



ROUTES TOWARDS THE MEDITERRANEAN

REDUCING RISKS AND STRENGTHENING
PROTECTION

UNHCR APPEAL, JUNE 2019



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

FRONT COVER:

A woman hugs a UNHCR staff member in June 2019 at the Gathering and Departure Facility in Tripoli, Libya after UNHCR secured the release of 96 detainees from Zintan detention centre, where conditions are dire. For more, see <https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2019/6/5cf61e4e4/unhcr-secures-release-96-detainees-libyas-zintan-detention-centre.html>.

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CONTENTS

Key Figures	5
Introduction	7
Success stories: Achievements in 2018	13
Implementation challenges in 2018	17
The future: Outlook for 2019-2020	18
Priorities for 2019-2020	19
Across all Regions	23
Financial Requirements 2019	28



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"We faced a lot of difficulties on our way to Libya. As we crossed the Sahara with smugglers, we were faced with hunger, the car broke down, there were roadblocks where we were told to pay money. We were abandoned by the smugglers but fortunately we found another car to take us to Libya."

"We found dead bodies of those who had died in the desert from starvation. I lost a lot of my family on that road, I don't know where they are now."

"My husband was working in Tripoli. He was kidnapped. They beat him and punished him. They demanded a ransom but we had nothing to pay them."

"The driver dropped us in the 'middle' [of the desert] because we didn't have enough money. I tried to pay him with my gold jewellery but he refused to take it. Later, my jewellery was stolen by militia on the road."

"I cannot sleep at night. When I think of what happened, my heart starts beating faster. My mind is somewhere else."

Mariam, 30, a mother-of-two from Sudan

KEY FIGURES

116,600

Arrivals to Europe by sea in 2018

21,800

Arrivals to Europe by sea in 2019 (as of 11 June).

Morocco and Libya remain the most active points of departure to Europe across the Central and Western Mediterranean Sea.

Arrivals from Libya to Europe decreased by **86%** in 2018

Arrivals to Spain who departed from Morocco and Algeria represented **45%** of all arrivals via the Mediterranean routes to Europe in 2018 compared to **15%** in 2017.

Arrivals to Europe who departed from Libya represented **11%** in 2018 compared to **59%** in 2017.

1,900

People have arrived in Europe from Libya in 2019 (as of 11 June).

331

Recorded deaths or persons missing at sea after departing from Libya in 2019 (as of 11 June).

On average, *one person has died for every six* people who have arrived in Europe from Libya so far this year, despite a decrease in arrivals.

In 2018, **18%** of arrivals to Italy were children and **10%** were women.

In Spain, **11%** of arrivals were children and **11%** were women.

So far in 2019, **17%** of arrivals to Italy were children and **6%** were women.

In Spain, **10%** of arrivals were children and **14%** were women.

ARRIVALS BY COUNTRY 2017-2018 JAN-DEC

SPAIN*
28,300 2017
65,400 2018

ITALY (Sea arrivals)
119,400 2017
23,400 2018

GREECE
35,400 2017
50,500 2018

8,178

Western Mediterranean route

Central Mediterranean route

Eastern Mediterranean route

*In 2018, 1,307 people arrived by sea to the Canary Islands and 1,085 people were disembarked in Spain after being rescued off the coast of Libya. Includes Serbia and Kosovo (S/RES/1244 (1999)). The boundaries and names shown and the designations on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

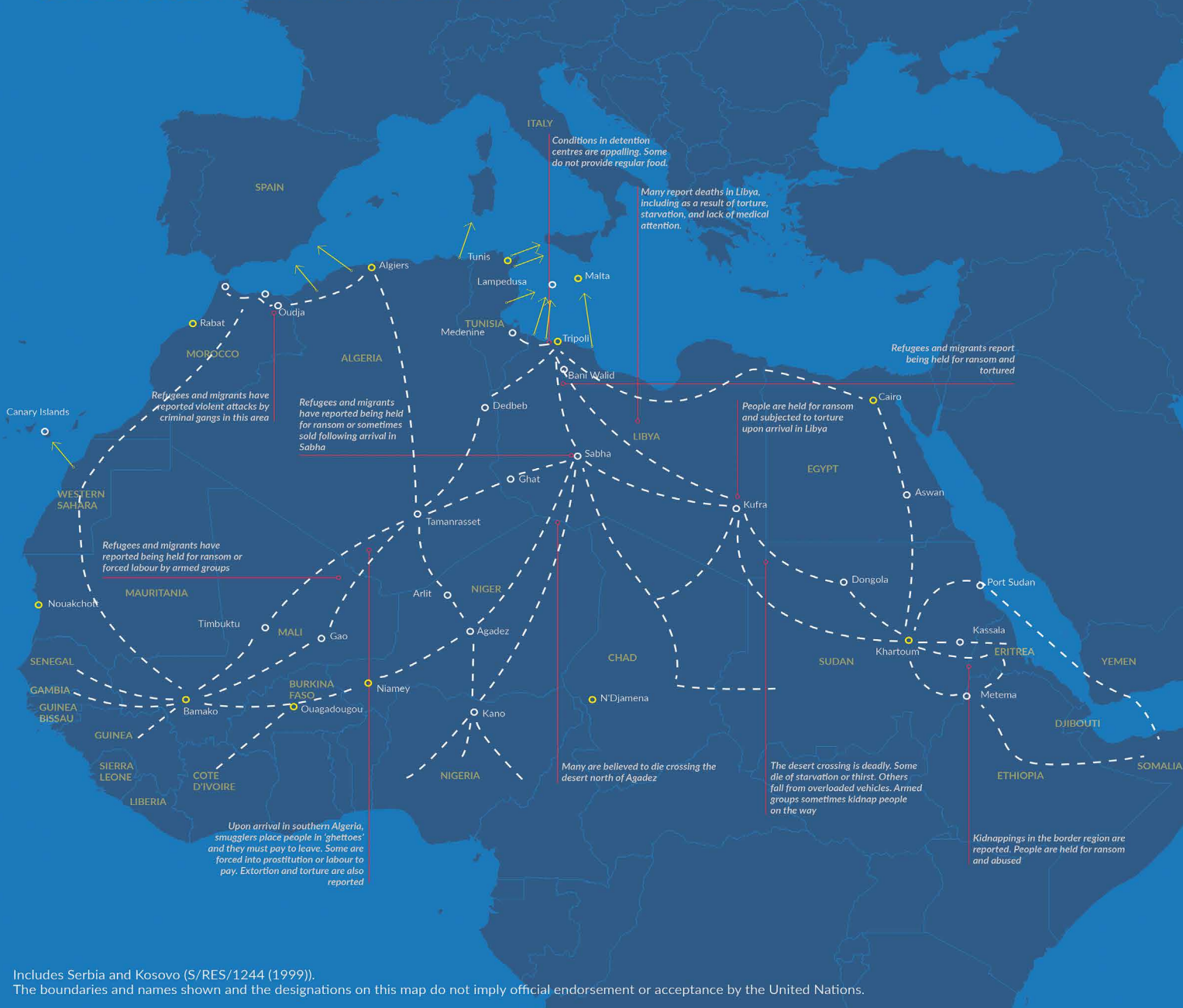
1,312

People are believed to have died or gone missing in the central Mediterranean Sea in 2018.

507

People are believed to have died or gone missing on the Central and Western Mediterranean Sea in 2019 (as of 11 June).

ROUTES THROUGH AFRICA TO EUROPE



Includes Serbia and Kosovo (S/RES/1244 (1999)).
The boundaries and names shown and the designations on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Note: The map does not include increased arrivals by air to Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

UNHCR is implementing its strategy to assist thousands of refugees and migrants across countries in North and Sub-Saharan Africa, who have fled violence and persecution in their home countries and face increasing dangers on their journey to safety. UNHCR is also assisting those who subsequently cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe.

A major shift took place in 2018, whereby the route from Morocco to Spain became the primary crossing to Europe by sea, leading to an expansion of UNHCR's strategy to include the Western Mediterranean Route.

INTRODUCTION



Passengers wait to begin boarding a long-distance bus to Agadez, Niger at a bus station in Niamey. The trip takes more than a day.

Thousands of refugees and migrants continue to risk their lives at the hands of traffickers and smugglers on dangerous journeys from Sub-Saharan Africa to North Africa. They face grave threats to their safety. Many are travelling in the hope of reaching Europe through the increasingly perilous journey across the Mediterranean Sea. As of early June, one person died on the Central Mediterranean Sea for every six people who reached European shores after departing from Libya in 2019. Conversely, in 2018, one person died for every 14 people who arrived by sea in Europe from Libya (compared to one death for every 38 arrivals in 2017). In the Western Mediterranean Sea, some 800 people died or went missing at sea in 2018.¹

However, the total number of people arriving in Europe from Libya has reduced substantially since 2016. In 2018, the Western Mediterranean route from Morocco to Spain became the main point of entry to Europe, a marked shift from 2017 when the Central Mediterranean route from Libya was most frequently used.

People on the move along the Central and Western Mediterranean routes² face serious risks and often fall victim to grave human rights violations, such as torture, trafficking, sexual exploitation or other forms of abuse.³

¹ UNHCR, *Desperate Journeys: January to December 2018*, January 2019, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67712>.

² The Central Mediterranean route refers to journeys towards North Africa often resulting in attempts to cross the sea towards Italy and Malta from Libya, Egypt or Tunisia. The Western Mediterranean route refers to journeys towards Morocco and Algeria often resulting in attempts to cross to Spain by land or sea.

³ UNSMIL and OHCHR, *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*, 20 December 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/LY/LibyaMigrationReport.pdf>.

