



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

# Libya

## Operational Update

31 March 2026



In Alkufra, Ramadan is served with solidarity. Hundreds of Sudanese break their fast each night thanks to a small kitchen and a small sense of solidarity. Every evening, Maiedat Alrahman initiative prepares meals helping 250 refugees who fled the war in Sudan gather for Iftar. Read more: [here](#)



**110,908**

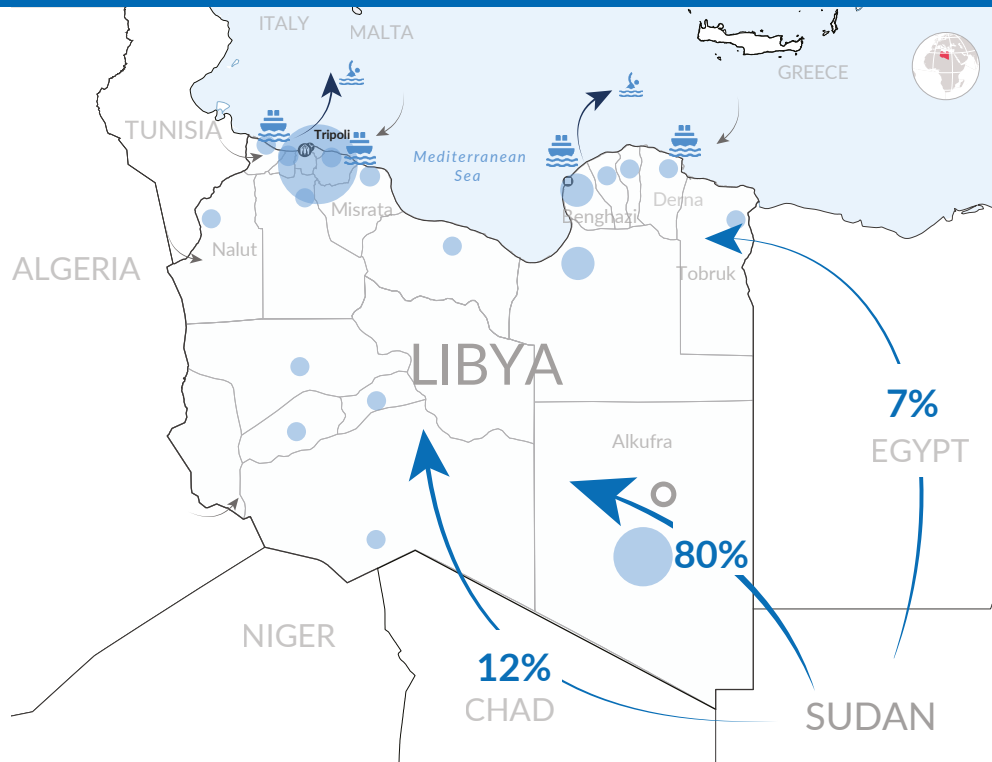
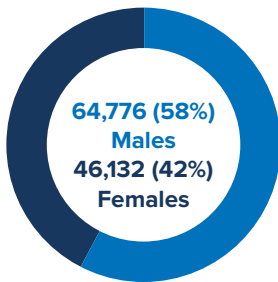
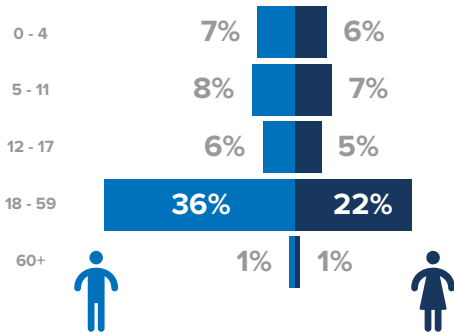
registered with UNHCR in Tripoli.

