UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

FACTSHEET

Emergency Transit Mechanism, Rwanda

July 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**: Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Guinea and Mali.

While **656** people are still waiting at the ETM, **1,119** people have departed and resettled 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 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 and 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**
656	10
Children	**Unaccompanied Children**
181	39
Departures from ETM	**Remaining Capacity**
1,119	44

Refugees and NGO partners participate in Umuganda community activities to promote hygiene and environmental protection. ©UNHCR

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: 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: support for persons with specific needs and psychosocial support.

Prison Fellowship Foundation: legal assistance, and civil documentation/registration; and community-based protection.

Save the Children International: 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.

UNHCR together with urban refugees, ETM refugees, World Vision International (WVI) and Humanity & Inclusion (HI) participated in the Bugesera Joint Action for Development Forum (JADF) Open Day, where they highlighted self-reliance of refugees and advocated for their inclusion on 1-2 July 2023 © UNHCR

Main Activities

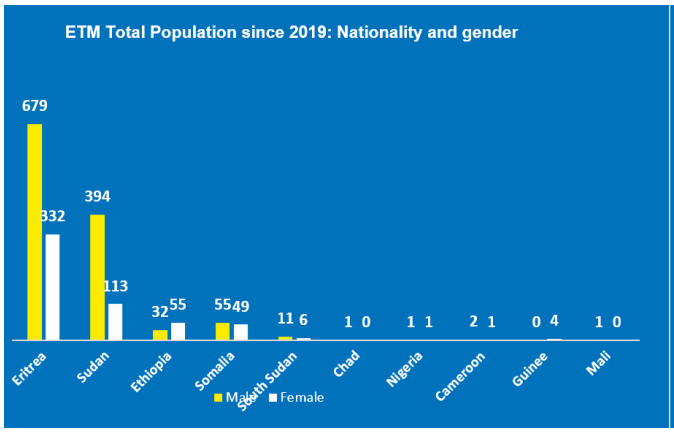
PROTECTION

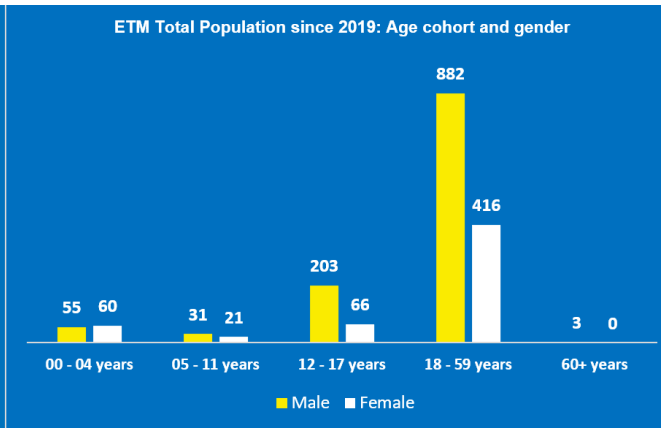
Protection Delivery: UNHCR mainstreams protection principles throughout all the humanitarian services it provides at the ETM. The key activities to ensure the protection of refugees and asylum seekers include registration, documentation, community engagement, psychosocial support (PSS), legal assistance, 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 41 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 the 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. 80% 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, 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 respect the rights of children and ensure that child-centred 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.





