UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Libya Operational Update

31 August 2024

66,879

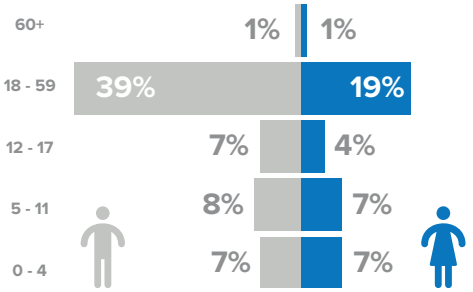
refugees registered with UNHCR in Tripoli.

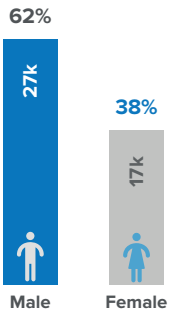
65% are Sudanese refugees
15% are Syrian refugees
12% are Eritrean refugees
8% other refugees[2]

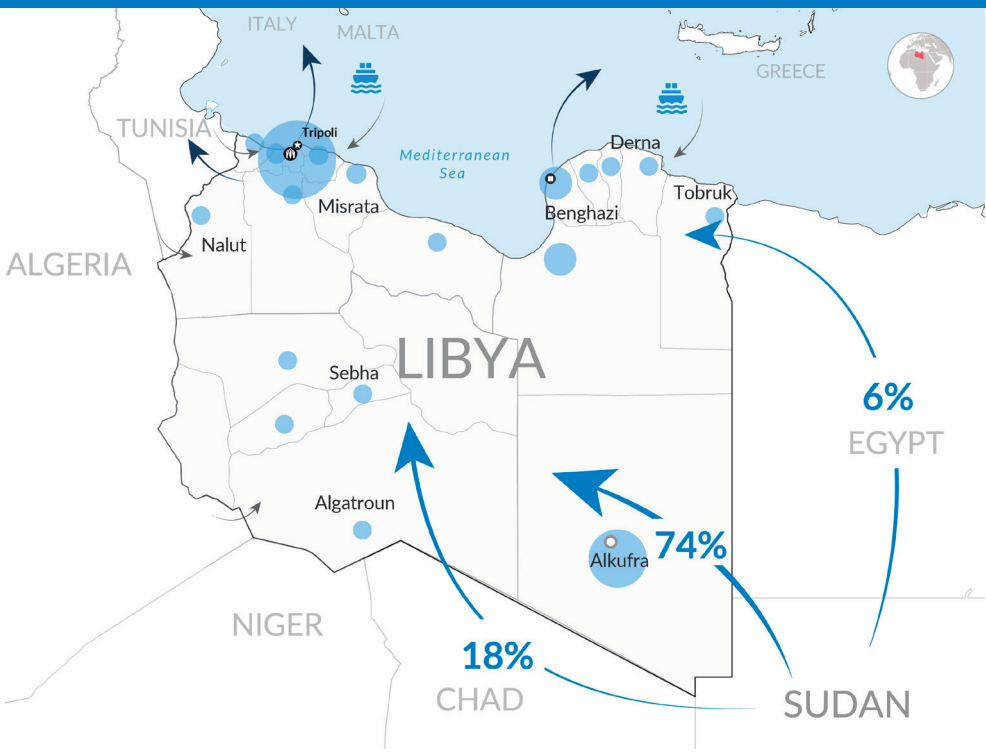
Sudanese Refugees

43,553

Sudanese registered with UNHCR Libya, including those who arrived before the onset of the crisis.







Office of Chief of Mission
National Capital
Field Office
UNHCR Presence
Administrative Boundaries
Sudanese Population
Arrival of Sudanese
Onward Movment of Sudanese
Rescue at Sea / Interception by Libyan Coast Guard
Expulsion of Sudanese by Tunisian authuroties

1. The arrival trends of Sudanese refugees is based on surveys with 5,500 Sudanese refugee households.
2. UNHCR registers refugees from 9 nationalities: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Yemen

HIGHLIGHTS

The southern border region of Alkufra, remains a key reception and transit area for Sudanese refugees. At least 7,500 recently arrived Sudanese refugees were impacted by flooding in Alkufra on 11 August according to refugee representatives. Many had to take temporary shelter in schools, with their few belongings damaged by the floodwaters.

Ongoing management disputes within the Central Bank of Libya (CBL) has raised concerns. Unresolved, the situation could significantly hamper humanitarian operations, particularly cash-based interventions.

