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The UN Refugee Agency



Kingdom of the Netherlands



► **Socio-economic
profiling of refugees
and asylum seekers
in Egypt**

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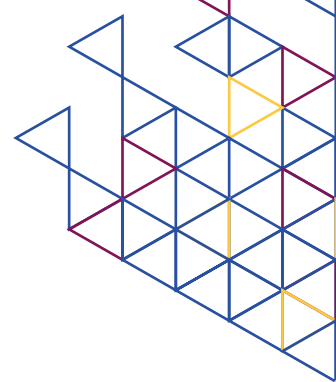
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Foreword



Egypt has a long and generous history at the crossroads of Africa, Europe, and the Middle East as a transit and a destination country for the forcibly displaced.

Today it hosts 289,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers. Exactly half originate from Syria, while others have arrived from Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, and Yemen. The majority live in Greater Cairo, Alexandria, and Damietta. This study is an attempt to survey and better understand the socio-economic characteristics of these vulnerable populations.

Its aims are practical: to better assist a social protection response that allows forcibly displaced communities to fulfil their potential and better contribute to the prosperity of Egypt.

It is the result of a collaboration between ILO and UNHCR through the Prospects partnership in Egypt, and has only been made possible through the continued and generous support of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

For that we express our gratitude, and to all stakeholders, including the Government of Egypt, who continue to work tirelessly on behalf of the forcibly displaced and their communities in Egypt.

PROSPECTS is a Netherlands-led partnership between the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UNICEF to operationalize the humanitarian development nexus, creating strong partnerships between humanitarian and development actors to leverage comparative advantages, improve coordination and efficiency to boost their overall impact for forcibly displaced persons and host communities.

The objective of PROSPECTS in Egypt is to improve the living standards and inclusiveness of refugees, asylum-seekers, and vulnerable host communities, by contributing to the expansion of socio-economic opportunities through better education and mainstreamed protection interventions. With a geographical focus on Greater Cairo, Alexandria, and Damietta, PROSPECTS Egypt works within three main pillars: (i) Education and Learning; (ii) Employment with dignity; and (iii) Protection and Inclusion.

Eric Oechslin
Director ILO Country Office for Egypt and Eritrea,
and Decent Work Team for North Africa

Dr. Hanan Hamdan
UNHCR Representative to the Arab Republic
of Egypt and to the League of Arab States



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Executive summary

This study profiles the socio-economic characteristics of refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt. It is based on a nationally representative sample of 2,600 working-age refugees (aged 15–64), drawn from the UNHCR registry of refugees and asylum seekers. The survey was conducted by phone from 17 November to 9 December 2021.

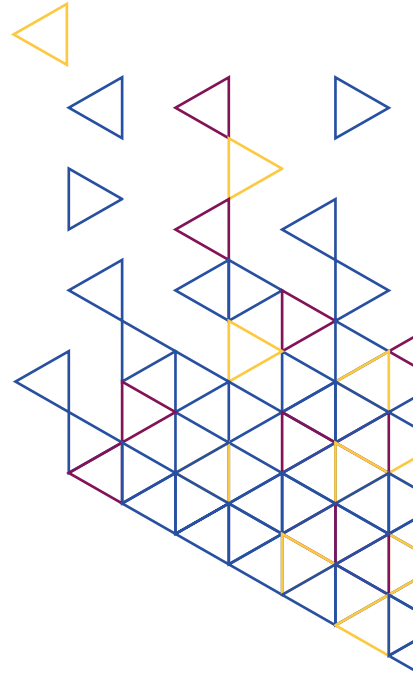
- ▶ Around half of the refugees in the sample are Syrian (48 per cent), 21 per cent are Sudanese, 10 per cent South Sudanese, 8 per cent Eritrean, 5 per cent Ethiopian, 3 per cent Yemeni, and 3 per cent Somali. All other nationalities accounted for 2 per cent of the sample.
- ▶ Almost all refugees (99.5 per cent) live in urban areas, with 86 per cent of refugees living in Greater Cairo, 10 per cent in Alexandria and 4 per cent in Damietta. Refugees in Alexandria and Damietta are almost exclusively from Syria; other nationalities are by and large settled in the Greater Cairo area. The mean household size is 3.7 persons. Although no formal restrictions apply, refugees tend to settle in one locality within Egypt; only 8 per cent of refugees changed their governorate of residence since they arrived in Egypt. The choice of the place of residence is reportedly dependent primarily on access to jobs. Few (20 per cent) indicate they need to remain where they live to support relatives.
- ▶ The mean duration of stay in Egypt is 7.1 years, the highest means were observed for Somalis, Syrians and Sudanese, while the lowest mean was recorded for Eritreans (4.6 years).
- ▶ Around 12 per cent of refugees have never been to school, 44 per cent completed primary or preparatory education, and 24 per cent have secondary education. The results also show extremely low vocational education (only 3 per cent) and an important share of refugees with tertiary education (16 per cent). Male refugees have only a slightly better educational attainment than females. Yemeni refugees have a distinctly higher educational attainment, while Somalis and Ethiopians have the lowest educational attainment (nearly two thirds have no education).
- ▶ A total of 83 per cent of refugees depend on wage-employment as their main source of income, and 70 per cent also receive social grants from the UNHCR; these represent the main income for 10 per cent of refugee households. Just 8.5 per cent get support from family and friends living in Egypt or abroad. Only 2 per cent of refugees have earnings from their own or family business (among those, most are Yemenis).

- ▶ The mean monthly income for refugees' households is 4,129 Egyptian pounds (£E), and per capita mean income is £E1,108 per month (compared with £E1,421 for Egyptians). The highest household incomes were recorded for Syrian refugees (£E4,772), then, with a large difference, for Somalis (£E3,806) and Sudanese (£E3,786). The lowest mean was recorded for Ethiopian refugees. Refugees living in Damietta (mostly Syrians) have the highest mean household income (£E4,724) compared with Greater Cairo (£E4,108) and Alexandria (£E4,091).
- ▶ Looking at their employment status, 41 per cent of refugees are currently working, 11 per cent are unemployed, 5 per cent are "discouraged" (willing to work but not actively searching for jobs) and 43 per cent are economically inactive (not willing or able to work). Only 26 per cent of females, as opposed to 55 per cent of males, report to be employed. The highest employment rate for female refugees was found among Eritreans (43 per cent), followed by Ethiopians (40 per cent) and Sudanese (38 per cent). The highest employment rates are in Damietta (82 per cent), then Alexandria (65 per cent); Greater Cairo has the lowest employment rates at 53 per cent.
- ▶ Almost all working refugees are employed informally without a work contract or social security coverage; only 1.3 per cent declared having a work contract. More than one third (36 per cent) of employed refugees are considered underemployed, that is, working fewer than 40 hours per week and willing to work more. On the other hand, a high proportion of employed refugees are also working long hours (with weeks of more than 48 hours).
- ▶ By comparing the employment status in the country of origin and the employment status in Egypt, the study finds high levels of human capital loss. More than a quarter of refugees (26 per cent) used to work in high-skilled jobs in their country of origin, compared with 12 per cent in Egypt, while 17 per cent of refugees worked as professionals in their country of origin but only 6 per cent do so in Egypt. High proportions of those who had worked as professionals, in services, sales workers or crafters became unemployed or had to settle for lower skilled jobs.
- ▶ About one third of refugees working reported having secured their work with help from family or friends, and more than 60 per cent declared having received no support from either an NGO or other employment services provider. Ethiopians seem to receive more from within their community networks, while Somalis mostly obtain help from associations and NGOs.



- ▶ A very high share (40 per cent) of refugees declare being economically inactive because of long-term illness, injury or disability (39 per cent), that is, incapacity to work.
- ▶ Almost all refugees (98 per cent) speak Arabic; 16 per cent speak English.
- ▶ Vocational training, computer training and understanding Egyptian laws and regulations for foreigners are the services most requested by refugees in Egypt. More than four fifths of refugees have poor or no computer skills, and two fifths believe that improving computer skills can provide them better job opportunities in Egypt. Only 7 per cent of refugees reported that they received job training in Egypt.
- ▶ Two fifths of respondents reported that they face racism or discrimination because of their origin.
- ▶ Close to 80 per cent of refugees (of working age) own a smartphone, and only 17 per cent report never using the internet.
- ▶ Almost all refugees (98 per cent) rent their dwelling. Most (86 per cent) live in their own apartment, 13 per cent have a room in a shared apartment. The highest mean monthly rents are paid by Yemenis (££1,810) and Syrians (££1,785), the lowest by Eritreans (££1,110). The mean monthly rent is ££1,573, which is considered “expensive” by 81 per cent of refugees.





Acknowledgments

This study was produced jointly by ILO and UNHCR. AL Zanati associates was commissioned to conduct the underlying survey of refugees and asylum seekers and assist with the data analysis. Luca Fedi (ILO), Shady Shehata (ILO), Amir Obeid (ILO), Elena Ferrari (UNHCR), Nermeen Abdelaziz (UNHCR), Aliaa Rashwan (UNHCR), Robert Sibson (UNHCR) have contributed to this project.



Introduction

Refugees and “asylum-seekers” face many challenges, including socio-economic vulnerabilities, psychological trauma and lack of opportunity, and they are often exposed to a broad range of protection risks. Refugees or asylum seekers struggle to develop fully their potential owing to the socio-economic context, which at times limits their capacity to provide for their own well-being. The situation was exacerbated by the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and its medium- to long-term impacts on the national and global economy. In response to the challenges facing both host communities and refugees, a new partnership initiative entitled “PROSPECTS – Partnership for improving prospects for host communities and forcibly displaced persons” was launched by the Government of the Netherlands, bringing together the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank. The Partnership has a four-year initial time horizon (2019–2023) to respond to forced displacement crises in eight countries (Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Sudan and Uganda).

- ▶ The overall objective of PROSPECTS in Egypt is to improve the living standards and inclusiveness of refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable host communities, by contributing to the expansion of socio-economic opportunities through better education and mainstreamed protection interventions. With a geographical focus on Greater Cairo (Cairo and urban areas of Qalyubia and Giza), Alexandria and Damietta, PROSPECTS Egypt works under three main pillars: education and learning, employment with dignity, and protection and inclusion.



► 1.1 Objectives

The main goal of this report is to provide socio-economic profiling of refugees and asylum seekers with regards to skills, networks, human capital and physical capital. The specific objectives of this study include the following:

- Understand refugees' socio-economic and demographic characteristics and living conditions in the targeted areas (Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta)
- Identify refugees' employment status, job experience, job search, knowledge of employment opportunities and employment needs
- Understand refugees' skills sets and career development needs
- Assess refugees' perceptions on accessibility and utilization of social insurance and services.

► 1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Sample design and selection

The results of this report are based on a phone survey with a stratified random sample of 2,600 refugees and asylum seekers in the age group 15 to 64 in three regions or governorates (strata): Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Damietta.

The sampling frame (provided by the UNHCR) included all refugees and asylum seekers in the age group 15 to 64, in the required three regions or governorates, who were registered with the UNHCR at the time of the survey (271,102 refugees or asylum seekers as of 31 December 2021). The frame included the following information required for sample selection: registration number (database ID), nationality and governorate of residence in Egypt. The frame did not provide any personal information (names, addresses, phone numbers, and so on) for refugees or asylum seekers to protect data confidentiality. After the sample was selected and a data-sharing agreement was signed, the UNHCR provided phone numbers only for the selected individuals.

The total sample size was decided to keep the margin of error within 2 points for all estimates of proportions based on a 95 per cent confidence level. The sample size was calculated using the following formula (assuming a large population):

$$n = \frac{P(1-P)}{d^2} = \frac{(1.96)^2 * (0.5) * (0.5)}{(0.02)^2} = 2,401$$

Where n is the sample size, P an estimate of the proportion to be measured (assumed to be 0.5 to get the highest possible sample size), $Z_{\alpha/2}^2 = 1.96$ the standard normal distribution value corresponding to the 95 per cent confidence level, and d is the accepted margin of error (0.02). It was decided to increase the sample size to 2,600 refugees or asylum seekers, and to use non-proportional allocation, to obtain estimates for each region or governorate with an acceptable margin of error.

To account for non-response, a total sample of 7,000 refugees or asylum seekers was selected and distributed over the regions or governorates. Simple Random Sampling (SRS) was used to select refugees or asylum seekers from each region or governorate in the frame. Table 1 shows the number of refugees or asylum seekers in each region or governorate, the selected sample size and the number of interviews in each region or governorate.

Table 1. Number of refugees or asylum seekers (15–64 years) in each region or governorate, the selected sample size and the interviewed sample size.

Region or governorate	Number of refugees or asylum seekers in the frame (1)	Selected sample (2)	Interviewed sample (3)
Greater Cairo	140,024	4,760	1,591
Alexandria	15,600	1,120	466
Damietta	5,735	1,120	543
Total	161,359	7,000	2,600

1.2.2 Sampling weights

As appears in table 1, the sample is not self-weighted, as the sample distribution over the strata (regions or governorates) is not proportional. Accordingly, it was needed to compute sampling weights to reflect the weight of each region or governorate in the calculations of indicators on the overall level. The weight for each sample unit in a region or governorate is calculated by dividing the total number of refugees or asylum seekers in the frame in this region or governorate by the number of interviewed in this region or governorate (dividing column 1 by column 3 in table 1).



