

## Proposal for the Government of Italy

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Directorate General for Migration Policies  
and Italians Abroad

### Provision of basic needs and essential services to forcibly displaced people



*Somali refugee and mother of three is about to embark on an evacuation flight from Libya to Italy alongside 134 refugees*

**UNHCR Libya**

April 2025

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| <b>Project Title</b>                            | Provision of basic needs and essential services to forcibly displaced people                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Budget</b>                                   | EUR 4,500,000 (USD 4,653,568)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Implementation period</b>                    | 1 July 2025 - 30 June 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Beneficiaries</b>                            | <p>This project aims to contribute towards supporting a total of 112,000 refugees and asylum-seekers across the country who are receiving multiple services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 112,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in an urban setting will receive assistance and access protection services, including registration and documentation.</li> <li>▪ 25,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in detention centres and at disembarkation points will receive assistance and health services.</li> <li>▪ 1,000 refugees and asylum-seekers will receive a durable solution by means of life-saving evacuation or departure to a third country.</li> </ul>                                                                                                              |
| <b>Summary of Project and Expected Outcomes</b> | <p>In continuation of previous contributions generously granted by the Italian Government through the Migration Fund, UNHCR Libya will provide a range of protection services to refugees and asylum-seekers at heightened risk in the urban setting, including children and gender-based violence (GBV) survivors. The Italian Government funds will contribute to assisting refugees and asylum-seekers through the provision of cash assistance, non-food items (hygiene kits and core relief items), as well as medical assistance at disembarkation points, detention centres, and in urban settings in Tripoli and other parts of the country. Durable solutions will be sought for refugees and asylum-seekers by means of evacuation from Libya to safety in third countries.</p> |

\* The exchange rate used is 0.967 (UN rate March 2025). However, the final exchange rate applied will be determined by UNHCR HQ according to the date of receipt of the contribution.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Libya remains both a destination and a transit country for refugees and asylum-seekers heading to Europe. Current legislation classifies refugees as illegal migrants, exposing them to abuse, including arbitrary detention, inhumane treatment, and extortion. Addressing these issues is essential to ensuring their safety and dignity. By the end of January 2025, UNHCR had registered 82,549 refugees and asylum-seekers in Tripoli, including 61,243 Sudanese refugees.

In 2024, attempted sea crossings represented less than 5% of the total migrant population in Libya. In 2024, a decline has been noted with 41,484 migrants and refugees having arrived in Italy from Libya, compared to 52,034 during 2023. On the other hand, increased maritime monitoring by the Libyan Coast Guard contributed to a rise in interceptions and rescues at sea, with 21,762 individuals involved reportedly between January and December, compared to 16,670 during the same period in 2023 and 24,788 in 2022. In coordination with the Libyan authorities, UNHCR intervenes at disembarkation points (DPs), following rescue or interception at sea operations. In 2024, UNHCR had access to five disembarkation points<sup>1</sup> responding to 155 operations and assisting 11,551 survivors with lifesaving humanitarian and medical aid.

[REDACTED] UNHCR has access to 18 of the 30 official DCs operated by the Directorate for Combatting Illegal Migration (DCIM). This access allows UNHCR to assess detention conditions, identify individuals in need of international protection, distribute essential items (such as bedding and clothing), and conduct medical assessments, making referrals when necessary. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] In 2024, UNHCR advocated for, and facilitated the release of, 131 refugees, who were registered and provided with assistance. Since early 2025, 141 more have been released following similar efforts. [REDACTED]

Jointly with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNHCR's work in DCs is guided by the Principled Framework for Interventions in Detention Centres in Libya that ensures life-saving assistance, reaching those in need and ensuring coordination among all actors. UNHCR remains committed to providing lifesaving assistance, identifying those in need of international protection, advocating for their release and providing subsequent protection services including healthcare, essential relief items, and consideration of durable solutions for those released from detention. The Framework was revised and endorsed in January 2025 and reinforces the need for stronger engagement with Libyan authorities to promote releases from detention of those in need of international protection, alternatives to detention for vulnerable groups, such as children and women, and a tiered approach to providing life-saving assistance to detainees.

Durable solutions in Libya are available for only a small number of at-risk refugees and asylum-seekers owing to the available quotas from countries offering resettlement and complementary pathway opportunities. With 82,549 registered refugees and asylum-seekers in Libya the needs are huge. In

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<sup>1</sup> Tripoli Commercial Port, Tripoli Al Shaab Port, Tripoli Marine Club, Tajoura Port "Alhamidiya," and Marsa Delah in Azzawya.

