

KEY FIGURES

202,209

Refugees and asylum-seekers (all nationalities) registered as of February 2017

234

Refugees submitted for resettlement in January and February 2017

588

Refugees departed for resettlement in January and February 2017

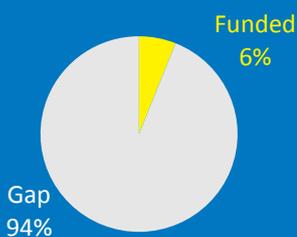
2,738

Unaccompanied and separated children registered to date

FUNDING

USD 79.3 M

Requested for the operation in 2017



Priorities

- Effective and strategic use of refugee status determination in merged procedures with registration.
- Support refugees' participation in decision-making and implementation of humanitarian programs.
- Enhance vulnerability assessment and provide targeted cash assistance to the most vulnerable.
- Support access to public primary health care across all nationalities.
- Support quality of education in public and community schools.
- Prevent and respond to SGBV and undertake child protection activities.
- Reduce incidents of detention and prevent refoulement.

EGYPT

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

January - February 2017

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Government of Egypt decided to extend the residence permit renewal process to Alexandria. Formerly, these services were only available in Cairo. Both Cairo and Alexandria are areas where large numbers of Syrian nationals are settled. Once in force, this new development is expected to greatly enhance the protection environment for Syrians residing in and around Alexandria, as it will save them the expense, time and efforts of traveling to the capital every six months for the renewal of their documents.



Syrian father and son in UNHCR reception area
©UNHCR/Nader Abdo

- Refugees and asylum-seekers of all nationalities have been officially included into the Egyptian public primary health care, as announced during an event hosted by the Ministry of Health and UNHCR on 18 January 2017. "With this initiative, the Arab Republic of Egypt has proven once more its humanitarian commitment and its open arms policy, setting an example for other countries", said UNHCR Representative Karim Atassi during the event.

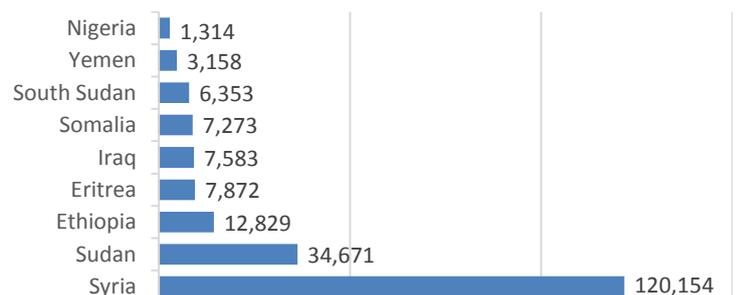
In addition to Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR who were already benefiting from access to public healthcare, this initiative will allow African, Iraqi and Yemeni refugees to access public health clinics at the same level as Egyptian citizens. Essential health care services will be offered free of charge or for nominal fees similar to those paid by Egyptians.



Government and UNHCR officials during launch event
©UNHCR/Tarik Argaz

Population of concern

A total of **202,209** refugees and asylum-seekers



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

Egypt remains a destination and transit country for refugees and asylum-seekers. In January and February 2017, 4,884 people newly registered with UNHCR (51 per cent Syrians, 49 per cent other nationalities). By the end of February, a total of 202,209 refugees and asylum-seekers of 66 different nationalities were registered with UNHCR in Egypt. Syrians represent 59 per cent of the total registered, followed by Sudanese (17 per cent) and Ethiopians (6 per cent). While refugees are dispersed throughout Egypt, including in remote areas, the majority are concentrated in three urban areas, namely Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta.

Achievements

Protection

- In February, UNHCR Egypt conducted its **annual Participatory Assessment** in Greater Cairo and the North Coast. In total, 183 focus group discussions gathering 1,103 individuals from all nationalities and age groups were conducted (463 children, 640 adults; 575 females, 528 males). Consultations with the community focussed on the overall protection environment, access to UNHCR and partners' services, documentation, and the impact of health and education mainstreaming into national services. During the consultations, refugees and asylum-seekers talked about the difficulties they face, how they cope with these challenges, and suggested ideas and solutions to be implemented by UNHCR and the refugee community. These discussions guide **UNHCR's planning for 2018**. A comprehensive report of the findings will be released in the second quarter of 2017.



Refugees and UNHCR staff member during consultations for the annual Participatory Assessment. ©UNHCR/Yahia Khelidy
- In the course of 2017 UNHCR will **issue documents for refugees and asylum-seekers with enhanced security features**. The new set will use materials that are difficult to duplicate and will be printed at the Ministry of Interior printing house.
- In January and February, the UNHCR Alexandria Field Office conducted **four mobile registration missions** covering Damietta, Matrouh and Dakahliya. UNHCR registered 47 new cases; 391 refugees approached UNHCR for continuous registration interventions, such as document renewal, adding family members or updating their records. A UNHCR team regularly visits remote areas in order to reach refugees and asylum-seekers who cannot approach the offices in Alexandria or Cairo.
- The Egyptian government granted **24 family re-unification visas** to particularly vulnerable Syrian families at the end of 2016 and beginning of 2017, after UNHCR had advocated for these cases in 2016. Several families had members with serious health issues.
- The UNHCR **infoline received a total of 43,572 calls** during the months of January and February. In the beginning of January, enquiries mainly focussed on **UNHCR's cash assistance and WFP's food assistance** before the respective distribution cycles started. The infoline also received an increased amount of phone calls inquiring about the **resettlement process to the United States** in view of the Presidential Executive Order. Refugees expressed their concerns in relation to the latest decisions and the ban placed on certain nationalities from entering the USA.