1.2.3 Questionnaire design

The main objective of the questionnaire was to provide socio-economic profiling of refugees and asylum seekers. In addition to the cover page, identification and consent form, the questionnaire included the following sections:¹

- ▶ Respondent's background: data about gender, nationality, education and literacy, age, duration of stay in Egypt, governorate of residence in Egypt and reasons of selecting this place of residence;
- ▶ Household characteristics and earnings: household composition, type of dwelling, cost of rent and sources of household income;
- ▶ Employment: employment status and occupation in Egypt and home country, work sector, number of working hours, work benefits and questions about job searching;
- ▶ Skills and qualifications: languages and computing skills, job training, work experience and level of some important work skills;
- ▶ Services: questions about perceptions on availability and the most needed services such as financial and social and sports services;
- ▶ Community inclusion: reasons for choosing Egypt for asylum, facing any discrimination or racism in Egypt and the rights to enjoy opportunities and services on equal basis as Egyptians.

After the introduction, this report includes six chapters, each corresponding to one section of the questionnaire, followed by a conclusion and recommendations.

1.2.4 Data collection

Data were collected between 17 November and 9 December 2021 using a CATI (Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system and Kobo toolbox (<https://www.kobotoolbox.org>). Comprehensive training on data collection techniques and data collection system was provided for the interviewers.

This report presents a summary of the main results. The complete set of tables and survey questionnaire are presented in Appendix A at the end of this report.

¹ The questionnaire is presented in Appendix A.

▶ 2

Respondents' background characteristics

To understand the results of the survey, it is important to study the background of the respondents. This was divided into two parts, firstly age, sex, education, employment status, duration of stay in Egypt, access and use of ICT and the internet, and so on, and secondly household size, type of dwelling, cost of rent, geographic mobility, and so on. The results are presented below.

▶ 2.1 Gender, age, nationality

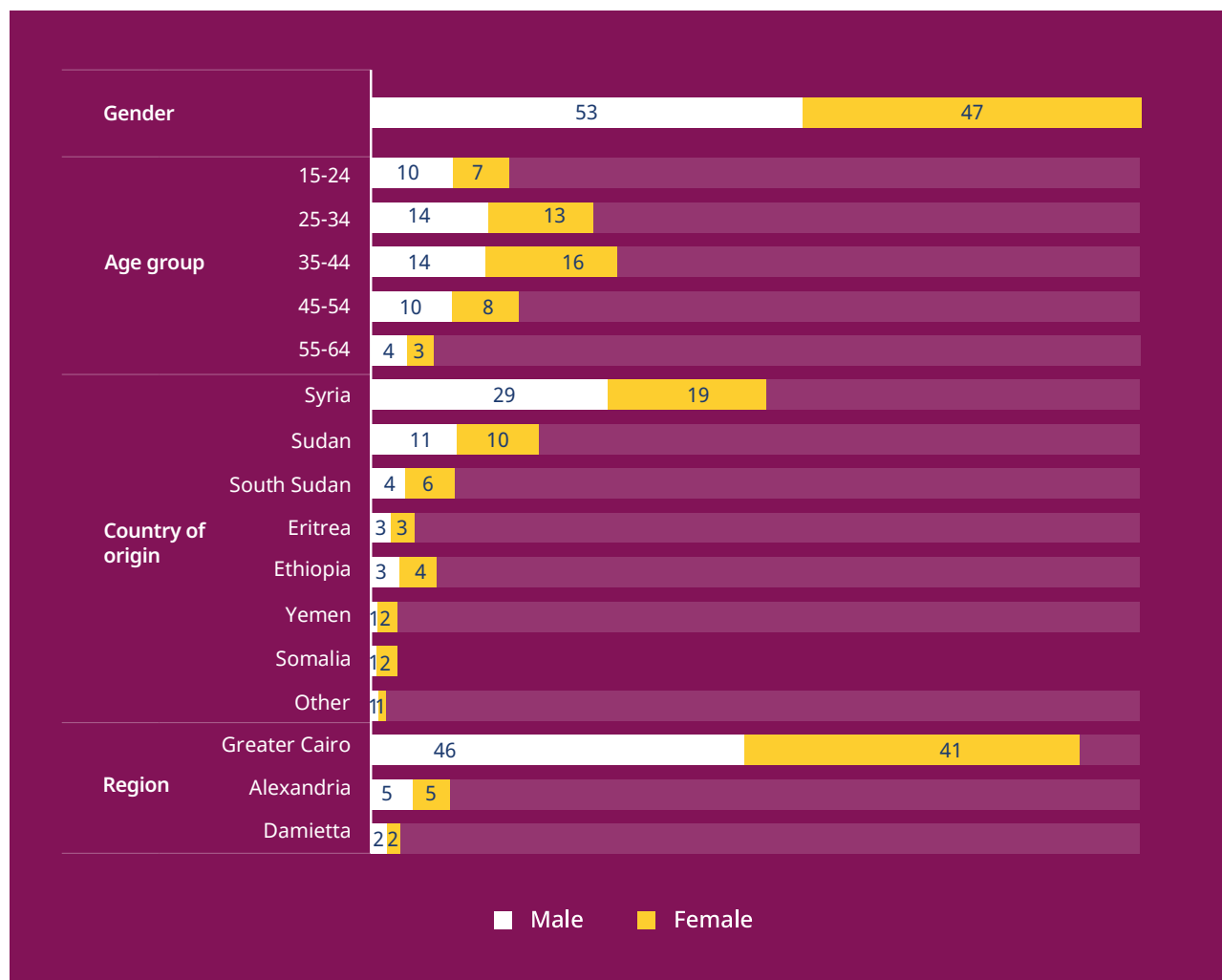
As presented in figure 1, the population of refugees and asylum seekers in the sample has slightly more males than females (53 and 47 per cent, respectively). The percentage of Syrian female refugees is lower than males (40 and 60 per cent, respectively), while it is higher among Yemenis (68 per cent), South Sudanese (59 per cent), Somalis (57 per cent) and Ethiopians (56 per cent). Most refugees are in the age groups 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 (57 per cent); the mean age of the sampled refugees was 36.7 years.

The sample included 26 nationalities, but only seven account for the vast majority of the refugees and asylum seekers in the country. Around half of the refugees in the sample are Syrian (48 per cent), 21 per cent Sudanese, 10 per cent South Sudanese, 8 per cent Eritrean, 5 per cent Ethiopian, 3 per cent Yemeni, and 3 per cent Somali. All other nationalities accounted for 2 per cent of the sample, with Iraq the main country of origin. Almost all refugees (99.5 per cent) live in urban areas,² with 86 per cent in Greater Cairo, 10 per cent in Alexandria and 4 per cent in Damietta. Refugees in Alexandria and Damietta are almost exclusively from Syria; other nationalities are mainly settled in the Greater Cairo area.



² This report will not, therefore, disaggregate the findings by urban or rural residency.

Figure 1. Selected socio-economic indicators (%).

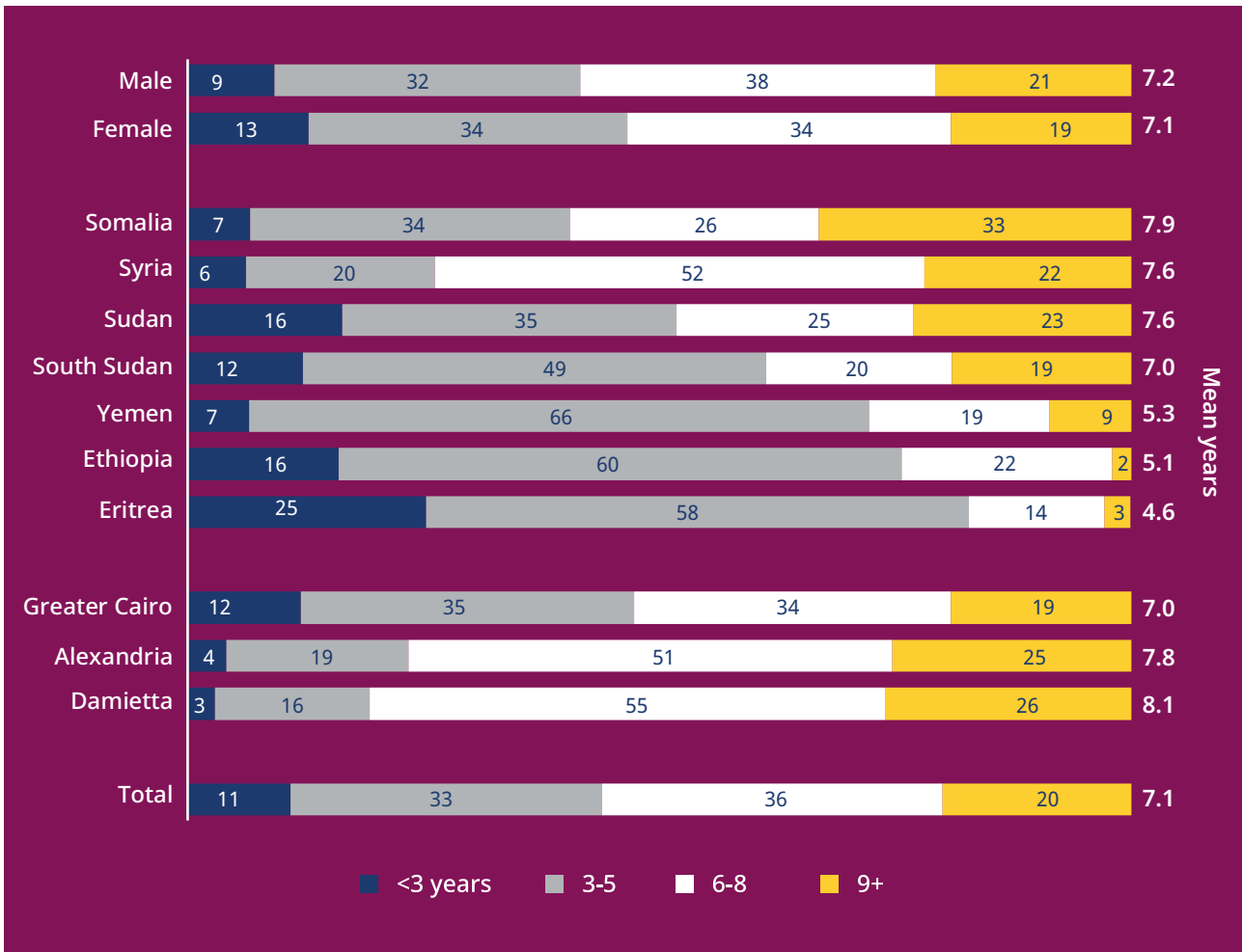


► 2.2 Duration of stay in Egypt

As shown in figure 2, a vast majority of refugees (around 90 per cent) have been in Egypt for three years or more. The percentage is higher among Syrians, Somalis and Yemenis (around 94 per cent); it is lowest among Eritreans (72 per cent). One third of Somali refugees have lived in Egypt for nine years or more; very few Ethiopians and Eritreans stayed for this long.

The mean duration of stay in Egypt for all refugees is 7.1 years, with no significant difference between males and females. The longest mean duration was observed for Somalis (7.9 years), followed by Syrians and Sudanese (7.6 years each), and the lowest for Eritreans (4.6 years). There is also some variation in the mean duration of stay in Egypt by region of residence; the highest mean was observed in Damietta (8.1 years) and the lowest in Greater Cairo and Alexandria (7.0 and 7.8 years respectively).

Figure 2. Duration of stay in Egypt in years (%).



► 2.3 Geographic mobility

The results, summarized in figure 3, showed that refugees tend to stay within the governorate where they settled; only 8 per cent of refugees changed their governorate of residence since they arrived in Egypt.

Figure 3 also shows that the choice of the place of residence is heavily dependent on access to jobs and the availability of support from family and community of origin. Around 90 per cent of respondents chose their current place of residence because they found a job there (46 per cent) or think they can find a job there (44 per cent), while 42 per cent indicated that the choice was (also) related to receiving support from family or their community of origin. A small share, 20 per cent, said they need to stay where they live in order to support relatives.

