


UNHCR EGYPT

SUDAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE UPDATE


05 September 2023



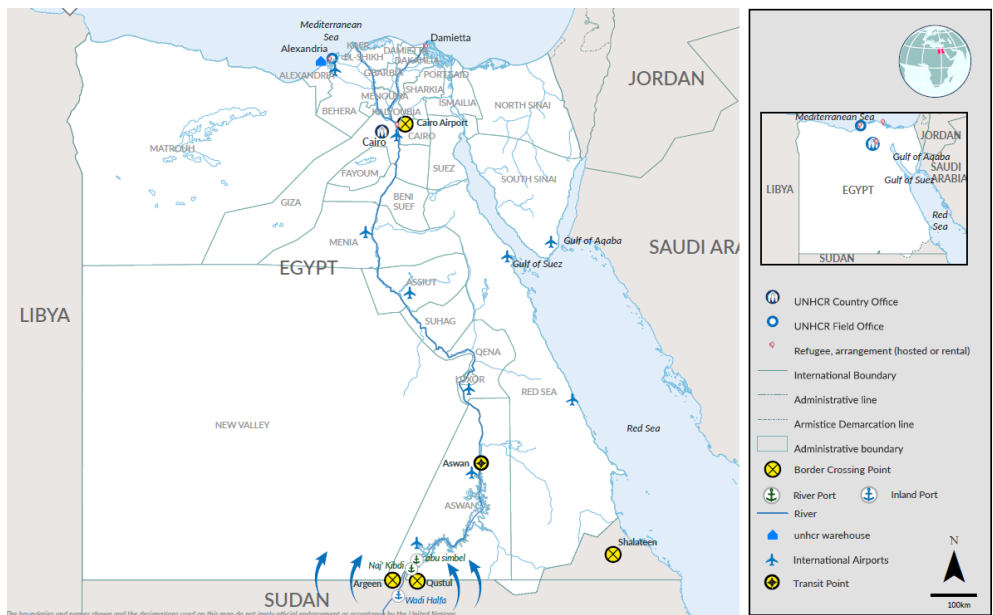
After fleeing violence in Sudan, this Sudanese mother and her three children approached UNHCR Registration Center in Cairo, where they were registered as asylum seekers. ©UNHCR/Jaime Gimenez

 **>280,000**

Sudanese forced to flee to Egypt
Since 15 April according to latest information provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to UNHCR on 20 August

 **31% funded**

of the \$28.2 million required by UNHCR for the [Sudan emergency response](#) in Egypt.



LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- On 31 August, the Government of Egypt announced that foreign residents living irregularly in Egypt must formalize their status within three months. The process involves obtaining a legal residence permit with sponsorship from an Egyptian national and paying administrative expenses equivalent to USD \$1,000. Foreigners must convert funds for the fees from foreign currencies to Egyptian pounds, which includes residence costs, through authorized channels. Although the government confirmed that this measure will not affect refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR, it is still unclear whether this measure will impact other Sudanese individuals who have fled the conflict and have not yet registered with UNHCR, including those already residing in Egypt and now no longer able to return to Sudan. UNHCR is sharing information messages through communication channels explaining that the new regulations do not apply to refugees.
- As of 3 September, following UNHCR's advocacy, refugees and asylum seekers regardless of their nationality can now collect remittances through IBAG (authorized agent for Western Union in Egypt) by using UNHCR registration cards as recognized identity document in conjunction with their residency permit. This eases access to Money Transfer Services across 38 branches in Egypt.
- UNHCR Representative, Dr. Hanan Hamdan, conducted a two-day mission to Alexandria on 29 and 30 August. It included meetings with refugee community leaders at the Caritas Community Centre and with the Saudi Consul and the Director of the Bibliotheca of Alexandria on ideas for further cooperation aimed at promoting the inclusion of refugees in the city. Alexandria currently hosts more than 28,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, including large numbers of Sudanese.
- The UNHCR Representative in Sudan, Axel Bisschop, conducted a mission to Cairo on August 30 and 31, to discuss coordination between the UNHCR Egypt and Sudan operations and the complex humanitarian situation in Wadi Halfa, where UNHCR has recently established an office to support forcibly displaced people, including those awaiting entry into Egypt and those who have returned. UNHCR is working to enhance cross-border coordination to address the growing needs in Wadi Halfa. Mr Bisschop also addressed a Sudan inter-agency meeting including diplomatic representatives from the USA, EU, and the embassies of Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, among others.
- As part of its strategy to empower local organizations and enhance livelihood opportunities for refugees and their hosts in southern Egypt, UNHCR delivered electronic and kitchen appliances, sewing machines, and other materials to eight community development associations on 26 and 30 August. The local organizations have been providing support to people arriving from Sudan since the conflict began on 15 April, offering food and shelter in Aswan and Karkar, a small town located some 30 km from Aswan. UNHCR has now agreed to provide each association with material assistance to address the needs of the new arrivals. The donated materials, which include seven laptops, seven fridges, five washing machines, four sewing machines, and three tool sharpening machines, will enable both refugees and the host community to improve their livelihoods, while also promoting the local integration of new arrivals from Sudan.
- Egypt has established measures to reduce traffic congestion at the Argeen and Qustol border crossings which has significantly relieved pressures. A queueing system in Abu Simbel and Aswan has reduced the length of tailbacks in Qustol from 15 km to 2km, and in Argeen ed from 22km to 15km over the past two weeks.


