UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

FACTSHEET

Emergency Transit Mechanism,

September 2023

Since the inception of the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM), **1,737 people** were evacuated from Libya in **14 evacuation flights** to the ETM. They came from **10 countries,** including Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Guinea, and Mali.

While **587** people are still waiting at the ETM, **1,192** people have departed through resettlement to third countries including Norway, Sweden, Canada, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland, and the USA.

The ETM remains a life-saving mechanism to allow critical life-saving assistance and protection, as well as case processing for durable solutions.

ETM OVERVIEW

Libya is a major transit route for refugees hoping to reach Europe through the Mediterranean Sea. The unstable situation combined with periodic fighting has caused widespread suffering. Many refugees and asylum seekers in the country have been held under dire conditions, including detention, where abuse is rife and violence a potent threat. UNHCR has been at the forefront in efforts to assist the most vulnerable, including relocating the refugees and asylum seekers to safe and secure places outside Libya.

Through the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2019, and valid to 31 December 2023, UNHCR in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda (GoR) and the African Union (AU) established an ETM Centre in Gashora Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda. The ETM can currently support up to 700 refugees and asylum seekers at any given time. Its main aim is to temporarily host refugees and asylum seekers who have undertaken voluntary evacuation from Libya. While in the ETM, the asylum seekers go through refugee case processing undertaken by UNHCR to determine if they meet the requirements for durable solutions. Three durable solutions of return to their countries, integration within Rwanda and resettlement are on offer to refugees at the ETM. To date, all refugees have opted for resettlement from the ETM.

POPULATION FIGURES AND STATISTICS

Evacuated	Evacuation Flights
1,737	14
Present in Rwanda	**Countries of Origin**
587	10
Children	**Unaccompanied Children**
158	32
Departures from ETM	**Remaining Capacity**
1,192	113

Inauguration of the ETM Community Centre at the occasion of a High Level Danish Mission at the ETM on 27 September 2023. ©UNHCR

CONTACTS

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Partners and Coordination

UNHCR's Office in Nyamata oversees the ETM Operation with a workforce of 44 persons including 22 international and 22 national staff.

UNHCR and the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) coordinate together the refugee response operation in Rwanda, including at the ETM Centre in Gashora. At the ETM, UNHCR works in partnership with MINEMA and seven NGOs who deliver live-saving protection, basic assistance, and essential services to the refugees and asylum seekers. These include:

MINEMA: camp coordination, management, and security.

ADRA: food Security (catering), warehousing and distribution management of non-food items (NFIs).

World Vision International (WVI): water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), as well as vocational/skills training.

African Humanitarian Action (AHA): healthcare services, reproductive health and HIV services as well as nutritional wellbeing**.**

Humanity & Inclusion (HI): support for persons with specific needs and psychosocial support.

Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR): legal assistance, and civil documentation/registration; and community-based protection.

Save the Children International (SCI): prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection (CP)

Rwanda Red Cross/International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC): family reunification and first aid.

Refugees, host community representatives and humanitarian workers play sports together, in observance to the International Peace Day, in ETM Gashora. ©UNHCR

Main Activities

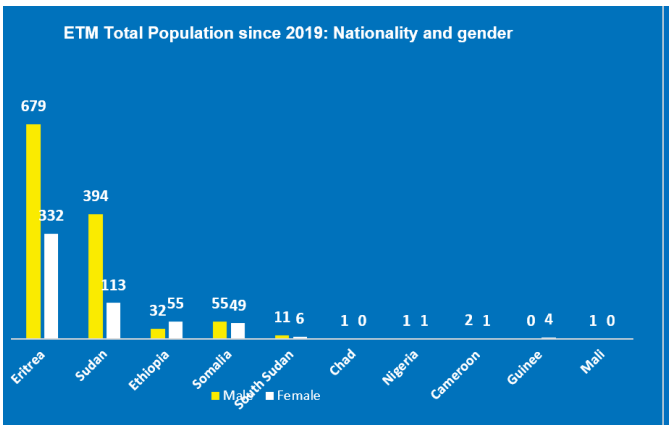
PROTECTION

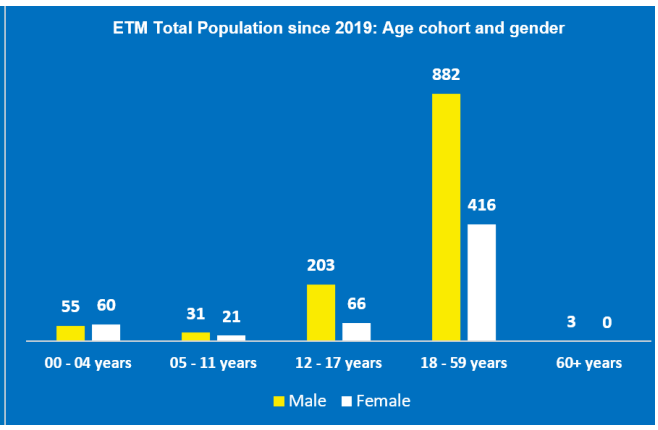
Protection Delivery: NHCR mainstreams protection principles throughout all the humanitarian services it provides at the ETM. The key activities to ensure the protection of refugees and asylum seekers include registration, documentation, community engagement, psychosocial support (PSS), legal assistance, child protection (CP) case management, protection monitoring, youth inclusion, and activities to prevent the occurrence of Gender Based Violence (GBV).