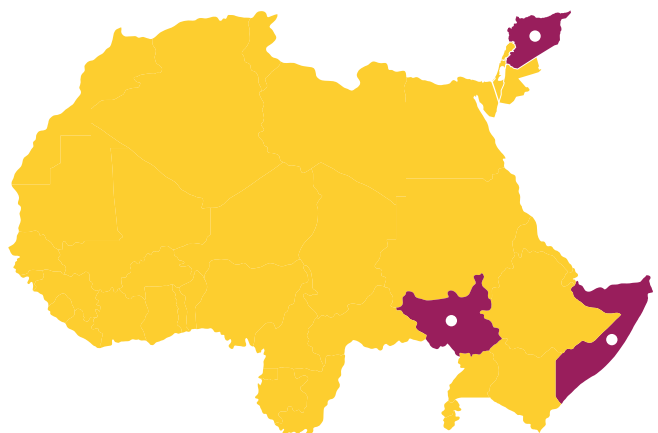
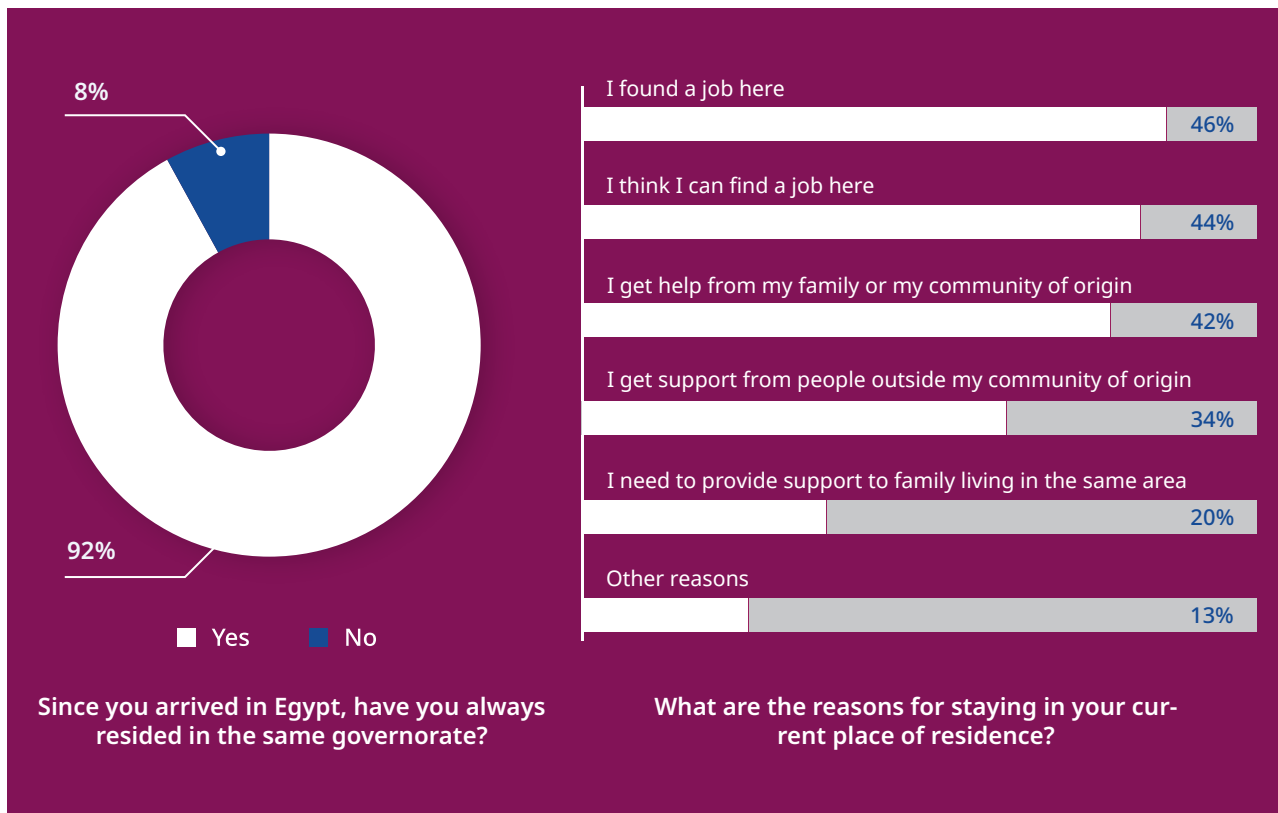


Figure 3. Geographic mobility and reasons for staying in the current place of residence (%).



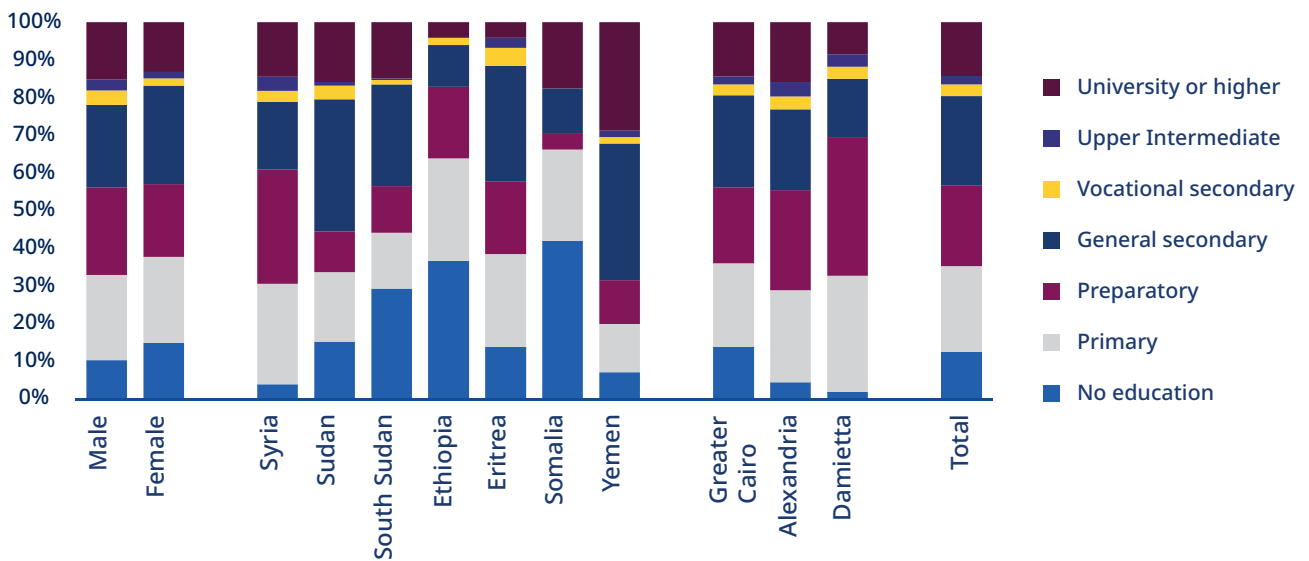
► 2.4 Educational attainment

The results in figure 4 show that around 12 per cent of refugees have never been to school, 44 per cent completed primary or preparatory education, and 24 per cent have secondary education. The results also show extremely low vocational education (only 3 per cent) and an important share of refugees with tertiary education (16 per cent).

Male refugees have only a slightly better educational attainment than females: 15 per cent of male refugees have a university degree or higher, compared with 13 per cent of females. Overall, the best educational attainment was observed among Yemeni refugees (69 per cent have a university degree). Somalis and Ethiopians, on the other hand, have the lowest educational attainment: nearly two thirds have no education.



Figure 4. Educational attainment (%).

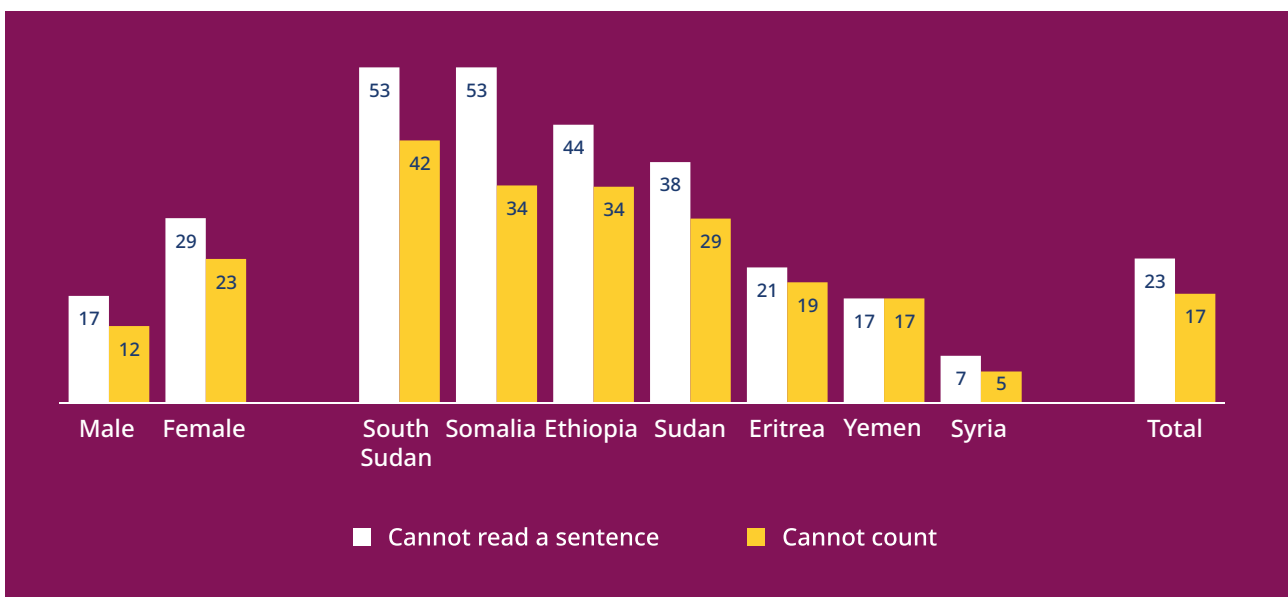


► 2.5 Literacy and numeracy

There are high levels of illiteracy and innumeracy among refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt. As shown in figure 5, nearly one out of four refugees cannot read a sentence in their native language, and 17 per cent cannot count. The illiteracy rate is higher among females: 29 per cent cannot read and 23 per cent cannot count, compared with 17 and 12 per cent for males, respectively.

The highest illiteracy rates were observed among South Sudanese and Somali refugees; more than half of them (53 per cent) cannot read a sentence. Syrian refugees have the highest literacy rates – 93 per cent can read and 95 per cent can count.

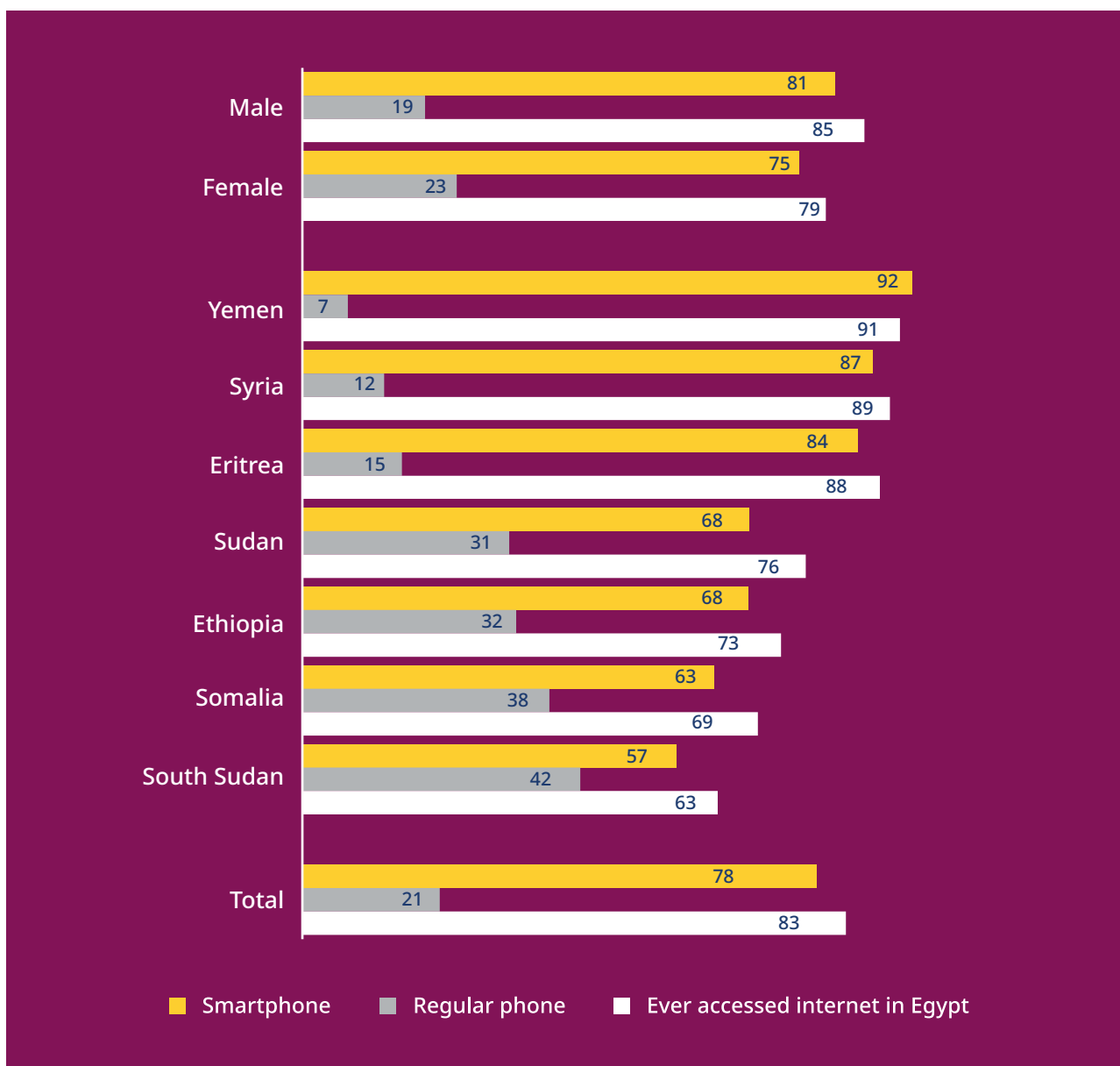
Figure 5. Literacy and numeracy (%).



