

Egypt

January 2024

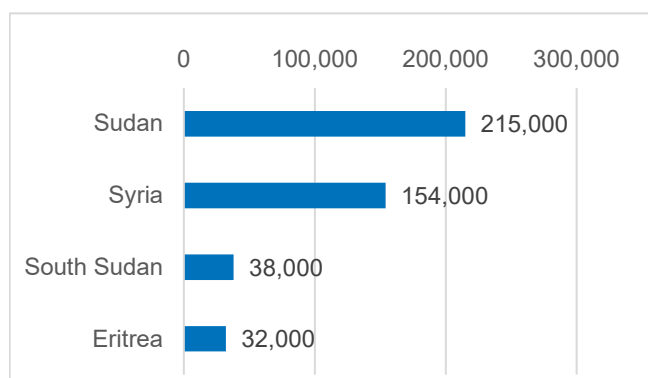
Egypt hosts 480,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers from 62 countries. Sudanese are now the largest group. Most refugees live in urban areas of Cairo and the North Coast.

UNHCR helps the Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) to deliver much-needed humanitarian aid to Gaza and supports medical evacuees in Egypt through the Ministry of Health.

Some 409,000 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 REGISTERED WITH UNHCR IN EGYPT, AS OF 15 JANUARY 2024

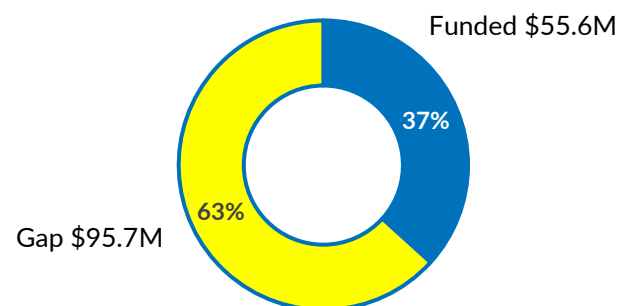
Top-4 Countries of Origin



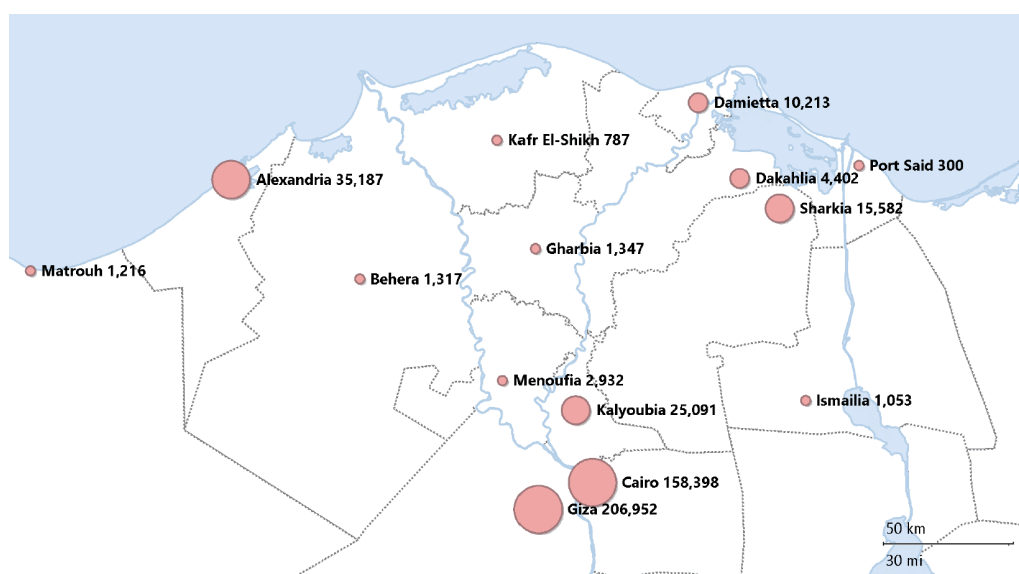
FUNDING (AS OF 15 DECEMBER 2023)

