

**UNHCR EGYPT**


**SUDAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE UPDATE**

9 June 2023

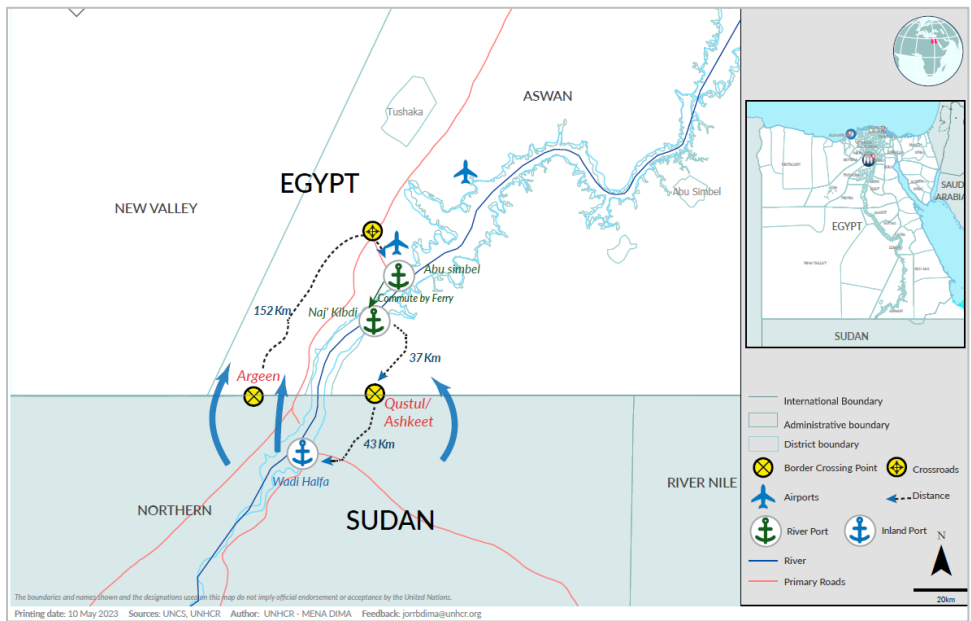


 **210,000**

Sudanese have entered Egypt from Sudan via the two official border crossings, Argeen and Qustol, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
*As of 8 June*

 **\$25.2 million**

UNHCR's financial requirements for the [Sudan emergency response in Egypt](#).



## OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS

- More than 210,000 Sudanese have fled their country for Egypt since the beginning of the crisis, according to figures received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The latest number of third-country nationals crossing from Sudan into Egypt is 5,565 (28 May).
- On 6 June, UNHCR debriefed the diplomatic community in Cairo on the High Commissioner's (HC) visit to Egypt, latest operational developments and progress made. The UNHCR Egypt Representative underlined the HC's three key messages during his mission: appreciation for Egypt's response to date, the centrality of access to the border crossing points, and the low funding uptake to the [Regional Refugee Response Plan](#).
- New enforcement procedures for admissions were put in place as of June, resulting in Sudanese new arrivals being given a month/single entry visa to Egypt, as opposed to six months/multiple entries. Afterwards, Sudanese nationals can continue to apply for a six-month residency subject to the presentation of a notarized rent contract and further approval by State security. With those changes in place, it is anticipated that an increased number of people will approach UNHCR for registration and other protection services. Furthermore, the Government of Egypt has communicated that as of 10 June, all individuals crossing into Egypt via Sudan will require visas, regardless of age, gender or nationality. This has reportedly led to many people rushing to the border to enter Egypt.
- Egypt signals a major development in [refugee policy](#). On 7 June, the Government of Egypt announced that the Cabinet had passed a new asylum law. UNHCR stands ready to support the Government in setting up and implementing a domestic asylum framework in line with international standards. UNHCR is currently collecting and verifying more detailed information on this and its impact, which will be shared separately.

## UNHCR Emergency Response

UNHCR is strengthening its engagement and coordination leadership with partners in Cairo as well as in the south and border areas, while continuing to engage local authorities and community-based organisations to assess the needs and scope of the response. Two technical inter-sector working groups (ISWG), one in Aswan and one in Cairo, continue to meet on a weekly basis to report any issue that needs the attention of the inter-agency working group.

During the last ISWG meeting, a nationwide referral pathways mechanism has been endorsed by the gender-based violence (GBV) sub-sector. The referral pathways mechanism establishes a first entry point for urgent medical care, aimed at providing immediate support to gender-based violence survivors and victims of sexual violence. After initial assistance, survivors are referred for case management, where their cases are identified, assessed, and referred to the appropriate and available services, such as mental health and psychosocial support, legal or health services.