On 27 August 2024, in light of the rapidly growing needs, UNHCR announced the scaling up of emergency aid, with a focus on emergency response and protection services in Alkufra and other areas with refugee's concentration. This includes deploying additional staff, coordinating with local and international partners, and enhancing the delivery of water, core relief items such as blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets and hygiene kits, and plastic sheeting for emergency shelter.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

UNHCR has been able to further expand its footprint in Alkufra following the first inter-agency visit and a Head of Agency visit there in July. From 5 to 10 August, UNHCR deployed a Multi-Functional Team to Alkufra to assess potential areas of intervention, including in **protection, health, and shelter**. On 19 August, two UNHCR national staff were sent to Alkufra to establish a more permanent presence to scale-up the response and to coordinate with authorities and partners.

UNHCR is further expanding partnerships with CESVI, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Intersos and national partners Libyan Red Crescent and Libaid, to bolster the humanitarian response for Sudanese refugees, both in Tripoli and the East. UNHCR is sending surge capacity to Benghazi, and the team on the ground, including protection, health, shelter, programme, and administration, provide continuous mission support to the team in Alkufra.

An airlift was conducted on **19 August from Benghazi to Ghat** in response to floods that hit south-west Libya and caused the displacement of more than 7,000 people according to IOM, including 4,346 internally displaced persons. The items dispatched were full non-food items sets for 300 families, including 1,500 blankets, 1,500 mattresses, 300 solar lamps, 600 male and female hygiene kits, 300 plastic sheets, 300 kitchen sets, and 300 jerrycans.

On 29 August, UNHCR's Chief of Mission (CoM), Aseer Al-Madaien and Assistant Chief of Mission for Protection, Edina Slipicevic-Dziho conducted a visit to Benghazi. They met with partners Libyan Red Crescent (LRC) and LibAid, as well as local authorities to discuss the scale-up of activities UNHCR and partners are planning to respond to the growing needs of Sudanese refugees in Alkufra, Benghazi and other areas in the east.

PROTECTION

UNHCR continues to actively assess and address the protection needs of newly arrived Sudanese refugees, having reached over 30,000 refugees since the conflict began. Since the beginning of 2024, our comprehensive approach included in-depth protection needs assessments for over 6,000 refugees, protection surveys for more than 14,000, and 97 house visits in Tripoli reaching 1,700 refugees. We also provided phone counselling to 9,000 newly arrived refugees in the east, and the Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) call centre managed 29,000 calls from refugees. Multisectoral needs assessments have been carried out to pinpoint immediate protection and humanitarian needs in Alkufra.

UNHCR has been providing emergency shelter assistance and core relief items to Sudanese refugees arriving in Alkufra so that they have a place to sleep and can attend to their basic needs.

UNHCR/Mohammed Aqeelah

New arrivals

The influx of Sudanese refugees persists amid ongoing conflict in various regions of Sudan. In the first half of August 2024, the daily average of new arrivals was approximately 350 individuals, including around 50-60 households (HHs) and the remainder as individuals without family members. However, according to the refugee committee in Alkufra, this number decreased to between 100 and 200 individuals in the latter half of the month due to a fuel shortage, which has impacted the region, hindered transportation and left approximately 700-800 families stranded in the triangle area inside Sudan.

Onward movements

Onward movements by people in mixed movement flows continue, both by land to Tunisia and by sea to Italy. In 2024, the overall number of sea arrivals in Italy has declined, with 43,269 reported between January and August, compared to 157,000 arrivals during 2023, primarily from Libya and Tunisia.

Protection response

In Tripoli, at least 25 Sudanese refugees with urgent needs are identified daily at the protection desk in UNHCR's registration centre, and receive assistance based on individual necessities, including cash, medical care, psychosocial support, food, water, clothing, core relief items, and care arrangements. Over 6,000 refugees have received specialize case management, including psychosocial assistance, support for survivors of gender-based violence, child protection services, aid for people with specific needs, and multi-purpose cash assistance.

UNHCR has conducted 726 Best Interest Assessments to assess and prioritize the needs of vulnerable children, including unaccompanied children and those separated from their families. Following assessment, these children are referred to temporary care arrangements. Core relief items or cash assistance are also provided to the family who is caring for the children.

Since April 2023, UNHCR has registered 24,346 Sudanese refugees in Tripoli, totalling 43,553 Sudanese refugees registered, including those who arrived before the onset of the war in Sudan. This registration enables access to essential services, including health care, core relief items, and protection needs assessments, protection services, as well as the identification of the most-at-risk cases for specific support and durable solutions.

In August, 58 Sudanese refugees departed with UNHCR's support through durable solutions. This brings the total number of Sudanese refugees to 862 who have departed through resettlement, complementary pathways, evacuations via the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) to Rwanda, and the Humanitarian Corridors to Italy since April 2023.

