

# Libya

## Operational Update

31 May 2025

In Tajoura, UNHCR and LibAid distribute mattresses, blankets, and hygiene kits to newly arrived Sudanese refugees. Over 1,200 people have been reached so far, with distributions ongoing.

📷 UNHCR/ Ziyad Alhamadi



**92,436**

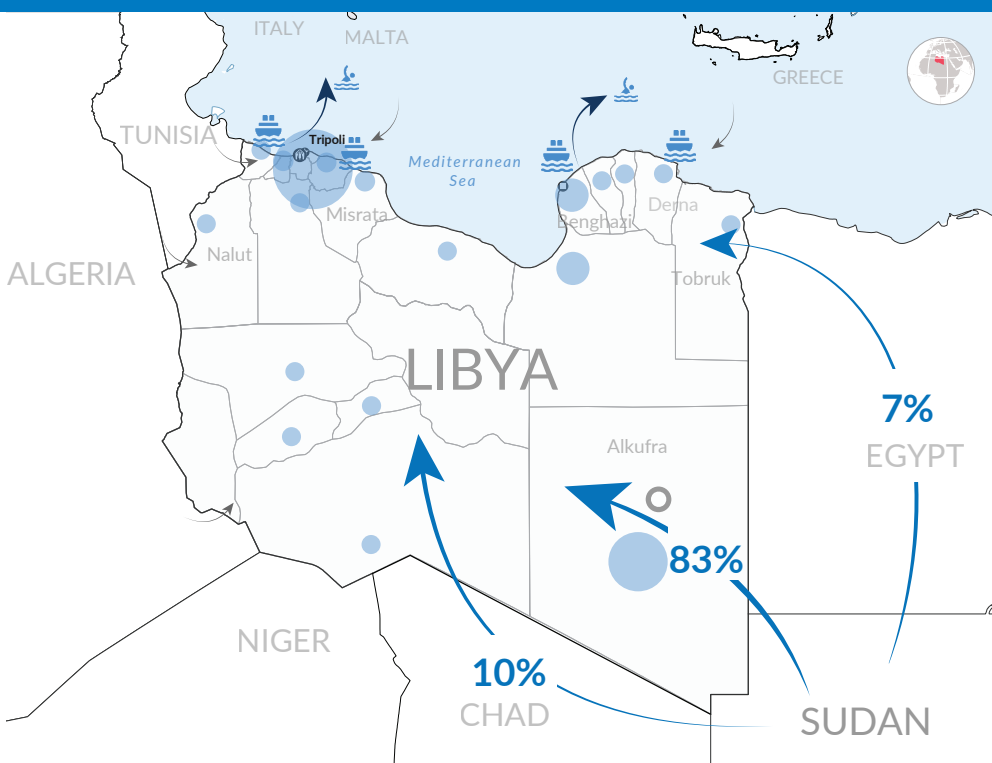
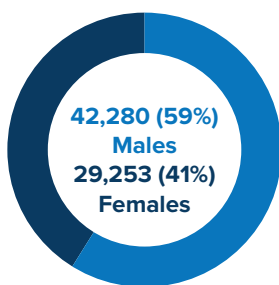
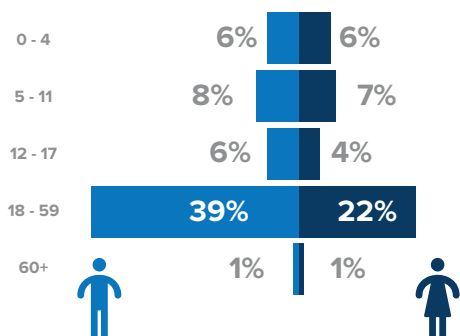
refugees registered with  
UNHCR in Tripoli.

**77%** are Sudanese refugees  
**10%** are Syrian refugees  
**7%** are Eritrean refugees  
**6%** other refugees<sup>2</sup>

### Sudanese Refugees

**71,533**

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



Country office



Field Office



National Capital



UNHCR Presence



Mantika Boundary



Sudanese Population



Arrival of Sudanese



Onward movement of Sudanese



Rescue at sea / Interception Expulsion



Expulsion

1. The arrival trends of Sudanese refugees are based on surveys conducted with Sudanese refugee households in 2025.  
2. UNHCR registers refugees from 9 nationalities: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Yemen.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Overall	Sudanese refugees	Indicator
92,436	71,533	Refugees registered at UNHCR's Registration Centre in Tripoli
4,351	3,132	Refugees who received tailored protection services
143		Refugees relocated from detention centres to the urban setting following UNHCR's advocacy
9,585	1,225	People rescued at sea
416	256	Refugees who departed Libya safely on durable solutions
36,426	27,735	Refugees and host communities who received core relief items and hygiene kits
6,938	4,191	Medical consultations provided (including in primary health in the urban settings, mental health, and at detention centres and disembarkation points)
2,047	1,561	Refugees who received cash or vouchers

