

Emergency Transit Mechanism, Rwanda

September 2022

In 2019, UNHCR, the African Union and Government of Rwanda establishing the Emergency Transit Mechanisms (ETM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to evacuate refugees and asylum seekers from Libya to Rwanda with the aim of finding durable solutions.

Since its inception, a total of **1,279 refugees and asylum seekers** have been evacuated from Libya in **11 evacuation flights** to the ETM. Refugees and asylum seekers come from **8 countries**, including Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon

As of the end of September 2022, **536 refugees and asylum seekers** are accommodated in the ETM. An additional **712 refugees** have departed the ETM through resettled to third countries including Norway, Sweden, Canada, France, Belgium, The Netherlands and Finland.

ETM OVERVIEW

Libya is a major transit route for refugees hoping to reach safety in Europe through the Mediterranean Sea. The unstable situation combined with periodic fighting has further muddied the situation 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 refugees and asylum seekers to safe and secure places outside Libya.

Through the MoU signed in 2019, UNHCR in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda (GoR) and the African Union (AU) established an Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) in Gashora Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda. This followed the establishment of a similar centre in Niger in 2017. 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, asylum seekers go through refugee case processing undertaken by UNHCR to determine if they meet the requirements for durable solutions which mainly involves resettlement to a third country.

The ETM remains an important mechanism to provide legal remedies for refugee and asylum seeker departure from Libya which is a challenge for UNHCR in view of the absence of asylum legal framework and lawful refugee status in the country.



UNHCR's High Commissioner and the Minister in Charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) visit a family hosted in the ETM. © UNHCR



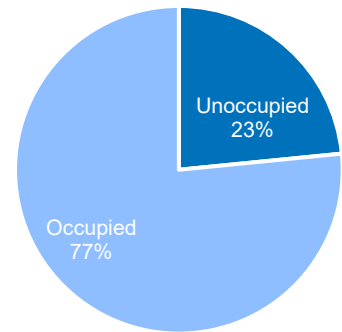
The completed Ground+2 Refugee Apartment with the capacity to host 360 persons which opened in xxx. Since its opening the capacity of the ETM increased to 700. © UNHCR

POPULATION FIGURES AND STATISTICS

Evacuated	Evacuation Flights
1279	11
Present in Rwanda	Countries of Origin
536	8
Children	Unaccompanied Children
123	40
Departures from ETM	Remaining Capacity
712	164

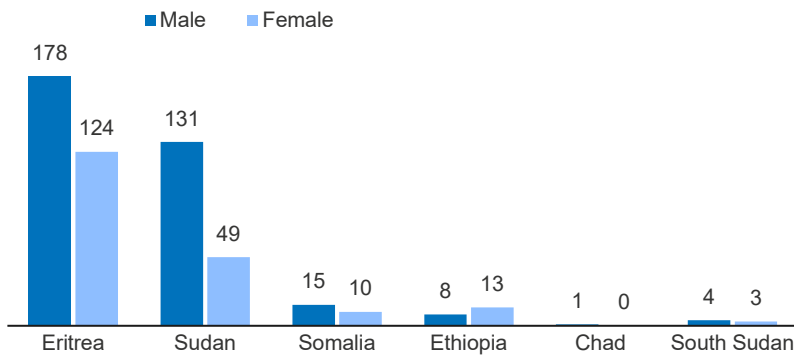
Current Accommodation Capacity In the ETM

Total of 700 people

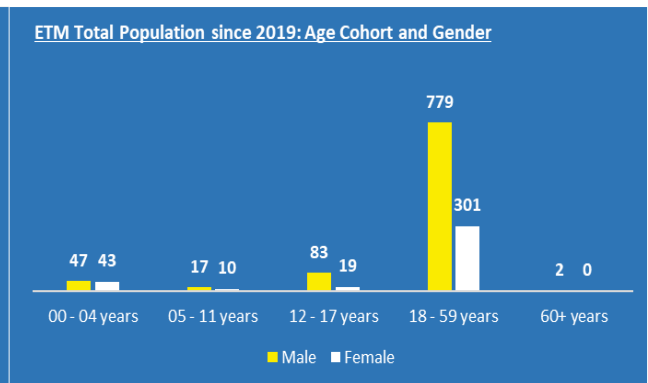
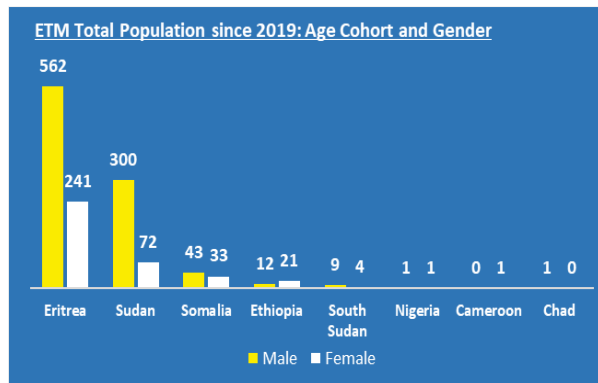
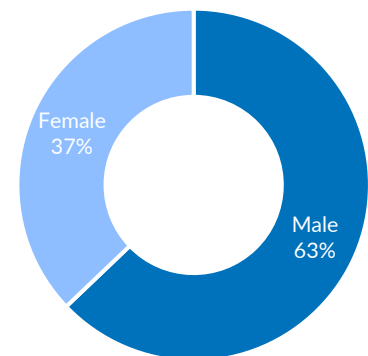