82% are Sudanese refugees  
8% are Eritrean refugees  
4% are Syrian refugees  
6% other refugees<sup>2</sup>

### Sudanese Refugees

**91,494**

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

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

# HIGHLIGHTS

## Key numbers\*

Overall	Sudanese refugees	Assistance
110,908	91,494	Refugees registered at UNHCR's registration centre in Tripoli
13,387	8,184	Refugees who received protection services
83	-	Refugees relocated from detention centres to the urban setting following UNHCR's advocacy
3,274	284	People rescued at sea
566	207	Refugees who departed Libya safely on durable solutions
20,009	12,047	Refugees and host communities who received core relief items and hygiene kits (including in urban settings, detention centres and disembarkation points)
1,493	1,224	Medical consultations provided (including in primary health in the urban settings, detention centres and disembarkation points) and cases assisted through the medical hotline
376	228	Refugees who received cash or vouchers

\* Numbers may change following verification

## OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

By the end of March, UNHCR estimates that 559,920 Sudanese refugees have fled to Libya since 2023. Movement towards Alkufra continues primarily via the Chad route, however Sudanese communities say that arrivals remain constrained by high travel costs, security risks, limited transport options, and route closures between Chad and Sudan.

On 5 March, the Department for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM) Desert Patrol Unit **intercepted** 36 Sudanese refugees (23 men, 11 women, and 2 children) west of Tazirbu in south-eastern Libya. They were found in extremely poor health and transferred to Alkufra DC. In Sebha in the south, refugee movements remain limited, largely due to the closure of the Chad–Libya border. Sudanese refugees reach Sebha through longer and riskier routes via Niger and onward into Libya through Al-Qatrun.

On 3 March, Libya's Anti-Illegal Immigration Agency **deported** 57 individuals through Benina International Airport in Benghazi, including 51 Sudanese refugees in coordination with the Sudanese Consulate. The deportations were carried out on medical and security grounds, with 48 individuals diagnosed with communicable diseases and three deported for security-related reasons; those concerned covered the cost of their own tickets.

In March, following a DCIM raid in Ajdabiya city targeting undocumented non-Libyans, 200 refugees and migrants were arrested and transferred to the Ajdabiya detention centre (DC) where they underwent medical screening. Those medically cleared are expected to be released, whilst others may face deportation. Eighty detainees of various nationalities were transferred to Ganfouda DC in preparation for return to their countries of origin.

Reports during March also highlighted the **discovery of mass graves** in Libya, pointing to severe abuses along migration routes. **Human rights observers warn** that weak governance and ongoing conflict allow smuggling networks and armed groups to operate with little accountability.



UNHCR/ Ziyad Alhamadi

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On the occasion of **International Women's Day 2026**, UNHCR, in collaboration with Moomken, **organized an awareness session at the Tripoli Office** under the theme “Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls”. Eighteen refugee women learned about the types, risks, psychological impacts, prevention, and available reporting mechanisms for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), as well as UNHCR protection services, legal assistance, and referral pathways.

This participatory session provided a safe space for discussion and experience sharing, addressing structural barriers to justice like limited information access, discrimination, and harmful social norms. Moomken’s legal team delivered a legal awareness component, focusing on key legal rights, obligations, common refugee challenges, and available legal support, with participants actively engaging on personal concerns. This enhanced understanding of protection risks, reporting mechanisms, and legal support led to improved awareness for women and girls facing violence and abuse.



### PROTECTION

- Considered as illegal migrants, the situation for refugees in Libya is difficult and people continue to risk the perilous journey across the Mediterranean. In 2026, 3,196 people were recorded during interceptions and rescues, including 1,581 intercepted in March, mainly from Sudan, while 47 persons were reported missing and at least 28 people were reported deceased in Libyan waters. These journeys increasingly include the eastern Mediterranean route, **with crossings from Tobruk to Crete sharply rising**.
- All people intercepted at sea and returned to Libya are placed in detention. At the end of March, 6,101 individuals were being held in detention centres across the country, including 2,238 (36%) of people potentially in need of international protection. UNHCR has had better access to detention centres in the East in Alkufra, Benghazi, Ganfouda and Tobruk enabling distribution of essential items, such as blankets, mattresses and hygiene kits, and identification of people of concern to the Office.