2024, 1,500 at-risk refugees and asylum-seekers departed Libya safely and in dignity through resettlement (536 individuals), complementary pathways (such as family reunification – 45 individuals), evacuations via the ETM to Rwanda (564 individuals) and the Humanitarian Corridor to Italy (355 individuals). So far in 2025, 135 refugees have departed via the Humanitarian Corridor to Italy.

Since the war in Sudan began in April 2023, Sudanese refugees have steadily arrived in Libya, leading to its inclusion in the Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan in July 2024. Most enter via Alkufra in the southeast, then move north to Ajdabiya and Benghazi or westward to Tripoli for work and services. Others arrive from Chad in the south or from Egypt via Tobruk in the east. East-based authorities register refugees in Alkufra, issuing Security Registration Cards for movement and public service access.

By January 2025, UNHCR estimated over 240,000 Sudanese refugees had reached Libya, straining already limited resources in health, water, sanitation, food, cash assistance, and shelter. With continuous arrivals, urgent life-saving aid is essential to mitigate protection risks. In 2024, UNHCR provided critical support, including medical assistance, hygiene kits (HK), kitchen sets, solar lamps, bedding, cash aid, and psychosocial support, to over 50,000 Sudanese refugees.

Despite Libya's fragile security situation and ongoing threats, UNHCR has scaled up operations to meet growing needs. It maintains an established presence in Tripoli and Benghazi, with outposted teams in Misrata and Alkufra. UNHCR aims to establish operations in Sebha, where refugees enter from Chad, depending on security conditions.

As mentioned above, since July 2024, Libya is included in the Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) under the leadership of UNHCR. UNHCR is leading the response that is targeting 446,000 people, comprising 375,000 Sudanese refugees, 70,000 host community members and 1,000 third-country nationals, with multi-sectoral assistance in Alkufra, Benghazi, Tripoli and other parts of the country. Working with authorities and RRP partners, and in close collaboration with the UN RC/HC's Office, the response is coordinated through an inter-agency structure, including eight thematic task forces (Protection, Shelter & NFI, Food Security, WASH, Health & Nutrition, Education, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods, and Access). An Information Management Task Force supports data collection and management. The financial requirements for Libya are US\$106.6 million.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND TIMEFRAME

The project aims to achieve the following objectives:

**Protection:** Refugees and asylum-seekers have access to a range of protection services including registration, child-protection (best interest procedures), GBV case management, and processing for durable solutions.

**Assistance:** Increased access for refugees and asylum-seekers to basic services through the provision of cash, core relief items (CRIs), and health services.

**Solutions:** Evacuation of refugees and asylum-seekers at heightened risk having been identified and assessed for durable solutions.

The project will ensure the provision of assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers in detention centres, disembarkation points, and in urban settings across the country, in continuation to UNHCR's efforts last year, to which the Italian Government generously contributed.

The implementation of some activities in this proposal will, where possible, be undertaken with the support of Italian civil society organizations CESVI and INTERSOS, with the former providing in-kind assistance, protection support and assessments, mental health and psychosocial support, and child-friendly activities, and the latter offering legal assistance.

The proposed implementation period is from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

## **BENEFICIARIES**

Targeted beneficiaries will be refugees and asylum-seekers at departure points, in detention centres, registered by UNHCR in Tripoli and Sudanese refugees in the East. Throughout the implementation of activities, particular attention will be paid to persons at-risk and with specific needs (female-headed households, unaccompanied and separated children, elderly persons, and persons with special needs).

According to UNHCR registered data, 60% of the targeted population are males and 40% female. Of these portions, 20% are boys and 17% are girls, and 39% are men and 22% are women. Single males make up 26% of the male portion of the population and single females only 3%. Elderly men and women who are 60 plus years comprise 1% of each category. The majority of registered refugees are from three nationalities – Sudanese (73%), Syrian (11%) and Eritrean (10%).

The proposed interventions will focus on areas with a concentrated presence of refugees and asylum-seekers throughout the country. UNHCR will offer services through its main office in Tripoli, the field office in Benghazi, and the team in Alkufra. UNHCR is also exploring the possibility for a presence in the south if the situation allows.

A total of 112,000 refugees and asylum-seekers will be targeted with the activities outlined below.