Other life-threatening risks along the route include extra-judicial killings, sexual violence, arbitrary and prolonged detention, starvation, extortion, being left to die in the desert, and forced labour.⁴

Despite UNHCR and other organizations having strengthened their presence and assistance to reach more people on the move in need of international protection, the exposure to risks and abuses along the route has only increased. For example, at disembarkation points along the Central Mediterranean coast and in Niger and in Tunisia, humanitarian organizations are witnessing a rise in the number of people who had previously been in Libya and who are suffering from extremely poor health situations, including severe malnourishment.⁵ Such poor health conditions correlate closely with extended periods in captivity at the hands of traffickers

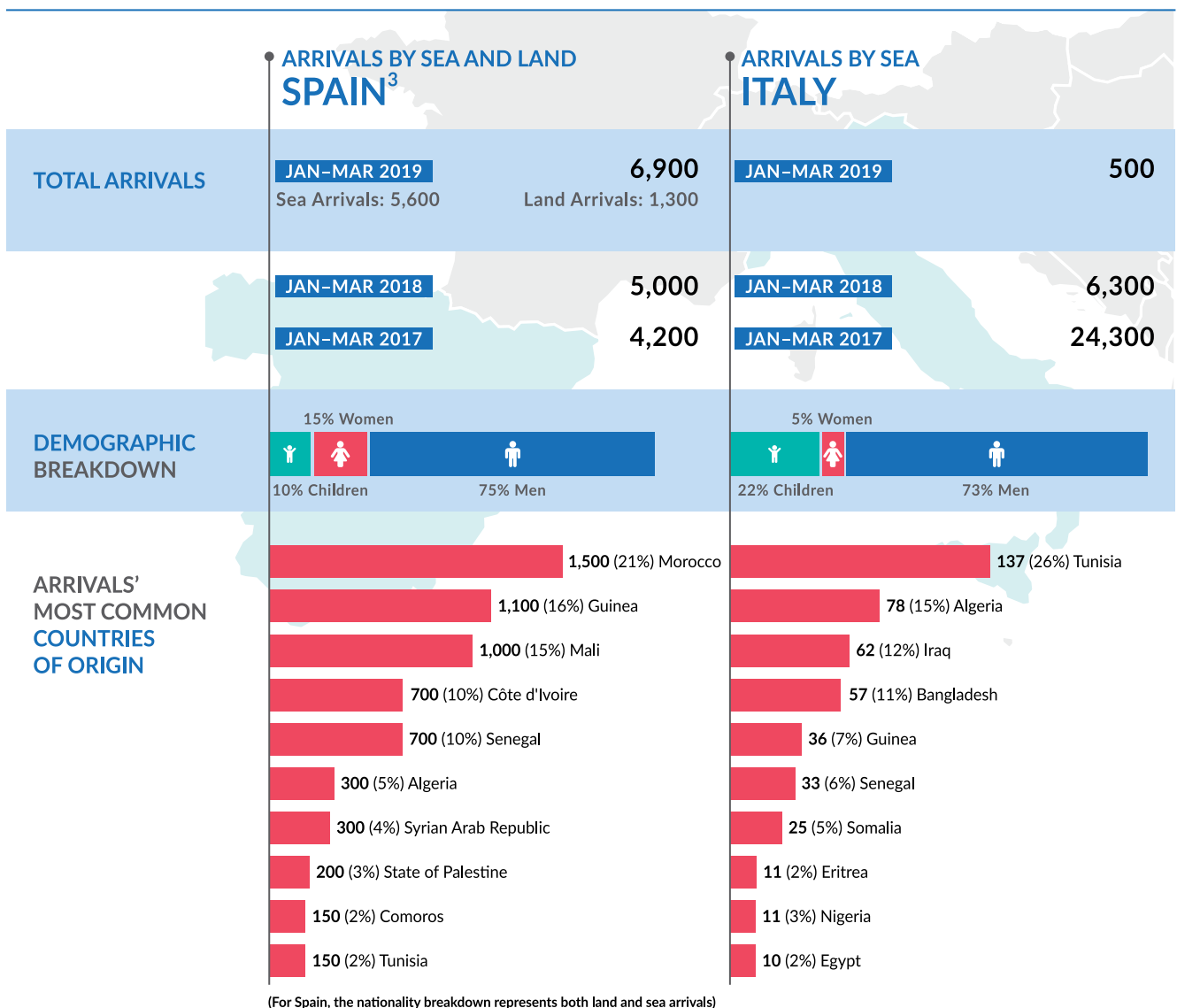
and smugglers, according to the testimonies of people arriving in Europe from Libya and interviewed by UNHCR.⁶ Some reported being held by armed groups for a year or more, usually for ransom or for forced labour.⁷

⁴ See, for example, UNSMIL and OHCHR, *Detained and Dehumanised: Report on human rights abuses against migrants in Libya*, 13 December 2016.

⁵ The Local, *Migrant rescued at sea dies hours after arriving in Italy*, 14 March 2018, <https://www.thelocal.it/20180314/eritrean-migrant-segen-rescued-mediterranean-starved-deathmalnutrition-italy-sicily>; InfoMigrants, *Stories of migrants that landed on Lampedusa at weekend*, 17 July 2018, <http://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/10675/stories-of-migrants-thatlanded-on-lampedusa-at-weekend?ref=tw>.

⁶ See, for example, UNHCR, *Desperate Journeys: January to December 2018*. In addition, a recent report by the Women's Refugee Commission also reiterated that "sexual violence, including sexual torture, against female and male refugees and migrants appears widespread in Libya. Sites of sexual violence include official detention centers, clandestine prisons, in the context of forced labor and enslavement, during random stops and at checkpoints by armed groups, in urban settings by gangs, and in private homes." See Women's Refugee Commission, *More than One Million Pains*, March 2019, <https://bit.ly/2GCay4N>.

⁷ See, for example, Time, *The Families of Migrants Held Hostage Are Using Facebook to Raise Money for Smugglers' Ransoms*, 5 February 2019, <http://time.com/5510517/facebook-smuggling-libya-ransoms/>.



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

³ Preliminary figures based on UNHCR and government estimation. Arrival figures will be adjusted pending provision of final figures by Spanish Mol.

Others reported multiple previous attempts to cross the Mediterranean Sea, with detention in appalling conditions following their return to Libya.⁸ People arriving in Spain have also reported abuses along the Western Mediterranean route, including being subjected to violence, along with kidnapping and extortion.⁹

Nationals of Sub-Saharan African countries made up the bulk of the top ten nationalities taking dangerous journeys to arrive in Italy, Malta, and Spain in 2018.¹⁰ In 2018, two of the top three nationalities arriving in Italy or Malta were from the East and Horn of Africa¹¹ (Eritreans and Sudanese) while six of the top ten nationalities that arrived in Spain were from West Africa. In addition, nearly 26,900 North African nationals crossed the sea to Italy, Malta or Spain in 2018, a slight increase from 24,500 in 2017.

For the top ten nationalities that arrived in Italy by sea in 2018, approximately 29% of individuals were estimated to be in need of international protection (see Graph 1), while of the top ten nationalities arriving in Spain (see Graph 2), approximately 13% of individuals were estimated to be in need of international protection.¹²

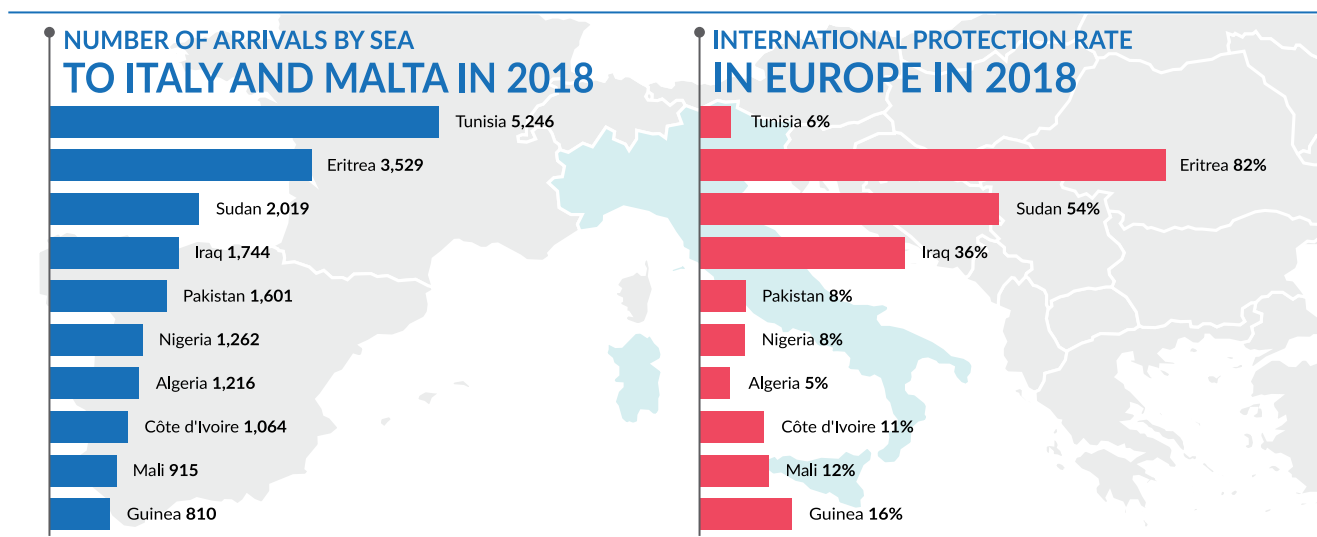
⁸ See also UNSMIL and OHCHR, *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*.

⁹ See, for example, *El Pais*, *Nearly half of migrants who arrive in Spain via Africa report violence on the journey*, 22 April 2019, https://elpais.com/elpais/2019/04/15/inenglish/1555317222_931024.html.

