



**CHILDREN
ON THE
MOVE
IN EGYPT**



Overview

UNICEF Egypt has been working with Children on the Move¹ since 2013, when the arrival of Syrian refugees in Egypt prompted UNICEF to adapt its programming to respond to the increased needs of refugee, migrant and vulnerable host community children and their families. UNICEF's unique mandate of protecting children's rights positions the agency to work with all children on the move, regardless of their nationality, legal status, or refugee status.

UNICEF programming in Egypt has an approach which focuses on resilience and development to respond to the ongoing humanitarian needs of refugee, migrant and vulnerable children in the country.

The programme is designed to transform and build the capacity of the Government of Egypt's (GoE) to meet the needs of the vulnerable groups through the delivery of services. It is supporting the government in its efforts to integrate refugees and asylum seekers into Egyptian communities: instead of refugee camps, they are integrated into Egyptian communities, moving freely in the country and with access to public education and primary health care services at an equal level to Egyptian citizens.

UNICEF Egypt is partnering with the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), the lead government agency with a mandate on child rights issues, as well as with other government entities, to:

- Strengthen the national child protection mechanisms to reduce the risks associated with irregular migration, including children moving to, through and from Egypt;
- Build long-term national capacity to respond to the complex needs of refugee, migrant and vulnerable Egyptian children;
- Support governmental and non-governmental basic service delivery, especially education and health, to these vulnerable population groups;
- Meet the immediate humanitarian needs of refugees, migrants and vulnerable Egyptians by supporting them through specific humanitarian interventions, outreach and community-based non-governmental interventions in the child protection, health and education sectors.

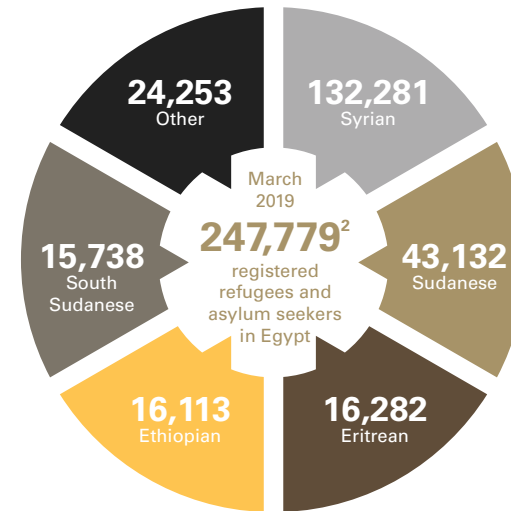
¹ Children on the Move is an umbrella term used to describe those children who are on the move for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, between or within countries, with or without parents or other care-givers, and whose movement, while it may open up opportunities, might also place them at increased risk of economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect or violence. Inter-Agency Working Group on Children on the Move.



SITUATION ANALYSIS

Egypt has long been a country of transit, destination and origin for migration.

Out of the total number of refugees and asylum seekers, approximately **39%** are children under 18 years



Of the children, **59%** are Syrians and **41%** are other nationalities.



Egypt hosts more than **85,000** child refugees, including Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC)



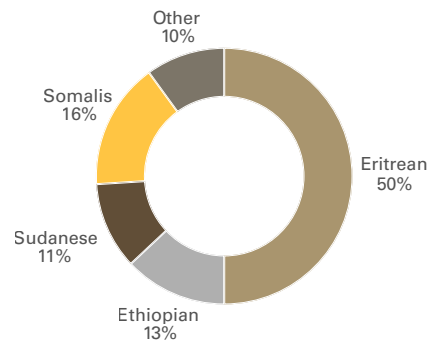
As of end of March 2019, a cumulative total of **3,830** unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) were registered, out of whom **2,238** are unaccompanied children, while **1,417³** are separated.



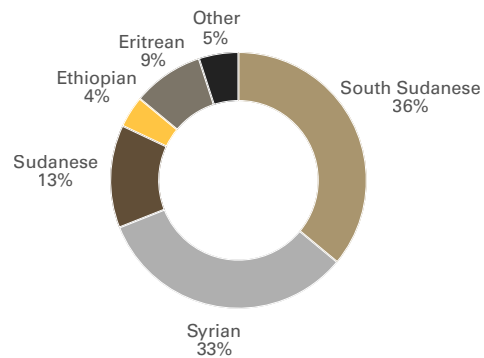
² UNHCR Egypt Monthly Statistical Report as of 31 March 2019.

³ Ibid

Total unaccompanied children registered



Total separated children registered



For all children on the move to, through and from Egypt, child trafficking, human smuggling and irregular mixed migration frequently overlap.

The majority of refugees and migrants in Egypt live in rented accommodation in informal settlements across Greater Cairo and other urban centers. This perpetuates levels of vulnerability influenced by deteriorating economic conditions in Egypt, including sharp increases in costs of essential goods and services. Children also face a range of other child protection issues, including barriers to residency and secure stay; risk of detention and deportation; discrimination and

harassment in public spaces; high risks of criminality and physical and sexual violence; language barriers for non-Arabic speaking children; lack of formal alternative care arrangements for unaccompanied children; delays in access to emergency care and costly secondary and tertiary health care. Many of these children and their families have experienced trauma, live under extreme stress, and have a range of psychosocial needs.



KEY AREAS OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN UNICEF AND NCCM:



National Policy Level and the COM National task force

UNICEF and NCCM work in partnership at the national level to strengthen the national child protection system to ensure inclusive child protection – prevention and response mechanisms – for all children on Egyptian territory, including refugee and migrant children. UNICEF has worked to support NCCM in the development and roll out of the National Standard Operating Procedure's (SOPs) for Child Protection Case Management, including a special Annex on migrant, refugee children and children victims of trafficking.