FIELD OPERATIONS

UNHCR is supporting local public services through Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), aimed at rehabilitating infrastructure and enhancing essential services in health, education, public spaces, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities. In August, UNHCR, in partnership with ACTED, successfully completed several QIPs. Notably, the rehabilitation of a hospital in Shahat, which had been severely impacted by Storm Daniel in 2023, has restored its capacity to deliver critical health services. Additionally, a dental clinic in Tripoli was renovated to improve dental care for refugees and the local population. Two primary schools in Benghazi underwent significant upgrades, including the construction of additional classrooms, washrooms, and a cafeteria, alongside the provision of new school desks. These enhancements aim to alleviate overcrowding and improve the educational environment for both internally displaced and host community children, as well as Sudanese refugees.

HEALTH

UNHCR provides medical care to nearly 1,000 Sudanese refugees each month in Tripoli, totalling over 22,000 consultations since the conflict began. In August, UNHCR provided medicine and medical equipment to the General Hospital in Alkufra, including a generator, hospital beds, sterilization and laboratory equipment, ultrasound machines, and wheelchairs, with a capacity to reach 20,000 refugees and host communities. Critical medical supplies have also been dispatched to Shohadaa Alhawari Hospital, one of the main medical facilities in Alkufra, to alleviate the pressure on the main hospital, Atia Alkaseh.

So far, nearly 9,000 refugees in Alkufra have received mattresses, blankets, solar lamps, plastic sheets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, and hygiene kits for women and men by UNHCR and partners.
UNHCR/Saleh Najem

CASH-BASED INTERVENTION

Since the onset of the war, Sudanese refugees in Libya continue to face severe challenges, with limited access to essential services. In response, UNHCR is actively working to deliver urgent humanitarian aid, while adapting its support to address evolving needs. In August, the UNHCR Chief of Mission engaged in discussions with eastern Libyan authorities to assess the feasibility of delivering cash-based assistance to Sudanese refugees. While negotiations with financial service providers, including Tifany and MoneyGram, are underway, the cash modality remains hindered by logistical and operational challenges. Nonetheless, UNHCR is committed to finding appropriate solutions to ensure that refugees receive the support they urgently need.

SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS

In response to the floods, on 13 August, with LibAid's support, UNHCR airlifted over 5,000 relief items from Benghazi to Alkufra. This was the second airlift by UNHCR this year, following an earlier delivery of medical equipment and vital supplies for Sudanese refugees in Alkufra. So far, nearly 9,000 refugees in Alkufra have received mattresses, blankets, solar lamps, plastic sheets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, and hygiene kits for women and men, including those refugees who were impacted by the floods on 13 August. 4,000 Sudanese refugees in other parts of the country, including Benghazi and Tripoli, received core relief items and hygiene items.

CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

Immediate Needs: UNHCR has identified the specific needs of refugees currently in Alkufra and other areas based on protection assessments and phone consultations with recently arrived refugee households. Some of the most immediate protection and humanitarian needs include lack of documentation, health, access to safe and dignified shelter, access to clean water and sanitation, access to livelihoods, improved services for survivors of gender-based violence, child protection, and protection from deportation for those who test positive for infectious diseases.

Challenges: Security concerns, limited access to certain areas, and resource constraints hinder the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The Central Bank of Libya (CBL) plays a critical role in the country's economic landscape, influencing the availability of funds for public services, including humanitarian assistance.

PARTNERSHIPS

UNHCR is expanding its partnerships to bolster support for Sudanese refugees in Libya. Partner CESVI will enhance case management to assess and respond to cases of child protection and gender-based violence. NRC will address the increased multipurpose cash needs in Tripoli, while INTERSOS expands legal awareness services. Additionally, partnerships with LibAid and the Libyan Red Crescent (LRC) are expanded to intensify efforts to meet the rising demand for core relief items in Alkufra.

UNHCR has been expanding its partnerships to respond to the growing needs of Sudanese refugees
UNHCR/Saleh Najem

COORDINATION

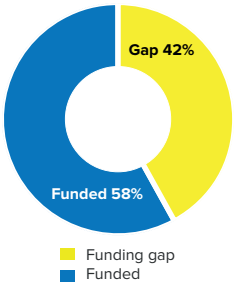
UNHCR coordinates the Inter-Agency Response for the Libyan portion of the Regional Refugee Response Plan. The response is coordinated through an inter-agency task force structure, including seven thematic task forces (Protection, Shelter & NFI, Food Security, WASH, Health & Nutrition, Education, and Access). An Information Management (IM) Task Force supports data collection and management.

FUNDING INFORMATION

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

USD 67.5 million

UNHCR requested for the operation in Libya, including the Sudan refugee response



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