► 2.6 ICT use

As summarized in figure 6, refugees in Egypt have a fairly wide access to phones and the internet: 78 per cent have a smartphone and 21 per cent a regular phone. Around 43 per cent of refugees access the internet almost every day, 32 per cent at least once a week and 7 per cent less frequently, while 17 per cent reported not using it.

Figure 6. Mobile phones ownership and Internet access (%).



Male refugees are more likely to have smartphones and access to the internet. Yemeni and Syrian refugees are more likely to have smartphones and access to the internet than other nationalities.

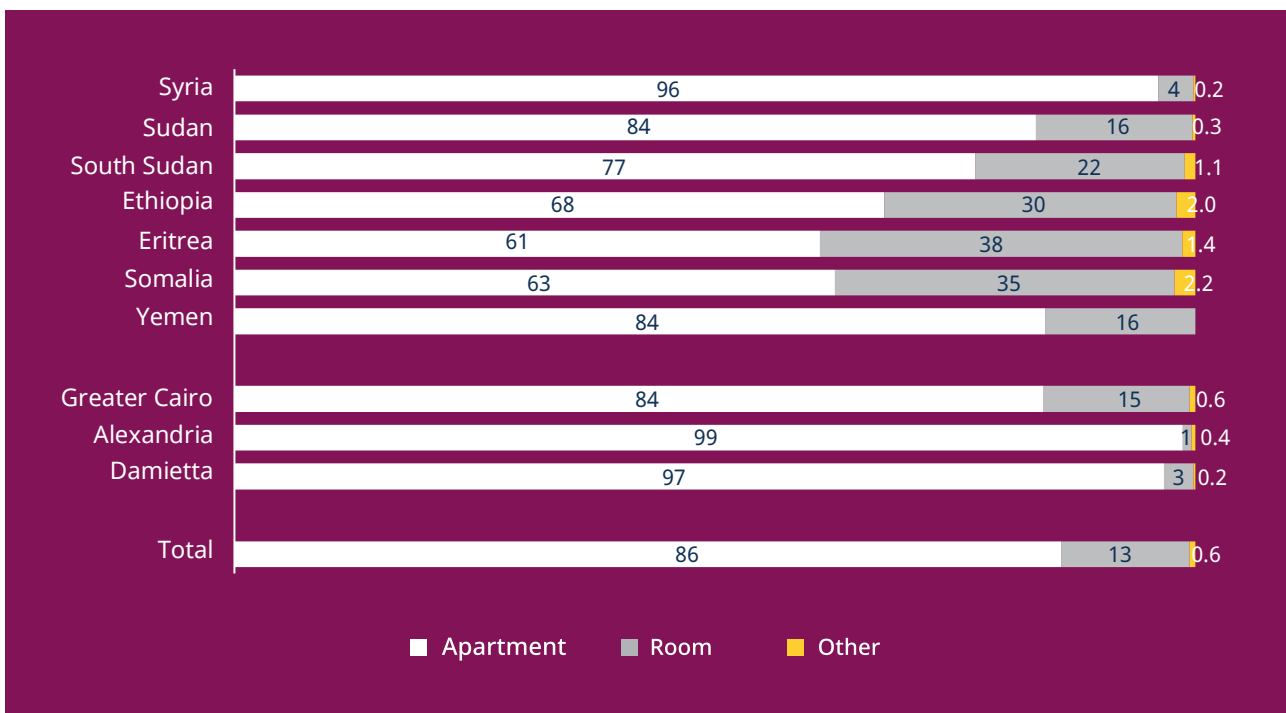
Respondents not using the internet were asked about the reasons behind that. Around four fifths answered that they do not have a PC or smartphone, 10 per cent because of high or non-affordable costs, and 6 per cent have no time.

► 2.7 Dwelling

As shown in figure 7, most refugees (86 per cent) live in apartments shared with family members only; 13 per cent live in rooms in apartments shared with other people.

As shown in the appendix, Syrians, Yemenis and Sudanese are more likely to live in a separate apartment, while Eritreans and Somalis are more likely to live in a room in a shared apartment. Also, refugees living in Alexandria and Damietta are more likely than those in Greater Cairo to live in a separate apartment.

Figure 7. Type of dwelling (%).



► 2.8 Cost of rent

Almost all refugees (98 per cent) live in rented dwellings. Figure 8 shows the mean monthly rent paid in Egyptian pounds by country of origin and region.³ The highest mean values of monthly rent were observed among refugees from Yemen (££1,810) and Syria (££1,785). The lowest mean was seen among Eritreans (££1,110).



³ It should be noted that the results related to cost of living and income reflect the situation at the time of data collection (November and December 2021).

Respondents were asked whether they thought the rent they pay for accommodation is expensive, reasonable or cheap. As shown in figure 9, more than four fifths of the refugees (81 per cent) consider the cost of rent to be expensive, 18 per cent think it is reasonable, and around 1 per cent think it is cheap. Refugees from Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan are more likely to consider the cost of rent as being expensive, while Eritreans are more likely to consider it fair. Also, refugees living in Damietta are more likely than those in Greater Cairo and Alexandria to think that rent is expensive (85, 82 and 74 per cent, respectively).

Figure 8. Mean monthly rent paid in EGP by country of origin and region.

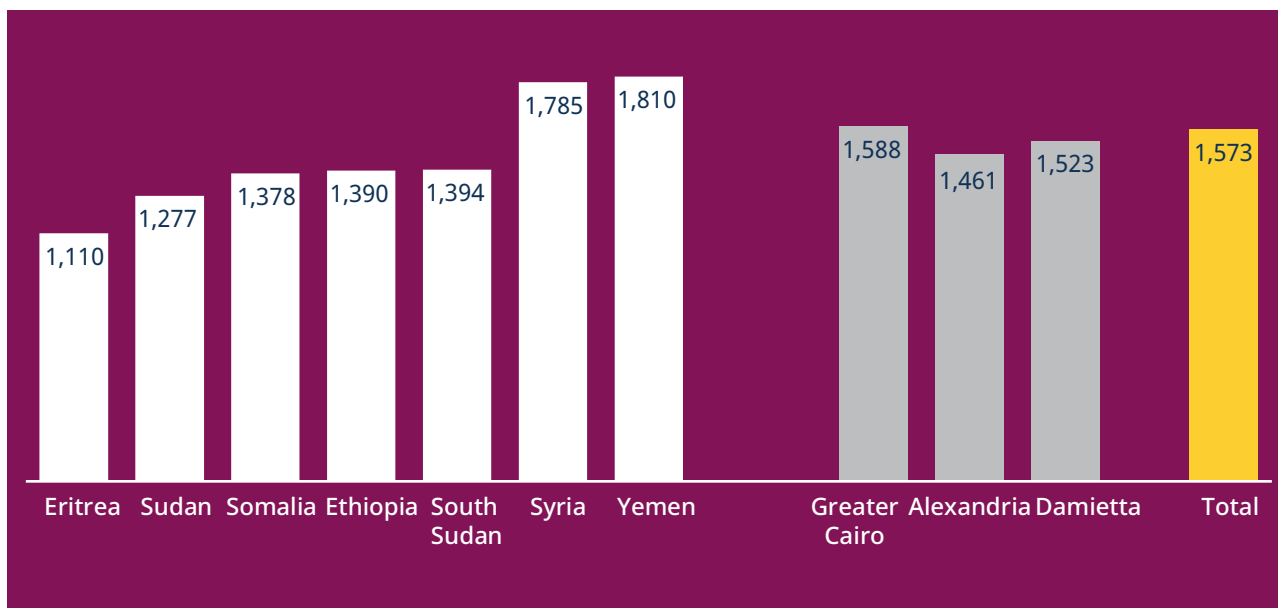
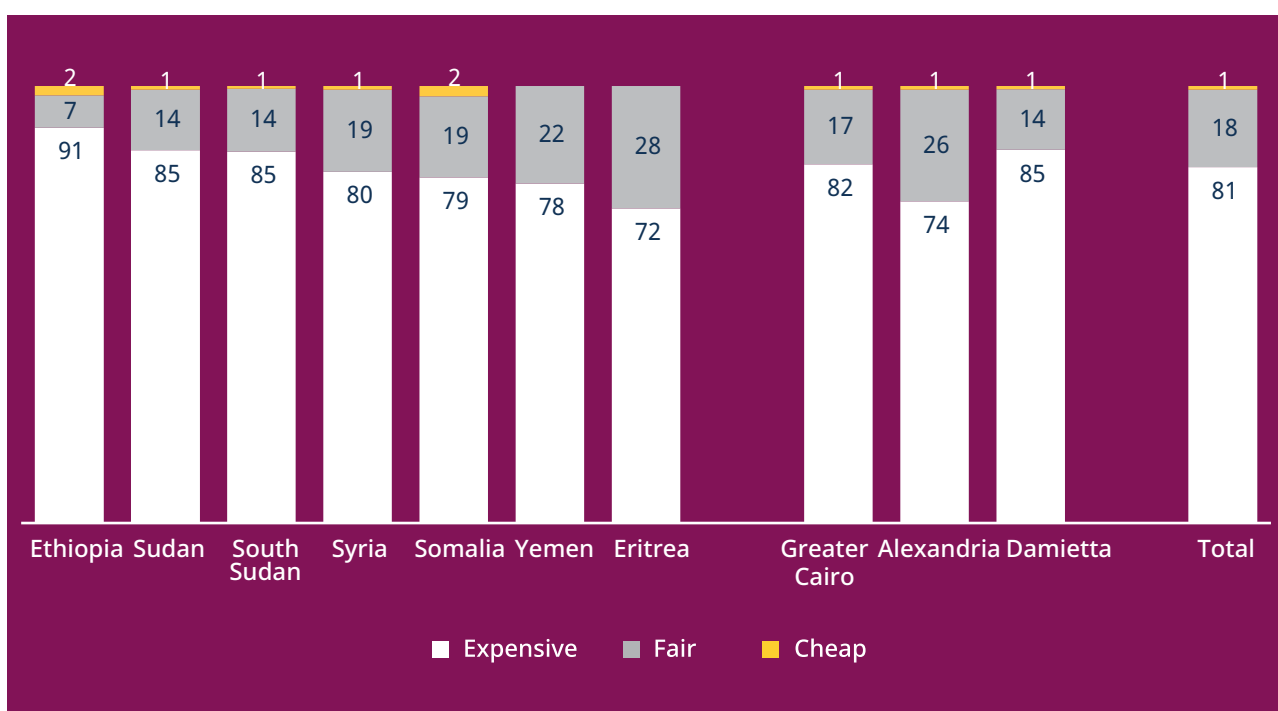


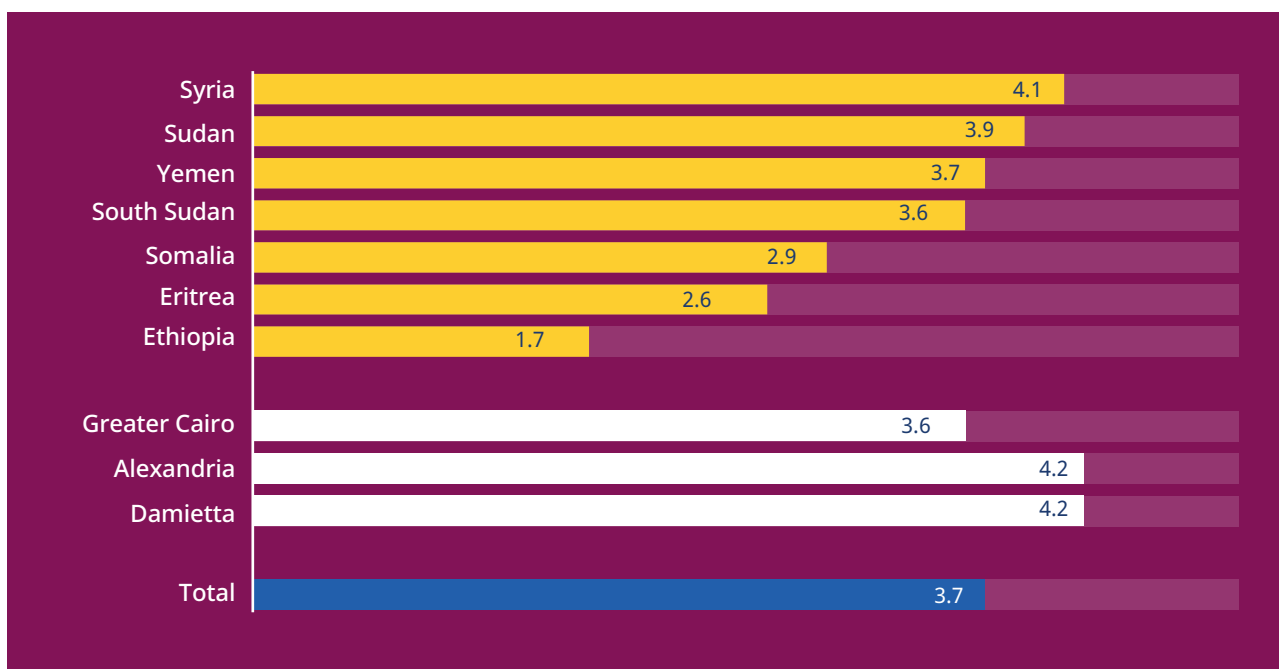
Figure 9. Opinion about the monthly rent by country of origin and region.



