

Egypt

October 2023

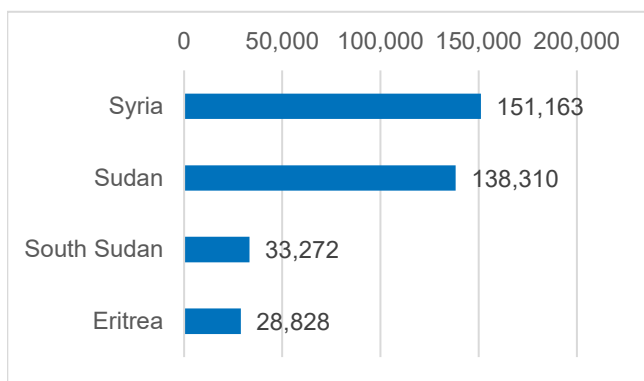
Egypt hosts some 390,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers from 59 countries. Syrians remain the largest group. Most refugees live in urban areas of Cairo and North Coast.

UNHCR conducts Refugee Status Determination on behalf of the Government and facilitates access to protection, basic needs, and essential services, such as health and education.

317,230 people forced to flee the Sudan crisis have entered Egypt since mid-April. UNHCR is scaling up the delivery of cash assistance and registration to address the most urgent needs of the most vulnerable.

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN EGYPT *REGISTERED WITH UNHCR, AS OF 15 OCTOBER

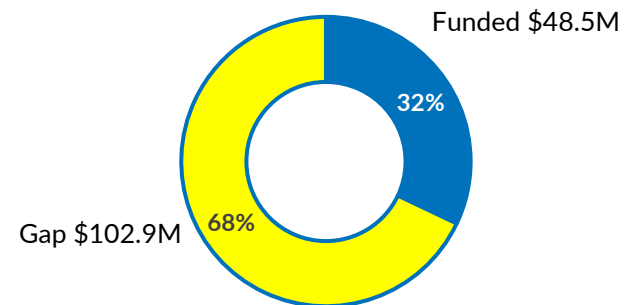
Top-4 Countries of Origin



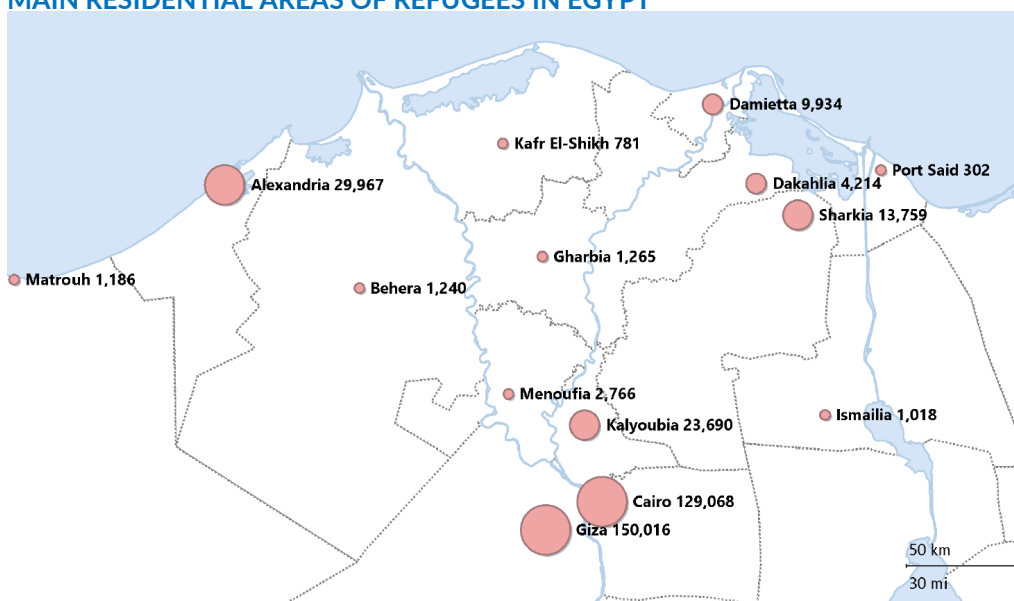
FUNDING (AS OF 4 OCTOBER)

