Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Children in Laayoune refugee camp, including the 8,109 children registered in schools and kindergartens damaged by the storm, are starting their school year as planned. This was made possible thanks to the emergency consolidation work conducted by CISP with the support of UNICEF under the close supervision of engineers commissioned by the local authorities. Until further rehabilitation can be done, and for the safety of children, the local authorities will monitor the state of the buildings.

Plans are in place for more sustainable rehabilitation works. UNICEF and partners are aiming to raise funds so this work can be undertaken as soon as possible to allow children to enjoy an improved learning environment. Details of the state of each of the 6 schools and 5 kindergartens affected are as follows:

1. **Kordoba primary school** (18 classrooms) was very seriously damaged. Emergency consolidation, including temporary fixing of the roof could be done. The school needs extensive rehabilitation [funding yet to be secured].
2. **Cantabria primary school** (16 classrooms): emergency consolidation and temporary fixing of the roof were required so that the school could be used. One entire block of classrooms requires reconstruction [funding yet to be secured].
3. **Legronio primary school** (18 classrooms) operates on a double shift system in 10 classrooms until the rehabilitation can be completed. DRC (the Danish Refugee Council) committed to perform the work [funding yet to be secured].
4. **Mahjoub El Khadir primary school** (17 classrooms) was severely damaged. Emergency consolidation, including temporary fixing of the roof could be done. 6 school tents, previously used in the camp of Dakhla after the October 2015 floods, were erected to accommodate children. The Dimes foundation committed to rebuild the school.
5. **Um Dreigua intermediate school** (17 classrooms) was under rehabilitation by CISP supported by UNICEF when the storm hit. Rehabilitation works are now completed.
6. **Said Sghir intermediate school** (19 classrooms) went through emergency consolidation and fixing of the roof. The school needs extensive rehabilitation [funding yet to be secured].

7. **Doura kindergarten** (6 classrooms) went through emergency fixing of the roof. The building requires extensive rehabilitation [funding yet to be secured].

8. **Hagounia kindergarten** (6 classrooms) is operating with 4 tents provided by the Saharawi Red Crescent. The association Limone nel Verde is committed to carry out the rehabilitation.

9. **Dchira kindergarten** (6 classrooms) went through emergency fixing of the roof. The building requires extensive rehabilitation [funding yet to be secured].

10. **Amgala kindergarten** (6 classrooms) was damaged by the storm and requires extensive rehabilitation [funding yet to be secured].

11. **Guelta 1 kindergarten** (6 classrooms) was being rehabilitated by CISP supported by UNICEF at the time of the storm. Rehabilitation was completed and the kindergarten resumed normal operations.

With the rainy season approaching, and confronted to the increased frequency of extreme weather conditions, humanitarian partners are reviewing contingency plans. In addition to prepositioning school-tents, systematic measures will be adopted to build-back better. This involves a pragmatic approach in applying lessons learnt including on improved roofing techniques, the use of “stabilized” mud bricks, or prefabricated elements and/or of cement blocks depending on the conditions of existing infrastructure.

UNICEF aims to mobilize **US$ 381,000** to cover immediate school repair/consolidation works and medium-term more sustainable rehabilitations. Budgeted figure also covers funding needed to implement immediate contingency measures so that education can continue or quickly resume in case of emergency, including through the pre-positioning of school tents.

### Humanitarian leadership and coordination

Given the prolonged duration of the Saharawi refugee crisis in Algeria, some UN agencies (UNHCR, WFP and UNICEF) have had a permanent presence in the camps for decades, along with international NGOs active in various sectors.

While UNHCR is responsible for the overall coordination of the humanitarian operation, emergency coordination groups were established in the aftermath of the October 2015 flash floods. UNHCR is responsible for Shelter, WASH, Protection and Health sectors; WFP for food and nutrition while UNICEF is co-chairing the Education group with UNHCR. This distribution of responsibilities and the coordination mechanism in place have facilitated the design and the rapid implementation of the response plan to the current crisis. Discussions are underway between partners to ensure an improved response to the recurrent WASH challenges in school, particularly in terms of sanitation.

On September 5th to 8th, UNICEF Representative in Algeria conducted a field mission to Saharawi refugee camps in Tindouf aiming at consulting with local partners and visiting school sites at the start of the new school year. The communication team accompanied the Representative and was able to collect testimonials from refugee children and families.

It was agreed that the UN would lead efforts to update contingency plans to be better prepared for the likely repetition of such events in the coming weeks and months. Agencies agreed on the principle of including the current response in the 2016-2017 appeal, with donor meetings to be held both in Algiers and Geneva. The donor briefing in Algiers is scheduled on 19 September.

### Estimated Affected Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of humanitarian response:</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Affected Population</td>
<td>4245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families Affected</td>
<td>849</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children (Under 18) from families affected by loss of shelter</td>
<td>2547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (Under 18) whose access to education is at risk</td>
<td>8109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context specific data</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Children and women constitute 70 to 80% of the refugee population in Sahrawi camps</td>
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Humanitarian Strategy

The UN agencies and NGOs present on the ground are sharing responsibilities for the response according to their mandate and capacity on the ground. With 4 staff on the ground - including 1 coordinator, 1 education officer, 1 emergency health specialist and 1 driver - and the support by UNICEF office staff in Algiers, UNICEF is working with all humanitarian partners to help address essential needs of Saharawi refugee children and build resilience. This is done through focused technical assistance, capacity building and provision of key supplies to children. UNICEF is committed to the sustained vaccination of all children, to improved mother and child health services, to improved access by refugee children to quality primary education and to the social integration and empowerment of girls and boys, adolescents and youth.

Analysis of Current Response

The on-going response by humanitarian actors includes the following:

- **Food**: Since the storm happened, WFP with OXFAM/ MPDL and SRC completed four rounds of emergency distribution to the 406 most affected families. In addition MPDL performed an exceptional distribution of eggs to 800 affected families. Regular food distribution resumed on 4 September. School feeding was also planned to resume at the beginning of the school year.

- **Shelter**: UNHCR and the SRC distributed 400 tents to the most affected families. Local authorities supported by UNHCR construction expert completed a detailed assessment of houses in need of rehabilitation or reconstruction. Results confirmed the need to further improve roofing techniques as a preventive measure and training shall be provided to construction workers to ensure longer lasting shelters.

- **Health**: In depth assessment commissioned by UNHCR and health authorities confirmed the initial budget requirement. Laayoune hospital and health centers are all operating normally. The surveillance system for diarrhea and respiratory diseases did not detect any abnormal increase in cases.

- **WASH**: UNHCR completed fixing the main water tower damaged by the storm. Chlorinated water distribution is back to normal status.

- **Protection**: Psychosocial support to most affected families by CISP teams continues and has been extended to school students starting the beginning of the school year.

- **Education**: as the school year has started all the children were able to attend school. Immediate response of roof fixing and consolidation was undertaken so children went back to school in the best conditions. Contingency plan is under review.

Media and External Communication

A joint UN press release was issued. Upon his visit to the camps, UNICEF Representative for Algeria, Marc Lucet, gave two interviews to the APS (Algeria Press Service) and to the National Algerian TV.

Security

At the moment, no security issues were reported. However due to the situation in the Sahel and the location of the camps, it is important to note that access to the camps for international staff remains dependent on Algerian government clearance.

UNICEF Representative and Team visit Mahjoub El Khadir primary school, Laayoune Camp – View of the school set-up, with children in school tents, and the extent of the damage.

UNICEF Representative and Team visit of Cantabria primary school, Laayoune Camp – view of temporary emergency roofing and consolidation.
This is the Final SitRep

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