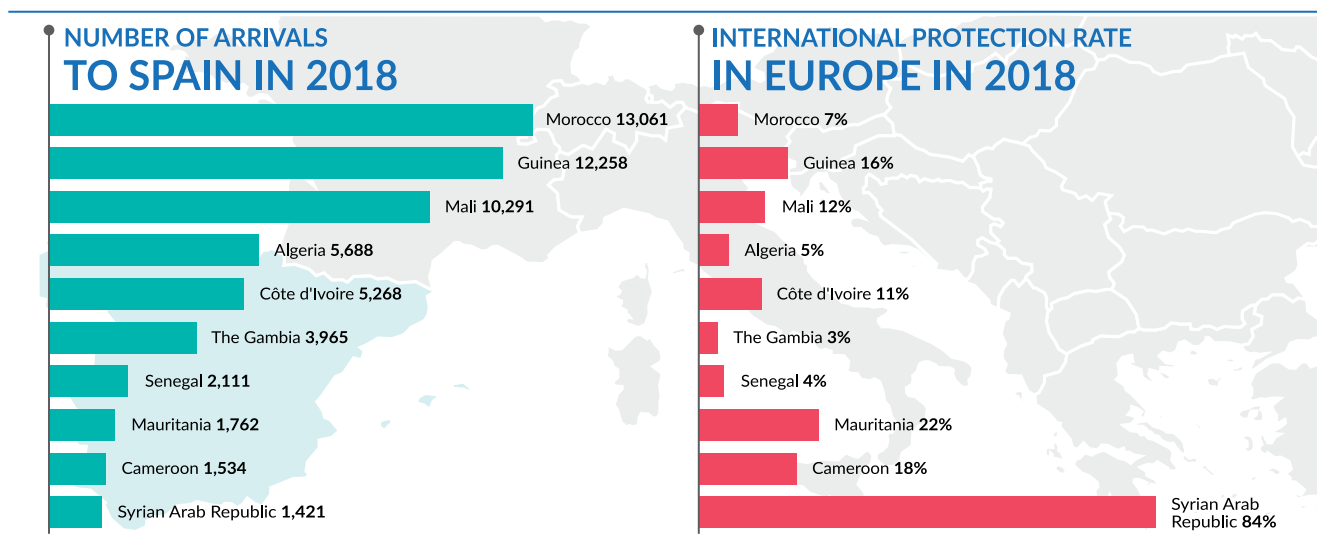
¹⁰ Amongst the top ten nationalities that arrived in Italy, Malta and Spain in 2018 were Guineans, Malians, Ivorians, Gambians, Eritreans, Senegalese, and Sudanese. The remaining nationalities amongst the top 10 were Moroccans, Tunisians and Algerians.

¹¹ Eritreans and Sudanese.

¹² This is based on Eurostat data for the EU member states along with Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland on the international protection rates for Q1-3 in 2018 for the top 10 nationalities arriving via each route in 2018 according to the proportion of those nationalities amongst arrivals. This does not include persons granted humanitarian status.



Graph 1: International Protection rates of arrivals to Italy and Malta in 2018



Graph 2: International Protection rates of arrivals to Spain in 2018

In addition, many others who were victims of trafficking or other grave human rights violations, including torture, were likely to be in need of some form of humanitarian protection. Those who were granted humanitarian protection after crossing the Mediterranean Sea from Libya in recent years included victims of trafficking not qualifying for international protection, unaccompanied children, and individuals who had suffered severe abuses during their journey.

People on the move along the Central and Western Mediterranean routes have diverse reasons for undertaking this journey.¹³ Some are fleeing persecution and human rights violations, others are seeking family reunification or better economic and/or employment opportunities, including supporting family members at home through remittances. Some are victims of human traffickers.¹⁴ A significant proportion of people on the move do not intend to reach Europe when they initially leave their country of origin.¹⁵ According to IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, Libya consistently features among the top three reported countries of final destination.¹⁶

Monitoring of social media suggests there is more understanding among communities about the risks along the routes and in Libya. Nevertheless, a number of people did not have full understanding of the risks and continued to embark on these dangerous journeys throughout 2018. Refugees participating in focus groups in the East and Horn of Africa as part of UNHCR's 'Telling the Real Story' information campaign¹⁷ reported that despite being aware of the risks, some felt they had no other alternative but to undertake the dangerous journey through Libya due to a lack of future prospects in refugee camps, especially as they relate to opportunities for education, employment to support family at home, and family unity.¹⁸

¹³ UNHCR, *Eritrean, Guinean and Sudanese Refugees and Migrants in Italy*, January 2019, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5c667ab84.html>; UNHCR, *Refugees and Migrants Arriving in Spain*, January 2019.

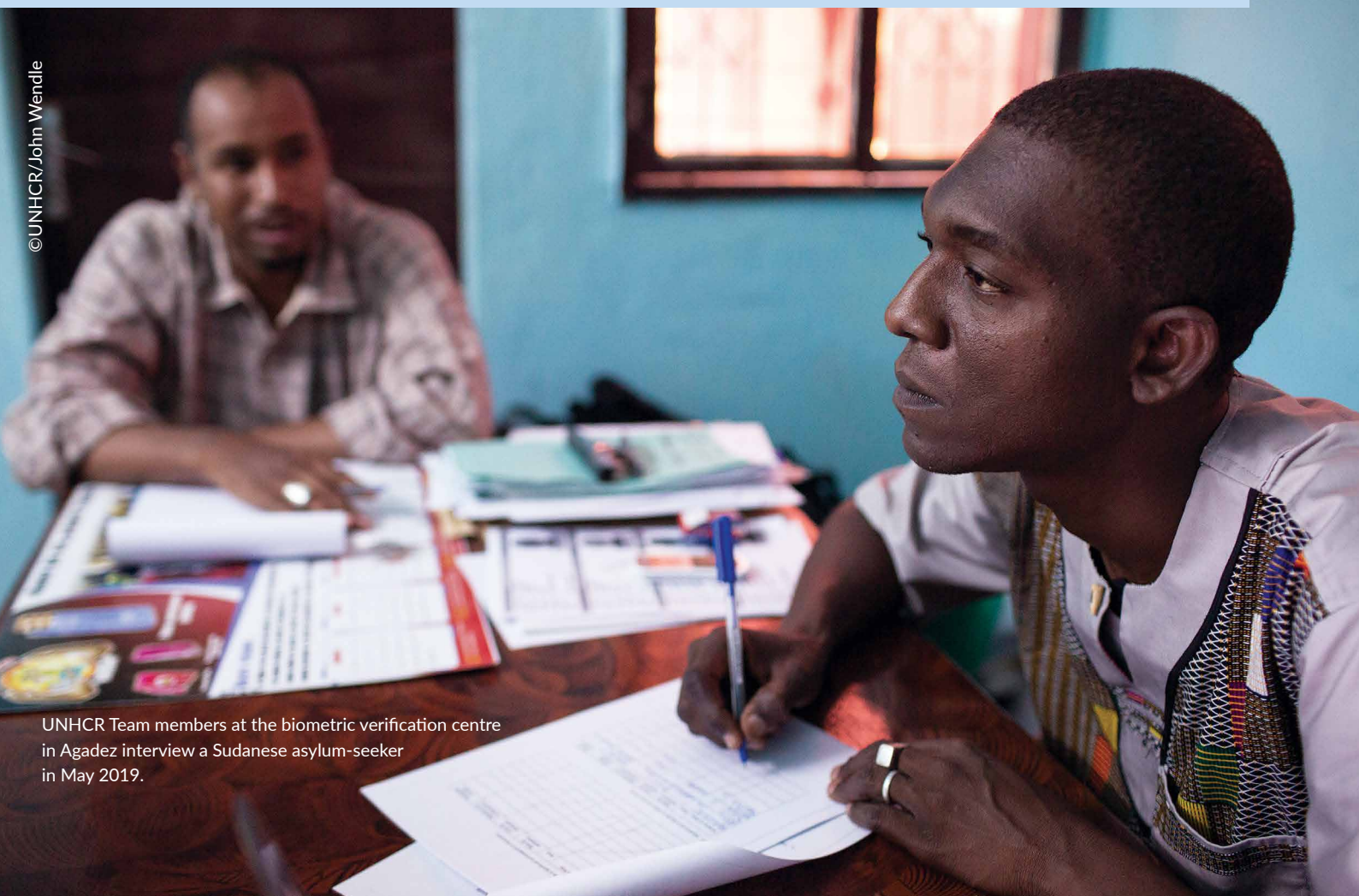
¹⁴ See UNHCR, *Refugees and Migrants Arriving in Spain*, January 2019.

¹⁵ For example, in UNHCR profiling of over 900 Eritreans, Guineans and Sudanese nationals in Italy in 2017, 65% of Eritreans, 24% of Guineans and 49% of Sudanese nationals intended to come to Europe at the time they departed home. See UNHCR, *Eritrean, Guinean and Sudanese Refugees and Migrants in Italy*, January 2019.

¹⁶ IOM, *Displacement Tracking Matrix: Libya's Migrant Report - Round 18*, March 2018, https://displacement.iom.int/system/tdf/reports/DTM%20Libya%20Round%2018%20Migrant%20Report%20%28March%202018%29_0.pdf?file=1&-type=node&id=3527. IOM, *Displacement Tracking Matrix: Libya's Migrant Report - Round 24 - January to February 2019*, February 2019, <https://migration.iom.int/system/tdf/reports/R24%20migrant%20report.pdf?file=1&-type=node&id=5516>.

¹⁷ UNHCR, *Telling the Real Story*, <http://tellingtherealstory.org/>.