## **PROPOSED ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **1. Provision of protection services, including registration and documentation, to refugees and asylum-seekers in the urban setting**

In line with its urban response programme, UNHCR aims to provide protection services and assistance to 112,000 refugees and asylum-seekers by means of:

- Registration and issuance of documentation
- Tailored protection services to vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers
- Child protection services, including child friendly spaces

#### **Sub-action 1.1 Registration and issues of documentation**

Access to territory, registration and documentation are essential for refugees and asylum-seekers arriving in Libya to facilitate UNHCR's advocacy in case of risk of *refoulement* and access to assistance and services. Registration activities are conducted at the UNHCR Sarraj Registration Centre in Tripoli

where UNHCR can register refugees and asylum-seekers of the following nationalities – Eritrean, Ethiopian, Iraqi, Palestinian, Somali, South Sudanese, Sudanese, Syrian and Yemeni.

Registered refugees and asylum-seekers are provided with documentation that allows them to access protection services and assistance tailored to their needs. Activities include new and continuous registration (bio-data updates, addition of children), interviews for durable solutions, and refugee status determination. Around 500 individuals pass through the centre daily. With the increase in the number of refugees and asylum-seekers for registration due to the Sudan situation, UNHCR scaled up registration activities in September 2024 by adopting an individual emergency registration dataset for newly arrived Sudanese. This has helped to reduce the waiting time overall between making the appointment and completing the registration to one month. On average, UNHCR registers between 3,000 to 4,000 refugees each month since the scale-up.

By January 2025, UNHCR had registered 82,549 refugees and asylum-seekers, including 61,243 Sudanese refugees. Registration enables access to essential services such as healthcare, core relief items, and tailored protection support, including psychosocial assistance, temporary care, and, in some cases, durable solutions.

### **Sub-action 1.2      Tailored protection services to vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers**

In addition to providing registration and documentation, persons with specific needs will have access to protection interviews where their specific conditions will be assessed to offer targeted solutions and, if required, referrals to specialized units or specialized organizations. The UNHCR registration centre has protection desks for survivors of gender-based violence and unaccompanied minors, and a private breastfeeding room for mothers.

At the community day centre (CDC), refugees and asylum-seekers will be provided with in-kind assistance, protection support and assessments, MHPSS (mental health and psychosocial support) including psychiatric and psychosocial support, and child-friendly activities. Refugees and asylum-seekers with specific needs will have access to assisted devices, such as hearing aids, glasses, wheelchairs, and walking aids. The CDC serves as a one-stop shop for refugees and asylum seekers, particularly those in urban areas, to access comprehensive support. The centre is the main hub for community engagement activities, operating on an appointment system and providing emergency support to the most vulnerable refugees. With over 400 individuals from multiple refugee nationalities supported weekly, the CDC plays a crucial role in addressing the needs of the refugee community.

Legal assistance will be provided in Tripoli, in homes, or via telephone. Services include legal counselling, mediation, representation (excluding criminal cases), and awareness-raising, with a focus on complex cases.

To better understand refugee needs, UNHCR conducts regular protection needs assessments and surveys. In 2024, UNHCR conducted 8,199 surveys, reaching over 20,400 refugees. These surveys inform programming and highlight refugees' journeys, family situations, and aspirations. In efforts to enhance communication with communities, information sessions will be provided for newly arrived refugees at the registration centre, covering feedback mechanisms, hotlines, and online platforms. Refugee committees will also play a crucial role in outreach, sharing lists of new arrivals and helping

assess needs for immediate and long-term assistance. In addition, focus groups discussions will be held divided into groups for women and girls, children, people with specific needs, men and boys, as well as community care givers to hear directly from the refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as about life in the communities.

### **Sub-action 1.3      Child protection services, including child friendly spaces**

Refugee children in Libya are among most vulnerable people UNHCR assists, with many not attending any form of regular education due to their illegal status in the country and language barriers to access public schools for those who do not speak Arabic. As of 31 December 2024, UNHCR had registered 2,135 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), with the majority being unaccompanied boys. Among the 1,753 children identified as requiring urgent protection interventions, key risks included family separation, child labour, lack of access to education, and vulnerabilities related to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The primary countries of origin were Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Syria.

