

Egypt

Emergency Response Update

May 2025

Emma, a 14-year-old refugee from Syria, attends English language classes in Damas School (Greater Cairo). She is one of nearly one million registered refugees who were forced to flee their countries and have found safety in Egypt. ©UNHCR/John McGrane



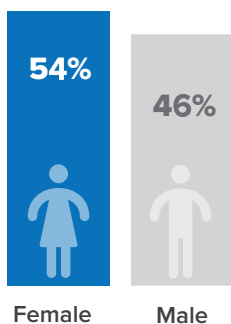
982,000
refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR in Egypt

29% funded

of the \$137.7 million required by UNHCR for the refugee response in Egypt in 2025.

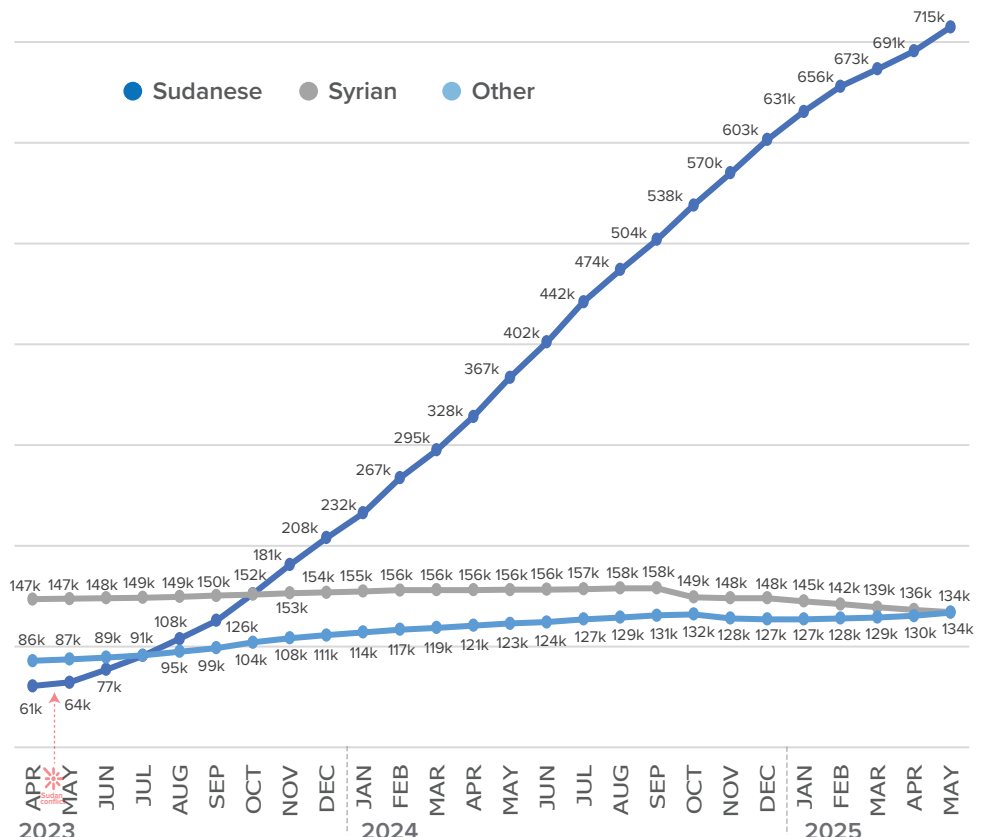
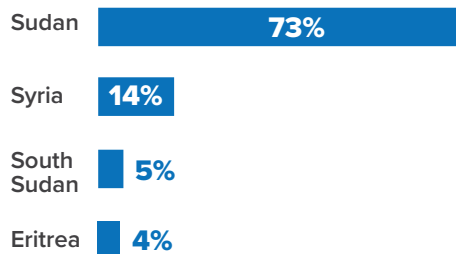


UNHCR Egypt registered more than 30,000 refugees in May



Registered refugees in Egypt have more than **tripled** since the Sudan crisis began