Current Population Breakdown

Gender and nationality



Gender Breakdown



Partners and Coordination

UNHCR's Field Office in Nyamata oversees the ETM Operation with a workforce of more than 70 staff including 45 international and 25 national personnel. UNHCR co-coordinates the refugee response at the ETM and across the rest of Rwanda alongside the Government of Rwanda under the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA). In addition, partnerships with seven different NGO partners enable the delivery of emergency and lifesaving interventions at the ETM.

The signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) defines the role and responsibilities of the GoR, UNHCR and AU, and guides all activities related to the coordination processes. Partnership agreements between the seven organizations, UNHCR and MINEMA detail coordination mechanisms around the delivery of services to refugees and asylum seekers. The different partners include:



MINEMA: Camp Coordination, Management, and Security in coordination with other government entity.



ADRA: Food Security (catering), warehouse management and distribution of Non-Food Items.



World Vision: Water, Sanitation and Vocational and Skills Training and Strengthening.



African Humanitarian Action (AHA): Primary 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.



ALIGHT: Prevention of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Child Protection (CP) and Community-based Protection



Rwanda Red Cross/ICRC: As an operational partner, RRC/ICRC support with family reunification services and first aid



Arrival of evacuation convoy at Kigali International Airport, 31st August 2022 © UNHCR

Main Activities



PROTECTION

Protection Delivery: UNHCR has established a multisectoral approach to strengthen delivery of humanitarian services in the ETM resulting in mainstreaming of protection principles throughout all programs at the ETM. 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 and provided documentation for 1,301 refugees and asylum seekers including 1,279 people evacuated from Libya and 22 babies born at the ETM. Upon arrival, all refugees are verified and issued with proof of registration from UNHCR. These documents allow the refugee status determination process to subsequently begin.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV): SGBV 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 so that all partners working at the ETM know how to support refugees and asylum seekers who have experienced SGBV. SGBV 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 SGBV awareness campaigns, follow-up on case management, examine SGBV trends in order to inform advocacy and future programming on potential gaps.

Child Protection: Together with partners, UNHCR has ensured that Best Interest assessment and determination procedures are operational in order 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 on offer are designed to create an enabling environment for the respect of rights of children and ensure that child centered programming is integrated under all sectors. In addition, a Child Friendly Space is in operation at the ETM providing a safe place for children of all ages to learn, play and receive tailored support.



