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# The human cost of war: Sudan's 1.5 million refugees in Egypt



Many Sudanese refugees forced to flee their homes find shelter in Egypt  
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The conflict in Sudan continues to rage, forcing civilians to flee their homes. **Nearly 15 million** Sudanese have been internally displaced or have left the country, **including almost 4 million children**. This has made Sudan the **world's largest child displacement crisis**.

In neighbouring **Egypt**, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has registered over **1 million Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers**. However, the actual

number of those who have fled is estimated to exceed 1.5 million. By way of illustration, this surpasses the entire population of Prague.

over 1.5 million

Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt

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## Sudanese refugees struggle to meet basic needs

Most Sudanese refugees live in underprivileged and underserved neighbourhoods in Egypt's major cities, struggling to meet their most basic needs. They yearn for peace in their homeland, hoping one day to return.



Aid workers help the most vulnerable Sudanese refugees, addressing their most basic needs  
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The European Union supports UNHCR in providing **cash assistance to refugees** in Egypt, including the most vulnerable Sudanese. This aid helps cover immediate needs like food

and medicine, but **much remains unmet**. Many refugees are forced to cut back on nutritious and diverse foods, subsisting on pulses and rice.

They also reduce medical expenses, limiting themselves to only essential care, and **compromise their health to save money for rent** in overcrowded homes.



Cash assistance to refugees in Egypt, also helps to cover health costs  
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## The EU's lifeline for Sudanese refugees in Egypt

Fleeing one's homeland is never a choice – it is **an act of survival imposed by war**.

Refugees leave with only what they can carry, often with barely enough money to cross the border, hoping humanitarian organisations and informal networks will support them. The cost of survival is steep: **most arrive with little more than their clothes on their backs**.

Those arriving in Cairo, Africa's largest metropolis with over 24 million inhabitants, often rely on family or social networks to take their first steps: finding shelter and learning how to obtain legal status. Many visit **UNHCR registration centres**, where staff – **supported by the EU** – provide registration, document renewal, legal status updates, and specialised support for those who need protection.



Staff at UNHCR registration centres, – supported by the EU – provide registration, document renewal, legal status updates to Sudanese refugees.

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## Between survival and longing

Being a refugee is **a life suspended between conflicting realities.**

Rationally, you tell yourself to be grateful: you are safe, no longer under bombardment or starving, and you might educate your children and find work. But your heart screams:

'I don't want to be here. I want to be home, surrounded by my people, my memories, my streets. Here, I am poor and dependent, surviving on scraps. I want my dignity, not pity. I want to walk with my head held high and be myself again, in my community.'

Your heart insists:

'This is not living. **This is surviving**'.

Yet you know you cannot return immediately. Everything your heart longs for is not accessible, at least for now. So, you retrace your steps and try to make the best of what you have.

Cash assistance empowers recipients to **prioritise their most urgent needs while also supporting local markets**. The EU is a strong supporter of cash assistance in emergency contexts across the globe.



Staff at UNHCR registration centres also provide legal and psychological support.

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Life, nevertheless, is not only made up of material needs and assistance. To be alone in a big metropolis, in a foreign land, without money or safety nets, makes one vulnerable and open to blackmail. Unfortunately, **gender-based violence** makes its way into these situations and lives in silence.

Being alone also means not knowing how to deal with this violence, who to turn to, which path to follow to be protected. This is why the **EU also funds UNHCR** to assist the victims of gender-based violence, directing and accompanying them to organisations that provide **legal and psychological support**.



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