Top Countries of Origin



Source: UNHCR registration data

www.unhcr.org/eg

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS – HIGHLIGHTS

- Egypt received the second highest number of asylum applications worldwide last year, with a total of 433,900, according to UNHCR's recently published 2024 [Global Trends](#) report.
- The Government of Egypt (GoE) has officially endorsed the Egypt Refugee and Resilience Response Plan (ERRRP 2025), marking its first nationally led refugee initiative. The plan will be launched on 24 June at a joint event hosted by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This milestone follows nearly two years of dialogue and collaboration. The launch, co-organized by the MFA, UNHCR, and UNDP, will take place at MFA headquarters and will engage key donor partners.
- Between 12 and 15 May, UNHCR conducted a mission to Aswan and distributed 68 UNHCR-issued documents to Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers. During a community meeting, Sudanese leaders appreciated the local distribution, citing difficulties traveling to Cairo and urging a continued UNHCR presence in Aswan.
- On 28 May, UNHCR, IOM, and UNDP co-organized a donor briefing in Cairo to provide key updates on the asylum law, the cross-border movements of Sudanese and Syrian nationals, and the impact of recent funding cuts. Representatives from embassies and the World Bank attended the meeting. Participants showed particular interest in UNHCR's work with the GoE on the asylum system transition, the launch of the ERRRP, and the situation of Sudanese refugees in Aswan.
- On 13 May, UNHCR Representative to Egypt delivered a lecture at the Institute of National Planning (INP) as part of its "Distinguished Speakers" series in Cairo. The Representative presented UNHCR's strategic response in Egypt, highlighting key programmes such as the Instant Network Schools (INS), PROSPECT, and MADE51. The session sparked a dynamic discussion on the refugee situation, UNHCR's support to public infrastructure, and challenges. This first engagement with INP opens the door to future collaboration.

Protection

Registration

In May, UNHCR Egypt registered 30,500 new refugees and asylum-seekers, 90 per cent of whom were new arrivals from Sudan. Including those who arrived in Egypt before the Sudan conflict, the country now hosts 982,000 refugees and asylum-seekers registered with UNHCR, representing 62 nationalities. Sudanese nationals account for 73 per cent of the total registered population, followed by Syrians at 14 per cent.

Since the outbreak of conflict in Sudan in April 2023, UNHCR Egypt has provided registration appointments to 937,000 individuals who fled the country. Of these, 664,000 people, or 71 per cent, have been fully registered to receive protection and assistance. Among those newly registered, 96 per cent are Sudanese nationals, while smaller numbers include Eritreans (1.7 per cent) and South Sudanese (1.6 per cent). Women make up 55 per cent of the registered population, and 41 per cent are children.

Since the regime change in Syria in December 2024, the number of Syrians approaching UNHCR in Cairo and Alexandria to request the closure of their asylum cases has risen significantly. As of 31 May, more than 21,750 Syrians have submitted such requests, signaling their intention to return to Syria. In addition, 14,560 individuals have been closed as spontaneous departures.

Community-Based Protection

In May, 27,500 refugees and asylum-seekers, including new arrivals from Sudan, received information on services, assistance, and procedures for reporting fraud and complaints from outreach community workers at UNHCR's Reception Centre in 6th of October City, Greater Cairo. In addition, over the same period, UNHCR's partner Terre des Hommes (TdH) provided on-the-spot basic psychosocial support to 13,000

individuals, out of whom 120 cases were referred for in-depth psycho-social assessment and another 550 fast-tracked for further assistance. Additionally, UNHCR's CBP team provided counseling to 400 refugees.

In May, UNHCR launched the [Community Centers Story Map](#), an interactive platform that consolidates key information on UNHCR-supported multi-purpose community centers in Greater Cairo. The map features the centers' locations and activities, offering an accessible overview of their services. It also illustrates how these spaces contribute to strengthening social cohesion between refugee and host communities.

UNHCR facilitated a two-day capacity-building workshop in Alexandria to strengthen the leadership of Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs) amid ongoing funding constraints. The training brought together 45 RLOs—representing around 500 refugees across Egypt's North Coast—to enhance skills in community-based protection, response planning, and coordination. Participants received targeted training in needs assessments, ethical community engagement, child protection, and referral systems. As a result, five thematic community committees were formally established, focusing on health, livelihoods, psychosocial support, specific needs, and relief. Each of the committees is led by elected RLO representatives.

From 26 to 27 May, UNHCR participated in the Integrated Urban Planning and Policy Impact through Data and Evidence workshop organized by UN-Habitat in Alexandria. During the event, UNHCR provided an overview of international refugee protection and the current context in Egypt. The agency also emphasized the importance of leveraging data to support both refugees and host communities in urban planning efforts. The workshop fostered collaboration among local and regional stakeholders and promoted evidence-based decision-making to enhance planning in refugee-hosting urban areas.

Legal and Physical Protection (LPP)

In May, 2,800 individuals received legal assistance and counselling through UNHCR and partners, concerning early and late birth registration, filing legal reports, divorce, custody, and legal representation. Additionally, 50 birth certificates were issued during the period.



Tawassul and Asmaa, two Sudanese artisans who fled the ongoing conflict in their country, showcased their handmade products at a livelihoods fair in Cairo in May. ©UNHCR/Shery Sidhom



Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence

On 21 May, UNHCR and UNFPA, co-leads of the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Sub-Working Group (SWG), organized a donor field visit with the participation of embassy representatives from Canada, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The delegation visited two RLOs in Greater Cairo to observe their efforts in GBV prevention and response, with a particular focus on case management and livelihoods support. The visit highlighted the essential role RLOs play as trusted, community-based service providers.