¹⁸ See UNHCR, *Desperate Journeys: January to December 2018*, January 2019.



Some refugees interviewed by UNHCR upon arrival in Italy from Libya reported having had no clear destination in mind when they fled their country.¹⁹ However, the lack of reception capacity (including temporary accommodation, access to basic services and material assistance) particularly in urban areas in most countries through which refugees and migrants travelled, was a key trigger for onward movement. Strengthened protection services and effective referral systems along the main routes, including through community mobilisation and empowerment, would help target persons with specific needs, enhance their access to registration and asylum procedures, improve their protection against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and could provide meaningful and accessible alternatives to dangerous journeys, including through employment and education opportunities. For example, in Agadez, Niger, UNHCR is working with the Government, IOM and NGOs to identify asylum-seekers amongst those attempting to travel onwards and provide them with assistance and information. As of March 2019, over 1,600 had been registered by UNHCR, 11% of whom were unaccompanied or separated children. The majority are seeking asylum in Niger.²⁰

While the voluntary return of migrants to their countries of origin, including through Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programmes, remained a key priority for transit and donor countries in 2017 and 2018, adequate investment to ensure access to international protection and solutions for refugees along the route has been insufficient. There has been a reported decrease of arrivals to Libya in 2018,²¹ however there is no verifiable data to support this trend because reports covering the migratory flow did not cover all countries along the route. Some limited return movement of refugees and migrants from Libya to Niger was observed in 2018,²³² and a growing number also consider some other North African countries as potential destination countries.

A severe protection crisis is unfolding in Libya in the context of a deteriorating conflict since early April 2019. Many refugees and asylum-seekers continue to face serious risks to their safety, well-being and

basic rights. As a result, UNHCR is redoubling efforts to deliver protection and find swift solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers before they reach Libya. UNHCR and partners face significant constraints due to the lack of humanitarian access and outreach capacity as a result of the insecurity inside Libya and along its borders; limited resources to establish an adequate protection response mechanism; and non-existent or partially functioning referral mechanisms, leaving refugees and asylum-seekers on the move largely undetected and regularly exposed to grave human rights abuses.

Although arrivals from Libya to Europe in 2018 decreased by 86% compared to 2017, movements towards Libya and countries neighbouring Libya as well as Europe are likely to continue through the remainder of 2019, including due to persistent needs for international protection. Variances to the routes being used and the numbers attempting the crossing may likely vary, depending on availability of boats, interceptions and disembarkation practices, visa regimes, as well as smugglers' and traffickers' capacity to adjust to changing contexts. For example, in response to the increased role of the Libyan Coast Guard to intercept vessels, in the latter half of 2018, some smugglers equipped boats with the capacity to travel longer distances from the Libyan coast and beyond the Libyan Search and Rescue Region to eventually reach the Italian or Maltese Rescue Regions,²³ a practice that has continued in 2019.

¹⁹ UNHCR staff routinely gather information regarding journeys towards Europe at disembarkation and subsequently, where possible. See also V. Squire, A. Dimitriadi, N. Perkowski, M. Pisani, D. Stevens, N. Vaughan-Williams, *Crossing the Mediterranean Sea by Boat: Mapping and Documenting Migratory Journeys and Experiences, Final Project Report*, 4 May 2017, https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/researchcentres/irs/crossingthemed/ctm_final_report_4may2017.pdf; S. McMahon, and N. Sigona. *Boat migration across the Central Mediterranean: drivers, experiences and responses*, MEDMIG Research Brief No.3, 3 September 2016, <http://www.medmig.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/research-brief-03-Boat-migration-across-the-Central-Mediterranean.pdf>.

²⁰ UNHCR, *Niger Country Operation update*, March 2019, April 2019, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68915>.

²¹ See, for example, AFP, *Migrant crossings from Niger to Europe fall by 95% says EU*, 17 July 2018, <https://www.news24.com/Africa/News/migrants-crossing-niger-to-europe-falls-by-95-says-eu-20180717>.

²² See Clingendael and Mixed Migration Centre, *Southbound Mixed Movement to Niger: an analysis of changing dynamics and policy responses*, February 2019, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/68149>.

²³ See UNHCR, *Desperate Journeys: January to December 2018*, January 2019



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The use of the “go now, pay later” schemes by smugglers along the East African route is another cause for concern as it encourages more people, including children, to move onward in spite of the dangers these movements entail, including subsequent detention and torture for ransom. Since October 2018, smuggling networks organize some arrivals to Tunisia through the land border with Libya. Equally worrying is the current situation in Sudan, which will likely lead to increased departures of refugees and migrants towards Egypt and Libya.

SUCCESS STORIES: ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2018

The UNHCR Central Mediterranean Risk Mitigation Strategy launched in October 2017 outlined a cross-regional approach with activities in countries of origin, countries of transit, and countries of destination across North and Sub-Saharan Africa to Europe.

Progress in the implementation of the 2017 Strategy objectives was identified in the following areas:

- **Expansion of UNHCR's outreach, including the provisions of services, directly or through partners, to persons moving along the routes towards Libya** led to an increase in the number of people identified as in need of international protection. For example, in collaboration with partners outside the capital cities, people of concern were identified and given necessary assistance in Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger and Tunisia as a result of UNHCR's expanded presence. Projects with the National Red Cross Societies to enhance identification and referral of persons of concern to UNHCR²⁴ were also launched in Senegal (2018) and The Gambia (2019). In Libya, UNHCR also managed to reach a limited number of persons of concern in the East and parts of the South through local partners.
- **Fifteen resettlement countries have pledged almost 41,000 resettlement places in response to UNHCR's initial appeal for 40,000 resettlement**

places from fifteen priority countries²⁵ along the Central Mediterranean route.²⁶ The Central Mediterranean Core Group for Expansion of Resettlement and Complementary Pathways under the chairmanship of France played a key catalytic role in this endeavour. By December 2018, a total of 28,399 refugees were submitted for resettlement and 13,399 have departed. This programme has significantly increased access to safe and legal alternatives to dangerous journeys via Libya.

²⁴ Persons of concern to UNHCR are those whose protection and assistance needs are of interest to UNHCR. This includes refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless people, internally displaced people and returnees.

²⁵ The priority countries include: Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Libya, Burkina Faso, Mali, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Mauritania.

²⁶ UNHCR, *Central Mediterranean situation: UNHCR calls for an additional 40,000 resettlement places*, 11 September 2017, <http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2017/9/59b6a5134/central-mediterranean-situation-unhcr-calls-additional-40000-resettlement.html>.



"The last weeks were the worst. The children were terrified by the fighting. Guards threatened to take one of my children away if they weren't quiet." Eritrean mother, Faradou and her children, aged 4 to 10, wait to board a bus at UNHCR's Gathering and Departure Facility in Tripoli, bound for the airport and a night flight to Niger in April 2019.

- **In Libya, persons of concern at heightened risk in detention centres were evacuated out of the country to Niger for onward solutions.** The Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) established in Niger permitted the evacuation of 2,782 persons who eventually had their cases processed for resettlement. A total of 1,366 evacuees departed on resettlement from Niger. Others left Libya for Italy under the humanitarian evacuation scheme. In addition, UNHCR is seeking to broaden the scope for solutions out of Libya, including through evacuation to first countries of asylum or countries of previous admission.
- **The opening of the UNHCR ‘Gathering and Departure Facility’ in Tripoli since December 2018** will facilitate its humanitarian response to those most in need and help broaden the search for solutions for refugees held in detention, including through evacuation to countries of previous admission. It is necessary to reach agreement with additional countries to provide life-saving alternatives and to maximise access to resettlement and other complementary pathways.
- **An internal UNHCR research and analysis mapping exercise identified the primary protection risks along the different routes** and key areas where refugees and migrants faced them. This served as a means for country offices in the region to identify how best to respond, security permitting.
- **UNHCR conducted another internal mapping exercise to address information and analysis gaps for the organization all along the routes leading to Libya,** through standardized information management tools. This was developed with a view to enhance cross-border exchange of information between UNHCR field offices, and with partners, and to respond to specific situations and cases.
- **A protection dialogue between a select number of countries of origin in West Africa and destination countries in Europe was organized at Chatham House²⁷** in January 2018 to address

²⁷ Chatham House, *Central Mediterranean dialogue: fostering mutual understanding and common approaches between countries of origin in West Africa and European countries of destination*, July 2018, <https://chathamhouse.soutron.net/Portal/Default/RecordView/Index/172447>



A Somali refugee family at the Gathering and Departure Facility waits to be transported to the airport to be evacuated to Italy in May 2019. Amid violent clashes and a deteriorating security situation in Tripoli, 153 vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers were evacuated from Tripoli to safety in Rome.

cross-regional issues and concerns regarding documentation and civil registration, children on the move, missing persons, transnational programming for victims of trafficking, and the role of the diaspora. As a result, joint recommendations for future actions were made.

- **A dialogue between Mediterranean Coastal States took place in July 2018 in Geneva in response to growing challenges related to rescue at sea and disembarkation in the Mediterranean Sea.** The meeting called for predictable search and rescue capacity as well as the development and implementation of a regional disembarkation scheme, as per the UNHCR-IOM joint proposal.²⁸ Close and regular consultations with concerned NGOs and other stakeholders, including the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and representatives of the shipping industry also took place.
- **UNHCR continued to strongly advocate at national, regional and international levels for measures to hold perpetrators accountable for crimes of violence and exploitation,**

including kidnapping, rape, torture and trafficking in persons, and UNHCR supported international, regional, and national efforts to prevent and respond to human trafficking, in line with UNHCR's recommendations.²⁹

- **In West Africa, several key national and regional actors³⁰ agreed to pursue seven key priorities to enhance the protection** of people in need of international protection in the context of mixed movements, as agreed in a UNHCR-organized symposium on asylum and migration held in Dakar in December 2017.³¹ Building upon the symposium, a regional workshop on the Protection of Persons of Concern in Mixed Movement-sin West Africa was organized in Dakar in October 2018, as well as a regional UNHCR/UNICEF

²⁸ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2018/6/5b33d8bf4/iom-unhcr-appeal-region-wide-action-eu-countries-mediterranean-tragedies.html>

²⁹ See, for example, UNHCR, *Statement to the United Nations Security Council*, 2 November 2017, <http://www.unhcr.org/admin/hcspeeches/59fb25ad4/statement-united-nations-security-council.html>; Vincent Cochetel, Post on Twitter, 24 October 2017, <https://twitter.com/cochetel/status/922725779288535040>.