► 2.9 Mean household⁴ size

The results of the study showed large variations in the household size (number of household members) among refugees of different nationalities. As figure 10 shows, the highest mean household size was observed among Syrian refugees (4.1 persons per household), followed by Sudanese and Yemeni refugees (3.9 and 3.7 persons per household, respectively). The lowest mean household size was observed among Ethiopians (1.7 persons per household).

Figure 10. Mean household size by country of origin and region.



The mean household size for refugees in Alexandria and Damietta was 4.2 persons per household, larger than that for Greater Cairo, where the mean size was 3.6 persons.



⁴ A household is defined as a group of two or more related or unrelated people who usually reside in the same dwelling, and who make common provision for food or other essentials for living; or a single person living in a dwelling who makes provision for his or her own food and other essentials for living, without combining with any other person.





3

Incomes

This section provides information about various sources of household earnings (wages and salaries, income from charity or from family and friends living in Egypt or abroad, and other sources), mean household income from each source and mean per capita income.

► 3.1 Sources of earnings

As shown in figure 11, more than four fifths (82.7 per cent) of refugees depend on wage-employment as their main source of income, and 69.7 per cent also receive social grants from the UNHCR; these represent the main income for 10 per cent of refugee households. Just 8.5 per cent get support from family and friends living in Egypt or abroad. Only 2 per cent of refugees have earnings from their own or family business (among those, most are Yemenis), or other sources such as income from properties or financial capital, scholarships, pension, and others.

Figure 11. Sources of refugees' household earnings (%).



Wages and salaries	82.7
Money from charity	69.7
Money from family or friends living in Egypt	4.9
Money from family or friends living abroad	3.6
Your business/ family business	2.4
Income from properties or financial capital	0.3
Other sources	2.6

As shown in table 2, Yemeni, Somali and Ethiopian refugees depend on assistance and charity more than other nationalities. Also, refugees living in Alexandria depend on assistance more than those in other regions.

Table 2. Percentages of households receiving earnings from various sources by region and country of origin.

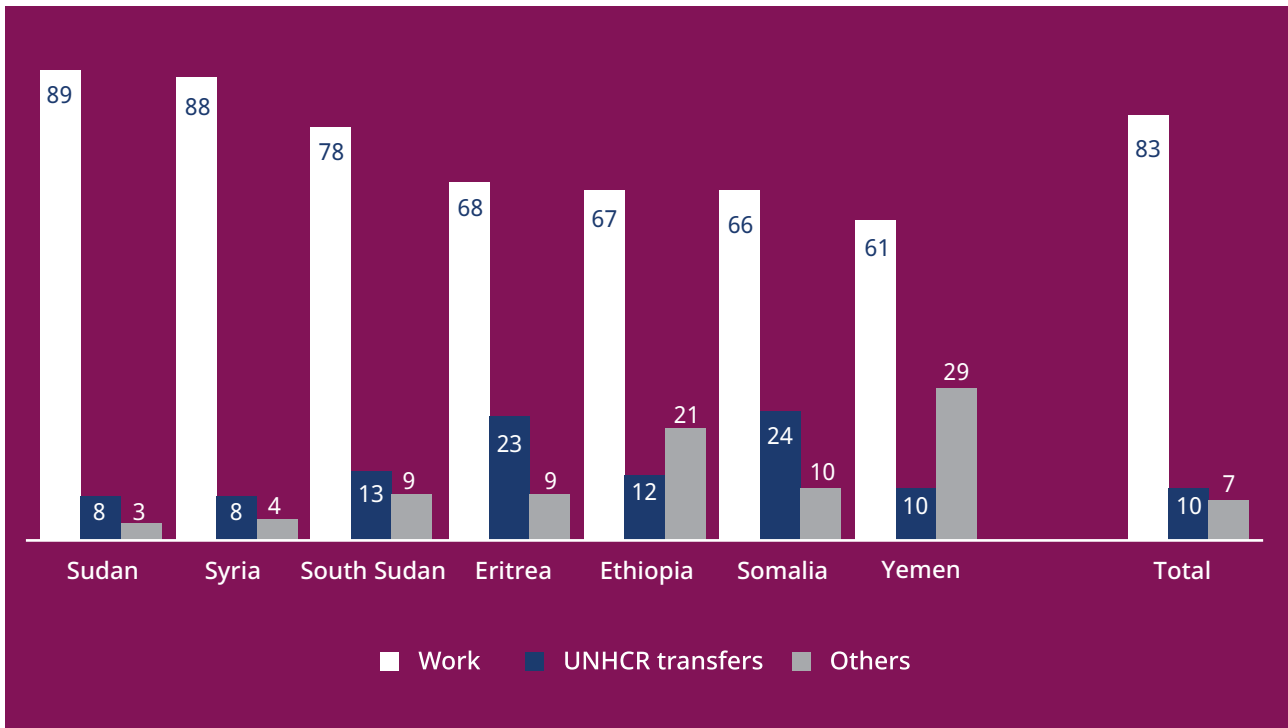
	Wages and salaries	Your business or family business	Income from properties or financial capital	Money from family or friends living in Egypt	Money from family or friends living abroad	Money from charity	Other sources
Country of origin							
Syria	89.7	2.7	0.3	3.3	2.9	74.0	2.3
Sudan	87.5	3.2	0.3	3.8	1.2	68.9	3.5
South Sudan	79.3	1.1	0.0	4.8	0.5	67.7	1.6
Ethiopia	61.5	1.0	0.0	9.1	5.1	56.5	3.0
Eritrea	65.1	2.1	0.0	6.2	3.4	69.9	1.4
Somalia	66.1	0.0	0.0	25.1	11.0	63.9	0.0
Yemen	61.4	3.5	0.0	14.8	23.6	55.1	5.2
Region							
Greater Cairo	82.5	1.9	0.3	5.2	3.8	67.9	2.6
Alexandria	82.0	6.0	1.1	3.2	2.6	78.3	3.6
Damietta	89.9	3.1	0.2	2.9	1.5	90.8	1.3
Total	82.7	2.4	0.3	4.9	3.6	69.7	2.6

► 3.2 Main source of income

As shown in figure 12, wage work is the main source of income for 83 per cent of refugees, followed by UNHCR transfers (10 per cent). Only 7 per cent of refugees have other main sources of income, including that from self-employment (business), property or remittances.

Sudanese and Syrians are more dependent on wage work, whereas Somalis and Eritreans are more dependent on UNHCR transfers. A sizeable share of Yemeni and Ethiopian refugees are the only nationalities receiving other sources of income, especially money from family members or friends living abroad.

Figure 12. Main source of income by country of origin (%).



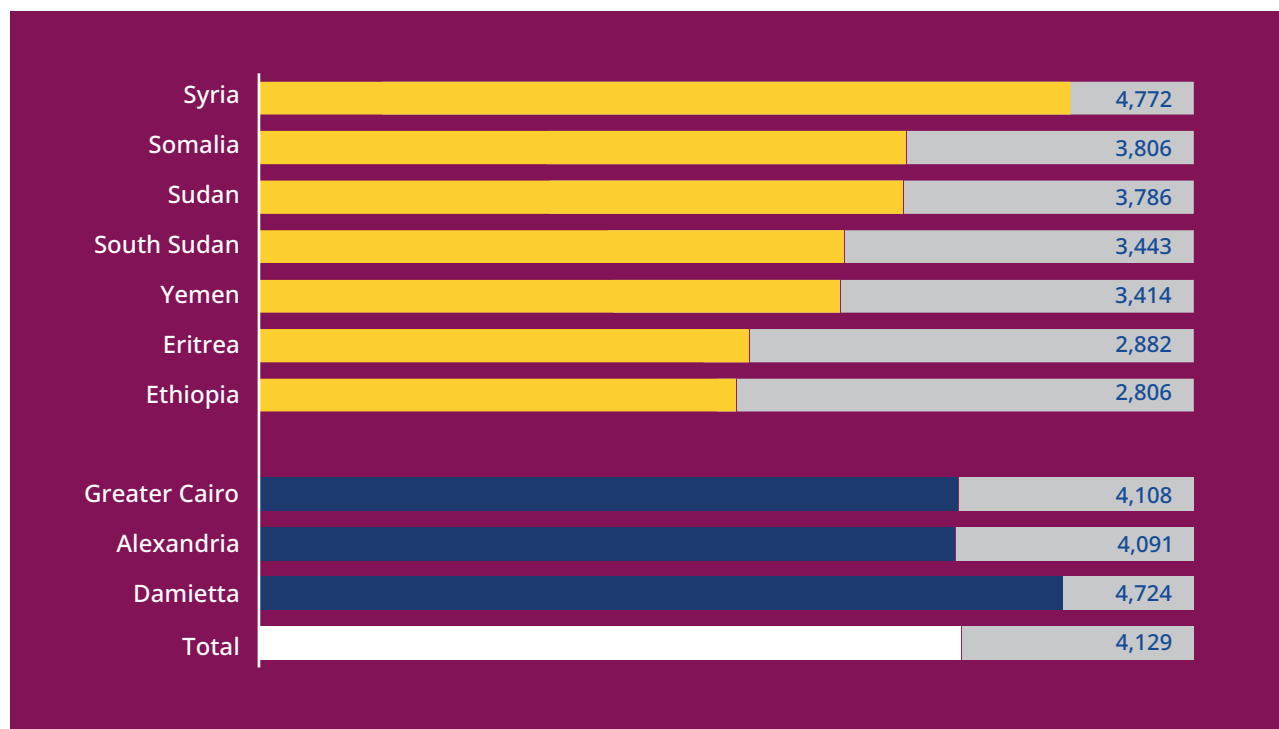
► 3.3 Mean household income

Figure 13 shows that the mean monthly income for refugees’ households is £E4,129. There are large variations in the mean household income for refugees by country of origin and by region of residence in Egypt.

The highest mean of household income was recorded for Syrian refugees (£E4,772), then, with a large difference, for Somalis (£E3,806) and Sudanese (£E3,786). The lowest mean was recorded for Ethiopian refugees. Looking at regions, refugees living in Damietta (mostly Syrians) have the highest mean household income (£E4,724) compared with Greater Cairo (£E4,108) and Alexandria (£E4,091).



Figure 13. Mean household income (EGP).