### REGISTRATION

- By the end of March, UNHCR had registered 110,908 refugees at its registration centre in Tripoli, with Sudanese refugees continuing to constitute the majority with 91,494 individuals. Registration enables access to essential services, including humanitarian assistance, essential items, 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.
- In Alkufra, the Security Registration Card (SRC), which is labour based annual residency, at the Isolation Centre remains open and operational, though activity levels are low, with many refugees unable to afford the fee of LYD 500. Sudanese refugees without SRCs continue to rely on health certificates, which currently facilitate their movement between cities along the Alkufra–Ajdabiya route, while their access to assistance remains limited.



## PROTECTION OUTREACH

- Through its local partner Moomken, UNHCR delivered legal awareness and counselling activities at the UNHCR Registration Centre to support 160 refugees and asylum seekers facing legal and administrative barriers, with a particular focus on access to civil registry documentation, especially birth registration for children born in Libya.
- In parallel, UNHCR strengthened communication, accountability, and access to legal assistance through community-based Communication with Communities (CwC). A total of nine CwC sessions were conducted in the reception area at UNHCR's Registration Centre as well as during a focus group discussion with parents of students at Al-Ekhwa school, reaching 438 refugees and asylum seekers. These sessions focused on UNHCR services, official communication channels, and mechanisms for reporting fraud and misconduct. Participants actively engaged, raising questions and seeking clarification, reflecting increased awareness of safe and trusted communication pathways.



## CALL CENTRE



# 82,158

**CALLS RECEIVED**  
so far in 2026



# 23,985

**CALLS HANDLED  
BY OPERATORS**  
so far in 2026



# 1,808

**REFERRALS MADE**  
for specialized protection,  
legal & social services,  
so far in 2026

- UNHCR's Call Centre, managed by Moomken and accessible country-wide by dialing 1504, continues to provide refugees with access to information and assistance through its interactive voice response (IVR) system and operator support. In March 2026, the call centre received 19,171 calls, of which 5,157 were escalated to operators from over 4,000 unique individuals. Through this channel, 340 cases were referred for specialized protection, legal, and social services. Arabic remained the most frequent language, followed by Tigrinya and Amharic, while registration support, available services for survivors of violence and abuse, and protection assessments were among the most requested services.
- On Thursday, 26 March 2026, [UNHCR participated in the VIP Day of the 4th Annual NGOs Expo](#), jointly hosted by Moomken and the Libyan Government Communication Centre, and attended by government officials, diplomatic missions, and humanitarian partners. The event provided an opportunity to emphasize the role of the Call Centre operated by UNHCR's local partner Moomken, in facilitating communication with and support for refugees, while also promoting accountability, access to information, and advocacy for sustained protection space and humanitarian access.



## CHILD PROTECTION

- In March, UNHCR conducted 50 Best Interest Assessments (BIAs) for vulnerable refugee children. Referred by the Call Centre, community mobilizers, or during the registration process, these BIAs assess the needs of children at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children. Based on their specific needs, children were referred to specialized services such as temporary care, while families caring for them received non-food items or cash assistance. UNHCR works with 43 caregivers who collectively host 109 vulnerable refugees under alternative care arrangements, among them 89 unaccompanied children, 14 single females, and 5 medical cases.
- During the month, the Child-Friendly Space (CFS) continued to operate as a safe, inclusive, and child-centered environment, providing 407 children (174 girls and 233 boys) mainly from Sudan, as well as Eritrea, South Sudan and Syria, with structured and unstructured activities that supported emotional well-being, positive social interaction, and a sense of routine and stability.

On 18 March, [UNHCR and UNICEF Libya signed a Letter of Understanding during a ceremony held at the UNHCR office in Tripoli](#), strengthening joint efforts to support refugee children, their families, and host communities. In coordination with Libyan authorities, the partnership aims to expand access to protection and essential services for those most in need.



- UNHCR's Child Protection team conducted a session at the Child-Friendly Space (CFS) aiming to enhance children's awareness and understanding of essential health and hygiene practices. 31 children (18 girls and 13 boys), primarily from Sudan, ranging from 4 to 16 years, actively participated, sharing their experiences and demonstrating interest in how proper hygiene reduces the risk of illness. To reinforce the concepts discussed, the session concluded with a practical and creative handicraft activity. Children classified healthy and unhealthy food items, linking the activity directly to the session topic.
- In Alkufra, 56 Sudanese children participated in recreational activities in the CFS at the Libyan Red Crescent (LRC) premises while their parents attended medical consultations at the LRC clinic or followed up on potential assistance. Plans are underway to initiate structured activities once a mechanism to provide transportation allowances for children is finalized. Priority will be given to children who are not enrolled in school to ensure they are receiving the support they need.