³⁰ The symposium included representatives of the national asylum authorities from all 15 West African countries and Chad, ECOWAS, the African Union, UNHCR, IOM, OHCHR, UNICEF, civil society and academics.



UNHCR holds a focus group with young unaccompanied minors at Shagarab refugee camp during the anti-trafficking campaign in east Sudan in July 2018.

retreat which identified the issue of children on the move as a prioritized theme for both organizations. These events elevated the importance and complexity of the issue of mixed movements in West Africa and paved the way for targeted engagement of all relevant actors in the region, including through ECOWAS.

- **The “Telling the Real Story” (“TRS”) initiative continues in East Africa³²** which facilitates intra-community dialogue to help counter misinformation on irregular journeys and provide useful alternatives. TRS has closely monitored the constantly changing smugglers’ narratives and effectively adjusted its messaging targeting those most at risk. For example, in Somalia,

thanks to the counter narrative and engagement of parents and neighbours, smugglers faced difficulties pitching their promises of a brighter future to children. Smugglers consequently decided to target the children and youth directly, which TRS is now seeking to address by providing those children with relevant and trustworthy information on education and employment prospects.

³¹The seven recommendations include: reinforcement of protection services provided by States to persons in need of international protection; Enhancing identification and referral mechanisms; Strengthening data collection and analysis to best inform policies and planned activities; Raising awareness of risks and improving communication with communities of people on the move or likely to move; Identifying effective solutions in countries of asylum, origin and transit, with a view to reducing life-threatening movements; Improving access to complementary pathways to a third country; Strengthening collaboration and partnerships in the context of asylum and migration.

³²UNHCR, *Telling the Real Story*.



“I left Sudan in 2016. I was born in a village in Darfur. There were many sporadic attacks over the years, but in 2011, they burned down the village. They killed my best friends, and some of my family members, my uncles. We left the village on foot to Zamzam camp in Sudan. I was with my parents and my six brothers and sisters.

There was rape of girls everywhere. But when you see this, if you say anything to intervene they beat you or they even kill you. I couldn’t stay there. I decided to pay a smuggler to take me to Tina, at the Chad/Sudan border. I spent just one week in Chad, I have no family or support network there so I could not stay. I took a car through the desert for seven days and on the 1st January, I reached the Libya border.

In Sabha, I was captured by militia/smugglers. They kept me there for four months, they beat me every day and demanded money. There was a group of us. When the guard slept one night, we broke down the door and escaped. We found a Sudanese person and we stayed with him for a few days. Then we paid another smuggler to take us to Sabratha.

It was two days journey in overcrowded cars. We were on top of each other, we could barely breath and there was no food. We stayed in Sabratha, in a smuggler warehouse until October 2017, around six months. Then, a conflict broke out in Sabratha. The Government forces discovered us and took us to a detention centre called Gharyan. We stayed there for two months. Then they took us to the Qaser Ben Ghashir detention centre.

My brother already made it across the Mediterranean, so I knew what to expect. He told me everything. But I had no other choice. I knew I could die in Libya, in the Mediterranean, but it is also the case in Sudan. So I made the choice to try.”

Mohydin, 27, from Sudan

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN 2018

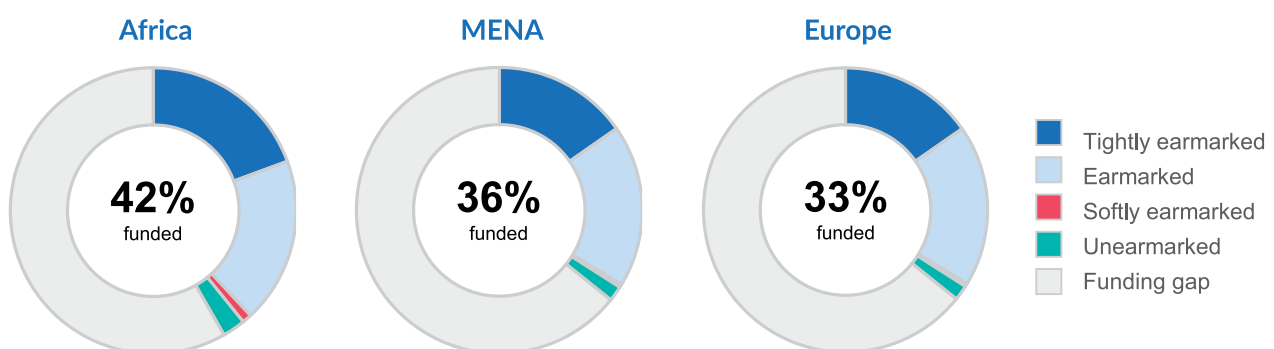
Growing insecurity in Libya, as well as in parts of Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Somalia caused new internal and cross-border displacement. In several transit countries, insecurity and a lack of Government permission for access negatively impacted the delivery of humanitarian assistance, limiting access for UNHCR and partners to key 'migratory hubs' where persons of concern to UNHCR were in dire need of protection and assistance.

The dire situation in detention centres in Libya coupled with **a challenging working environment**³³ hampered the swift identification of all those in need of international protection and durable solutions. UNHCR's restricted access to specific nationalities continued,³⁴ and this, along with the limited number of persons in need of protection able to be evacuated, left persons of other nationalities (in particular Malians) with no other option but to return home to unsafe conditions or to attempt the crossing of the Mediterranean Sea. Of those who returned home, some subsequently sought asylum in third countries, including Niger, as well as a limited number in Mauritania.

The 'Gathering and Departure Facility' only opened in Tripoli in December 2018, following a year long process of negotiations. The facility, which has the capacity to accommodate 1,000 persons, will eventually provide UNHCR and its partners with a space to provide humanitarian assistance and seek solutions for persons at heightened risk in Libya, including through broadened solutions (evacuation to the ETM in Niger or to countries of previous admission, resettlement directly out of Libya, family reunification and other complementary pathways for legal admission to third countries, return to country of origin, humanitarian corridor, etc). UNHCR strived to identify additional ETM host countries for the purpose of evacuation and in order to maximise access to resettlement and other solutions out of Libya.

Voluntary repatriation movements which could also positively contribute to decreasing onward movements **remained under-funded.** In spite of some progress made in 2018 with returns to Sudan, Chad, and Somalia, there remained significant additional efforts to be made, including in reintegration programming. For example, due to lack of funding, some 4,808 Chadian returnees from Sudan did not receive adequate reintegration assistance while the voluntary repatriation of Darfuri refugees to Sudan from Chad was delayed several times, and only 1,769 Darfuri refugees returned to Sudan by 31 December 2018.

A lack of financial resources significantly constrained the implementation of important activities identified in the 2017 Risk Mitigation Strategy, including the improvement of reception systems for asylum-seekers and victims of trafficking in key transit countries as well as programmatic interventions for refugee children and youth, in particular in camps and settlements. Coupled with reduced WFP food assistance, lack of education and income generating opportunities, for example in Chad and Sudan, further increased risks of onward movement. More generally, even though contributions at country and regional level were supportive and appreciated, the levels of un-earmarked or broadly earmarked contributions did not provide UNHCR with the required flexibility to effectively respond.



**Including indicative allocation of softly earmarked and un-earmarked contributions.*

Funding levels for UNHCR Central Mediterranean Situation in 2018 – Indicative figures³⁵

³³ See UNSMIL and OHCHR, *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*, 20 December 2018.

³⁴ UNHCR, *UNHCR Position on Returns to Libya - Update II*, September 2018, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b8d02314.html>.

³⁵ While Greece remains part of the situation, it has not been included in these figures as a majority of its needs are covered by earmarked contributions

THE FUTURE: OUTLOOK FOR 2019-2020

The scale of forced displacement in Africa and its protracted nature requires innovative and robust approaches to tackle root causes and implement approaches that support durable solutions. Until then, people will continue to seek safety and international protection, while others will try to seek a better life, hoping to find work or educational opportunities elsewhere. North African countries may witness an increase in the number of arrivals whose destination may either be final or in transit onwards to Europe. Sea arrivals from North African countries to Europe will also continue, with Morocco expected to remain the main point of departure. The insufficient capacity of coastal states, including the Libyan Coast Guard/ Navy, coupled with the reduced capacity of NGOs to undertake rescue at sea (a trend observed since mid-2018)³⁶ may likely encourage some smugglers and human traffickers to alter their business models and this may continue to place lives at risk.