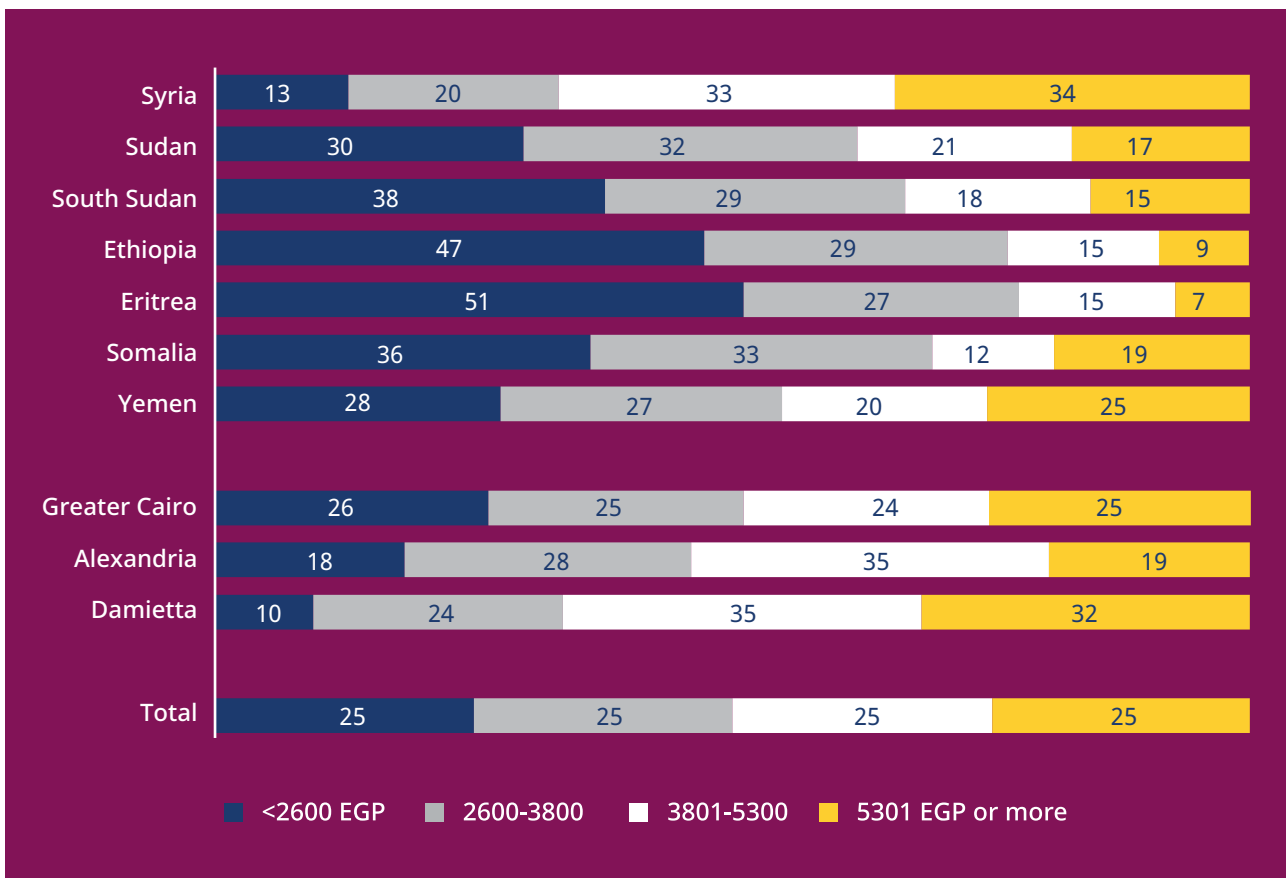


► 3.4 Mean household income quartiles

Figure 14 shows the mean monthly household income quartiles for the interviewed refugees and asylum seekers, which are £E2,600, £E3,800 and £E5,300. Accordingly, 25 per cent of households have an income of less than £E2,600, while another 25 per cent have an income of more than £E5,300.

As shown in figure 14, around half of Eritrean and Ethiopian refugee households (51 and 47 per cent, respectively) have an income of less than £E2,600. On the other hand, 34 per cent of Syrian and 25 per cent of Yemeni refugee households have an income of more than £E5,300. Refugee households in Damietta are more likely to come under the highest income quartile than refugees living in other regions.

Figure 14. Mean household income quartiles (%).



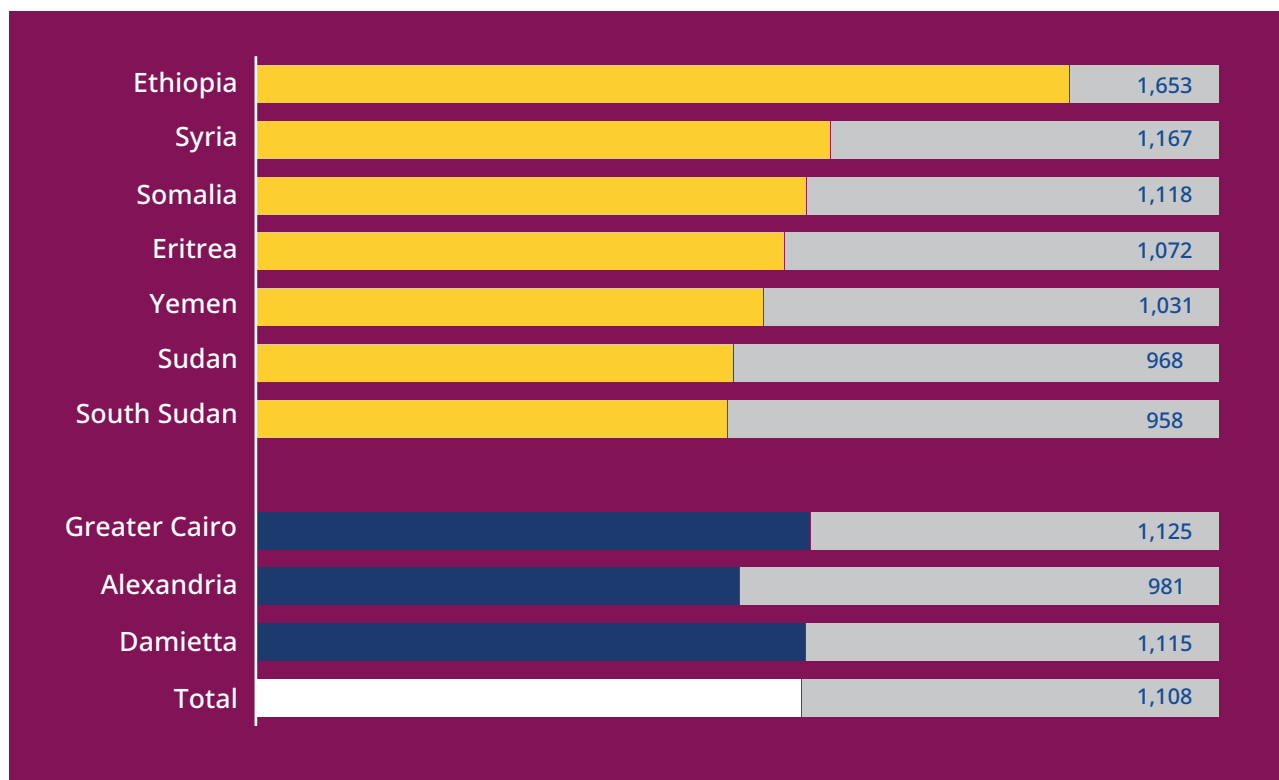
► 3.5 Mean per capita income

As shown in figure 15, the mean monthly per capita income for refugees is £E1,108, but there are large variations depending on the country of origin and region of residence.

The highest mean monthly per capita income was observed for Ethiopian refugees (£E1,653), then, with a large difference, Syrians (£E1,167) and Somalis (£E1,118). The high per capita income observed for Ethiopians and Somalis may be because the mean household size for both communities is smaller than that for other nationalities (as presented in the previous section). On the other hand, the lowest mean monthly per capita incomes were recorded for Sudanese and South Sudanese (£E968 and £E958, respectively).

Considering the data by region, refugees living in Greater Cairo have the highest mean per capita income (£E1,125), and the lowest was observed for refugees in Alexandria (£E981).

Figure 15. Mean per capita income (EGP).



► 3.6 Mean income from various sources

Figures 16.A and 16.B show the mean monthly income for refugee households and mean monthly per capita income from wages and salaries, charity and assistance.⁵ The mean monthly income for households is £E3,601 from wages and salaries and £E1,757 from cash transfers.⁶ The mean monthly per capita income for refugees is £E801 from wages and salaries and £E443 from cash transfers and charity.

Figures 16.A and 16.B also show some variations in mean monthly household income and per capita income from various sources for refugees of different nationalities. For example, the highest mean household income from wages and salaries was observed among Syrian households (£E3,601), while the highest mean household income from social transfers and charity was observed for Sudanese households (£E2,039). On the other hand, Ethiopian refugees have the highest mean monthly per capita income from wages and salary (£E1,372) and from social transfers and charity (£E870).

⁵The mean values are calculated for households that received each source of income during the 12 months preceding the interview.

⁶UNHCR provided assistance for refugees because of the spread of COVID-19; this may have increased the calculated average income from cash transfers.

Figure 16.A. Mean monthly household income from wages and salaries and charity (EGP).

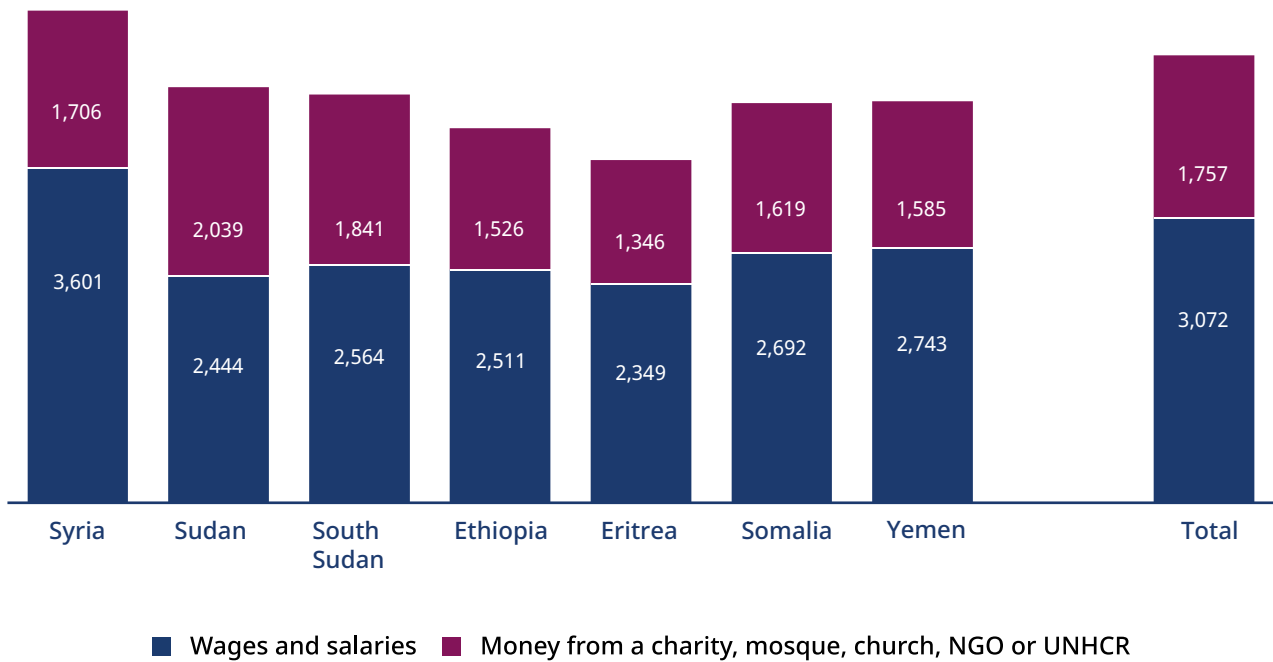
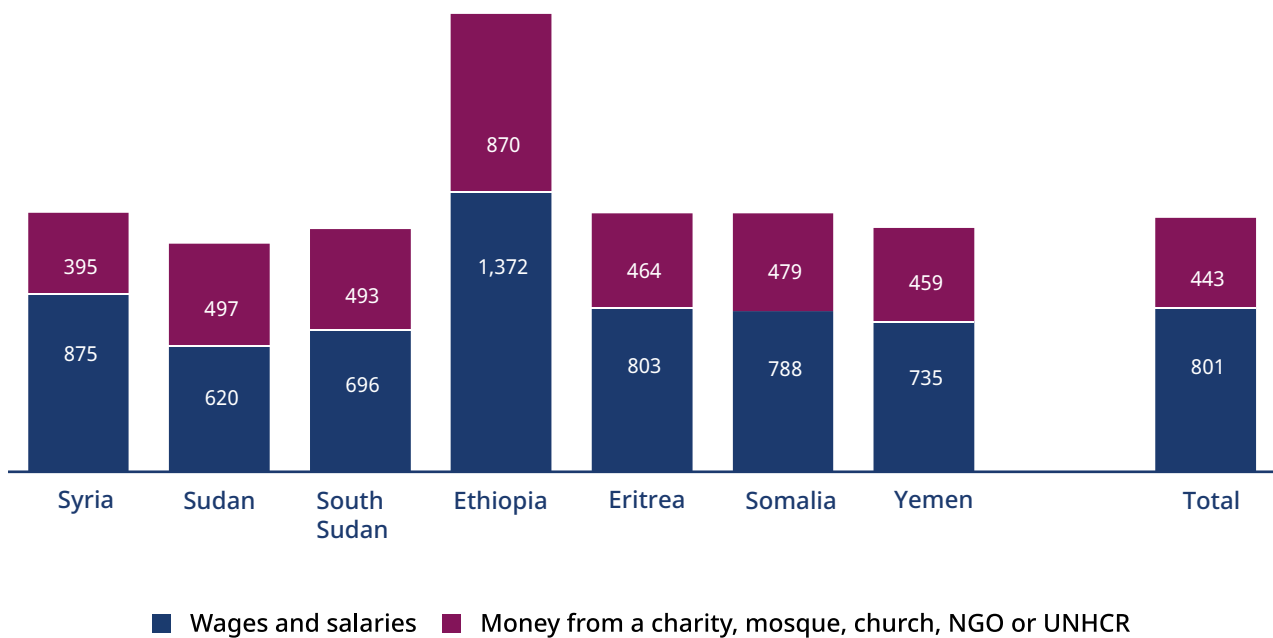


Figure 16.B. Mean monthly per capita income from wages and salaries and charity (EGP).







Employment

This section provides information about the respondents' employment status, rates of employment and unemployment, formal versus informal employment, occupation and job skills level in Egypt and home country, employment sector, mean working hours and underemployment (time-related), work benefits, job search and sources of help to get a job, in addition to challenges in running business in Egypt.