USD 151.4 million

requested for the Egypt Operation



MAIN RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF REFUGEES IN EGYPT



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

60 International Staff
349 National Staff

Offices:

1 Country office in Cairo
1 Reception centre in Giza
1 RSD/RST building in Giza
1 Field office in Alexandria

Context

Historically, Egypt has welcomed people forced to flee their homes. In recent years, these have included tens of thousands of refugees from Syria, Sudan, and South Sudan. Since the onset of the conflict in Sudan in April 2023, Egypt has been a primary refuge for mainly Sudanese women and children seeking safety.

UNHCR has been operational in Egypt since 1954 after the Government of Egypt and UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Since then, UNHCR provides protection services including all aspects of registration, documentation, refugee status determination and resettlement to those who are forcibly displaced. The UNHCR operation in Egypt is the world's largest in terms of refugee status determination (RSD).

UNHCR works through ten partners in Greater Cairo, North Coast and Aswan: CARE Egypt, Caritas, Catholic Relief Service, Don Bosco, Egyptian Foundation for Refugee Rights, Egyptian Red Crescent, Plan International, All Saints/ Refuge Egypt, Save the Children, and Terre des Hommes.



Rauth and her three children are among the 73,000 people who have been registered by UNHCR Egypt after fleeing conflict in Sudan. ©UNHCR/Jaime Gimenez

Main Activities

Protection

- **Reception, counselling and legal assistance**

UNHCR Egypt receives between one and two thousand refugees at its offices every working day. One of the first points of contact with UNHCR are the reception areas in Greater Cairo and Alexandria. There, protection staff counsel refugees and asylum-seekers entering the premises on a walk-in basis.

Apart from the reception areas in UNHCR offices, refugees have several other access avenues to UNHCR including its in-house telephone Infoline in Cairo and Alexandria. Infoline operators provide information-sharing and counselling and schedule registration appointments for asylum-seekers and refugees in Egypt from Sunday to Thursday in seven languages (Arabic, Tigrinya, Amharic, French, Oromo, English and Somali). Two-way communication also takes place through home visits, refugee outreach volunteers, focus group discussions, and our social media platforms which are run in six languages.

Furthermore, refugees and asylum-seekers have access to legal remedies and representation through lawyers of NGO partners.

Community-based protection (CBP)

UNHCR and partners provide targeted support to persons with specific needs through individual case management, community-based psychosocial support, and emergency response. UNHCR also organizes outreach meetings with refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as community dialogue, focus group discussions, and awareness-raising on the services provided by UNHCR and our partners. The aim of these activities is to promote social cohesion and peaceful coexistence among refugees and host communities.

▪ CBP – Communication with Communities

UNHCR maintains an active outreach programme for Communication with Communities (CwC), providing refugees and asylum-seekers with information about UNHCR and partners services. UNHCR uses different communication channels, including social media, to reach the persons forced to flee and capture their feedback. This includes the [Help website](#), where UNHCR shares vital information for refugees in the country. 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. Egypt's Help website was selected to receive a sponsorship from Google in September which will enhance the page's visibility in Google searches.

A confidential complaint and feedback mechanism is in place for refugees and asylum-seekers to report misconduct, including corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse by staff and NGO partners, as a key component of UNHCR's accountability to affected communities. Confidential reporting channels include email, physical complaint boxes and the UNHCR hotline.

▪ Child protection

UNHCR Child Protection (CP) programming focuses on children at risk of abuse, neglect, violence, and exploitation. Unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) remain one of the key vulnerable groups of refugee children. UNHCR conducts best-interest assessments and prioritizes protection and assistance to UASC and other children at-risk across all programmes through prevention and response activities and specialized services. In addition to direct CP service provision, UNHCR engages with national counterparts to advocate for inclusion of refugee children into national CP services. UNHCR is working with the Ministry of Social Solidarity to ensure that refugee children are considered in the draft national Alternative Care Law.