USD 151.4 million

requested for the Egypt Operation



MAIN RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF REFUGEES IN EGYPT



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

58 International Staff
 366 National Staff

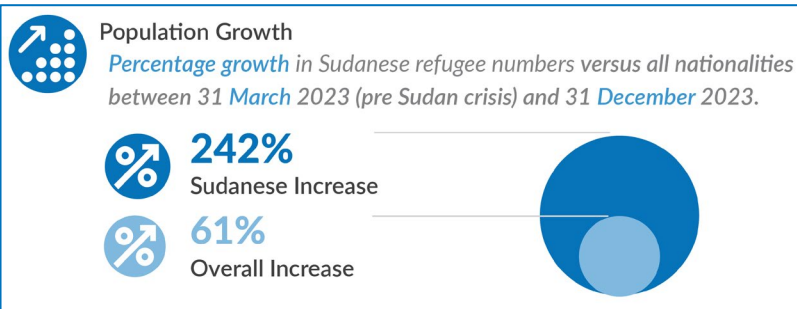
Offices:

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

Context

There are 480,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers in Egypt, a 64 percent increase compared to 2022 with major conflicts across its borders. Refugees in Egypt live in urban settings across the major cities, with most new arrivals coming from Khartoum in Sudan. We have seen a 242% increase in Sudanese registering as refugees since the start of the Sudan crisis in mid-April 2023, compared to a 61% increase of all registered refugee nationalities during the same time period.

Since the onset of the conflict in Sudan, Egypt has been a primary refuge for mainly Sudanese women and children seeking safety. In response to the Gaza situation, UNHCR has delivered water, warm clothes, blankets, jerry cans, and sleeping mats to Gaza through the ERC, and cash assistance to medical evacuees from Gaza into Egypt.



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, Aswan and North Sinai: CARE Egypt, Caritas, Catholic Relief Service, Don Bosco, Egyptian Foundation for Refugee Rights, the Egyptian Red Crescent, Plan International, All Saints/ Refuge Egypt, Save the Children, and Terre des Hommes.



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 recently expanded and revamped helpline – the “Infoline” – in Cairo and Alexandria to respond to the 170% surge in people seeking UNHCR’s assistance and protection since the outbreak of violence

in Sudan. Infoline operators provide information-sharing and counselling and schedule registration appointments for asylum-seekers and refugees in Egypt 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 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.



UNHCR staff provides information to a Sudanese refugee in Cairo.
 ©UNHCR/Jaime Gimenez

■ **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. 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 gender-based violence (GBV) 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 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 254,633 newly arrived people from Sudan have approached UNHCR for registration in-person, through the Infoline, or by internal and external referrals (from 15 April 2023 to 11 January 2024). Of the total, 56% (more than 143,000 people) were prioritized and registered while the remaining ones have been issued registration appointments. Those who approached in person were provided appointment slips which are recognized by the government. 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 has scaled up its overall registration processing since the start of the Sudan crisis by increasing staffing, carrying out registration over weekends, improving infrastructure, and expanding the Infoline as well as communication channels.

Refugee Status Determination

UNHCR conducts Refugee Status Determination (RSD) on behalf of the Government and facilitates access to protection, basic needs, and essential services, such as health and education. UNHCR Egypt strategically utilizes RSD to maximize protection benefits for many asylum-seekers while maintaining the integrity of the asylum system. In 2023, UNHCR Egypt finalized 12,600 RSD decisions extending the operation's status as the most productive RSD mandate operation globally. 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.

Durable solutions

Due to its location, Egypt is part of the Syrian and Central Mediterranean resettlement initiatives. In 2023, 3,247 refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration to Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, the UK and the USA, while 4,359 refugees departed for resettlement countries. UNHCR Egypt continues to prioritize Complementary Pathways as a means of a long-lasting solution for refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt. In 2023, 864 refugees and asylum seekers departed the country after accessing such pathways, including family reunification, labour mobility, education, and private sponsorship programs. Among this, three successfully selected students proceeded to complete their master's degrees at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, through an Education Pathways pilot project. Additionally, through UNHCR intervention, 15 households were referred to the global legal partners for legal assistance with lodging family reunification applications, while 117 individuals departed on family reunification.