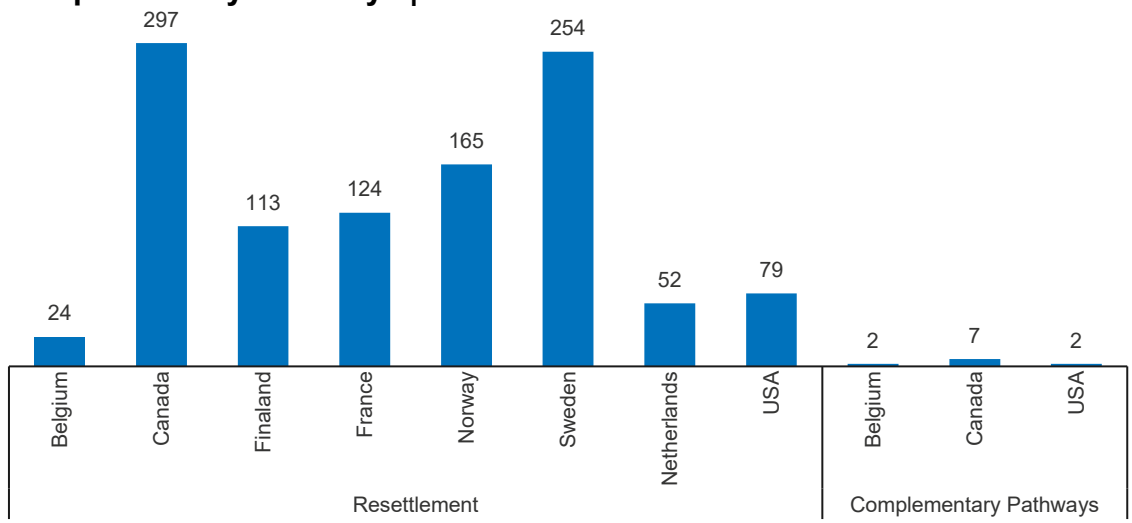
CASE PROCESSING FOR SOLUTIONS

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 1,601 individuals.

Country of Origin	Female	Male	Grand Total
Cameroon	1	0	**1**
Chad	0	1	**1**
Eritrea	310	637	**947**
Ethiopia	48	21	**69**
Guinea	4	0	**4**
Nigeria	1	1	**2**
Somalia	40	50	**90**
South Sudan	7	10	**17**
Sudan	103	367	**470**
Grand Total	**514**	**1087**	**1,601**

Resettlement: Since the opening of the ETM in 2019, a total of 1,119 individuals departed through resettlement and complementary pathways to eight resettlement countries (Finland, Belgium, France, Norway, Canada, Sweden, the 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 July, 53 individuals were interviewed for resettlement while 18 individuals departed the ETM on resettlement (14 Canada and 4 USA). In total, there are currently 84 cases who were previously submitted for resettlement and are at different stages if the resettlement process.

Departures from the ETM through Resettlement and Complementary Pathways | 2019 - 2023



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 50,000 RWF (~50$) 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. During July 2023, 879 refugees received primary healthcare at the clinic, at a rate of 29 consultations per clinician per day. Where individuals may require secondary or tertiary healthcare services, UNHCR and the health partner (AHA) refer those cases to secondary and tertiary level hospitals – 51 individuals were assisted in July, with 35 at secondary and 16 at tertiary levels. The health clinic also operates ambulance services for emergency cases and referrals cases. In addition, mental health services are provided.

- For **food assistance**, refugees, and asylum seekers at the ETM receive three meals a day provided by UNHCR and ADRA. In July 2023, 673 refugees and asylum seekers were fed through the ETM wet feeding 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 monthly average water consumption per person per day is about 100 liters in July 2023, 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 70 shower rooms serving average of nine persons per shower-room, and 98 drop-holes serving on average seven persons per latrine. 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. In July, 564 people were reached by these messages. UNHCR and WVI also clean the centre's common areas daily.

- **Infrastructure:** Since the ETM Centre's 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. In addition, there are 30 accommodation houses that can host 340 individuals. In addition, UNHCR constructed a health clinic, and office block in previous years which are all currently fully operational. Construction of a one-stop community multipurpose center has also been completed. To manage rainwater and prevent soil erosion/degradation, UNHCR enabled the construction of a centre-whole drainage system 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 trainings at the ETM to empower the refugees and ensure that they gain useful skills. Based on proposals and feedback from the community, trainings are delivered to both the refugees and the host community. Activities aim to boost the resilience as well as encourage peaceful coexistence.
- Courses provided in July 2023 included hairdressing, tailoring and ICT skills. Language classes in English, French and Kinyarwanda are also delivered by WVI. A total of 353 refugees, asylum seekers and host community members benefited trainings in July including 137 refugees and asylum seekers who attended language classes. Due to funding limitations, motor vehicle driving classes and domestic electricity courses are not currently implemented, although they remain of high interest for ETM refugee communities.

Skills Training in July	Refugees & Asylum Seekers			Host Community		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Languages	101	36	**137**	0	0	**0**
ICT	55	29	**84**	3	0	**3**
Tailoring	26	18	**44**	0	26	**26**
Hair dressing	14	18	**32**	2	25	**27**
Total	**196**	**101**	**297**	**5**	**51**	**56**