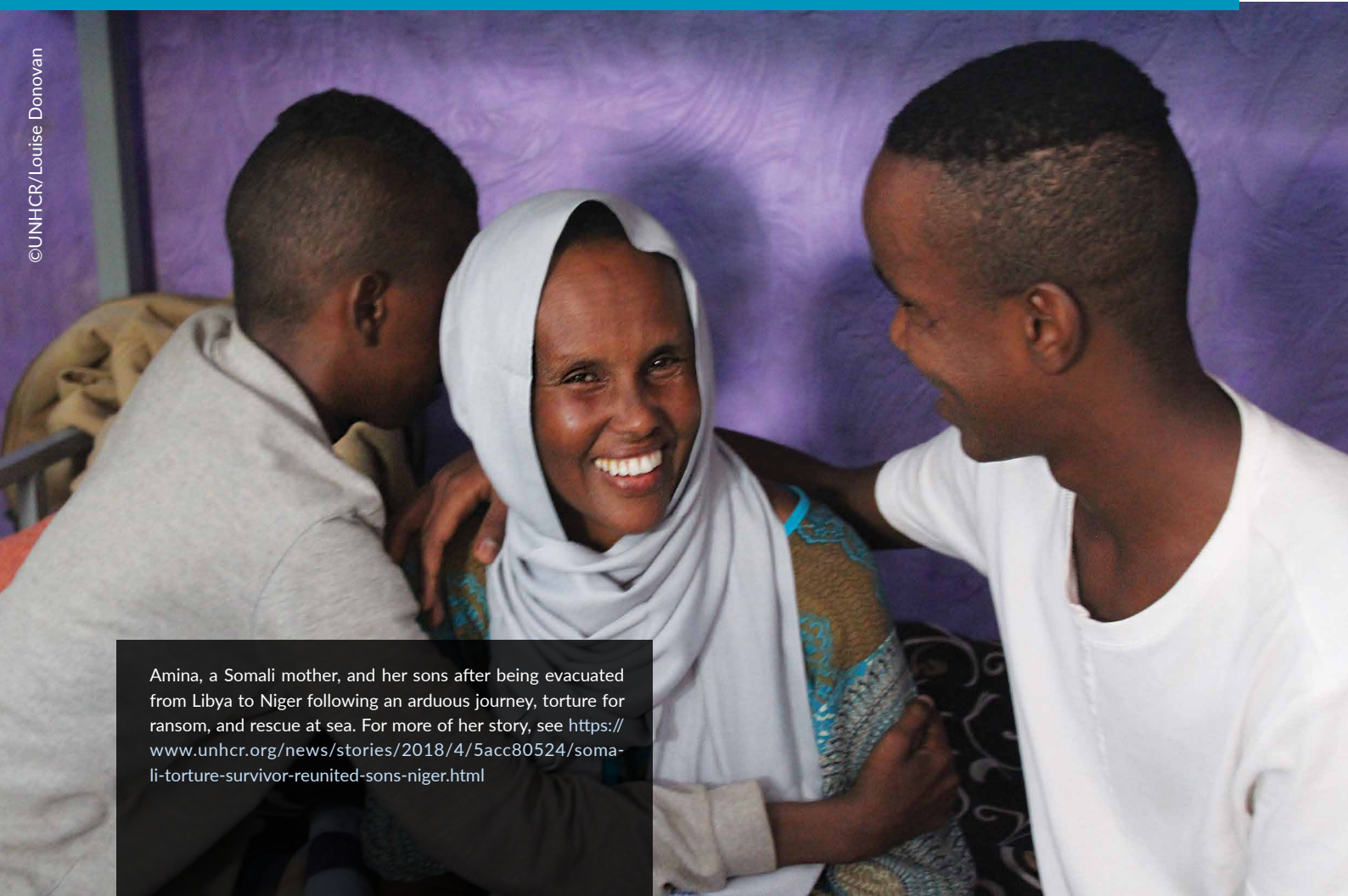
Departures from North African countries will depend on the scale, scope and nature of border control

measures in place both at sea and on land, the availability of legal alternatives, the visa regimes imposed on third country nationals, the impact of counter-trafficking/smuggling measures taken, as well as the adoption and effective implementation of comprehensive asylum and migration management systems.

While political and low level military instability in key transit countries has the potential to increase onward movement and eventually cause backflows,³⁷ or pendular movements across North African countries, the tightening of border controls initiated in 2017/2018 in some of these countries might trigger shifts in the directions taken, with circumstantial evidence pointing to a variety of routes being used (e.g. Niger-Algeria-Libya, Mali-Algeria-Morocco, Libya-Tunisia, Libya-Niger, etc).

³⁶ See UNHCR, *Desperate Journeys: January to December 2018*, January 2019.

³⁷ UNHCR noted in 2018 a backflow from Libya to Niger, namely to Agadez. Within this new phenomenon, at least 1,800 people, mainly of Sudanese nationality, have been identified as in need of international protection



Amina, a Somali mother, and her sons after being evacuated from Libya to Niger following an arduous journey, torture for ransom, and rescue at sea. For more of her story, see <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2018/4/5acc80524/somali-torture-survivor-reunited-sons-niger.html>

Registration of new asylum-seekers in UNHCR Offices in North Africa shows a significant increase in numbers in some countries, a trend that might continue in 2019. Reasons include the lack of alternative options in previously-crossed countries, effective interception practices by coastal States, and fears of being otherwise deported. In addition, many may no longer be able to afford the smuggling fees.

The prospect of improved security and restoration of rule of law in key countries along the way, which would be essential to further stabilize displaced populations, remains uncertain. Despite positive developments in South Sudan, the humanitarian situation has not seen any marked improvement and remains dire while internal and external displacement continues. The political rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea is yet to impact the departure rates while the situation in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Libya, Mali, Nigeria and Niger is triggering significant internal and cross-border displacement³⁸ which could eventually lead to secondary movements towards North Africa and Europe.

Number of Persons of Concern Registered by UNHCR in North Africa

	Algeria	Egypt*	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia
2017	2,259	47,272	6,519	2,787	411
2018	2,808	30,076	15,139	3,784	666

*More than 11,200 persons were still waiting to register in Egypt as of the end of 2018

³⁸ UNHCR, 42,000 Libyans now displaced by Tripoli clashes, UNHCR among those providing aid, 30 April 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2019/4/5c-c80ab74/42000-libyans-displaced-tripoli-clashes-unhcr-among-providing-aid.html>; UNHCR, UNHCR alarmed at upsurge in violence in south-east Niger, 9 April 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2019/4/5cac53cd4/unhcr-alarmed-upsurge-violence-south-east-niger.html>; UNHCR, UNHCR says funds urgently needed for displaced Cameroonians, 26 March 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2019/3/5c99e8254/unhcr-says-funds-urgently-needed-displaced-caeroonians.html>; UNHCR, Continued insecurity hampering aid efforts in Burkina Faso, 12 March 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2019/3/5c8776214/continued-insecurity-hampering-aid-efforts-brukina-faso.html>.

PRIORITIES FOR 2019-2020

Because of the funding gaps illustrated above, which are expected to continue in 2019-2020, UNHCR could not prioritize within its programme a number of interventions that have the potential to furthering refugee protection and access to solutions in key refugee hosting areas, and therefore reduce the risks associated with onward movements. Considering progress against the 2017 Risk Mitigation Strategy, funding trends, feedback from refugee communities during consultations and mindful of operational realities and experiences, UNHCR has identified the following target activities it will engage in, with further support:

1. **Enhance jointly with partners outreach, assistance and services delivery (food, shelter, health, psycho-social support etc) along key routes**, as a means of increasing the identification of people with international protection needs and providing them with aservices where they are.
2. **Provide meaningful alternatives to dangerous irregular movements**, including through improved access to asylum procedures, registration, services as well as inclusion of refugees into the national development systems that would ensure and protect the dignity, rights and aspirations of refugees while improving their resilience.
3. **Increase access to resettlement and complementary pathways in the 15 countries along the Central and Western Mediterranean routes** to ensure a comprehensive regional protection response, reduce onward movements and avoid the creation of pull factors towards Libya and Niger.
4. **Expand the scope for swift solutions out of Libya**, including through the use of the Emergency Transit Mechanism for evacuation via Niger and other countries, the increased use of the Gathering and Departure Facility in Tripoli, as well as increased resettlement directly from Libya.

5. **Strengthen child/youth protection programming in four priority countries,³⁹ including through facilitated family reunification**, as a means to address the concerning levels of unaccompanied children and separated children, as well as the youth traveling from the East and Horn of Africa or West Africa via Libya to Europe.
6. **Support the development and implementation of a Regional Disembarkation Mechanism** that ensures a consistent and predictable response to rescues in the central Mediterranean Sea, advocate for increased rescue capacity, and provide technical assistance where needed.
7. **Pursue efforts to prevent and protect refugees and asylum-seekers from falling victim to trafficking and other serious crimes, in cooperation with partners.** This includes through strengthening the identification, systematic assessment of eventual international protection needs and immediate protection of victims, advocating for perpetrators to be held accountable, and raising the awareness of persons of the risk associated with onward movement, including through targeted messaging regularly updated with testimonies.
8. **Continue to invest in and strengthen the Telling the Real Story initiative⁴⁰** as an innovative means of countering the narrative of human traffickers and smugglers and providing useful information on meaningful alternatives to irregular dangerous journeys. Additional testimonies will be sought to further inform people about the risks related to the route via Morocco to Spain, and a pilot platform will be established in Egypt to further disseminate information on protection services available as well as alternative pathways to legal admission in destination countries.

³⁹ Ethiopia, Sudan, Egypt and Libya.

⁴⁰ UNHCR, *Telling the Real Story*.



A Sudanese refugee collects her monthly cash assistance at a post office in 6th of October City, Cairo in December 2018.



