



## Joint News Release

23 April 2020

# UN HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES APPEAL FOR US\$ 15 MILLION FOR JOINT COVID-19 RESPONSE FOR SAHRAWI REFUGEES IN ALGERIA

**ALGIERS** – UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and five NGO partners urgently need US\$ 15 million to respond to the public health needs and immediate humanitarian consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic in the Tindouf refugee camps in Algeria.

With the coronavirus pandemic testing health care systems around the world, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and their partners are calling attention to the challenges faced by Sahrawi refugees in Algeria. The current global public health emergency has exacerbated an already difficult situation for a population that has been living under harsh conditions in the Sahara Desert for the past 45 years and is dependent on external humanitarian assistance.

"As governments across the world are taking extraordinary measures to contain the spread and mitigate the impact of COVID-19, we must not forget vulnerable populations such as the Sahrawi refugees. I would like to express our gratitude to the Algerian Government for its continued support to this refugee population and for including them in all the COVID-19 national response strategies," said Agostino Mulas, UNHCR Representative in Algeria. "On behalf of all humanitarian actors, I humbly call on donors, whether governments, foundations or individuals, to support these efforts and help the humanitarian community working in the Tindouf camps to face this unprecedented crisis."

The joint COVID-19 response outlines measures to (1) prevent transmission of COVID-19 among Sahrawi refugees; (2) provide adequate care for patients affected by COVID-19 and to support their families and close contacts; and (3) adapt programmes in health, education, food security, protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) to mitigate the worst effects of the pandemic.

To read the full appeal, with response plan, click [here](#) or go to [www.wfp.org/publications/comprehensive-needs-covid-19-prevention-and-response-refugees-western-sahara-tindouf](http://www.wfp.org/publications/comprehensive-needs-covid-19-prevention-and-response-refugees-western-sahara-tindouf)

Although the camps are currently under lockdown, the UN humanitarian agencies are working through NGO and community partners to continue to provide live-saving



activities and essential health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene, and food services without disruption. The requested funding will allow the UN agencies and partners to sustain this support during this critical period.

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**UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency**, is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. We work to ensure that everybody has the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge, having fled violence, persecution, war or disaster at home.  
Follow UNHCR on Twitter @Refugees and @unhcralgeria

**UNICEF** works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.  
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**The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)** is the world's largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies, building prosperity and supporting a sustainable future for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.  
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