A child-friendly space at UNHCR's registration centre in Tripoli, offers a safe space for children to socialize and provide them with a safe and supportive environment. Trained facilitators will provide structured play and recreational sessions for children ranging from 3 to 15 years old in sessions twice a week, where they will engage in activities designed to promote their development, well-being, and learning, contributing to their emotional and social resilience. In 2024, 11,392 refugee children participated in these sessions, which are part of UNHCR's efforts to provide psychosocial support and create a sense of normalcy for refugee children.

UNHCR will also conduct best interest assessments (BIA) for vulnerable refugee children to determine temporary care arrangements. Families caring for these children will be provided with in-kind assistance in order to cover the additional needs associated with caring for the child they are hosting.

## **2.      Provision of assistance and health services to refugees and asylum-seekers at DCs, DPs, and in the urban setting**

An estimated 25,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in detention centres and at disembarkation points, as well as in urban settings, will be targeted with the following activities:

- Life-saving healthcare in DCs, DPs, and in the urban setting
- Distribution of HK and CRIs in DCs, DPs, and in the urban setting
- Cash assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers in the urban setting

### **Sub-action 2.1      Life-saving healthcare in DCs, DPs, and in the urban setting**

Libya's health facilities are under-staffed, lack medical equipment, and are severely under-resourced. UNHCR expanded its health response in Libya, enhancing access to primary healthcare services for refugees, asylum-seekers, and vulnerable host communities. Health interventions focus on fixed healthcare services, ensuring medical assistance at disembarkation points, detention centres, and other health facilities.

Additional services are provided at the Community Day Centre including psychosocial support and child-friendly activities serving over 400 refugees weekly. Under collective outcome 2 (UNSDCF), and in close cooperation with UN sister agencies, UNHCR will strive to establish access to primary health care for refugees and asylum-seekers without identify documents, as well as referrals to secondary health care.

UNHCR will continue working in detention centres providing life-saving assistance consisting of primary healthcare services and referrals to secondary healthcare. In 2024, 5,042 medical consultations and 285 referrals were provided at detention centres. Similarly, UNHCR will provide life-saving humanitarian and medical aid at disembarkation points. Medical staff are on call 24/7 to respond to disembarkations of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants and will provide medical screenings, consultations, and treatments, as well as referrals to humanitarian actors operating in the DCs where the individuals are taken. UNHCR has access to five disembarkation points in the greater Tripoli area and in 2024, 1,191 medical consultations were conducted, and 109 referrals were made to specialized medical care.

#### **Sub-action 2.2            Distribution of HK and CRIs in DCs, DPs, and in the urban setting**

UNHCR also undertakes protection and provides lifesaving humanitarian assistance at disembarkation points, and will provide emergency food and water packs, and hygiene kits to individuals who have been rescued at sea. In 2024, UNHCR and partners responded to 155 operations in Tripoli and Azzawya, assisting 11,551 survivors, and provided 6,263 emergency food and water packs, and 5,268 hygiene kits.

At detention centres, UNHCR will provide protection and humanitarian services. These services offer key opportunities to undertake protection monitoring and to identify vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers with compelling humanitarian and medical needs, with a key focus on survivors of gender-based violence, women and children, unaccompanied and separated children, and persons with specific needs. UNHCR will advocate for their release from detention when they will be subsequently registered and receive core relief items and hygiene kits at the CDC. They will also receive cash assistance. In 2024, 131 people in need of international protection were released from detention, and 143 so far in 2025, following UNHCR advocacy.

Pending release, detainees will receive essential items, such as blankets, mattresses, clothing and hygiene kits to be able to cope with the conditions in the detention centre. In 2024, 31,381 core relief items and 14,726 hygiene kits were distributed to detainees.

For refugees and asylum-seekers in the urban setting, protection needs assessments help to identify individuals for targeted CRIs. This type of assistance is provided through distributions at the UNHCR Registration Centre or at alternative locations. In the east of Libya, UNHCR and partner Libaid distribute core relief items and hygiene kits to newly arrived Sudanese refugees in Alkufra, Benghazi, Ajdabiya and other towns and cities where Sudanese refugees are living. The standard CRI pack includes blankets, mattresses, tarpaulin, solar lamp, kitchen set, jerry can and hygiene kits. Baby diapers are provided to families with small children and adult diapers where necessary.

**Sub-action 2.3      Cash assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers in the urban setting**

Cash-based interventions are a critical pillar of UNHCR's humanitarian response in Libya, providing targeted financial support to refugees and asylum-seekers offering a flexible and dignified form of assistance that empowers individuals to make informed choices about their immediate priorities. Cash assistance will be provided to refugees and asylum-seekers, helping beneficiaries meet their most pressing needs. In 2024, 7,678 vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers received cash assistance.