Cash-based interventions

- In order to assess the impact of the winterization programme on the situation of Syrian refugees, UNHCR conducted a **post distribution monitoring** (PDM) exercise specific to **winterization assistance** in early February 2017. The survey showed that 48 per cent of the grants were mainly spent on clothes, ten per cent on blankets, and four per cent on heating. Part of the grants were also used for expenses on rent, health and education. Survey results indicate that the period for spending the money was very short: 22 per cent spent it on the same day, and over 85 per cent spent it within a week. This **can be interpreted as of proof of the criticality of the needs**. In November and December 2016, UNHCR had supported over 104,900 refugees and asylum-seekers with one-time payments to prepare for the winter, intended for the purchase of clothing and heating.
- In January, UNHCR renewed its official agreement with Egypt's Post Office Authority regarding the disbursement of cash assistance for refugees through the postal service. Syrian refugees can access education grants and other cash assistance from approximately 3,000 Egypt Post branches nationwide.

Livelihoods and Self-Reliance

- On 18 January, UNHCR in collaboration with Caritas celebrated **successful livelihood projects** in Alexandria. The day was marked with a series of events including a panel discussion with refugees who had received UNHCR livelihood grants; they talked about their challenges and achievements in starting and operating businesses. Syrian, African and Egyptian musicians performed during the event, entertainment was provided for children and handicrafts were displayed in an exhibition with the theme 'Small Project, Big Dream'.

From 2014 to 2016, UNHCR Egypt through its livelihood program in Alexandria provided 1,100 grants for refugees to start small businesses; 462 of the grants were provided in 2016 alone.



Nawal a Sudanese refugee showcasing her perfumes and spices at the exhibition. ©UNHCR/Nora Ibrahim

Education

- Based on an agreement with the Ministry of Education in 2016, UNHCR will provide computer lab equipment to a total of 30 schools across Egypt. This will be benefit to Egyptian and refugee children. In February, equipment was handed over to the Education Department and school representatives of 22 schools on the Egyptian North Coast (16 in Alexandria, five in Damietta and one in Gamasa).
- UNHCR Egypt and Government partners inaugurated the latest '**Schoolyard for All**' projects in Greater Cairo and Alexandria. The projects aim at creating child-friendly spaces, allowing local Egyptian and refugee school children to play together in a **safe environment and fostering a better educational atmosphere**. The interventions included the construction of a basketball court, playgrounds for smaller children, as well as shades and child-friendly benches that encourage socialising and integration. Since the project started in 2014, UNHCR and partners intervened in nine schools in different governorates in Egypt.



Newly established basketball court and nursery playground in Alexandria. ©UNHCR/Nora Ibrahim

Health

- UNHCR trained **outreach volunteers** in Alexandria on presentation and facilitation skills. The training built the capacity of the outreach volunteers' team to facilitate sessions and to deal with various audiences. Currently, UNHCR through its health partners works with 16 health outreach volunteers in Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta. The volunteers provide health promotion sessions, undertake home visits to home-bound refugees and asylum-seekers, and assess patients for hypertension and diabetes follow-up.

Community Empowerment

- UNHCR Egypt supported a regional [UNHCR campaign](#) which aimed to spread awareness about the dangerous crossing to and through war-stricken Yemen. Together with the Egyptian singer Hany Adel, UNHCR Egypt hosted five leading artists from Somalia and Ethiopia in late 2016. Within a week, the group of artists created the song '[Dangerous Crossings](#)', which formed the basis for the campaign launched in mid-February 2017.



The six singers of the 'Dangerous Crossings' campaign during the video shooting in Cairo. ©UNHCR/Tim Kaldas

Working in partnership

UNHCR in Egypt works through the following partners:

Arab Council for Supporting Fair Trials and Human Rights (ACSFT) • Arab Medical Union (AMU) • Care Int/USA • Caritas • Catholic Relief Services (CRS) • Danish Refugee Council (DRC) • Egyptian Foundation for Refugee Rights (EFRR) • ICMC • IOM • Dr Mostafa Mahmoud Society • Refuge Egypt • Save the Children • St Andrews Refugee Services (StARS) • Terre Des Hommes (TdH) - Psycho-Social Services and Training Institute in Cairo (PSTIC) • UNDP • UNFPA • UNHABITAT • UNICEF • UNOPS • UNV • WFP • WHO

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to **US\$ 4.8 million**.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by [Canada](#), [the European Union](#), [Italy](#) and [Japan](#), who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds in 2017.

Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds to UNHCR in 2017:

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Links:

Regional portal: data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php

Twitter: [@UNHCREGYPT](https://twitter.com/UNHCREGYPT)