Registration and documentation: Since the opening of the ETM in 2019, UNHCR has registered 1,737 people evacuated from Libya, and 45 babies born at the ETM. Documents were provided for all registered refugees and asylum seekers. Upon arrival, UNHCR conducts a verification exercise for all refugees and asylum seekers and assists them in obtaining proof of registration. These documents allow the refugee status determination process to subsequently begin.

Gender-based violence (GBV): UNHCR and its partners undertake ETM community GBV prevention, mitigation, and response activities including ensuring that victims/survivors are referred to and have access to services in a timely and sustained manner. In this regard, interagency standard operating procedures have been established to support GBV and other partners to coordinate and implement safe and accessible GBV response, risk mitigation and prevention interventions. GBV incidents faced by individuals in the ETM include intimate partner violence, early child pregnancy, denial of resources and rape. Eighty per cent of incidents occurred while in Libya or country of origin. As a result, UNHCR and partners conduct regular GBV awareness campaigns, follow-up on case management, and examine GBV trends to inform advocacy and future programing on potential gaps.

Child Protection: Together with partners, UNHCR has ensured that Best Interest Assessment (BIA) and Best Interest Determination (BID) procedures are operational to identify the best course of action in child protection cases. In addition, UNHCR and partners ensure that children at risk, including those under foster care arrangements, are identified, supported, and assisted. All services offered are designed to create an enabling environment that respects the rights of children and ensures that child-centered programming is integrated in all sectors. In addition, a child friendly space is in operation at the ETM providing a safe space for children of all ages to learn, play and receive tailored support. In September, a three-day long child protection mainstreaming workshop was organized by SCI and UNHCR which different partners participated in.



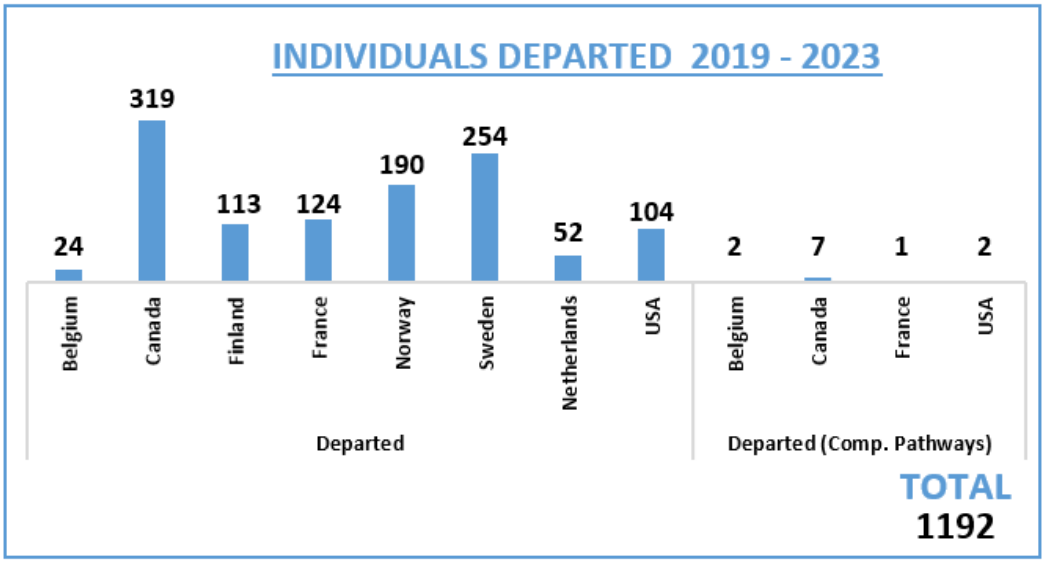


CASE PROCESSING FOR SOLUTIONS

Refugee Status Determination (RSD): All refugees and asylum seekers evacuated from Libya undergo case processing for solutions starting with the RSD process. UNHCR determines whether they meet the refugee criteria in accordance with the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Granting of refugee status is an important mechanism to enable resettlement to third countries and prevent refoulment of refugees to their countries of origin. To date, RSD has been carried out for 1,741 individuals.

