



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

# LIBYA

## SUDAN SITUATION: COUNTRY SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE

January 2025

## Country Context

Since the conflict in Sudan began in April 2023, Libya has seen a significant influx of Sudanese refugees, primarily entering through key points such as Alkufra, Tobruk, and the southern border. As of December 2024, there have been around 400 daily arrivals in Alkufra, southeastern Libya - a region with harsh, arid conditions and few public services available. Once being medically cleared and registered with the authorities in Alkufra, refugees will normally try to reach coastal cities like Benghazi and Tripoli, but face challenges in doing so, including limited and expensive transport options. The difficult conditions make movement from the border extremely challenging for many refugees, while host communities in Alkufra feel the strain of overstretched services.

Once registered with eastern authorities in Alkufra, Sudanese refugees are provided with security cards that allow them freedom of movement and access to public services. UNHCR is only allowed to register refugees in Tripoli with no government registration in place in the West. As of 31 December 2024, there were 57,648 Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR in Libya, and approximately 1,116 Sudanese cases are scheduled for registration. Sudanese refugees are fleeing an increasingly dire situation in Darfur, where violence is intensifying: 56% of Sudanese refugees have prior residence in Darfur and 32% from Khartoum. Approximately 44% of the new arrivals are women and 45% children. They face critical shortages in healthcare, water, sanitation, and hygiene services, and temporary accommodation – currently most live under plastic sheeting – overwhelming the already limited resources in Libya. Moreover, school-aged children need access to education, many of whom have already missed a year of schooling.

UNHCR's strategic priority is to support the response by Libyan authorities to enhance the protection environment with a focus on access to legal documentation and provide life-saving assistance to displaced populations, asylum seekers, and refugees, while also seeking solutions for most vulnerable groups. There are growing concerns that many refugees in Libya may attempt the dangerous Mediterranean crossing to Europe if they do not receive adequate support. UNHCR will also prioritize activities that support social cohesion with hosting communities.

## Socioeconomic Characteristics of Displacement

While Libya is considered a middle-income country, it is heavily dependent on oil and gas revenues and an estimated 803,000 people, including displaced Libyans, asylum-seekers, refugees, and migrants, are in need of humanitarian assistance<sup>1</sup>. Despite the government's efforts, the influx of refugees from Sudan has stretched public services to the breaking point.

There is a clear need for greater collaboration with development partners to support the self-reliance of Sudanese refugees arriving in Libya, particularly by providing employment opportunities and minimizing the impact of the large number of Sudanese refugees on host communities and as a consequence the overstretched public services. Increasing focus is put on the significant number of new arrivals, many of them are skilled workers, including doctors, nurses, and teachers, who could contribute to Libya's workforce, a practice observed at limited scale in Alkufra and elsewhere in Libya. Female-headed households or people with disabilities, in particular, require additional support due to their vulnerabilities. Access to freedom of movement within Libya is tied to obtaining a security registration card, and health certificate in Alkufra. Those holding security cards are allowed to move to areas with higher levels of economic activity, however, they are still required to

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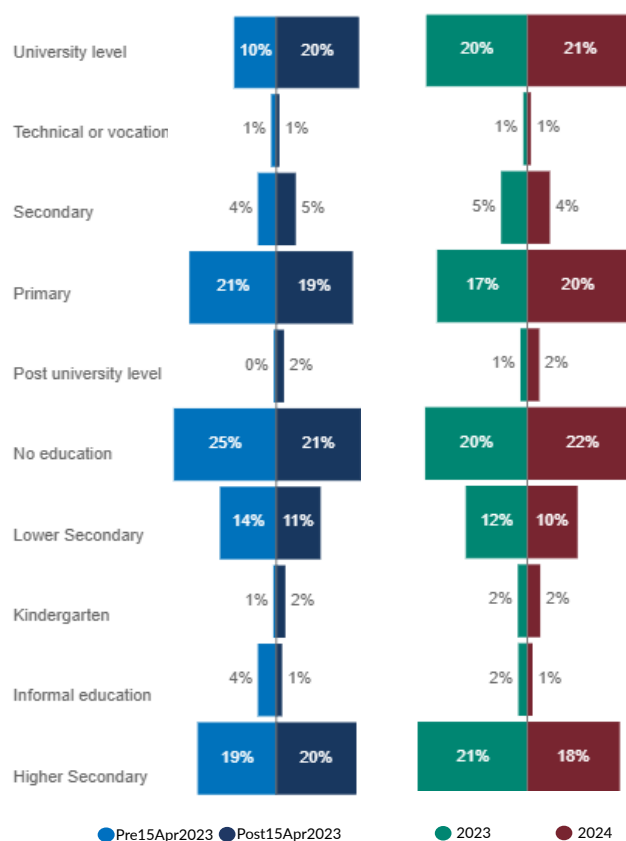
<sup>1</sup> See <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/lby>

