UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

FACTSHEET

Emergency Transit Mechanism, Rwanda

July 2024

Since the inception of the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) Centre, **2,355** persons have been evacuated from Libya to Rwanda in **18** evacuation flights. They are from **11** countries, including Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, and Ivory Coast.

While **610** people are in the ETM, **1,799 refugees** have departed on 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 is ensured.

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) UNHCR in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda (GoR) and the African Union (AU) established the ETM Centre in Gashora Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda. The MOU was signed in 2019 and was valid until 31 December 2023, currently the MOU is pending signatures for extension for additional 2 years. The capacity of the ETM is to host 700 asylum seekers and refugees at any given time and its main aim is to temporarily host refugees and asylum seekers who have undertaken voluntary evacuation from Libya to Rwanda. 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: - return to their countries, integration in Rwanda and resettlement are shared with refugees. To date, all refugees have opted for resettlement from the ETM.

POPULATION FIGURES AND STATISTICS

Evacuated	Evacuation Flights
2,355	18
Present in Rwanda	Countries of Origin
610	11
Children	UACs
213	72
Departures from ETM	Remaining Capacity
1,799	90

UNHCR works with ADRA to provide refugees and asylum seekers with three meals a day at the ETM through the canteen at the centre.

Partners and Coordination

UNHCR's Field Unit in ETM Gashora represents UNHCR presence in ETM Gashora with 17 staff comprised of 12 IUNV (translation officers) and 5 national staff; and complemented by designated protection and case processing staff based in Kigali, with regular field visits and activities in Gashora**.**

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

MINEMA: Camp coordination, management, and security.

DGIE: Rwanda Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration

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): Child protection (CP) and Gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, risks mitigation and response.

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

International Organization for Migration (IOM) is a UN Agency working in the field of migration. UNHCR cooperates with them around refugee resettlement.

Main Activities

PROTECTION

Protection Delivery: UNHCR mainstreams protection principles throughout all the humanitarian services it provides at the ETM. Key activities to ensure protection delivery for 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 inception of ETM in 2019, UNHCR has received 2,355 persons evacuated from Libya (*see the graph below*), and 58 babies born in ETM. Documents have been provided for all registered asylum seekers and refugees. Upon arrival in Rwanda, 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 to be conducted.

Gender-based violence (GBV): UNHCR and its partners undertake ETM community GBV prevention, mitigation, and response activities including ensuring that victims/survivors 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, physical assault, psychological abuse and denial of resources. 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 for all cases committed during flight or in Rwanda and examine GBV trends to inform advocacy and future programing.

In July 2024, UNHCR and partners conducted awareness sessions on GBV which were attended by 101 individuals (68 females and 33 males). In addition, 06 women were supported to attend vocational skills training to promote their empowerment. A GBV committee from among the refugees and asylum seekers to support with GBV prevention activities at the ETM was established during the month.

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-cantered programming is integrated in all sectors. In addition, a child-friendly space is operational in ETM providing a safe space for children of all ages to learn, play and receive tailored support.

CASE PROCESSING FOR SOLUTIONS

Refugee Status Determination (RSD):

All refugees and asylum seekers evacuated from Libya undergo case processing for solutions starting with RSD process. UNHCR determines whether they meet the refugee criteria in accordance with the 1951 Convention Relating to 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 conducted for **2,266** individuals.

Country of Origin	Female	Male	Grand Total
Cameroon	3	0	3
Chad	0	1	1
Eritrea	427	814	1,241
Ethiopia	68	42	110
Guinea	4	0	4
Mali	0	1	1
Nigeria	1	1	2
Somalia	71	69	140
South Sudan	12	21	33
Sudan	210	521	731
Grand Total	**796**	**1,470**	**2,266**

Resettlement:

Since the opening of the ETM in 2019, a total of **1,799** individuals have 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 ETM in Rwanda. In July 2024, 48 individuals departed from the ETM.

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 100,000 RWF ($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 individuals may require secondary or tertiary healthcare services, UNHCR and the health partner (AHA) refer those cases to secondary and tertiary level hospitals - 36 people were referred in July 2024. The health clinic also operates ambulance services for emergency cases and referrals cases. Additionally, mental health services are provided, and supplementary feeding is provided to 40 children under two years old and 43 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 July 2024, up to 658 refugees and asylum seekers (including newly arrived refugees)

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 ETM from the main national water grid, through the government run Water and Sanitation Cooperation (WASAC). The average water consumption in July 2024 was 44 litres per person per day for both drinking and domestic use. Noting that 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. There are 40 shower rooms and 68 drop-holes. Solid and liquid waste is also regularly collected and disposed.
  - **Hygiene promotion** activities take place regularly by hygiene promoters from the community encouraging their fellow refugees to adopt best hygiene practices.

- **Infrastructure:** Since its opening, UNHCR has expanded the availability, accessibility and quality of accommodation provided in ETM. Key infrastructure developments include a two-levels 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, office block and community centre in previous years that are all fully operational. 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 they gain useful skills which will also help them integrate when resettled or find durable solutions. Based on proposals and feedback received from the community, different training was delivered to both refugees and the host community was appreciated. Activities aim at boosting resilience as well as encourage peaceful coexistence. In July, the following numbers of refugees, asylum seekers and members of the host community attended such trainings.

Skills Training	Refugees and Asylum Seekers			Host Community		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Languages	46	46	**92**	0	0	**0**
Driving	51	47	**98**	0	0	**0**
ICT	37	28	**65**	13	17	**30**
Tailoring	20	29	**49**	5	18	**23**
Hairdressing	9	41	**50**	2	27	**29**
Total	**163**	**191**	**354**	**20**	**62**	**82**

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