FACT SHEET

Emergency Transit Mechanism, Rwanda

March 2022

Since its inception, a total of **1,603 people** have been evacuated from Libya through **13 evacuation flights** to the ETM. They come from **9 countries,** including Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Guinea.

While **674** people are still awaiting durable solutions from the ETM, **957** people have departed through resettlement to third countries including Norway, Sweden, Canada, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland, and the USA.

In March, the 13th evacuation flight from Libya to the ETM in Rwanda took place on 09 March consisting of 150 individuals. The new arrivals have subsequently received assistance and services including medical screenings.

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 further muddied the situation and caused widespread suffering. Many refugees and asylum seekers in the country have been held under dire conditions, 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 a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2019, which is valid to 31 December 2023, UNHCR in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda (GoR) and the African Union (AU) established an Emergency Transit Mechanism (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 are a refugee. Subsequently, refugees are processed for durable solutions such as resettlement, return or local integration. To date, all refugees have opted for resettlement to third countries.

The ETM remains an important mechanism to provide legal remedies for refugee and asylum seekers in view of the absence of asylum space in Libya. In addition to Rwanda, UNHCR also operates an ETM in Niger.

POPULATION FIGURES AND STATISTICS

Evacuated	Evacuation Flights
1,603	13
Present in Rwanda	**Countries of Origin**
674	9
Children	**Unaccompanied Children**
154	31
Departures from ETM	**Remaining Capacity**
957	26

UNHCR staff members welcome newly evacuated refugees and asylum seekers from Libya to the ETM in Rwanda.
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Partners and Coordination

UNHCR's Field Office in Nyamata oversees the ETM Operation with a workforce of over **63 persons** made up of a total of 36 international and 25 national staff.

UNHCR and MINEMA co-coordinate the refugee response operation in Rwanda, including at the Emergency Transit Mechanism Centre in Gashora. Seven NGOs, including one new partner which replaced another departed partner in this year, are enabled to deliver live-saving protection, basic assistance, and essential services to the people we serve.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) defines the roles and responsibilities of the GoR, UNHCR and AU, and it guides all activities related to the coordination processes. Project Agreements concluded between the seven NGOs, UNHCR and MINEMA provide detailed coordination mechanisms around the delivery of protection, assistance, and services to the people we serve. The partners including their main areas of engagements can be summarized as follows:

MINEMA: Camp Coordination, Management, and Security.

ADRA: Provision of food, warehousing and distribution management of Non-Food Items.

World Vision: Water, Sanitation, and hygiene, 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 Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and Child Protection (CP)

Rwanda Red Cross/ICRC: As an operational partner, RRC/ICRC provides support in the areas of family reunification and first aid

International Women's Day was celebrated at the ETM in March where the Mayor of the Bugesera District was the guest of honor, joining refugees and the host community in promoting digital inclusion for all. © UNHCR