On 13 May, UNHCR participated in the launch of a [study](#) on female genital mutilation (FGM) among the Sudanese community in Cairo, organized by the Tadwein Center for Gender Studies and Equality Now. UNHCR joined a panel discussion to share information about the services it provides to support refugee survivors of FGM. The study examines how displacement influences attitudes and practices related to FGM, providing an analysis of community perspectives and the challenges faced by Sudanese refugees in Cairo.



Child Protection

On 28 May, UNHCR conducted a child protection training for six officials from the Ministry of Defense. The session covered key topics, including Best Interest Procedures and the alternative care process for refugee children. Participants raised several questions, particularly regarding UNHCR's role in securing shelters for children at risk, with a focus on unaccompanied children.

In response to the increasing number of young and vulnerable children who need alternative care, often because their mothers or caregivers face protection risks, UNHCR also delivered a training to its partner, Plan International. The training aimed to strengthen the participants' capacity to establish and manage alternative care arrangements for children at risk.



Infoline

In May, UNHCR Egypt's Infoline responded to 36,800 inquiries. An average of 335 individuals per day fleeing the conflict in Sudan secured registration appointments through the Infoline. Since the crisis began, a total of 619,200 people successfully been scheduled with appointments using this system.



Education

UNHCR, through its education partner Catholic Relief Services (CRS), organized four community engagement meetings attended by 116 parents. The sessions aimed to share information about the educational services offered by UNHCR and its partners, and to respond to parents' questions and concerns.

In preparation for the launch of UNHCR's bridging classes, 70 refugee students in Cairo sat for an English language placement test. Based on the results, students will be assigned to the appropriate language level to support their learning needs. Meanwhile, 84 refugee children and youth continued to participate in UNHCR's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programme, where they are gaining practical skills in fields such as mobile phone maintenance, car mechanics, advanced tailoring, hairdressing, and electrical installation.

UNHCR and CRS also conducted mentorship interviews with 120 parents of children with disabilities. These sessions aimed to monitor the children's educational progress and provide guidance on addressing any related challenges. In addition, UNHCR and its partner continued follow-up interviews with DAFI scholars. During the reporting week, 130 scholars living in Cairo, Alexandria, and Damietta met with caseworkers to review their academic progress, discuss any difficulties, and agree on action plans where needed.



Health

The Health Working Group met in the last week of May to coordinate preventive measures ahead of expected heatwaves, to reduce heat-related deaths among new arrivals. In partnership with the Egyptian authorities, health promotion efforts are being strengthened in Aswan. These include public messaging on how to stay safe and respond to extreme heat conditions. These efforts follow the tragic deaths of at least 80 Sudanese individuals in June 2024, who succumbed to heatstroke and dehydration after entering Egypt.

Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion

In May, refugee artisans participated in two events in Cairo to showcase and sell their handmade products. The month-long Spring Flower Exhibition, a popular annual event in the city, featured the work of 26 refugees—including 16 from Sudan—alongside Egyptian artisans from across the country. On 17 May, 21 refugees, including 10 Sudanese, exhibited and sold their crafts at the Irish Embassy in Cairo as part of celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ireland and Egypt. Additionally, from 17 to 20 May, eight Sudanese refugee artists also participated in workshops during the third edition of the Empower Her Art Forum, held at the Grand Egyptian Museum. The event provided a platform for creative exchange and skill-building.

Cash Assistance

In May, UNHCR provided multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) to 74,400 refugees and asylum-seekers in Egypt, 65% of whom were from Sudan. However, due to funding shortfalls, assistance for some 6,000 vulnerable individuals had to be suspended. UNHCR is offering counselling to those affected and exploring support through livelihood interventions. Additionally, over 100,000 Sudanese refugees with high levels of poverty who meet the eligibility criteria for assistance remain on the MPCA waiting list due to limited funding.

A joint Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) exercise by Egypt's Cash Working Group found that the top expenditure areas for MPCA recipients were food (75%), rent (59%), and healthcare (26%). However, only 16% of them were able to meet more than half of their basic needs. The current transfer value covers less than one-quarter of the Subsistence Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), which has increased by 2.5% since December 2024.

Funding information

UNHCR is grateful for the crucial and generous contributions from its donors, who provide both earmarked and unearmarked funding to support its operations in Egypt in 2025, including for the Sudan and Syria responses.



UNHCR Egypt is also grateful for the crucial support of private donors from Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Spain, and the USA.

DONATE NOW

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