▪ Gender-based violence

In Egypt, UNHCR prevention activities encompass innovative multi-sectoral approaches including community-based activities, legal awareness sessions, women empowerment initiatives, and art therapy. UNHCR and partners provide tailored assistance and psychosocial support to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) and those who have experienced or witnessed conflict, violence or trauma.

Registration

As the Government of Egypt delegated to UNHCR the registration process with the 1954 MoU, registration of the population in need of international protection is a central activity of UNHCR. The crisis in Sudan has prompted UNHCR to significantly expand its registration capabilities, aiming to provide protection to as many individuals as possible who have arrived in Egypt. In addition to facilitating access to services, biometric registration allows refugees and asylum-seekers to regularize their stay in Egypt and obtain a renewable residence permit which grants them freedom of movement across the country.

Among the new arrivals, more than 107,000 newly arrived people from Sudan have approached UNHCR for registration in-person, through the Infoline or by internal and external referrals (from 15 April to 13 October 2023). Of the total, 68% (close to 73,000 persons) were prioritized and registered while the remaining ones have been issued registration appointments. Those who approached in person were provided registration appointment slips which are recognized by the government and provide protection from refoulement. UNHCR is enhancing Infoline and registration processes to accommodate the needs of new arrivals as well as the pre-existing community. UNHCR is also exploring online appointment issuance modalities to enhance accessibility. In response to the increasing numbers, UNHCR scaled up

its overall registration processing capacity by over 500 per cent, increasing staffing, carrying out registration over weekends, improving infrastructure, and expanding the Infoline as well as the communication channels.

Refugee Status Determination

UNHCR Egypt strategically utilizes Refugee Status Determination to maximize protection benefits for a large number of asylum-seekers while maintaining the integrity of the asylum system. In 2022, UNHCR Egypt finalized more than 11,000 RSD decisions extending the operation's status as the most productive RSD mandate operation globally. In 2023, priority processing will be given to applications deemed manifestly unfounded or clearly abusive, preserving the protection space in Egypt for genuine international protection applicants. UNHCR strives to finalize decisions on refugee status promptly, enabling individuals to make informed choices about their future, whether as refugees or through alternative avenues like the International Organization for Migration's Assisted Voluntary Return and Repatriation program.



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

Education

UNHCR advocates for enrolling refugees and asylum-seekers in public schools. Currently, Syrian, Sudanese, South Sudanese and Yemeni nationals have access to the public system on par with Egyptians. In August 2023, the Ministry of Higher Education imposed a \$2,000 fee for first-time university registration for foreign students, including refugees, ending the previous equal treatment policy. Additionally, school registration delays occurred due to residency permit issues, affecting both new arrivals and existing refugees. Based on the needs identified by the GoE, UNHCR provides teacher training, supports the refurbishment of schools and supplies equipment, computers, furniture, and other necessities to assist the Egyptian facilities in absorbing the refugee population. Moreover, UNHCR provides education grants to contribute to school fees, school uniforms, books, stationery and transportation.

For the 2022/2023 academic year, UNHCR has provided education grants to more than 56,000 refugees and asylum-seeker students (50% female) in public, community and private schools. Additionally, enhanced education grants are provided to around 1,800 unaccompanied and separated children and some 600 children with disabilities.

Durable solutions

Due to its location, Egypt is part of the Syrian and Central Mediterranean resettlement initiatives. In 2022, 2,834 refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration to Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and US, while 4,101 refugee departed for resettlement countries.

As of 30 September 2023, UNHCR Egypt successfully identified, processed, and submitted 2,719 refugees for resettlement to Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, UK, and USA. Additionally, some 2,506 individuals departed for resettlement, including also 1,045 individuals to the US.

UNHCR Egypt prioritizes solutions through legal admission to third countries, including Complementary Pathways. In 2022, 891 refugees and asylum seekers accessed such pathways, including humanitarian visas, family reunification, and private sponsorship. Partnership with Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) was established to explore labour mobility opportunities to third countries.

