UNHCR EGYPT
SUDAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE UPDATE
19 September 2023

Sherin and her son were forced to flee Khartoum due to violence and sought safety in Egypt. They were registered and provided with other protection services after approaching UNHCR Registration Centre in Cairo's outskirts. ©UNHCR/Jaime Gimenez

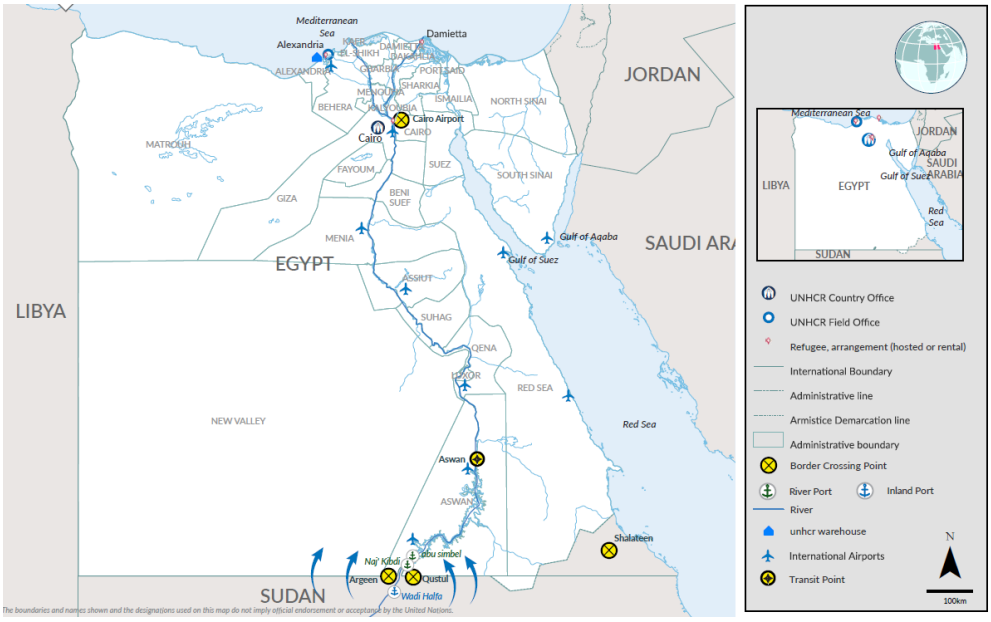
>310,000

Sudanese forced to flee to Egypt

Since 15 April according to the latest information provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to UNHCR on 11 September

31% funded

of the $28.2 million required by UNHCR for the Sudan emergency response in Egypt.



LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- UNHCR has noted a significant increase in the number of individuals registered with UNHCR who have irregularly crossed from Egypt to Libya. UNHCR records indicate that between January and August, 376 registered refugees and asylum-seekers crossed into Libya in the first eight months of 2023, compared to the 21 who did so in the same period in 2022. Likewise, 10 times the number of Sudanese families crossed compared to the previous year. UNHCR has increased its community messaging on the risk of irregular crossing and the fragile situation in Libya.

- On 13 September, UNHCR delivered 150 computers and other IT equipment to the Ministry of Education to establish computer laboratories in 15 public schools in Aswan governorate. The IT laboratories are anticipated to be ready for use before the start of the new academic year. The intervention aims to support the capacity-building of local public schools hosting refugee and asylum-seeker children who have fled the conflict in Sudan, as well as enhance the quality of education.

- Three refugee students travelled from Egypt to Belgium to pursue their master's degrees as part of a UNHCR pilot programme for complementary pathways which presents refugees with alternatives to resorting to irregular means and harmful onward movement. The students, originally from South Sudan and Syria, will study at the Catholic University of Leuven and have been pre-assessed for eligibility for refugee status in Belgium. UNHCR Egypt has prioritized the expansion of complementary pathways as one of its main priorities, including for Sudanese refugees. It forms part of a pilot project implemented by UNHCR alongside the Government of Belgium, Caritas, and the Catholic University of Leuven. The pilot project is a part of EU-Passworld, a three-year project funded by the European Union linking community sponsorship to labour and education pathways.

- UNHCR and UNFPA conducted a workshop on gender-based violence prevention, children's rights, and legal protection targeted at the Sudanese population on 15 September in Karkar near Aswan. During the workshop, attended by 61 people, participants mentioned that accessing medical services in the region is challenging due to the lack of pharmacies and medicines. They also expressed concern about the difficulty of sending their children to school due to high fees. In addition, UNHCR's support with transportation and accommodation was requested to be able to reach Cairo and register. In other focus groups held in Aswan last week, Sudanese also mentioned livelihoods, cash assistance and psychosocial support for children as other important needs.

- UNHCR Representative highlighted how the private sector can contribute to the integration of refugees in Egypt, including new arrivals from Sudan, during a panel discussion at the annual meeting of the Arab Foundation Forum. She also explained how the private sector could play an increasingly important role in job creation, contributing to the self-reliance of the displaced and their host communities.