Protection

UNHCR Egypt conducted a live Facebook video on 27 August reaching some 90,000 users and viewed more than 37,000 times to respond to requests from newly arrived Sudanese on registration. The video was streamed on UNHCR Egypt's Communication with Communities Facebook channels, which collectively count more than 200,000 followers. In the live broadcast, UNHCR staff answered refugees' questions on how to register and what to bring to their registration interviews and reminded viewers of UNHCR's integrity principles and how to report fraud, stating that all UNHCR services are free. It further stated the importance of not sharing personal information with unauthorized individuals or untrusted resources.




Yazen Alsaqaheen, UNHCR Registration Associate, provides information to a Sudanese family about the registration process in Cairo. ©UNHCR/Jaime Gimenez


The Inter Sector Working Group (ISWG) in Egypt has identified as a priority the need to provide mental health and psychosocial support to children who have experienced the trauma of conflict and displacement after fleeing Sudan. The group advocates for the establishment of appropriate care arrangements, specialized services and Best Interest Procedures for children at risk, particularly unaccompanied children; adequate support and access to information for children held in detention; and comprehensive case management, alternative care options, psychosocial support, and cash assistance to address their unique needs.

For the second consecutive month, in August, the UNHCR Egypt Help website received the highest number of visits among operations in the Middle East and North Africa region and ranked fourth globally. In August, the website received over 60,000 visits and more than 123,000 page views. This represents a 41% increase in page views compared to April, when the Sudan crisis began. The UNHCR Egypt Help website, available in the six main languages used by refugees in the country (Arabic, English, Somali, Amharic, Oromo and Tigrinya), is a key channel for providing information to the displaced population.

In addition to the new arrivals from Sudan, many Sudanese who used to live in Egypt mainly for economic reasons and may never have registered as refugees now face issues renewing their residencies. At the same time, they cannot go back to Sudan due to fear of persecution and since they would in this case no longer be allowed to re-enter into Egypt. They thus risk becoming *sur-place* refugees. Many of them therefore are expected to register with UNHCR to be able to continue legally staying in Egypt.


Inter-Agency Coordination
Egypt planned response (May-December 2023):

350,000
 Sudanese
 refugees


8,000
 Third country
 nationals


28.2 M
 UNHCR Egypt
 Funding requirement

A revision of the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) has been conducted in the last weeks, to extend the plan until the end of 2023 and Egypt's overall RRP requirements increased by around 10% to USD 125.5 million. UNHCR Egypt's revised requirements include an additional 3 million for Registration and Winter Cash Assistance. The Egypt chapter of the Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) remains only [27 per cent funded as of today](#). On 21 September, UNHCR will convene a workshop to plan the RRP 2024 together with the government, donors, UN agencies and partners. While this update focuses on UNHCR's activities, a [separate RRP update](#) provides details on the holistic inter-agency and inter-sector response.

Registration

In August 2023, there was almost a fivefold increase in overall registration capacity compared to pre-crisis output. In August, 21,756 individuals were newly registered, including 17,268 newly arrived refugees and asylum-seekers. The rest included Sudanese already in Egypt prior to the Sudan crisis. In August, there was a 130% increase in the number of newly arrived persons registered compared to July and UNHCR issued 21,687 appointments to 47,057 individuals, including 23,203 new arrivals from Sudan. To respond to the increased demands, 80 new cameras for biometric enrolment and 90,000 new UNHCR cards were procured.

As of 3 September, UNHCR had provided pre-registration appointments to 72,975 newly arrived individuals (34,847 households), including 45,043 individuals (21,967 households) have now registered. The majority are Sudanese nationals (91%), while the top three third-country nationals registered are South Sudanese (4%), Eritrean (3%) and Syrian (1%). Most Sudanese (89%) originate from Khartoum, while more than 4% are from Darfur region. In terms of documentation, 58% 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. Between 12 August and 2 September, the number of recently arrived individuals fleeing the conflict in Sudan who received UNHCR cash assistance increased by 157%. The total number of assisted individuals now stands at 27,780, compared to 10,823 at the beginning of August. Age and gender trends remain consistent, with most assessed families being female headed (72%).

UNHCR provides emergency cash assistance to new arrival 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 the unregistered Sudanese. Registered families and unregistered families in possession of a passport currently receive assistance through the Egypt Post Office. Those who are not registered and without a valid passport receive their assistance via prepaid cards.

Health

In the context of the Sudan crisis, UNHCR is working to ensure access for new arrivals to the public health system by expanding existing programs to accommodate new arrivals, including by introducing new activities in Aswan. UNHCR is also supporting the Ministry of Health with key medical equipment to strengthen its capacity to deal with the increased number of people in need. The number of persons receiving subsidized medication with UNHCR support was more than 7,600, while the number of people receiving hospital care was close to 3,700, according to the last quarterly figures issued at the end of June.



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 smart phones, 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. The overall Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) involves five countries and, following the recent budget increase, is currently funded at 20%.



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

DONATE NOW

CONTACT: UNHCR Public Information and External Relations Unit – arecap@unhcr.org

LINKS: [UNHCR Global Focus](#) | [UNHCR Egypt Website](#) | [UNHCR Sudan Emergency Website](#) | [UNHCR Egypt Twitter \(@UNHCREgypt\)](#)