Main Activities

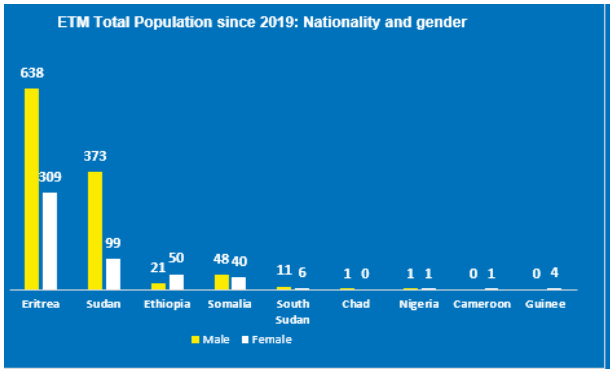
PROTECTION

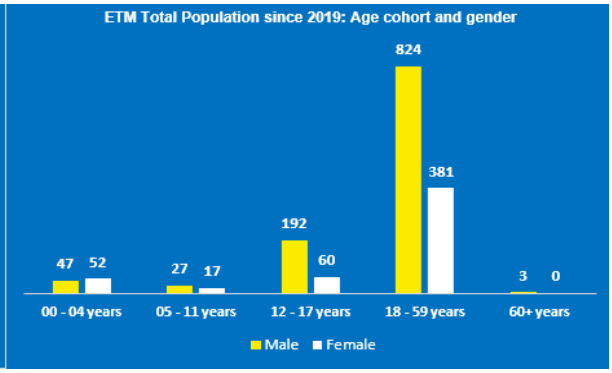
Protection Delivery: UNHCR has established a multisectoral approach to strengthen delivery of humanitarian services in the ETM resulting in mainstreaming of protection principles throughout all programs at the ETM. Key activities to ensure the protection of refugees and asylum seekers include registration, 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 1,633 refugees and asylum seekers including 1,603 people evacuated from Libya and 30 babies born at the ETM. Upon arrival, UNHCR conducts a verification exercise for all refugees and asylum seekers and assists them to obtain proof of registration. The registration/verification exercise was completed on 30th March 2023 for the new evacuees from Libya (13th convoy) and their documents will be issued by mid-April 2023. 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 SGBV 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 and determination 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 centered 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

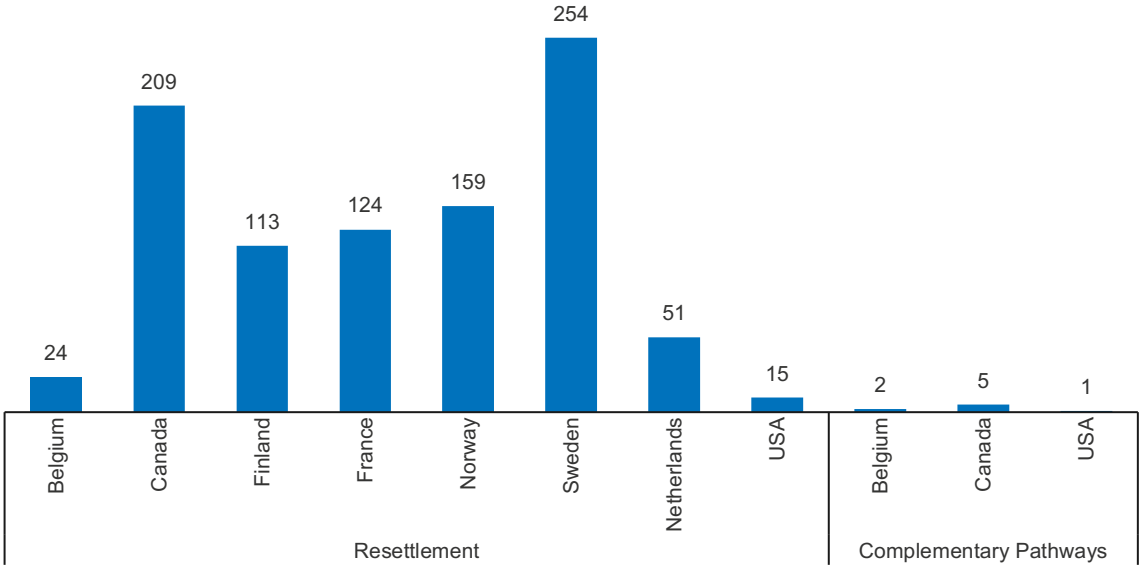
Refugee Status Determination (RSD): All refugees and asylum seekers evacuated from Libya undergo case processing for solutions starting with the RSD process. UNHCR determines whether they meet the refugee criteria in accordance with the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Granting of refugee status is an important mechanism to enable resettlement to third countries and prevent refoulment of refugees to their countries of origin. As of the end of March 2023, UNHCR is working on completing the case processing of the 12th convoy previously evacuated in December 2022.