Country of Origin	Female	Male	Grand Total
Cameroon	3	0	3
Chad	0	1	1
Eritrea	334	676	1010
Ethiopia	52	33	85
Guinea	4	0	4
Mali	0	1	1
Nigeria	1	1	2
Somalia	52	57	109
South Sudan	7	11	18
Sudan	118	390	508
Grand Total	571	1170	1,741

Resettlement: Since the opening of the ETM in 2019, a total of 1,192 individuals departed through resettlement and complementary pathways to eight resettlement countries (Finland, Belgium, France, Norway, Canada, Sweden, Netherlands, and the USA). UNHCR continues to advocate for increased resettlement opportunities for the most vulnerable groups as resettlement remains the most viable durable solution for refugees evacuated from Libya to the ETM in Rwanda. In September, 64 cases involving 89 individuals were interviewed for resettlement and 40 individuals departed from the ETM. There are also 13 cases of 16 individuals who were previously submitted for resettlement and are at different stages of the resettlement process.



BASIC NEEDS AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

- **Basic assistance** is provided to ETM refugees and asylum seekers, including shelter, bedding, food, electricity, clean water, hygiene essentials, core relief items as well as cash assistance to help them purchase essential items shortly after arrival in Rwanda. Following their registration and enrolment in the cash assistance systems, basic needs assistance is provided through cash-based interventions (CBI), where each refugee receives a RWF 100,000 ($95) arrival CBI package, followed by a monthly RWF 50,000 (~$45) to meet their daily non-food basic needs.

- **Healthcare services including reproductive health, nutrition and HIV services** are accessible, free of charge on 24/7 basis for all refugees and asylum seekers at the health clinic run by AHA. Where individual may require secondary or tertiary healthcare services, UNHCR and the health partner (AHA) refer those cases to secondary and tertiary level hospitals - 31 people were assisted in September. In addition, two births were assisted during the month. The health clinic also operates ambulance services for emergency cases and referrals cases. In addition, mental health services are provided, and supplementary feeding is provided to 26 children under two years old and 65 adults with special nutrition needs. Regular nutrient deficiency screenings are also conducted. Regular nutrient deficiency screenings have also been conducted.

- For **food assistance:** refugees, and asylum seekers at the ETM receive three meals a day provided by UNHCR and ADRA. In September, 646 refugees and asylum seekers were fed through this programme. UNHCR also supports people with special needs through the provision of gas (LPG) and dry food to supplement their nutritional needs and enable cooking at home with dignity.

- **Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services:**
    - **Water** is supplied to the ETM from the main national water grid, through the government run Water and Sanitation Cooperation (WASAC). The average water consumption in September was 84 litres per person per day for both drinking and domestic use. Moreover, as the UNHCR's WASH partner, WVI conducts regular monitoring of water quality to ensure proper free chlorine levels prior distribution.
    - **Sanitation** services are regularly provided by WVI. The ETM counts 40 shower rooms and 30 modern bathrooms, as well as 68 drop-holes. Solid and liquid waste is also regularly collected and disposed.
    - **Hygiene promotion** activities take place regularly with hygiene promoters from the community encouraging their fellow refugees adopt best hygiene practices.

- **Infrastructure:** Since its opening, UNHCR has expanded the availability, accessibility and quality of accommodation provided at the ETM. The key infrastructure developments include a two-storey building (the *Ikaze Residence* Apartment) with the capacity to host 360 persons. There are also 30 accommodation houses that host 340 individuals. In addition, UNHCR constructed a health clinic and an office block in previous years that are all fully operational. Construction of a one-stop community multipurpose center has also been completed and was inaugurated in September: it currently hosts psychosocial support and learning services. To manage rainwater and prevent soil erosion/degradation, UNHCR previously constructed a drainage system for the whole of the ETM of 2,495 m. Repairs and maintenance of diverse offices, community spaces and accommodations are regularly conducted. These developments have been critical to enable safe shelter and a conducive environment to deliver services.

VOCATIONAL AND SKILLS TRAINING

- UNHCR and partners deliver a range of vocational and skills-based training at the ETM to empower the refugees and ensure that they gain useful skills which will also help them integrate when resettled or find durable solutions. Based on the proposal and feedback from the community, different training delivered to both the refugees and the host community appreciated. Activities aim to boost resilience as well as encourage peaceful coexistence.
- Courses provided in September included hairdressing, tailoring as well as ICT skills. Language classes in English, French and Kinyarwanda are also delivered by UNHCR and WVI. A total of 146 refugees, asylum

seekers and host community members benefited from the skills training in September and an additional 79 refugees and asylum seekers attended language classes.

Skills Training	Active Refugees & ASs			Host Community		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Languages	46	33	79	0	0	0
ICT	28	10	38	2	0	2
Tailoring	16	14	30	0	23	23
Hair dressing	15	15	30	2	21	23
Driving Coaching	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	105	72	177	4	44	48