


UNHCR EGYPT
SUDAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE UPDATE
22 June 2023



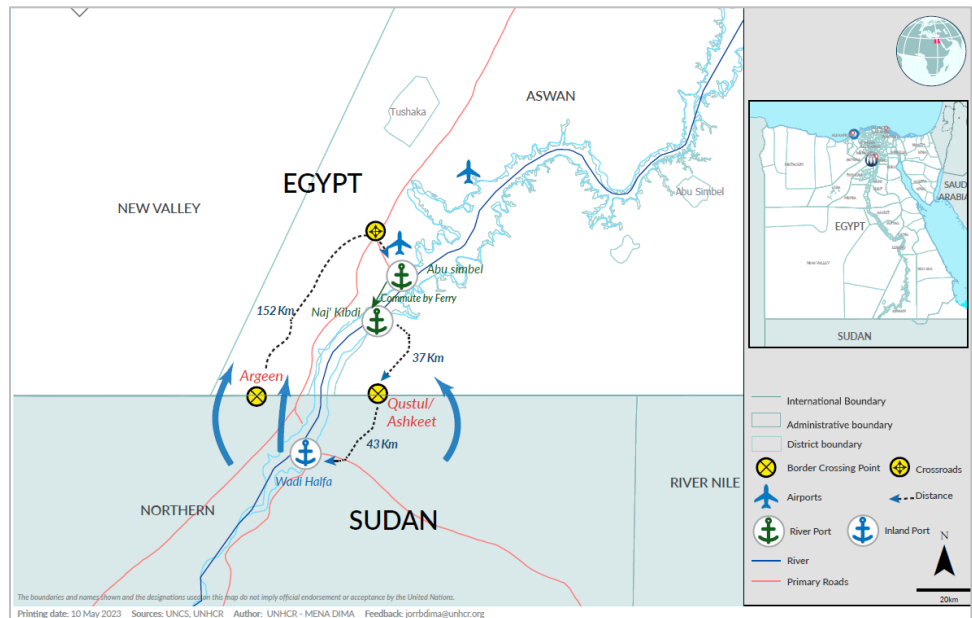
Ayman Gharibeh, UNHCR Regional Director for MENA, meets refugee community leaders in Cairo on 20 June, World Refugee Day. ©UNHCR/Pedro Costa Gomes

 **250,000**

Sudanese have entered Egypt from Sudan via the two official border crossings, Argeen and Qustol, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
As of 22 June

 **\$25.2 million**

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



OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS

- International donors [pledged](#) \$1.52 billion at the Sudan Pledging Conference, which took place on 19 June in Geneva. The largest contributors were the United States (\$550 million), Germany (\$161.8 million), and the European Commission (\$151.29 million).
- During his statement at the Sudan Pledging Conference, the Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry announced that more than 250,000 Sudanese have now crossed into Egypt. He also emphasized that the stability and security of Sudan are integral to Egypt's national stability and security as well as to the whole region. Noting that Egypt is currently hosting some 60% of those fleeing the conflict in Sudan, he urged the international community to provide the necessary financial support to host communities in neighbouring countries to promote their resilience and ensure peaceful coexistence.
- A humanitarian corridor was opened between the Qustol border crossing and Wadi Halfa. Three WFP trucks carrying a first consignment of 50 metric tons of food travelled from Qustol to Wadi Halfa, thanks to the facilitation from Egyptian and Sudanese government counterparts. In addition, 15,000 of UNICEF's hygiene kits reached the Sudanese side of the border. Over 12,000 families remain stranded in Wadi Halfa in difficult conditions with shelter, food, and medicine identified as the biggest needs.
- UNHCR teams at the border have noticed an increase in recent weeks of Sudanese returning across the border through Argeen and Qustol. On 16 June, 197 people were observed by UNHCR passing into Sudan through Argeen and 193 the day before. The numbers have risen from double figures with the latest rise possibly linked to the wish to join family for Eid. While some of the movement is expected with traders travelling back and forth, other movement as reported to UNHCR includes people unable to sustain themselves in Egypt because of high rent and living costs.
- A 72 hour-truce agreed by the warring parties in the Sudan conflict came into effect on 18 June. The truce reached with the support of Saudi Arabia and the US, required the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces to refrain from using any kind of force to allow freedom of movement and the delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout Sudan. The new truce aimed at providing a window for people stuck in conflict areas such as Khartoum, to leave and make the journey to safer places. However, the Sudanese capital was again under fire on 20 and 21 June, after the latest [breached](#) ceasefire between warring generals ended without any sign of an end to more than two months of war. Reports of hostilities have continued, particularly in Khartoum, Kordofan and Darfur states (see [here](#) for details).
- Under WFP leadership, 130,000 ready-to-eat food rations have been provided to respond to immediate needs at the border. As part of the second phase involving cash assistance, under the WFP and UNICEF joint programme, a pilot was launched in Aswan and Cairo using an innovative enrolment tool which enables distribution of cash assistance in three minutes, benefiting 15,000 individuals.

New admission procedures

UNHCR protection staff continue to report reduced movement at the main border crossing points of Argeen and Qustol since the imposition of new restrictions on 10 June. Arrivals at Argeen have reduced to double figures while in Qustol arrivals range between 300 and 600 people daily, mostly men who have obtained visas from Wadi Halfa or Port Sudan after long waits. Over the past week, only six buses with 134 passengers arrived at Karkar, confirming the continuous low traffic at the bus station. Most new arrivals reported heading to Cairo, where they could search for job opportunities, while fewer reported travelling to Alexandria, where their family members reside.