► 4.1 Employment status

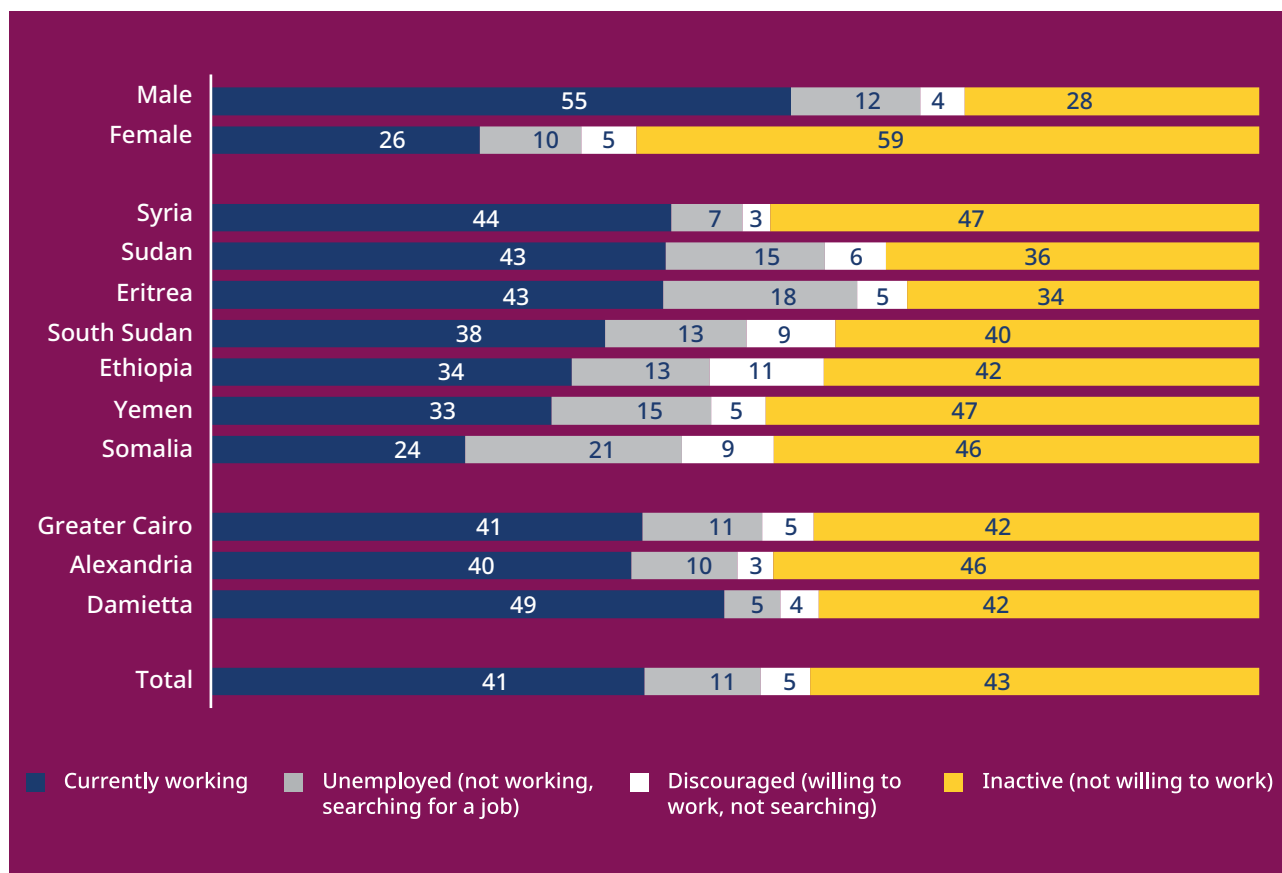
Figure 17 shows that more than two fifths (41 per cent) of refugees are currently working, 11 per cent are unemployed (not working and searching for jobs), 5 per cent are discouraged (willing to work but not actively searching for jobs), and 43 per cent are economically inactive (not willing or able to work).

The percentage of refugees who are currently working is higher among males than females (55 and 26 per cent, respectively), while the percentage of economically inactive refugees (not willing to work) is much lower (28 and 59 per cent, respectively).

The percentage of refugees currently working is relatively higher among Syrians (44 per cent), Sudanese (43 per cent) and Eritreans (43 per cent) than among other nationalities, especially Somalis (only 24 per cent employed). On the other hand, the highest percentage of refugees who feel discouraged concerns Ethiopians (11 per cent), almost four times more than the corresponding percentage for Syrians (3 per cent).

Considering the data by region, the highest percentage of refugees currently working was observed in Damietta (49 per cent), compared with 41 per cent in Greater Cairo and 40 per cent in Alexandria, while the highest percentage of inactive refugees was found in Alexandria (46 per cent), compared with 42 per cent in Greater Cairo and Damietta.

Figure 17. Employment status (%).

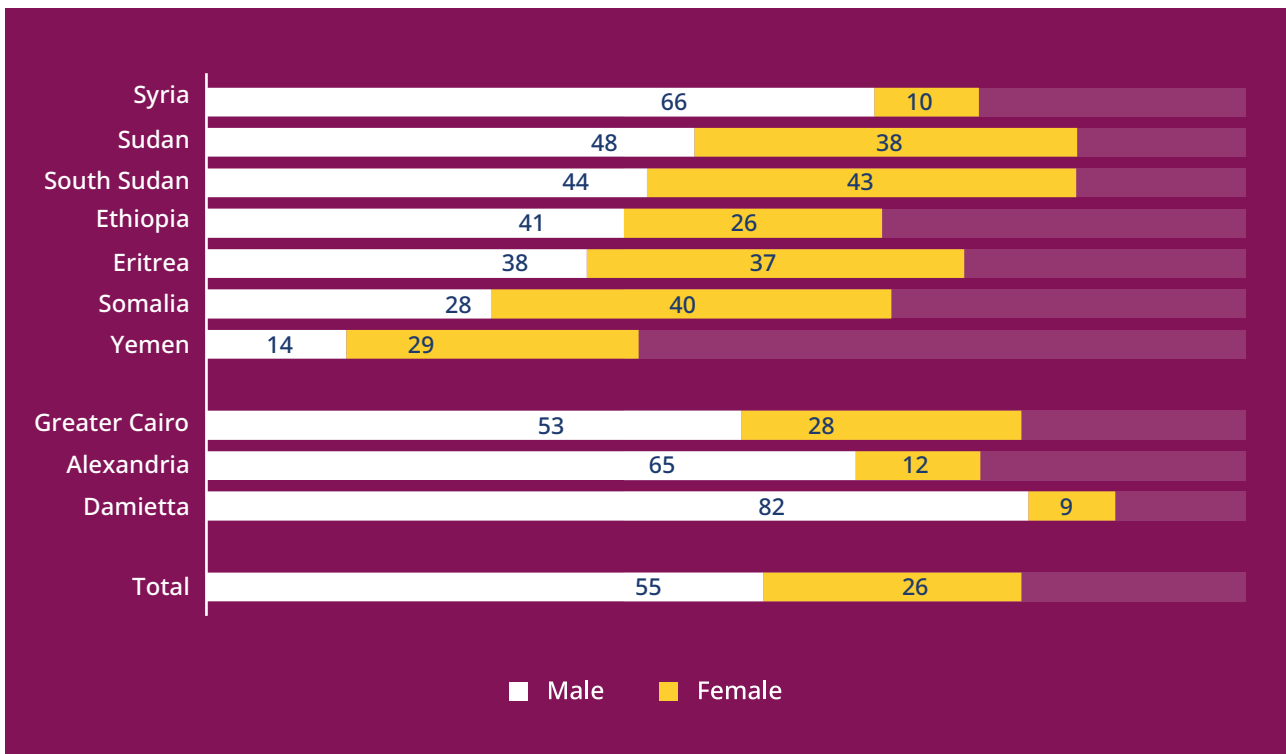


► 4.2 Employment rates

Figure 18 shows employment rates of refugees (percentages of those currently working) by country of origin, region and gender. The highest employment rate among male refugees was observed among Syrians (66 per cent), followed by Sudanese (48 per cent) and Eritreans (44 per cent), while the lowest rates were among Somalis (only 14 per cent). Moreover, male refugees have higher employment rates in Damietta (82 per cent) than in Alexandria (65 per cent) and Greater Cairo (53 per cent).



Figure 18. Employment rates (%).



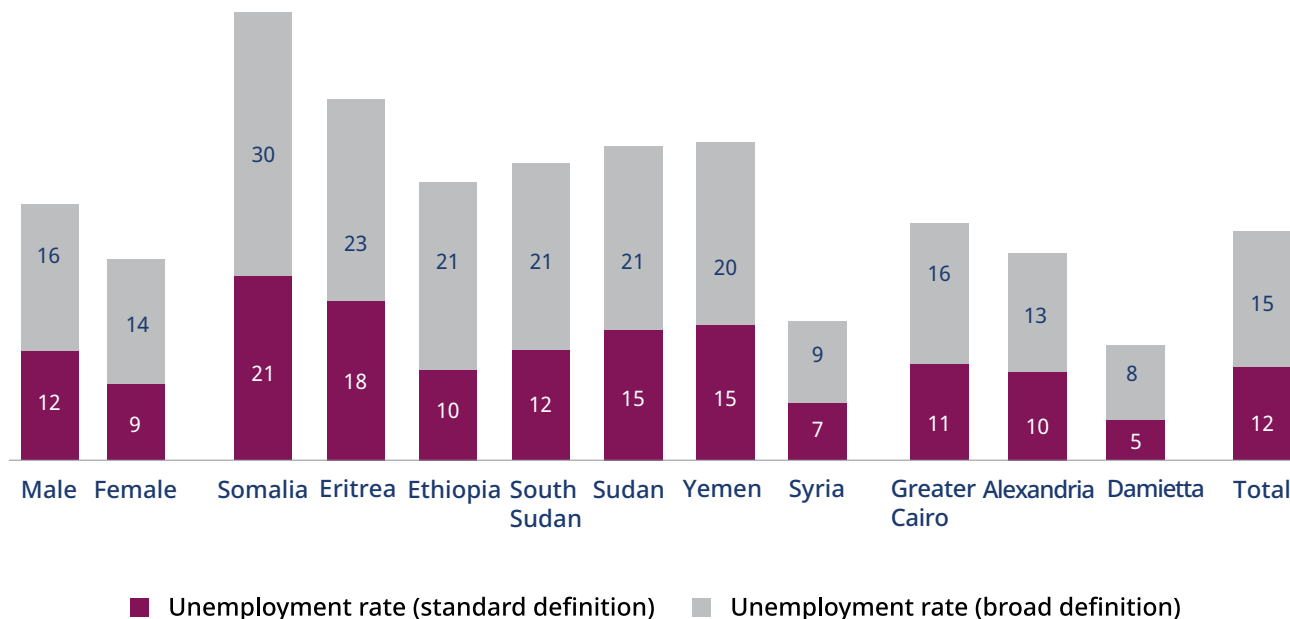
The highest employment rate for female refugees was found among Eritreans (43 per cent), followed by Ethiopians (40 per cent) and Sudanese (38 per cent). Female refugees have a higher employment rate in Greater Cairo (28 per cent) than in Alexandria (12 per cent) and Damietta (9 per cent).

► 4.3 Unemployment rates

Figure 36 shows the unemployment rates of interviewed refugees according to the standard and broad definitions of unemployment, in line with international labour statistics standards. Persons are thus considered unemployed, according to the broad definition, if they are of working age (15–64 years), did not work over the past week, are willing to work and are available, whether they are actively searching for work or not. The standard definition requires the latter criterion of job search.

The overall unemployment rate is around 11 per cent according to the standard definition and 15 per cent according to the broad definition. Unemployment rates (both definitions) are higher among male refugees than among females. Somali refugees and refugees living in Greater Cairo have higher rates of unemployment than other groups.

Figure 19. Unemployment rates according to the standard and broad definitions (%).