- A Sudanese and a Syrian refugee student participated in the COSIMENA Summer School in Cairo between 10 and 17 September and hereby exchanged ideas about inclusion with other students from Egypt, other Arab countries, and Germany. The event explored challenges and best practices in cross-cultural communication, including social and news media, film, arts, and tourism. It was organized by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) with the Freie Universität Berlin, Ahram Canadian University, and the German Embassy in Cairo. The 25 participants from 10 different nationalities received training in innovative media production strategies and tools. In this year's edition, UNHCR raised awareness about young talented refugees and shed light on their experience fleeing their home countries and residing in Egypt. The refugee students, who had received an *Albert Einstein* German Academic Refugee Initiative Fund (DAFI) scholarship for their university studies, participated in creating a podcast and a short film about the lives of refugees in Egypt that will be disseminated in the coming weeks.

Protection

The number of people calling UNHCR's Infoline has been increasing since the beginning of the Sudan crisis with 30,563 new arrivals from Sudan (12,000 households) receiving appointments via Infoline. This trend has resulted from the revamping of the Infoline service in response to the crisis, which involved increasing the number of Infoline operators from 12 to 32 and expanding the Infoline channels from 30 to 120.

Sudanese siblings play at the UNHCR Registration Centre in Greater Cairo while waiting to be registered as asylum seekers together with their mother. ©UNHCR/Jaime Gimenez

During last week (10-14 September), 5,961 total inquiries were handled by the Infoline in Cairo, marking a 57% increase compared to the previous week. Of them, 1,465 new registration appointments (24.6%) were given to 3,237 people who had fled the Sudan conflict. The new registration appointment ratio over the total inquiries has increased by 11.9% compared to the week of 3 September, and this is due to the prioritization of the new registration appointment options for the new arrivals from Sudan.

Registration

As of 15 September, UNHCR had provided pre-registration appointments to 83,306 newly arrived individuals (40,037 households), of whom 54,382 individuals (26,047 households) have already been registered. The majority are Sudanese nationals (90%), while the top three nationalities registered are South Sudanese (5%), Eritrean (3%) and Syrian (1%). Most Sudanese (88%) originate from Khartoum, while more than 4% are from Darfur region. In terms of documentation, 54% of registered heads of household are in possession of a travel document.

Cash assistance

UNHCR is accelerating the cash assistance delivery to new arrivals from Sudan. In the past week, UNHCR Egypt provided emergency cash assistance to 6,528 people (2,478 households). Since the onset of the Sudan conflict, the total number of assisted individuals now stands at 41,759 (14,657 households).

UNHCR provides emergency cash assistance to newly arrived Sudanese who fled to Egypt after the conflict in Sudan. The assistance is provided as a once-off to families who have registered with UNHCR and to those who have not registered to support them with their most pressing needs. UNHCR conducts rapid needs assessments to inform the eligibility for emergency assistance for unregistered Sudanese individuals.

Health

According to UNHCR data on newly registered cases, the population of new arrivals has a disproportionate number of children, women, and older persons. The health needs are reflecting this demographic composition with a need for reproductive health care, care for childhood diseases, and treatments for chronic disorders associated with old age such as diabetes and hypertension. It is also believed that many of the persons who left Sudan at an early stage did so because they had medical needs that the collapsing Sudanese health system no longer could address. This is supported by reports of high numbers in need of hemodialysis and cancer treatment.

Information Technology (IT)

After the onset of the Sudan crisis, IT services were rapidly rolled out to the Aswan UNHCR team, delivering not only internet access but also essential equipment to facilitate effective communication with stakeholders and partners. Furthermore, to support registration activities in Cairo and Alexandria, network coverage was expanded, ensuring stable connectivity for uninterrupted protection services. In addition, UNHCR revamped its Infoline infrastructure with a significant increase in the connection channel capacity. Calls from Sudanese new arrivals were prioritized for rapid response. The consolidation of both Cairo and Alexandria Infoline services into a unified platform optimized accessibility.

Core relief items

Items distributed to newly arrived individuals:

634,180
Bottles of water

150,000
hygiene kits

80,000
Sanitary items

UNHCR has installed three Rubb halls at the border crossings between Egypt and Sudan, and a fourth in the registration centre in Cairo. The Rubb halls have facilitated the scale-up of the response and provided shaded rest areas for asylum-seekers. In addition, UNHCR has delivered 1,000 blankets, 50 mattresses, 1,000 floor mats, nine commercial fridges, 15 family tents, 10 tablets, four freezers, four logistic trolleys, 10 laptops, 20 smartphones, 30 fire extinguishers, 250 waiting benches, one sound system, one multi-function printer, one office fridge, 40 fans, 50 office chairs, and 20 tables to UNHCR's partner, the Egyptian Red Crescent.

Financial information

UNHCR is grateful for the crucial and generous contributions from its donors, who have provided both earmarked and unearmarked funding to support its operations in Egypt, including in response to the Sudan situation.

UNHCR Egypt is also grateful for the crucial support of private donors, including those from Australia, China, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the USA.

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