Eligibility for Emergency Cash Assistance is determined through Protection Needs Assessments, ensuring aid reaches the most vulnerable. Criteria include homeless individuals seeking immediate shelter, survivors of severe violations, those with life-threatening medical conditions, victims of severe accidents, pregnant women or single mothers, and individuals released from detention.

Due to the political climate and cash liquidity issues in Libya, UNHCR will use a hybrid modality to supplement cash with vouchers, provided it is approved by the authorities, and in-kind assistance. In 2025, UNHCR will provide assistance in the form of vouchers for purchases at pre-selected vendors. The vouchers will support beneficiaries to purchase a wide range of commodities such as food, water, hygiene items, essential goods, clothing and medicines. In addition, beneficiaries will be supplemented with in-kind assistance to ensure all their basic needs are met.

**3.      Life-saving evacuation including identification and departure of refugees at heightened risks to third countries for durable solutions**

Finding durable solutions is a critical component of UNHCR's work in Libya. Although opportunities for solutions such as humanitarian evacuation flights remain limited, UNHCR continues to prioritize efforts to find alternatives for refugees and asylum-seekers at heightened risk.

UNHCR is facilitating the evacuation of refugees to the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) in Rwanda and through humanitarian evacuations to Italy. Refugees in the ETM are typically resettled to third countries, primarily in Europe and North America, with up to 500 expected to depart to Rwanda in 2025, where they will spend up to a year before final resettlement.

A Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR, the Italian Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, signed on 20 December 2023, extends the humanitarian corridor/evacuations to Italy for 1,400 refugees and asylum-seekers through 2026. In 2024, 1,500 refugees departed Libya through these mechanisms, including 564 to Rwanda and 355 to Italy. Another 581 were resettled in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Norway, and the Netherlands. In 2024, 355 refugees were evacuated to Italy, and 135 more departed in February 2025.

In 2025, the Italian Government's contribution will support evacuation efforts, with an expected 500 refugees departing each to Italy and Rwanda over twelve months.

**REPORTING AND VISIBILITY**

**Interim Report:** An interim narrative report will be provided nine months after the start of the implementation period providing a brief update on progress in the first six months of implementation.

**Final Report:** A final narrative and financial report will be provided within three months after the conclusion of the implementation period and will cover the whole implementation period.

**Visibility:** UNHCR will provide visibility to the Government of Italy and this contribution, highlighting its impact on the lives of the forcibly displaced populations. This will be done through social media platforms and external publications, UNHCR Libya's operational updates, produced in English and Arabic, and distributed widely to UNHCR interlocutors. All UNHCR's updates are published on the UNHCR Libya Data Portal and Global Focus website available globally.

## BUDGET

|                                                                                                                                        | EUR              | USD*             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Outcome area: [indicate outcome area]</b>                                                                                           |                  |                  |
| Provision of protection services, including registration and documentation, to refugees and asylum-seekers in the urban setting        |                  |                  |
| Registration and issues of documentation                                                                                               | 615,000          | 669,935          |
| Tailored protection services to vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers                                                                 | 700,000          | 762,527          |
| Child protection services, including child friendly spaces                                                                             | 300,000          | 326,797          |
| Provision of assistance and health services to refugees and asylum-seekers at DCs, DPs, and in the urban setting                       |                  |                  |
| Medical consultations and referrals in DCs, DPs, and in the urban setting                                                              | 200,000          | 217,865          |
| Distribution of HK and CRIs in DCs, DPs, and in the urban setting                                                                      | 50,000           | 54,466           |
| Cash assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers in the urban setting                                                                    | 50,000           | 54,466           |
| Life-saving evacuation including identification and departure of refugees at heightened risks to third countries for durable solutions | 900,000          | 980,392          |
| Staff costs                                                                                                                            | 1,410,352        | 1,536,331        |
| <b>Activities sub-total</b>                                                                                                            | <b>4,225,352</b> | <b>4,602,780</b> |
| <b>Indirect Support costs – 6.5%</b>                                                                                                   | <b>274,648</b>   | <b>2899,181</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                                                                                           | <b>4,500,000</b> | <b>4,901,961</b> |
| * The exchange rate used is 0.918 (March 2025)                                                                                         |                  |                  |

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