### TRIPOLI CLASHES AND IMPACT ON OPERATIONS:

Due to clashes that erupted in Tripoli on 12 May, UNHCR's Registration office in Tripoli closed on 13 May and staff worked remotely. Despite access limitations, UNHCR maintained contact through online meetings with community mobilizers to discuss refugees' urgent needs and potential interventions. Community mobilizers have highlighted escalating protection risks driven by the security situation in Tripoli. Refugees and asylum-seekers faced heightened fears, movement restrictions, and limited access to basic services, including healthcare. As calm returned, UNHCR began a gradual return to its office on 25 May, with registration services resuming the following day.

### SITUATION OF SUDANESE REFUGEES IN ALKUFRA:

Eleven Sudanese refugees died of dehydration in Libya's southern desert after their vehicle broke down and they were stranded near Alkufra, the Director of the Libyan Medical Emergency Department [said on 22 May](#). Women and children were reportedly among the dead and at least fifteen others traveling with the group were rescued. "The survivors were almost about to die. They are severely dehydrated and exhibiting signs of distress and trauma under such circumstances" he said. UNHCR Libya issued a [statement](#) on the deaths, highlighting the need to protect those forced to flee and help end the conflict in Sudan.

On 27 May, over 500 Sudanese individuals departed from Alkufra to the Triangle border area and were reportedly received by Sudanese military and security personnel. Libyan authorities organized this first return in coordination with the Sudanese Community. The group had final destinations across Khartoum and other states. Libyan authorities have reportedly fully covered the transport cost and returnees were provided with free transportation, food, and water throughout the journey.



In Tajoura, Sudanese refugees share their concerns with UNHCR's community-based protection staff, who offer tailored support and refer urgent cases for further assistance.  UNHCR/ Ziyad Alhamadi



## PROTECTION

- It is estimated that over 313,000 Sudanese refugees have arrived in Libya following the outbreak of the war in Sudan. Most arrivals to Libya continue to be directly from Sudan, with 245,000 Sudanese estimated to have arrived in Libya through Alkufra alone. According to the Ministry of Health in Alkufra, over 164,000 health certificates were issued to Sudanese refugees. Despite these estimates, irregular entry points, vast remote borders with Chad, Egypt, and Sudan, and onward movements to coastal cities make it challenging to determine exact arrival numbers.
- Libya remains a key transit point for refugees and migrants. Increased maritime monitoring by the Libyan Coast Guard contributed to a rise in interceptions and rescues at sea. By end of May 2025, 9,585 people were intercepted or rescued at sea in 126 operations, compared to 6,835 in the same period of 2024. Departures from Tobruk (441 km east of Benghazi) have increased in recent months, with 2,181 individuals returned from sea so far this year—almost 40% of them in May alone. This marks a significant rise, as there had been only 435 returns recorded throughout all last year.
- Since the start of 2025, UNHCR and partners have conducted 104 visits to detention centres (DCs) to monitor the overall conditions and identify people who are in need of international protection as well as needs for humanitarian assistance. Since January, 4,289 detainees received non-food items (NFIs), and 1,105 medical consultations were provided in detention centres. These visits are part of UNHCR's commitment to address urgent humanitarian needs within detention facilities, where individuals often lack essential supplies and face harsh conditions. At the end of May, 4,004 individuals were detained, of whom 24% (965) are people in need of international protection. As a result of the security developments in Tripoli since mid-May, Tajoura remains the only operational DC in the Tripolia area. On 23 May, as part of a joint intervention with IOM, UNHCR staff distributed mattresses to 1,205 individuals at Tajoura DC.



## REGISTRATION

- By the end of May, UNHCR had registered 92,436 refugees (including 71,533 Sudanese refugees). Registration enables access to essential services, including health assistance, CRIs, and tailored protection support, which includes the identification of the most at-risk psychosocial aid cases, temporary care arrangements, and in some cases, durable solutions. With registration services halted between 13 and 25 May due to the security situation in Tripoli, the rate of new registrations dropped to 1,734 in May compared to 3,839 in April.



- Authorities in Alkufra continue to register Sudanese refugees and issue them with Security Registration Cards (SRCs) which allow people freedom of movement in the east/south of Libya and enable access to public services. While SRCs are issued free of charge, Sudanese refugees are charged 160 Libyan Dinars (LYD) for health certificates as part of the process.