In early 2018, NCCM established a national task force on children on the move. UNICEF provides technical support to the functioning of the task force. The task force engages with stakeholders to coordinate efforts, share information, and develop common approaches and tools to ensure that practical and immediate responses are in place for COM, with a focus on UASC. The task force members provide technical support to NCCM and other relevant national agencies to activate child protection

committees (CPCs) and establish other child protection systems across all governorates in Egypt, meeting the needs of all vulnerable children regardless of their status, with due regard to the specific needs and rights of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees under international legal instruments.

Additionally, UNICEF and NCCM are working towards the prevention of detention and the support of children in detention. Ongoing advocacy efforts between NCCM, the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the Public Prosecution office, and the Ministry of Interior (MoI) aim to provide alternatives to detention and identify alternative care options for children arrested in attempts of illegal migration. Country-specific guidelines will be developed in consultation between all stakeholders to deal with child victims, witnesses and children in need of care and protection, including migrant children. UNICEF and NCCM collaborate to advocate for the release of migrant and refugee children in detention.



System Strengthening and Capacity Building

With refugees and migrants integrated into Egyptian society, with access to primary health care and public education, it is both of immediate and long-term importance to strengthen government capacity to meet the needs of these vulnerable groups. By focusing on system strengthening and capacity

building as key components of meeting immediate humanitarian needs, governmental and non-governmental actors will be better able to respond to future shocks and stressors, including national socio-economic challenges and future influxes of refugees from the region.

Child Protection Committee Activation

UNICEF and NCCM are working together to address the absence of an operational and standardized child protection mechanism in Egypt, as defined in the Child Law, by developing an institutional model to establish key pillars of the national child protection system: case management systems and a child protection social workforce. To achieve this, NCCM and UNICEF are partnering to establish, activate and strengthen the role of Child Protection Committees (CPCs) at district and governorate levels for the protection and referral to the appropriate case management pathways, of all children within Egyptian territory who are at risk.

Activation involves enhancing the capacity of the child protection workforce, including those of the CPCs at the general and district levels, as well as the Child Helpline staff and Ministry of Social Solidarity's (MoSS) social workers. In 2018, more than 800 child protection staff received capacity building training on case management SOPs, referral pathways, provision of psychosocial support to children, and on standard legal procedures for victims of violence.

Child Helpline (CHL)

UNICEF supports NCCM in strengthening the National Child Helpline "16000", a mechanism for receiving and recording child complaints. It provides protection from violence, abuse and neglect across the country through partnership with the relevant ministries and NGOs working in this field. To en-

hance effectiveness and sustainability of this system for the protection of children at risk, the Child Helpline is institutionalized under the management and supervision of NCCM, linked with governorate offices, local administrative units, civil society partners, corporate sector and international organizations.



Inter-sectoral Services for Children

In 2018, UNICEF worked with government and NGO partners to reach more than 76,000 children, adolescents and youth with sustained psychosocial support, child protection, and life skills programs, while over 8,000 children received multi-sectoral case management services. To prevent violence against children in the home and improve family relationships, more than 15,000 parents participated in positive parenting programs. The positive parenting program supports parents of Egyptian, migrant and refugee children by providing positive parenting skills as well as building their knowledge to be able to provide care and protection for their children and increase their resilience. Through partnership with NCCM and Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), UNICEF delivers psychosocial support to migrant children and their families, alongside vulnerable Egyptian children from the hosting communities. Psychosocial support programming includes recreational activities like computer lessons or English for younger children (0 to 5) and life skills for adolescents up to 20 years old.

In partnership with Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE), UNICEF has supported 113 public schools to:

- build child safeguarding systems in primary public schools to prevent and respond to violence;
- activate and link child protection committees (CPCs) in schools and District CPCs in Ministry of Education in the selected areas;
- build the capacity of school staff to implement Positive discipline methods; enhance parents' access community-based protection and psychosocial support through positive parenting capacity building and PTA strengthening;
- provide psychosocial support (PSS) to parents and children and promote social integration and peaceful coexistence in communities.

To integrate refugee and migrant children in the formal education system, UNICEF is ensuring that the targeted teachers and students benefit from the on-going Education transformation: 'Education 2.0' in collaboration with the MoETE.



With support of Egyptian authorities and NGOs, UNICEF Egypt was able to provide more than 9,000 refugee and migrant children with education grants to support their enrollment in pre-primary education for the 2018-19 academic year. In addition, UNICEF Egypt and partners provided nearly 2,500 children with textbooks and storybooks, equipped 65 kindergarten classrooms with education supplies and trained 771 teachers. Moreover, 15,800 children from refugee and host communities benefited from life skills education. With the support from UNICEF Egypt,

MoETE conducted the rehabilitation of 428 public in six governorates to ensure a conducive learning environment for refugee and host community children.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), UNICEF is strengthening the capacity of 80 selected PHUs from 19 governorates to offer child protection interventions as part of routine primary health care visits at the community level. Interventions are delivered through Family Clubs established within the PHUs.

NCCM's approach in tackling child trafficking:

Children on the move is a broad topic that also includes victims of child-trafficking. In this context, NCCM took significant steps to combat child trafficking in Egypt by establishing the Anti-Trafficking in Children Unit. The Unit's main activities include:

- Establishing a database on girl-child marriages;
- Carrying out activities to prevent girl-child marriage, with NGOs and local community leaders, at targeted villages;

- Providing legal and social support to victims;
- Launching a website for researchers: child-trafficking.org that includes publications and reports on child trafficking;
- Establishing FACE center, to rehabilitate young male victims of child trafficking.

