (asylum seekers)
Total	Accepted by RST country	Pending 1st inst. decision
310	1 475	110
- Including recognized refugees	Submitted to RST country	Pending appeal
156	110	-
incl. referred to RST		Pending 2nd inst. decision
25		12
- Including finally rejected		
6		

Population movement since 1st Dec. 2011

	Increases		Decreases					
	New arrivals	New births	RST Departures	Private Sponsorship	Spontaneous Departures	Voluntary Repatriation	Deaths	File Closure
Dec-11	133	6	79	9	20	-	1	103
Jan-12	56	10	44	-	12	-	-	65
Feb-12	-	11	75	-	-	6	2	80
Mar-12	-	5	99	-	-	-	-	19
Apr-12	6(**)	5	274	1	-	-	1	17
May-12*	95	9	163	3	5	6	-	-
Jun-12	1(***)	2	48	31	20	-	-	2
Jul-12	11	4	229	1	14	5	1	-
Aug-12	8	7	42	-	-	-	1	1
Sep-12	-	6	292	-	-	-	-	-
Oct-12	-	3	38	-	-	-	-	4
Week of 5 Oct - 12 Oct	-	1	30	-	-	-	-	1

*8 persons are waiting clearance for registration (claim to be new arrivals)

** Reopening of 1 case of A/S in detention in Medenine

*** Reopening of 1 case of A/S

Country of Origin and Legal Status

Country of Origin	Total		% of Total	Refugees		Asylum Seekers		Others Persons
	Cases	Persons		Cases	Persons	Cases	Persons	
Sudan	562	715	35,9%	532	667	30	48	-
Somalia	601	686	34,4%	546	627	55	59	-
Eritrea	180	204	10,2%	179	203	1	1	-
Iraq	50	171	8,6%	50	171	-	-	-
Ethiopia	81	117	5,9%	79	115	2	2	-
Chad	16	25	1,3%	14	23	2	2	-
Palestine	8	21	1,1%	8	21	-	-	-
Côte d'Ivoire	14	14	0,7%	10	10	3	3	1
Pakistan	2	8	0,4%	2	8	-	-	-
Mali	8	8	0,4%	6	6	2	2	-
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2	6	0,3%	1	5	1	1	-
Central African Republic	2	2	0,1%	2	2	-	-	-
Gambia	2	2	0,1%	2	2	-	-	-
Algeria	1	2	0,1%	-	1	1	1	-
Guinea	2	2	0,1%	-	-	2	2	-
Syrian Arab Republic	-	2	0,1%	-	2	-	-	-
Morocco	-	2	0,1%	-	2	-	-	-
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	-	1	0,1%	-	-	-	-	1
Nigeria	1	1	0,1%	-	-	1	1	-
Senegal	1	1	0,1%	1	1	-	-	-
Cameroon	1	1	0,1%	1	1	-	-	-
India	-	1	0,1%	-	1	-	-	-
Total	1 534	1 992	100,0%	1 433	1 868	100	122	2

Month of Arrival

févr-11	9	0,5%
mars-11	1 074	53,9%
avr-11	265	13,3%
mai-11	112	5,6%
juin-11	48	2,4%
juil-11	67	3,4%
août-11	41	2,1%
sept-11	24	1,2%
oct-11	81	4,1%
nov-11	16	0,8%
déc-11	123	6,2%
janv-12	22	1,1%
févr-12	9	0,5%
mars-12	54	2,7%
avr-12	6	0,3%
mai-12	16	0,8%
juin-12	6	0,3%
juil-12	7	0,4%
août-12	4	0,2%
sept-12	8	0,4%

Ex-Libya Origins

Iraq	115
Sudan	72
Somalia	47
Eritrea	45
Ethiopia	14
Palestine	10
D.Republic of the Congo	4
Others	6
Total	313

Persons Not of concern to UNHCR (rejected asylum seekers)

Final rejection decisions - Breakdown by Nationality

Country of Origin	Total		% of Total
	Cases	Persons	
Chad	87	112	34,5%
Sudan	62	69	21,2%
Nigeria	36	41	12,6%
Côte d'Ivoire	30	30	9,2%
Ethiopia	14	18	5,5%
Mali	8	8	2,5%
Gambia	7	7	2,2%
Ghana	7	7	2,2%
Liberia	6	6	1,8%
Pakistan	3	5	1,5%
Bangladesh	3	3	0,9%
Others	17	19	5,8%
Total	280	325	

Not of Concern:

Still residing in the camp	281	86,5%
Departed	44	13,5%