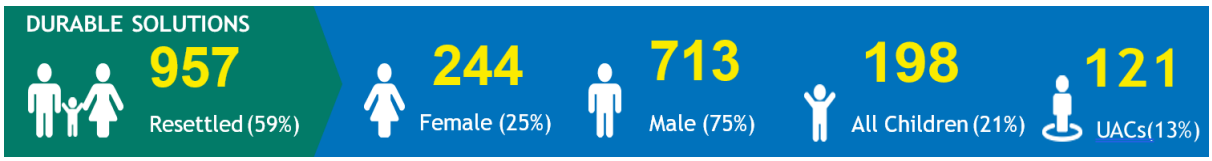
Resettlement: A total of **957 individuals** have been resettled to **8 resettlement countries** including Finland, Belgium, France, Norway, Canada, Sweden, Netherlands, and USA since the ETM started operation. UNHCR continues to advocate for increased resettlement opportunities for the most vulnerable groups as resettlement remains the most viable durable solution for refugees evacuated from Libya to the ETM Rwanda.

In March 2023, UNHCR submitted a total of 130 cases of 166 individuals for resettlement and the cases are currently in different stages of the resettlement pipeline depending on the country. In March, 25 refugees also departed on resettlement to Canada, France, the Netherlands, Norway and the USA.

During the reporting period, UNHCR also facilitated different resettlement selection missions including; Canada selection mission where 54 individuals were interviewed; USA Mission where 84 individuals were interviewed; Norway selection mission where 30 individuals were interviewed.

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





BASIC NEEDS AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Basic assistance is provided to refugees and asylum seekers at the ETM, including shelter, bedding, food, electricity, clean water, hygiene essentials, core relief items and cash assistance to help them purchase essential items shortly after arrival in Rwanda. Following their registration and enrolment in the cash assistance systems, assistance is subsequently provided through cash-based interventions (CBI), where each refugee receives 50,000 Frw (~50$) to meet their daily non-food basic needs on a monthly basis.

Healthcare, including reproductive health, nutrition and HIV services, are accessible free of charge on 24/7 basis for all refugees and asylum seekers through the health clinic at the ETM. Where individuals may require secondary or tertiary healthcare services, UNHCR and the health partner (AHA) refer those cases to secondary and tertiary level hospitals. 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. 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 government run Water and Sanitation Cooperation (WASAC). The monthly average water consumption per person per day is about 110 liters in March 2023, for both drinking and domestic use. Moreover, as the UNHCR's WASH partner, World Vision International (WVI) conducts regular monitoring of water quality to ensure proper free chlorine levels prior distribution.
- **Sanitation** services are regularly provided where the ETM counts 70 shower rooms serving average six persons per shower-room, and 98 drop-holes serving on average seven persons per latrine, which are closely maintained by WVI. Solid and liquid waste is also regularly collected and disposed.
- **Hygiene promotion** activities to encourage refugees to adopt good hygiene behaviors and seek support when they identify a gap takes place regularly through seven hygiene promoters, who conduct regular outreach and hygiene promotion activities at a rate of 18 persons per hygiene promoter. UNHCR and WVI also conduct daily general cleaning of the center's areas and common places

Infrastructure: Since its opening, UNHCR has expanded the availability, accessibility and quality of accommodation provided at the ETM. Key **infrastructure developments** include a two-storey building (the *Ikaze Residence* Apartment) with the capacity to host 360 persons, a health clinic, and an office block which are all fully operational. Construction of a one-stop community multipurpose center is in progress, expected to be completed in April 2023. To manage rainwater and prevent soil erosion/degradation, UNHCR enabled the construction of a center-whole drainage system of 2,495m. Repairs and maintenance of 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 refugees and asylum seekers and ensure that they gain skills which are useful to them in the future. Activities aim to boost the resilience as well as encourage peaceful coexistence and also involve Rwandans from the local host community. The programme of activities offered at the ETM is based on feedback and consultations with the community.

Courses provided in March 2023 included hairdressing, tailoring as well as ICT skills. Language classes in English, French and Kinyarwanda are also delivered by World Vision International. A total of 173 refugees and asylum seekers and host community members benefited from the technical and vocation trainings program, while 82 individuals participated in language education over the last month.

	Number of Participants during February					
Skills Training	Refugees & Asylum Seekers			Host Community		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Languages	49	33	**82**	0	0	**0**
ICT	37	17	**54**	0	0	**0**
Tailoring	28	14	**42**	0	34	**34**
Hair dressing	7	17	**24**	0	19	**19**
Total	**121**	**81**	**202**	**0**	**53**	**53**

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