## PROTECTION ASSESSMENTS

- UNHCR conducted protection surveys in May with 101 Sudanese refugee families to better understand and address refugee needs. These surveys provided insight into their journeys, family situations, and future aspirations. Of the Sudanese refugees surveyed, 88% fled directly from Sudan and 12% arrived through Chad. The journey to safety remains dangerous, with around half of refugees reporting protection incidents, including smuggling (13%), assault (28%), and robbery (3%). 50% of the Sudanese refugees surveyed were women.
- Access to education remains a significant challenge, particularly for children. 40% the refugees surveyed were children, and 70% of school-aged children have no access to school, primarily due to a lack of required documentation or financial barriers. 6% of those surveyed said they came to Tripoli to access services and/or livelihood opportunities. Similarly, access to healthcare is a challenge for 91% of refugees surveyed, mainly due to the costs of transportation and medical services. Since the start of 2025, UNHCR has conducted 1,672 protection surveys, reaching 4,180 refugees, including 4,097 Sudanese refugees.



## COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS

- To counter misleading information, two community consultation sessions were held online with 30 individuals (of whom 20 were Sudanese), including mobilizers and caregivers. There has been an increase in false information on social media, including posts about boats taking refugees out of Libya and fraudulent claims of UNHCR cash assistance through a registration link. UNHCR has responded to community inquiries, reiterating that all services and assistance provided by UNHCR, and partners are entirely free of charge. Targeted messages were developed to warn refugees and prevent the spread of this misinformation. **A false information alert** has been published on UNHCR Libya's Help Site in five different languages to ensure broad dissemination.
- A focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted with Sudanese women at the UNHCR main office in Tripoli to explore key protection concerns and obstacles to accessing basic services. Participants shared experiences of harassment, particularly in public transportation, workplace discrimination, unpaid labour, and abuse at the community level. Many women restrict their movements due to insecurity and fears of arrest. High rent costs and discrimination are causing housing challenges. Unaffordable fees, lack of documentation, bullying, and transportation difficulties hinder education access. Economic hardship often forces children into labour. Health concerns include poor sanitation and limited access to healthcare due to discrimination and high costs. Participants previously relied on humanitarian assistance and services much of which are considerably reduced or no longer available following the suspension of many international organizations in mid-March. Following FGD sessions, participants are referred to specialized services and assistance (including NFI distributions) depending on availability. In light of the current suspension of partner INGOs, providing sufficient support has been challenging. Nonetheless, UNHCR continues to monitor trends and support when possible.



## TAILORED PROTECTION ASSISTANCE

- UNHCR's protection desk at the Registration Centre remains a vital support mechanism for some of the most at-risk refugees. In May, 120 refugees, including 102 Sudanese, received assistance in the form of medical care, psychosocial support, clothing, core relief items, and specialized care arrangements.



## CHILD PROTECTION

- Since January 2025, 323 Best Interest Assessments (BIAs) have been conducted. In May, 46 BIAs were conducted for vulnerable refugee children. Depending on their needs, children were referred to specialized services such as temporary care, while families caring for them received core relief items or cash assistance. UNHCR works with 48 caregivers who are currently hosting 136 individuals under alternative care arrangements.
- Since the suspension of INGO activities in Tripoli, the Community Day Centre (CDC) managed by CESVI has been closed. Therefore, refugee children depend on the child-friendly space (CFS) at UNHCR's Registration Centre to be able to play and have a short reprieve from the trauma of displacement. In May, 243 refugee children participated in activities fostering a safe and supportive environment. So far this year, over 4,000 children have benefited from such structured and unstructured sessions at UNHCR's Registration Centre and, previously, at the CDC. 283 children were assessed for educational needs through surveys conducted in May, and they were referred to UNICEF for assistance and potential placement in Bayti Centres where they can receive educational support. Over 90% of these children were Sudanese.



## DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- A key priority for UNHCR is securing durable solutions for vulnerable refugees, including evacuation, resettlement, and complementary pathways. In May 2025, 17 Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers departed on resettlement. So far this year, 416 refugees have been provided with durable solutions, including evacuation (272 individuals), resettlement (139 individuals), and complementary pathways (5 individuals).

## FIELD OPERATIONS



## HEALTH ASSISTANCE

- Targeted health support for vulnerable refugees remains ongoing. This month, in Alkufra [four Sudanese refugees with disabilities received wheelchairs, significantly improving their mobility and quality of life](#), bringing the total in the East to 26 individuals since the beginning of the year.