CASE PROCESSING FOR SOLUTIONS

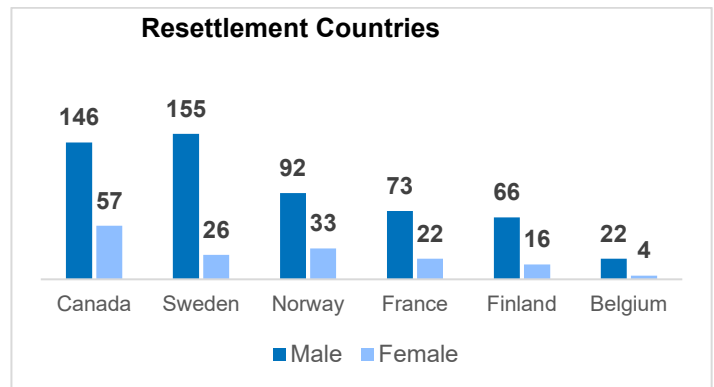
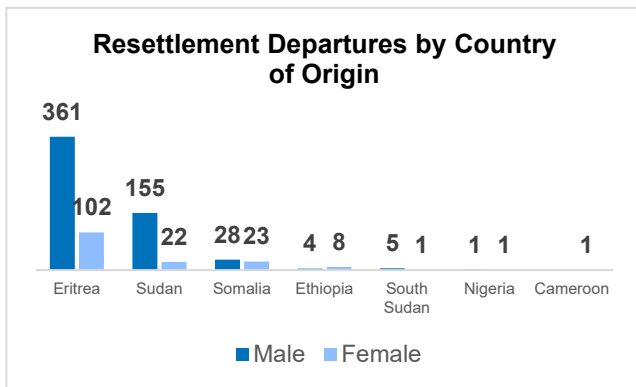
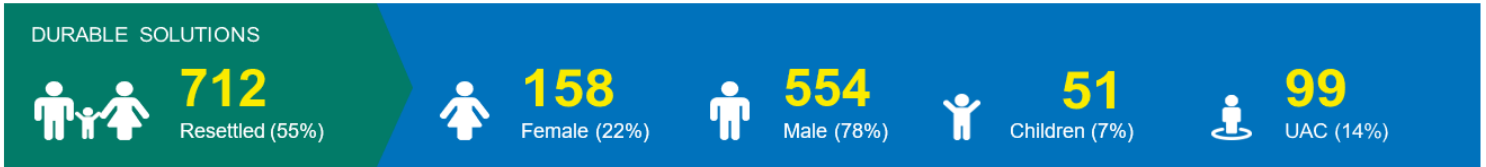
Refugee Status Determination (RSD):

Country of Origin	Female	Male	Total
Cameroon	1	0	1
Chad	0	1	1
Eritrea	190	479	669
Ethiopia	18	12	30
Nigeria	1	1	2
Somalia	27	36	63
South Sudan	5	7	12
Sudan	46	244	290
Grand Total	288	780	1068

100% of 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.

As of the end of September, 211 cases are currently pending with RSD case process. The granting of refugee status is an important mechanism to enable resettlement to third countries and prevent refoulement of refugees to their countries of origin.

Resettlement: A total of **712 individuals** have been resettled to **7 resettlement countries** including Finland, Belgium, France, Norway, Canada, Sweden and Netherlands. UNHCR continues to advocate for increased resettlement opportunities for the most vulnerable groups as resettlement remains the most desirable durable solution for refugees residing at the ETM.



BASIC NEEDS AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

- **All refugees and asylum seekers are provided with 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
- **Primary healthcare including reproductive health, nutrition and HIV services** is accessible free of charge on 24hrs basis for all refugees and asylum seekers at the ETM health clinic. Where individuals may require secondary or tertiary healthcare, UNHCR and AHA refer cases for specialist at local hospitals. The clinic also operates ambulance services for emergency cases. In addition, mental health services are provided to refugees and asylum seekers at the clinic.
- Refugees and asylum seekers at the ETM are provided with **three meals a day** by UNHCR and ADRA. The hot meals include breakfast, lunch and dinner. 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.
- **Water** is supplied to the ETM from the main national water grid, through government run Water and Sanitation Cooperation (WASAC). UNHCR and partners have also worked to improve sanitation facilities in order to increase the quality of life and wellbeing for refugees and asylum seekers while they remain at the ETM. Solid and liquid waste collection and disposal is managed by UNHCR through World Vision as its implementing partner.
- Since its opening, UNHCR has expanded the availability, accessibility and quality of accommodation provided at the ETM. Key **infrastructure developments** have included the construction of the *Ikaze Residence* Ground+2 Refugee Apartment with the capacity to host 360 persons (opened in June 2022), the G+2 health clinic, community learning center and office blocks. 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 refugees and ensure that they gain skills which are useful to them in the future. Based on feedback from the community, different trainings are delivered to both refugees, asylum seekers and Rwandans from the local host community. Activities aim to boost the resilience as well as encourage peaceful coexistence.
- Courses provided include motor vehicle driving, hairdressing, tailoring as well as ICT skills. Language classes in English, French and Kinyarwanda are also delivered by World Vision International.

Skills Training	Active POCs		
	Male	Female	Total
Languages	40	25	65
Driving	58	57	115
ICT	11	3	14
Tailoring	23	2	25
Hair dressing	8	9	17
Domestic Electricity	0	0	0
Business and Finance Management	0	0	0
Total	140	96	236



Tailoring class including Host community members © UNHCR



Driving school students undertaking practical lessons at the ETM © UNHCR