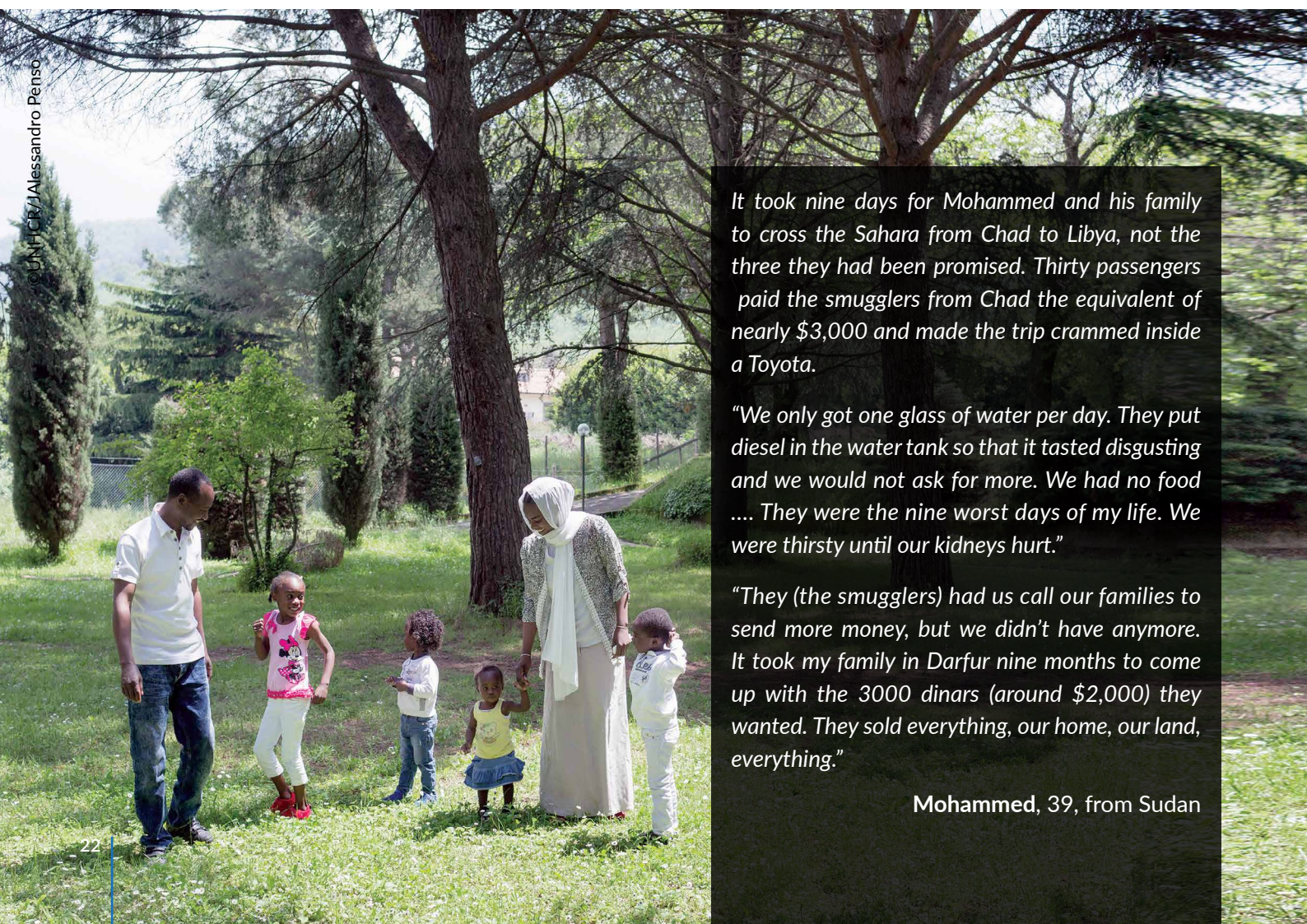
In Libya, key underfunded activities in relation to refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons revolve around improving access to basic services and humanitarian assistance, including measures to support self-reliance and physical safety in urban settings, ending detention, ensuring the fast processing of persons of concern in detention for protection and for broadened solutions, including resettlement (directly to the receiving country or indirectly through evacuation to the ETM Niger/Emergency Transit Centre Romania), evacuations to countries of previous admission/registration, voluntary repatriation, family reunification, and other complementary pathways for admission to third countries. Following a year of negotiations, the ‘Gathering and Departure Facility’ eventually opened in Tripoli in December 2018, offering UNHCR and its partners a safe environment where vulnerable persons of concern, in particular children in detention, are accommodated, pending their access to solutions. Evacuation from Libya will remain high in 2019 and UNHCR is encouraging new ETM host countries beyond Niger to come forward as well as is advocating for additional resettlement and other legal pathways opportunities. Resettlement access to and complementary pathways efforts will also be further pursued in the fifteen priority countries with the aim of increasing access to this solution for those most vulnerable. In addition, and depending on security and the availability of partners, UNHCR will seek to further expand its operational outreach in the south and east of Libya.

In all **North African countries**, the expected increase in the number of asylum-seekers will initially be met by the deployment of UNHCR’s rapid response teams to register, document, assist and conduct status determination. **With additional resources, UNHCR will be able to support states** to take on increased responsibilities in managing asylum, including registration, documentation, reception and access to basic services and livelihoods benefitting both persons of concern and hosting communities. On the basis of the UNHCR-IOM 2018 proposal for a predictable Regional Disembarkation Mechanism, and with the agreement of the Governments concerned, UNHCR will seek access to persons of concern in detention of all nationalities, including following their rescue/interception at sea.

In **all concerned Sub-Saharan African transit countries**, UNHCR will seek to actively expand its operational outreach in key mixed movements hubs, in close partnership with IOM, UNICEF, and IFRC. Support for the identification and reception of persons in need of international protection will be sought, and the capacity of the asylum authorities and systems strengthened. UNHCR is in particular pursuing a strategic regional collaboration with the IFRC with a view to enhance access to protection services through community-based mechanisms. In addition, the operationalization of the commitments made in the context of the Global Compact on Refugees,⁴¹ including in support of comprehensive national and regional responses to refugee situations will remain strategically essential to unlock local solutions and enhance international solidarity. Local solutions include access to national services, freedom of movement, the right to work and access to educational opportunities. Efforts will also be pursued to improve **protection services and programs for children and youth to prevent risky onward movements**. Given that many victims of human trafficking in the West Africa region are reportedly children, an important intervention will be made to develop standards of protection for victims of trafficking, to increase prevention measures among refugee populations including through awareness-raising and monitoring activities, and to strengthen the referral and protection of victims through advocacy and capacity-building initiatives. Last but not least, communication programming with communities at risk of onward movements and involving diaspora communities will continue in Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria (as a country of origin), Sudan and Somalia.

In **countries of origin**, UNHCR must seize all opportunities to facilitate access to voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity and ensure targeted reintegration programming to sustain those returns. In addition, and where appropriate with the active involvement of the diaspora, UNHCR will pursue its information campaigns to counter the narrative of smugglers and human traffickers and support access to meaningful alternatives.

⁴¹ The Global Compact on Refugees – final draft, 26 June 2018, <https://www.unhcr.org/events/conferences/5b3295167/official-version-final-draft-global-compact-refugees.html>.



It took nine days for Mohammed and his family to cross the Sahara from Chad to Libya, not the three they had been promised. Thirty passengers paid the smugglers from Chad the equivalent of nearly \$3,000 and made the trip crammed inside a Toyota.

“We only got one glass of water per day. They put diesel in the water tank so that it tasted disgusting and we would not ask for more. We had no food They were the nine worst days of my life. We were thirsty until our kidneys hurt.”

“They (the smugglers) had us call our families to send more money, but we didn’t have anymore. It took my family in Darfur nine months to come up with the 3000 dinars (around \$2,000) they wanted. They sold everything, our home, our land, everything.”

Mohammed, 39, from Sudan

ACROSS ALL REGIONS

CHILDREN AND YOUTH ON THE MOVE

Children and youth continue to take dangerous routes to reach Europe. Instability, human rights abuses and lack of opportunities in their countries of origin are among the primary motivation for their move. A large number of children and youth also engage in this journey with the hope to reunify with relatives or friends who have left for Europe previously and who may have received refugee or subsidiary protection status. In Shire, Ethiopia, approximately 30% of almost 11,000 unaccompanied or separated children (UASC) have relatives in third countries. Most of these relatives are immediate family, i.e. biological parents or siblings. A total of 3,536 UASC arrived by sea in Italy in 2018, representing 15% of all arrivals.⁴² As they move on, children and youth at-risk continue to be exposed to a variety of human rights abuses and face exploitation,

trafficking, kidnapping and detention. A September 2017 joint UNICEF and IOM study found that over 75% of children and youth who took the Central Mediterranean route had suffered some form of exploitation, including human trafficking. Over 60% of children reported having been held against their will and just under half of all children endured forced labour without compensation.⁴³

⁴² UNHCR, Italy – *Unaccompanied and Separated Children Dashboard* – December 2018; January 2019, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download>

⁴³ UNICEF, *Harrowing Journeys: Children and youth on the move across the Mediterranean Sea, at risk of trafficking and exploitation*, September 2017, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/59b7fdd74.html>. Statistics cited include all nationalities as the report did not differentiate between refugees and migrants.

Some of the 15 minors among a group of 47 people rescued at sea are met by UNHCR staff in Catania, Italy and taken to reception centres in January 2019.