Health

UNHCR supports national efforts to improve the quality of health services to refugees and asylum-seekers and the host population in areas with high concentrations of refugees. As of 3 October, UNHCR partner Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) had provided medical services to more than 27,000 refugees since the onset of the Sudan crisis. The services were provided at border crossings and included treatment for ailments related to the journey to Egypt (dehydration, heat stroke, insect bites, infection) and unattended chronic diseases (diabetes, heart failure). In severe cases ERC stabilized patients and referred them for care in hospitals in Abu Simbel or Aswan.

Livelihoods and economic inclusion

UNHCR helps refugees and asylum-seekers to support themselves and their families by offering them training and assisting them in finding a market for their skills and goods. Work in this area is guided by several core principles, mainly protection, diversity, equity, access and sustainability. UNHCR also works to promote economic inclusion of those forced to flee their homes by advocating for their right to work and building their livelihoods through market-oriented programs.



UNHCR provided local organizations in southern Egypt with sewing machines with the aim of strengthening livelihood opportunities for refugees and locals. ©UNHCR/Sebastian Herwig

Cash-based interventions

UNHCR delivers monthly unconditional cash grants to extremely vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers to provide protection and assistance and prevent refugees from resorting to harmful coping mechanisms. Furthermore, the influx of refugees and asylum-seekers after the onset of the Sudan conflict in mid-April led UNHCR to a reorientation of its cash assistance program to also include recently arrived both registered and unregistered individuals if they meet the eligibility criteria. Adapting to the new emergency context, UNHCR began delivering assistance in the southern part of the country through its temporarily based team in Aswan. As of 15 October 2023, some 41,759 new arrivals from Sudan have been assisted with emergency cash assistance. Cash is deemed the most efficient and dignified way to enable vulnerable refugees to cover their basic needs, while at the same time supporting and boosting local markets.

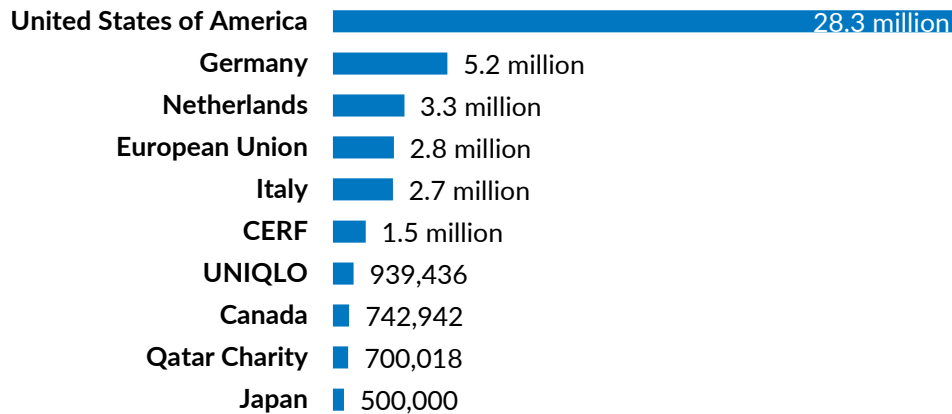
Inter-agency coordination

Following the onset of the crisis, in line with the Refugee Coordination Model, UNHCR led the development of a Regional Sudan Situation Refugee Response Plan (RRP), to coordinate the interagency response as well as associated advocacy and resource mobilization in the five countries most affected by the potential outflows of refugees from Sudan, including Egypt. On 21 September, UNHCR and the Government of Egypt hosted the 2024 joint planning workshop in Cairo on the Egypt Response Plan, a stand-alone appeal covering all refugee populations and host communities. The 2024 Egypt Response Plan will disaggregate targets and budgets to feed into the 2024 Syria 3RP and the Sudan RRP at the regional level. The event was attended by senior government officials, donors, the UN system, the World Bank, and INGO representatives. The participation of senior actors, including from the World Bank, with its focus on the Triple Nexus, was a resounding affirmation of recent UNHCR efforts to engage the international community, the government, civil society, but also IFIs. The workshop represented the opportunity to further build on the strong partnership between the government and the international community. As of 15 October, the Egypt chapter of the 2023 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) remains 35 per cent funded.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to the Egypt Operation, including the Sudan Situation, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD



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

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