

TUNISIA

December 2021

Inauguration of the “Shamel Office” for the inclusion of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and returning Tunisians

Al Ghazela Citizen Space, Municipality of Raoued

In an increasingly urbanized context, cities in Tunisia are at the forefront of mobility and displacement, whether people on the move pass through them in transit or settle in them for longer. Urban centers in the Greater Tunis, Sfax and Medenine governorates are key nodes on the Central Mediterranean route and attract mixed population movements of both asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. Many are in a situation of vulnerability and it is often difficult for them to find the support they need in their new host locality. Cities and municipalities thus play a key role as front-line actors in promoting the protection and improving the conditions for the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the country of asylum.

As part of UNHCR’s regional engagement with inclusive cities in the North Africa region, UNHCR Tunisia works with ten municipalities who can provide attractive opportunities for people on the move and improve their access to local basic services, such as health, education, employment, and social protection.



UNHCR Representative and partners during the inauguration ceremony of the Shamel Office, 02 December 2021.
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The Shamel Office for the inclusion of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and returning Tunisians



An employee (left) of the Al Ghazela Citizen Space, with the Mayor of Raoued, explains the functioning of the one-stop-shop to UN Resident Coordinator and UN Agencies chiefs ©UNHCR/Mohamed Ali Baati

In line with the approaches promoted by the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) (GCR) and the [Global Compact for Migration](#) (GCM) as well as the recommendation of the [first Mayor’s Forum on Inclusive Cities in North Africa](#), hosted by Tunisia in November 2020; UNHCR and its partner the Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR), together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), succeeded in establishing a one-stop shop pilot service within the structure of the Municipality of Raoued (Greater Tunis).

The one-stop-shop baptized “Shamel Office” (meaning “reunion” in Arabic) [opened its doors](#) on 02 December 2021 in the renovated Citizen Space of Al Ghazela in Raoued, thanks to the support of UNHCR donors, in particular the Austrian

Development Agency (ADA) and the Swiss Government’ Secretariat for Migration (SEM). The aim is to have a dedicated space and service ensuring the reception, provision of information and referral of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and Tunisian migrants towards the relevant available services existing within the municipality, whether at municipal level or through other actors such as regional directorates, international and civil society organizations.

As a pilot initiative, the Shamel Office is the first in its kind in Tunisia and in North Africa region. The integrated service represents an enhanced form of partnership between a varied number of actors including local authorities,

international organizations, and civil society; all linked by the common goal of finding innovative approaches to provide local response for the protection and assistance of vulnerable groups.

Building on the experience with the municipality of Raoued, UNHCR will continue working at city and municipal level in targeted regions highly affected by the increase in new arrivals of people on the move, to strengthen multi-level and multi-stakeholder cooperation between local, regional, and national levels and operationalize a comprehensive and effective protection and solutions response to forced displacement.

Press review

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Attounisia, 03/12/2021:

<https://attounisia.net/2021/12/03/%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%85%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%81%D9%88%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84/>

Le Temps, 03/12/2021 : <https://letemps.news/2021/12/03/raoued-inauguration-du-bureau-shamel-pour-linclusion-des-refugies/>

Alchourouk, 03/12/2021:

<https://www.alchourouk.com/article/%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D9%85%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A8-%D8%B4%D9%85%D9%84-%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%AF%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AC-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%88%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%A1-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86>

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