To effectively respond to their needs and prevent further risks, UNHCR is calling for robust programmatic interventions in countries of asylum along the route, including through:

- Reviving the successful and multi-year, cross-regional Live, Learn and Play Safe (LLPS)⁴⁴ initiative which will bring resources to three key transit countries with high rates of UASC moving onwards (Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia) as well as bolster child protection programming within Libya for the urban populations there. The initiative will call for enhanced child programming, including through inclusion in national systems, promoting family-based care, expanding access to psychosocial support, recreational activities, education and livelihood opportunities and redoubling efforts to find lasting solutions;
- Enhancing youth programming through the LLPS initiative and promoting the inclusion of youth programming in the operational priorities of the

region. This includes expanding resources for youth-led projects such as the Youth Initiative Fund and providing targeted support, assistance and programming for youth transitioning to adulthood who are at-high risk of onward movement;

- Expanding access to family reunification for children and youth at-risk in line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). A legal assistance pilot project with NGO partners (RefugePoint and the International Refugee Assistance Project) will be launched in mid-2019, which will target children and youth at-risk who qualify for family reunification from four key countries (Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya) and assist them and their families abroad to file high-quality family reunification applications, even for complex cases.

⁴⁴ UNHCR, *UNHCR Child Protection Regional initiative – Live, Learn and Play Safe 2014-2016, 2014*, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/53bbc6314.html>.

UNHCR staff members accompany two Eritrean children from a Libyan detention centre in April 2018 after successfully advocating for their release in order to be reunited with their mother in Switzerland. For more on their story, see <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2019/1/5c49e39a4/eritrean-minors-reunited-mother-eight-year-odyssey.html>



SEARCH AND RESCUE

In light of the continued loss of life at sea, UNHCR will continue to advocate for efforts by all actors to save lives at sea, and seek to reinforce its activities aimed at:

- Strengthening collective engagement and responses including, among other things, through promoting a Regional Disembarkation Mechanism for search and rescue operations, with states, multi-lateral and private operators (commercial ships and NGOs) and other relevant actors;
- Contributing, with other stakeholders, to the training of concerned coast guards or others as appropriate on applicable international refugee and human right standards, and sharing good practice at disembarkation and post-disembarkation points, including for effective screening and referral of persons with possible international protection needs or other specific needs;
- Improving current disembarkation procedures to better identify persons in need of international protection and those with other specific needs (i.e. unaccompanied and separated children or victims of trafficking), provide appropriate assistance to all those rescued at sea and improve their tracing post-disembarkation. UNHCR is ready to assist States in the processing of persons following rescue/disembarkation at sea in accordance with its mandate; and
- Promote through roundtable exchanges better understanding of the concept of shared responsibilities between concerned states whereby responsibility for search and rescue efforts and disembarkation would, under regional arrangements for predictable cooperative responses (such as the Regional Disembarkation Mechanism), not necessarily be linked to responsibility for providing appropriate and differentiated solutions for those disembarked.



UNHCR staff distribute leaflets about international protection to passengers disembarking the Sea Watch 3 vessel in the Sicilian port of Catania in January 2019.

TRAFFICKING AND OTHER SERIOUS CRIMES AGAINST REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

Groups engaged in smuggling, trafficking, kidnapping for ransom, terrorism, forced labour, sexual exploitation or trading weapons and drugs continue to operate along different parts of the Central and Western Mediterranean routes. In line with its 2017 counter-trafficking recommendations, and in support of UNODC's lead role on the matter, UNHCR will pursue its advocacy efforts for enhanced engagement of concerned stakeholders in filling the critical gaps to effectively counter human trafficking as well as abuses by smugglers, in particular, notably through:

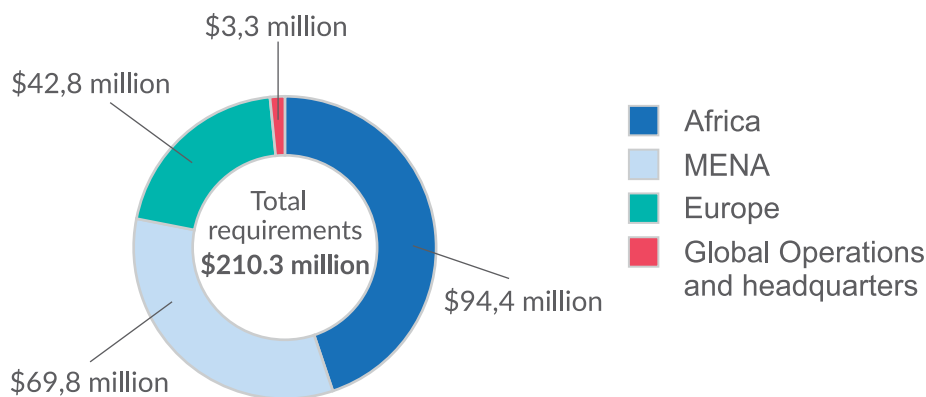
- Taking measures to strengthen protection for victims of trafficking and abuses by smugglers and those at risk, including through enhanced identification at borders, in detention or at disembarkation points; systematic assessment of eventual international protection needs and referral to adequate services such as shelter and witness protection as required; access to adequate information related to the specific assistance available to victims of trafficking or abuses by smugglers; as well as enhancing transnational programming and exchange of good practices with partners for the protection of victims, in particular women and children;
- Working with UNODC and other partners, especially governments, to establish or strengthen, where relevant, national and regional counter-trafficking and smuggling legislation and action plans to ensure adherence to and implementation of applicable standards, including through coordination and protection-sensitive referral mechanisms;
- Advocating for the increased sharing of information on known perpetrators and of good practices between relevant law enforcement agencies to counter trafficking, prosecute perpetrators and ensure victims' access to justice; the further use of the existing Sanctions Committee on Libya in relation to individuals and companies facilitating trafficking to and through Libya; as well as additional measures to combat the ongoing transnational criminal activities related to the sexual exploitation of girls and women, particularly from Nigeria, trafficked across West Africa, the Mediterranean Sea, and within EU Member States.



“When we arrived [at Bani Walid] armed men forced us into an underground cell, with 500 other prisoners and beat us all day and all night. We were told to call our families and they demanded 10,000 Dinars (US\$7,000) for each of us.”

Yasir, a Sudanese asylum-seeker forced to flee persecution in his country, is recovering at UNHCR’s Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) camp outside Niamey

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS 2019⁴⁵



THE IMPORTANCE OF FLEXIBLE FUNDING FOR UNHCR'S SITUATIONS

Crises are pushing people of concern to UNHCR into flight in multiple locations, over greater and greater distances. For cases where an emergency has repercussions that go beyond the borders of the country in which it originated, **UNHCR uses the term “situation” for its advocacy, planning, budgeting and fundraising.** Situations are interlinked, one crisis impacts on another, or is felt far away. Crossing borders and sometimes continents, situations reflect the operational complexity of today's displacement crises, and the concomitant difficulties UNHCR and its partners have in planning and responding.

Affecting three continents and more than a dozen countries, the Mediterranean situation is emblematic of this complexity and, given this complexity, UNHCR's response must be adaptable and reflective. For it to be effective, funding to these situations needs to be as **broadly earmarked as possible** as situational management reflects the complexity of today's environment of sustained and mass displacement. **Financial support needs to be flexible,** allowing UNHCR to place it anywhere within a given situation, in line with the Office's priorities, from where people in need are forced to flee, to where they find refuge. It needs to come as early as possible in order for UNHCR to plan in the most efficient manner possible, allocating to priorities first. This

situation will not cease to exist in the short term. To respond effectively, funding needs also to be multi-year in order to ensure long-term results are achieved efficiently and effectively. Based on this then, the preferences for income would be as follows:

- **Unearmarked funding** is the priority for resource mobilization. Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR the critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern in the greatest need and at the greatest risk.
- Secondly, funding which is **softly earmarked at the situational or regional level**, meaning funding that can be used across the range of countries and activities in a given region or situation in accordance with the priorities and activities identified by UNHCR.
- Thirdly, funding which is **earmarked at the country or operational level**. Funding of this type allows UNHCR to allocated funding to its planned activities within a country in a context specific manner.
- Fourthly, funding which is tightly earmarked to the sectoral or thematic level. This is the most restrictive level of funding.

⁴⁵ While Greece remains part of the situation, it has not been included in this Appeal because a majority of its needs are expected to be covered by earmarked contributions. UNHCR's 2018 Excom Budget for Greece amounts to \$ 240,000,000.

- Ideally, all funds raised should be multi-year allowing for long term planning or **flexibility in their implementation period**, meaning UNHCR should be able to carry funds over to the following

year. This will enable the smooth continuation of activities, make operations more predictable, and avoid situations of UNHCR receiving funds it may not be able to spend within the calendar year.

SUPPORT IN 2018 MADE A VITAL DIFFERENCE

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this situation in 2018 as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with softly earmarked and unearmarked funds. UNHCR has drawn from these funds to cover underfunded prioritised activities, enabling important help to be provided to refugees and other populations of concern.

UNHCR is grateful for contributions by the following unearmarked and softly earmarked donors:

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Sweden 98.2 million | Private donors Spain 82 million | Netherlands 47.1 million | United Kingdom 45.3 million | Norway 42.5 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 38.7 million | Japan 26.5 million | Denmark 25.5 million | Private donors Japan 24.2 million | Private donors Italy 21.2 million | Private donors Sweden 17.3 million | Switzerland 15.8 million | Private donors USA 14.9 million | France 14 million | Germany 13.7 million | Italy 11.2 million

SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

United States of America 466.9 million | European Union 19.9 million | Private donors Australia 16.4 million | Canada 10.1 million | Germany 7 million | United Kingdom 6.9 million | Italy 6.4 million | Netherlands 6 million | Sweden 4.3 million | Denmark 3.3 million | Switzerland 3.3 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 2.9 million | Private donors USA 2.7 million | UN Peacebuilding Fund 2.6 million | Private donors Sweden 2.4 million



Thanks to donor support, UNHCR was able to open the Gathering and Departure Facility in Tripoli in December 2018. The facility is intended to bring vulnerable refugees to safety while solutions are sought for them.



A bus drives along the road leading into the desert from Agadez, Niger.

© UNHCR/John Wendle