Sector highlights

UNHCR continues to strengthen 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 organizations 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 bi-weekly basis to report any issue that needs the attention of the inter-agency working group.

Protection

Over the past week, UNHCR Egypt conducted protection counselling for 329 cases (828 individuals) of new arrivals/newly registered to assess their protection risks and specific needs. The number of those approaching UNHCR for protection counselling over the past three weeks has been averaging 800 people per week; a substantial increase compared to the month of May when the average number of people approaching the Office for the same service was 150 people per week. Most of those counselled last week were Sudanese (94%), with the remaining 6% from South Sudan, Eritrea, and Somalia. Out of the total number counselled last week, 51% lived in precarious host family conditions or were homeless, 44% had a serious medical condition, 24% are single parents, 24% are older persons at risk, 7% are women at risk and 4% were cases in need of psychosocial support.

Meanwhile, UNHCR Egypt continues to distribute emergency cash assistance to new arrivals from Sudan. To date, UNHCR has assisted a total of 3,209 newly arrived cases (approximately 9,000 individuals) with emergency cash assistance. UNHCR and partners conducted rapid needs assessments for almost 1,750 (some 5,250 individuals) in Aswan, Greater Cairo, and Alexandria. Most assessed cases are female headed households (76%). Other than the one-off emergency cash, UNHCR is expediting the vulnerability assessment and targeting procedures to identify vulnerable newly arrived Sudanese families for eligibility under the regular multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) program. As of 19 June, 826 families have undertaken vulnerability assessments. Eligible families will receive MPCA starting July 2023.

On 15 June, UNHCR led a protection training for 18 frontline partner staff from UN agencies, international NGOs, and the government. Topics covered included an introduction to international refugee protection, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), ethical and safe handling of gender-based violence cases, including referral pathways, and anti-fraud and integrity. The PSEA training was based on material tailored specifically for the Sudan situation by the Sudan Situation PSEA Network co-chaired by UNHCR and UN Agency partner.

In commemoration of World Refugee Day, an award ceremony was held to recognize the contributions of a coalition of 24 Sudanese Refugee Led Organizations, based in the 6 October area (Giza), in responding to the Sudan crisis. Organized by UNHCR and a partner, the event was attended by approximately 75 people. Speeches were delivered by the MENA Regional Director, the Representative of UNHCR Egypt, the head of Terre des Hommes (TdH), and the leaders of the coalition. Two RLOs were selected to receive awards of material support and financial grants, to rent apartments that will be used to continue to host new arrivals from Sudan, particularly women and children.

Registration

To date, UNHCR has provided pre-registration appointments for 11,356 households (some 24,000 individuals) of which, 4,862 households (some 10,100 individuals) have been registered. This number is expected to rise as further restrictions imposed by Egypt on passport renewals make it difficult for refugees to renew their residency documents. According to Registration data, over 94% are Sudanese, followed by South Sudanese and Eritrea and 61% are female headed households.

During the reporting week, UNHCR has received requests from Sudanese nationals to get their files reopened, as the current prevailing conditions in Sudan prevent them from returning. UNHCR met with a group of Sudanese single parent female-headed households with such requests, as they are unable to renew their national passports and are now with no valid documentation to renew their residency permits in Egypt. Anecdotal observations by UNHCR partners suggest that many Sudanese who hold expired passports are also unable to afford the costly procedure of renewing their documents because they require a valid passport to obtain residency and a notarized rental contract from an Egyptian landlord is a requirement. UNHCR anticipates an increasing demand for reopening of closed files and

documentation. The operation is streamlining reopening processing and is currently screening cases, prioritizing persons with specific needs and other vulnerabilities.



Fadlallah, 71, came to Egypt with his wife less than a month ago from Khartoum through Qustul. "I wanted to spend the rest of my days in peace. Sudan lost its peace." ©UNHCR/Pedro Costa Gomes



Core relief items

UNHCR completed the installation of two rub halls in Qustol border crossing. The structures will help UNHCR and its partner the ERC scale up their activities, operationalize information desks, and deliver psychosocial support services, among others. A third rub hall has been installed in zone are between the two borders to serve as a space for asylum-seekers to rest due to the long waiting hours prior to admission. In addition, UNHCR has delivered 456,640 water bottles, 122,000 hygiene kits, and 80,000 sanitary napkins to new arrivals, and nine commercial fridges, 15 family tents, 50 office chairs, 30 tablets, and 250 waiting benches to partner ERC.

Main needs and gaps

Access to territory under new admission restrictions outlined above is a major concern, slowing the rate of new arrivals. 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 these changes in place, it is anticipated that an increased number of people will approach protection services putting additional pressure on limited resources – the interagency response in Egypt is currently only 10 per cent funded. Crowds in the thousands and growing are behind the border gate and inside the buffer zone, including many with serious medical needs but incomplete documentation. UNHCR and partner the Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) have been able to facilitate entry for serious medical cases, but only for those with correct documentation.

At the borders there is a need to increase availability of certain specialized services, improve pharmacy management and increase availability of cross-water transport. Further work is needed to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Health & Population (MoHP) to detect, respond to and prevent communicable diseases including through vaccination and vector control campaigns. Further support is also needed to public health facilities in Aswan governorate and to ensure similar availability to health services there as elsewhere in Egypt.

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.

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