**We were forced to flee after a missile hit our home and armed groups broke in and stole everything we owned.**

Samia, a mother who fled Sudan to Alkufra Libya with her husband and six children: three of them living with disabilities. With Sudan's health system collapsed and their home under attack, Samia left in search of safety and medical care for her 3 children with disabilities. In Alkufra, UNHCR provided three wheelchairs for the children, to ease their movement and support their rehabilitation.

 UNHCR/ Emad Albrieeki





“

I fled to protect myself and my family. We had very little, but the Libyan people and fellow refugees helped us along the way. Now I'm doing everything I can for my children.

Mokhtar, 37, fled the war in Sudan in early 2024 and journeyed with his family across the border to Libya in search of safety. After a difficult trip through Alkufra, he is now in Tripoli with his wife and four children. With support from UNHCR, Mokhtar is doing everything he can to provide for his family and rebuild their lives.

📷 UNHCR/ Ziyad Alhamadi



## Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

- In May, UNHCR provided core relief items to over 6,000 refugees, asylum-seekers, and host community members across Libya, including 4,300 Sudanese refugees, bringing the total number of individuals that have received this type of assistance to over 36,000. On 8 May, through national partner LibAid, UNHCR reached 366 Sudanese refugee families in [Al-Marj](#) with assistance including hygiene kits, kitchen sets, jerrycans, solar lamps, blankets, and mattresses. On 20 May, UNHCR and the Libyan Red Crescent (LRC) provided essential relief item, including mattresses, blankets, hygiene kits, and kitchen sets to support 200 Sudanese refugee families in [Alkufra](#). On 26 May, UNHCR began a distribution to Sudanese refugees in [Tajoura](#). The distribution targeted 827 refugee families, and items include blankets, mattresses, tarpaulins, hygiene kits, solar lamps, and jerrycans. On 29 May, UNHCR distributed core relief items to 29 Sudanese refugee families in [Misrata](#), and on 31 May, it assisted 208 refugee families in [Alkufra](#). These distributions offer essential support to families living in difficult conditions. By addressing basic needs, these items help preserve dignity and enable displaced families to adapt to harsh environments as they work to rebuild their lives.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES

### A new beginning

For 13 years, Rahma fled war, loss, and danger with her 5 children. Keeping the family together & safe was her priority.

Today Rahma & her children are able to dream beyond displacement.


On **International Day Of Families**, [read full story: here.](#)



📷 UNHCR/ Eric Didier Karinganire





On 11 May, at its Registration Centre, UNHCR received Tabari Dossett, the PRM Humanitarian Coordinator for North Africa, and Leonard Payne of the Libya External Office. The delegation met with the UNHCR Chief of Mission to discuss UNHCR's services, overall situation following the suspension of INGOs work, and funding needs. The delegation also attended Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with female refugees to understand the challenges they face, and their protection needs.  UNHCR/ Ziyad Alhamadi



## Coordination

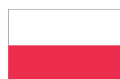
- UNHCR leads the Inter-Agency Response for the Regional Refugee Response Plan. In Libya, the response is coordinated through an Inter-Agency task force structure, including eight thematic task forces (Protection, Shelter & NFI, Food Security, WASH, Health & Nutrition, Education, Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion, and Access). An Information Management (IM) Task Force supports data collection and management.
- On 1 May, **UNHCR welcomed representatives from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for migration-related programming to its office in Tripoli, Libya.** Following a visit to the Registration Centre, discussions focused on enhancing protection efforts, improving registration processes, and identifying durable solutions. The Netherlands remains a key partner in delivering life-saving support to refugees, asylum-seekers, and host communities.
- On 5 May, **UNHCR and its national partner, LibAid, accompanied the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Libya (DSRSG/RC/HC) Aeneas Chuma on a visit to the Al-Sella shelter in Ajdabiya** (165 km southeast of Benghazi). Established by authorities in late 2024, the shelter hosts approximately 130 Sudanese refugee families (around 700 individuals). UNHCR has assessed living conditions at the site and provided non-food items to support the essential needs of the refugees.

## UNHCR PARTNERS



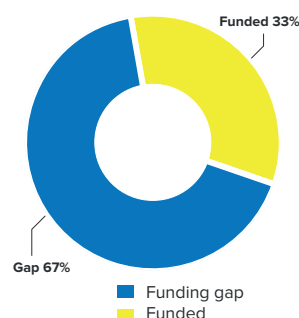
## FUNDING INFORMATION

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 61.5 million

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



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**LINKS:** [UNHCR Global Focus](#) | [UNHCR Libya Facebook](#) | [UNHCR Libya X](#) | [UNHCR Data Portal](#) | [UNHCR Libya website](#)