regularize their employment through the employer. UNHCR certificates are not recognized by the authorities as legal documentation.

**With support from the Joint Data Centre on Forced Displacement, the World Bank, UNHCR, IOM and WFP have collaborated to undertake a [socioeconomic longitudinal survey of refugees and migrants in Libya from 2022-2024](#).** The main objective of the activity was to establish a solid base of socioeconomic data on migrants and refugees. To date, four rounds of data collection have taken place - with the last concluding in February 2024 - and are being consolidated and analyzed. The report and key findings are expected to be released by early 2025.

**Among Sudanese refugees registered with UNHCR in Libya, a significant number have secondary or university levels of education.** This is particularly true for those arriving after April 2023, where the university-level arrivals rose from 10% pre-crisis to 20% post-crisis. This is consistent with household surveys of newly registered refugees showing rates of university level education around 22.7%. Comparing 2023 and 2024, the percentages remained relatively stable for the education categories of those fleeing to Libya.

Figure 1: Education

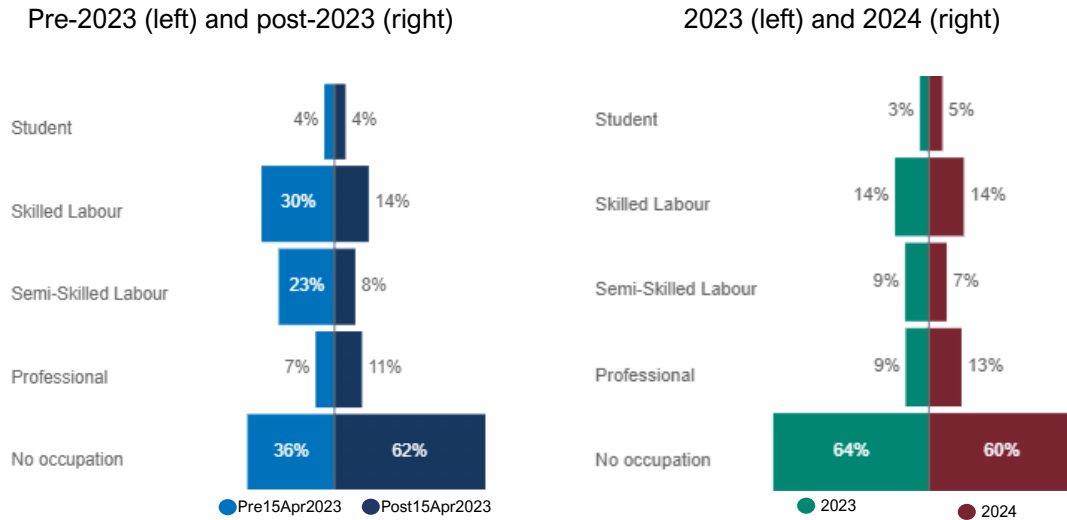


Source: UNHCR registration data

**Occupation is not recorded for many registered Sudanese refugees in Libya; however, trends show a slight increase in those with professional backgrounds, consistent with the education levels noted above.** Among Sudanese refugees arriving after April 2023, the percentage of professionals rose from 8 to 11%, suggesting that more professionals fled due to adverse conditions associated with crisis. Skilled labour saw a decrease from 30% in 2023 to 14% in 2024, as did semi-

skilled, however this may be due to the large number of refugees without a recorded occupation. Overall, the percentage of people with no occupation increased from 36% to 62% following the events of April 2023, **and** remained relatively stable between 2023 and 2024.

Figure 2: Occupation



Source: UNHCR registration data