A few highlights regarding the inter-agency coordination mechanisms and operational delivery under the refugee coordination model (RCM) are the following:

- Since 15 April, UNHCR, UNFPA and partners CARE and Youth and Development Consultancy Institute in Egypt (ETIJAH), in close coordination with the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), have assisted GBV cases in Aswan and Cairo. Among those are Sudanese and third country nationals from South Sudan and Eritrea. Their most frequent requests are safe relocation, fast-tracked registration, and psychosocial support.
- Two psychosocial support and child-friendly spaces are operational at Qustol and Argeen with psychological first aid and psychologists present in both locations. UNICEF has established four child friendly spaces - one in Karkar bus station and three in Aswan - and eight family clubs in Primary Health Care Units in cooperation with the Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP).
- IOM reported that over 3,200 Sudanese have approached its offices enquiring for assistance. IOM is liaising with the Protection Working group to be able to identify vulnerabilities and specific needs and refer those individuals to the appropriate available services.

- As the lead of the food security response, WFP has already assisted 10,000 individuals with ready-to-eat (RTE) food, fortified emergency food, and cash assistance.

## Sector highlights

### Protection

UNHCR continues to receive reports regarding difficult journeys to Egypt and need for targeted protection interventions in Cairo. In response, UNHCR has increased its protection counselling activities by 174% over the past week. Those receiving protection counselling generally present specific needs, with 55% reporting lack of adequate shelter – i.e., homelessness with unaccompanied and separated minors being at particular risk – or difficult host family conditions, and 39% with serious medical issues. Securing dignified and suitable accommodation is one of the needs most consistently communicated to UNHCR by new Sudanese arrivals.

In response, UNHCR is currently assessing the situation and identifying the main challenges, e.g., a rise in average monthly rent in Aswan from \$ 40 to \$ 160, to share information with other partners and help refugees and asylum-seekers meet their needs.



UNHCR staff visits Sudan new arrivals in community centre in Cairo ©UNHCR/Pedro Costa Gomes

UNHCR continues to distribute emergency cash assistance to new arrivals from Sudan—at Aswan, Alexandria and Cairo. As of 8 June, 802 of the most vulnerable newly arrival families from Sudan, comprising 1,864 individuals, have benefitted from the emergency cash assistance programme. Inter-sector coordination is ongoing as Protection referrals for assessments for Multi-Purpose Case Grants is streamlined within Reception and Registration procedures in Cairo.

UNHCR prioritizes engagement with community leaders and community-based organizations to better assess the needs of new arrivals and adapt the emergency response according to the pressing needs identified. During the reporting week, UNHCR met with representatives of community-based organizations providing medication and shelter to Sudanese newly arrivals. Other areas of cooperation with UNHCR include mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for children, women and elderly men who recently arrived in Egypt and are struggling with psychological distress and trauma.

On 1 June, UNHCR concluded a three-day training for the military border guard officers. The training was attended by 17 military officers deployed at several border crossings and units across Egypt, including at Argeen. The main topics covered by the training were UNHCR's mandate and principles of international protection, the definition of a refugee, the principles of non-refoulement and non-penalization of irregular entry, the Refugee Coordination Model and protection considerations in the context of mixed movements. The Deputy Chief of staff attended the closure of the event and made remarks on the importance of adherence to international refugee law and standards in the work of the frontline officers deployed at the border. The training was followed by discussions on expanding UNHCR capacity building activities with Ministry of Defense officials.



 **Registration**

*Sudanese family who recently fled their country seek safety in Cairo, Egypt. ©UNHCR/Pedro Costa Gomes*

As of 8 June, over 15,000 new arrivals from Sudan have approached UNHCR and were provided registration appointments. Among them, 27% have been newly registered with UNHCR. The figures of registered new arrivals have risen substantially over the past week as UNHCR continues to allocate additional staff to the frontline and expands its surge registration capacity. New registration services are being carried out 6 days a week to ensure new arrivals are able to access registration and critical protection services. Over 90% of those newly registered are Sudanese.

### Core relief items

UNHCR completed the installation of two rub halls in Qustol border crossing. The structures will help UNHCR and its partner the Egyptian Red Cross (ERC) scale up their activities, operationalize information desks, and deliver psychosocial support services, among others. A third rub hall is being installed in the zone in between the Egyptian and Sudanese border, to serve as a space for asylum-seekers to rest due to the long waiting hours prior to admission. Finally, a fourth rub hall is due to be installed in Argeen. In addition, UNHCR has delivered 625,560 water bottles, 160,000 hygiene kits, and 80,000 sanitary napkins to new arrivals, and nine commercial fridges, 15 family tents, 50 office chairs, 30 tablets, and 95 waiting benches to partner ERC.

### Main needs and gaps

The situation on the Sudanese side of the border is reportedly concerning, as conditions continue to deteriorate. The large numbers of new arrivals remain a challenge in terms of processing capacity. UNHCR observations also indicate that conditions at the Sudanese side of the border continue to deteriorate due to lack of water, food, WASH facilities, and speculation on the higher costs of the buses from Sudan to Egypt, all resulting in people being held for long periods of time in dire conditions.

### Financial information

UNHCR is grateful to the donors who have contributed to its operation in Egypt, including in response to the Sudan situation. Ongoing support is critical to help families rebuild their lives. UNHCR is urgently appealing for **\$151.4 million** to support its response, including to the emergency across Egypt, with little contributions received to date.

**DONATE NOW**

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