Education

UNHCR advocates for enrolling refugees and asylum-seekers in public schools on the same footing as Egyptians. In 2023, UNHCR provided education cash grants to more than 73,000 children to support the enrolment of refugee students in public schools and refugee community learning centres and enable their access to safe transportation to school and buy needed stationery. Furthermore, 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.



Egyptian and Sudanese girls in Cairo learn about online security on tablets provided by UNHCR and the Vodafone Foundation. ©UNHCR/Lamis Soliman

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. In 2023, UNHCR partner Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) provided medical services to more than 32,000 refugees who had fled 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. Additionally, more than 4,500 people received primary health services, and more than 900 received hospital care in Alexandria, Cairo and Aswan in 2023.

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. 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. In 2023, UNHCR provided livelihoods support to 5,842 people. This support included guidance on the Egyptian labour market and matching employers with potential employees while ensuring minimum standards are met. In total, with the support provided, 477 individuals found a job after taking part in UNHCR programmes in 2023. Moreover, UNHCR supported 407 entrepreneurs with cash grants and mentoring to establish businesses. All these efforts helped refugees to navigate a challenging labour market which is characterized by a significant informal sector and chronic unemployment.



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 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 the south (Aswan). Since the onset of the Sudan conflict, UNHCR has assisted 54,521 people with emergency cash. Meanwhile, 70,715 people were assisted with the bimonthly Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) in December 2023, out of whom 16,216 were newly arrived people from Sudan. 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.

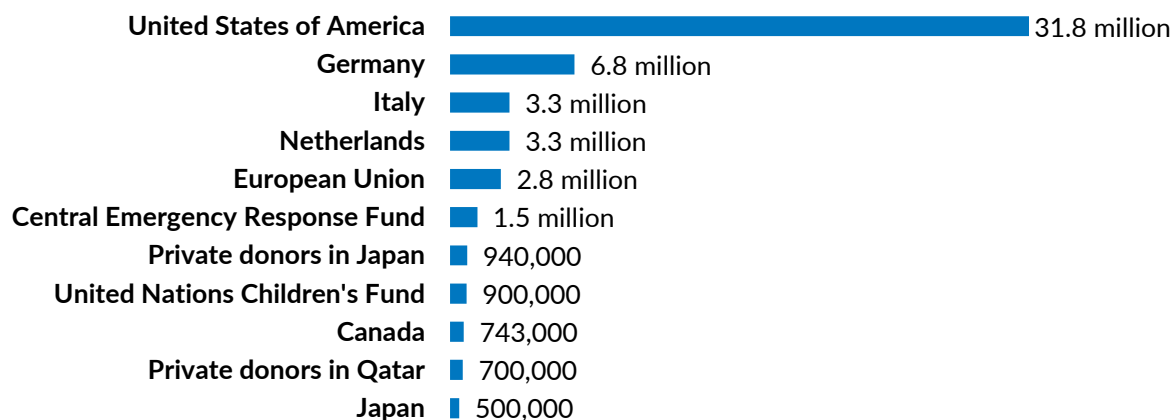
Inter-agency coordination

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 2023, 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 participation of senior government officials, donors, the UN system, the World Bank, and INGO representatives was a resounding affirmation of recent UNHCR efforts to engage the international community, the government, civil society, and also IFIs. The workshop represented the opportunity to further build on the strong partnership between the government and the international community. As of 15 January 2024, the Egypt chapter of the 2023 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) was 49 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 AS OF 15 DECEMBER 2023 | USD



Belgium
partner in development



In partnership with
Canada



European Union



Irish Aid
Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



From
the People of Japan



United Nations
CERF



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

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LINKS: UNHCR Global Focus | UNHCR Egypt Website | UNHCR Sudan Emergency Site | UNHCR Egypt Twitter | UNHCR Data Portal