## FIELD OPERATIONS



### Basic Needs

- In March, UNHCR provided core relief items to over 11,000 refugees, asylum-seekers, and host community members across Libya, including 6,714 Sudanese refugees. [During Ramadan, distributions continued in Benghazi](#), reaching more than 2,000 Sudanese refugees, [while across Alkufra, Al-Abyar and Ajdabiya, UNHCR supported a further 2,700 people from refugee and host communities facing difficult conditions](#). The assistance included blankets and mattresses, solar lamps, kitchen sets, hygiene and dignity kits, jerry cans, clothing, and other essential items, helping families to sleep, cook meals, store water, and meet their daily needs.
- UNHCR [facilitated a training workshop for the Libyan Red Crescent team in Tobruk](#), as part of preparations for upcoming distributions. The workshop aimed to strengthen capacities and enhance field readiness, ensuring that distributions are carried out in line with established humanitarian standards and that the most vulnerable groups are reached in an effective manner.
- UNHCR recorded a steady flow of referrals for inclusion in multi-purpose voucher assistance programmes, with 143 new referrals received during the month. In total, the number of referrals for assistance rose to 565 cases, highlighting sustained needs. Meanwhile, UNHCR partner LibAid distributed vouchers to 120 refugee families identified and referred by the Protection team for tailored support, while an additional 70 vulnerable host community households also received assistance.



### Health Assistance

- UNHCR donated four mobile latrines to municipalities in Murzuq, Ubari, and Tazirbu to strengthen sanitation services for refugees, and host communities. Each unit comprises 6 toilets and sinks helping to reduce pressure on public facilities in areas frequently accessed by refugees and host communities.



UNHCR/ Ziyad Alhamadi

On 11 March, the Ambassador of France to Libya, **Thierry Vallat, visited the UNHCR office in Tripoli and met with UNHCR's Deputy Chief of Mission.** He engaged with refugee mothers and caregivers and heard their harrowing stories. The discussions highlighted the need for critical support to maintain protection space and improve refugee access to services and find lifesaving solutions.

## Coordination

- In Libya, UNHCR leads the Inter-Agency coordination for the Sudan Refugee Response Plan (RRP) through a dedicated task force structure. This framework includes seven thematic task forces, focusing on Protection, Basic Needs, Food Security, WASH, Public Health & Nutrition, Education, and Livelihoods & Economic Inclusion, supported by an Information Management (IM) Task Force for data collection and management.
- Following the technical consultations held in February 2026 between UN agencies and relevant Libyan government ministry counterparts, the virtual launch of the **Libya chapter of the 2026 Sudan RRP took place on Monday, 16 March.** The launch featured interventions from the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG), the UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Sudan Situation, the UNHCR Representative in Sudan, and the Head of the Department for International Organizations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Response Plan, involving 14 UN agencies and international NGOs, aims to assist 667,000 persons comprising 596,000 refugees, 1,000 third country nationals, and 70,000 host community members, with a projected budget of US\$115.5 million. Multi-sectoral assistance, focusing on protection, basic services, and resilience support, seeks to provide nearly 200,000 people with protection services, over 221,000 people with food assistance, 180,000 people with essential items and support 398,000 individual health consultations.

### UNHCR PARTNERS



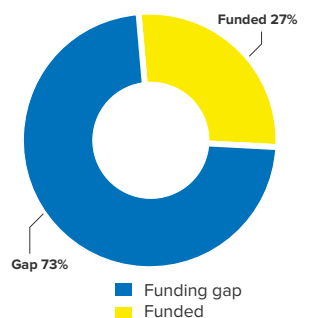
### FUNDING INFORMATION

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.



## US\$ 51.1 million

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



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