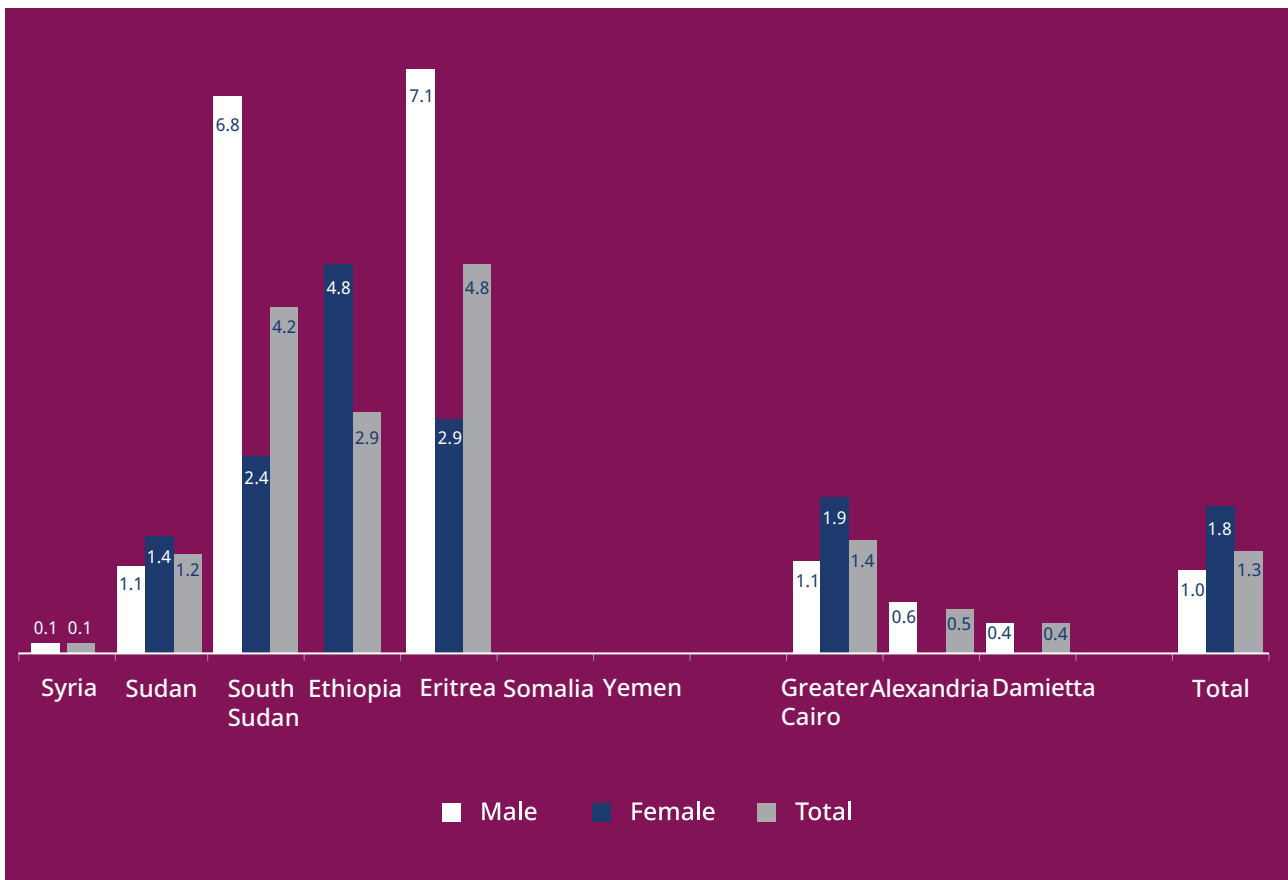
► 4.4 Formal versus informal employment

As figure 19 shows, almost all working refugees are employed informally without a contract; only 1.3 per cent of them do have contracts. The highest rates of employment with a contract were observed among Eritreans (4.8 per cent) and South Sudanese (4.2 per cent). None of the employed refugees from Somalia and Yemen who were interviewed have work contracts. Employed refugees in Greater Cairo are more likely to have work contracts than those in other regions.

The percentage of employed male refugees with a work contract is higher than that of females (1.8 and 1.0 per cent, respectively). However, employed female refugees from South Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea are more likely than males to have work contracts.



Figure 20. Percentages of employed refugees with work contract.



► 4.5 Current occupation

As shown in figure 20 more than one third of employed refugees work in services and sales, around a quarter in handicrafts and around 12 per cent in elementary occupations (including domestic workers).



Figure 21. Current occupation (%).



4.5.1 Current occupation by gender

Figure 21 presents the current occupations for employed refugees by gender. Male refugees are more likely than females to work as service and sales workers, construction workers, plant and machine operators, technicians and associate professionals. Female refugees are more present in handicrafts, elementary occupations (including domestic work) and as professionals.



Figure 22. Current occupation by gender (%).



4.5.2 Current occupation and prior occupation in country of origin

Figure 22 shows the current occupations for employed refugees according to their country of origin. More than half of the Yemeni and Ethiopian refugees work in services and sales (55 and 53 per cent, respectively). Nearly half the Somalis (46 per cent) and around one third of Eritreans work in handicrafts. South Sudanese, Eritreans, Sudanese and Ethiopians are more likely to work in elementary occupations (including domestic work) than other nationalities.

Figure 23. Current occupation by country of origin (%).

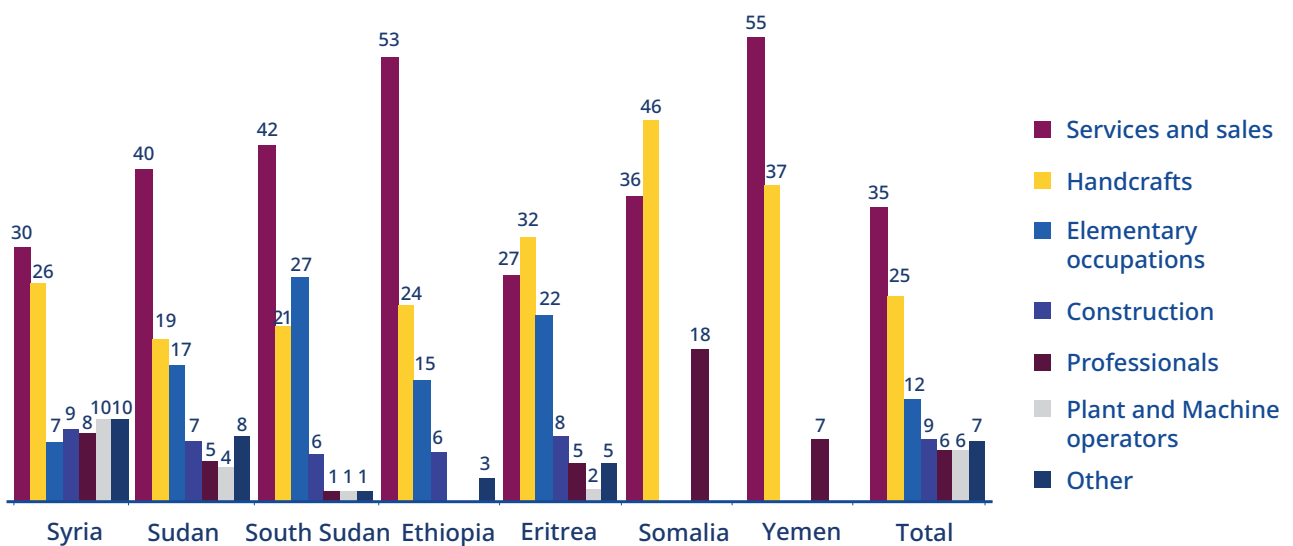


Figure 23 shows the last occupation of refugees before they left their country of origin. While 17 per cent of refugees worked as professionals in their home country, only 6 per cent do so in Egypt. In particular, 41 per cent of Yemenis worked as professionals in Yemen but only 7 per cent in Egypt.

As shown in figure 24, most unemployed refugees, and a high proportion of those who had worked as professionals, in services and sales, or in handicrafts in their home country became unemployed in Egypt. However, those who had worked in construction remained in the same category in Egypt.

Figure 24. Current occupation by country of origin (%).

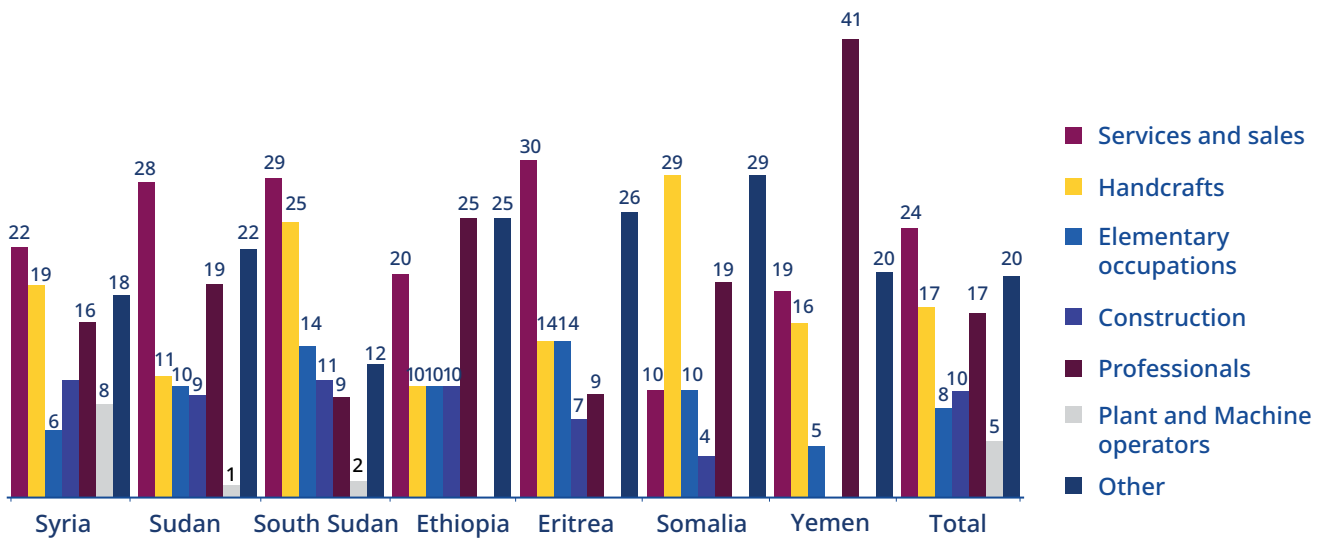
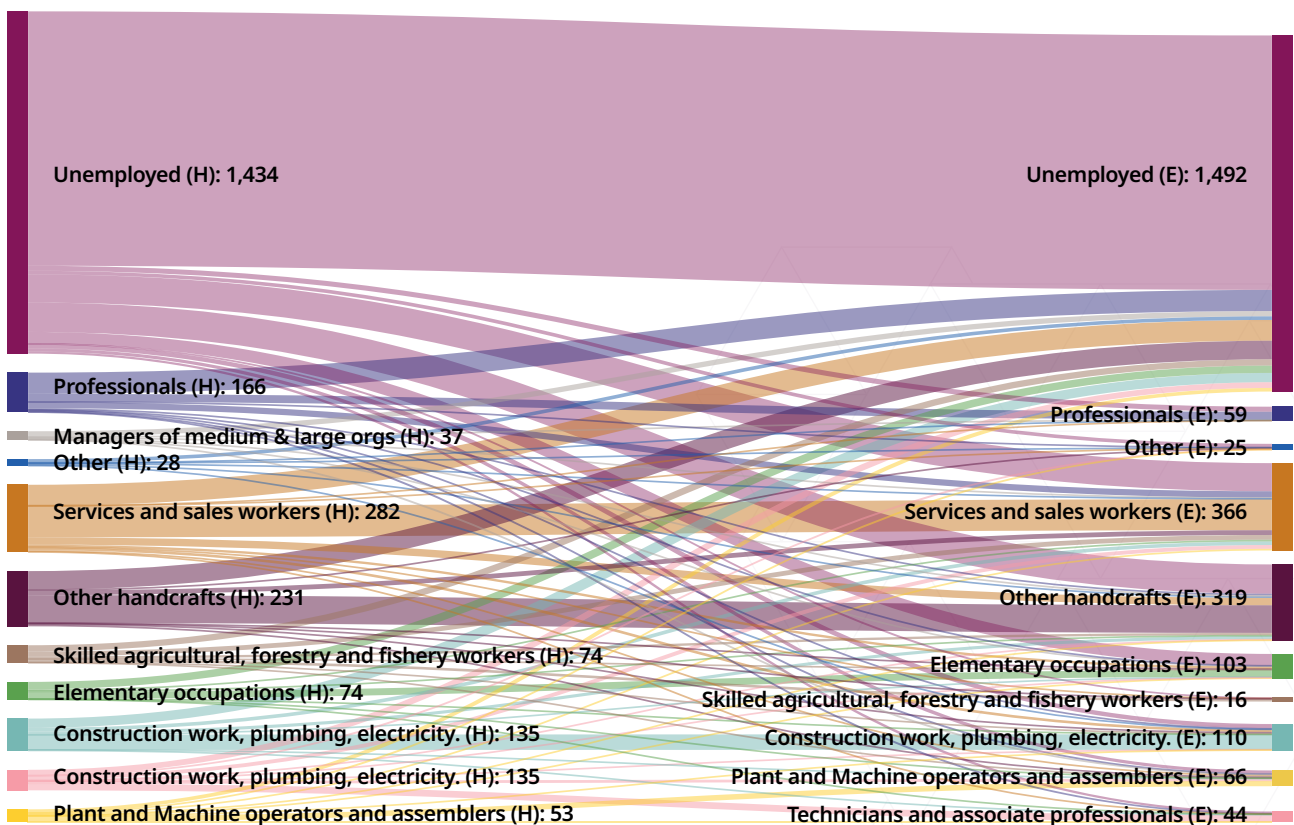


Figure 25. Number of respondents by occupation in home country (H) and in Egypt (E).

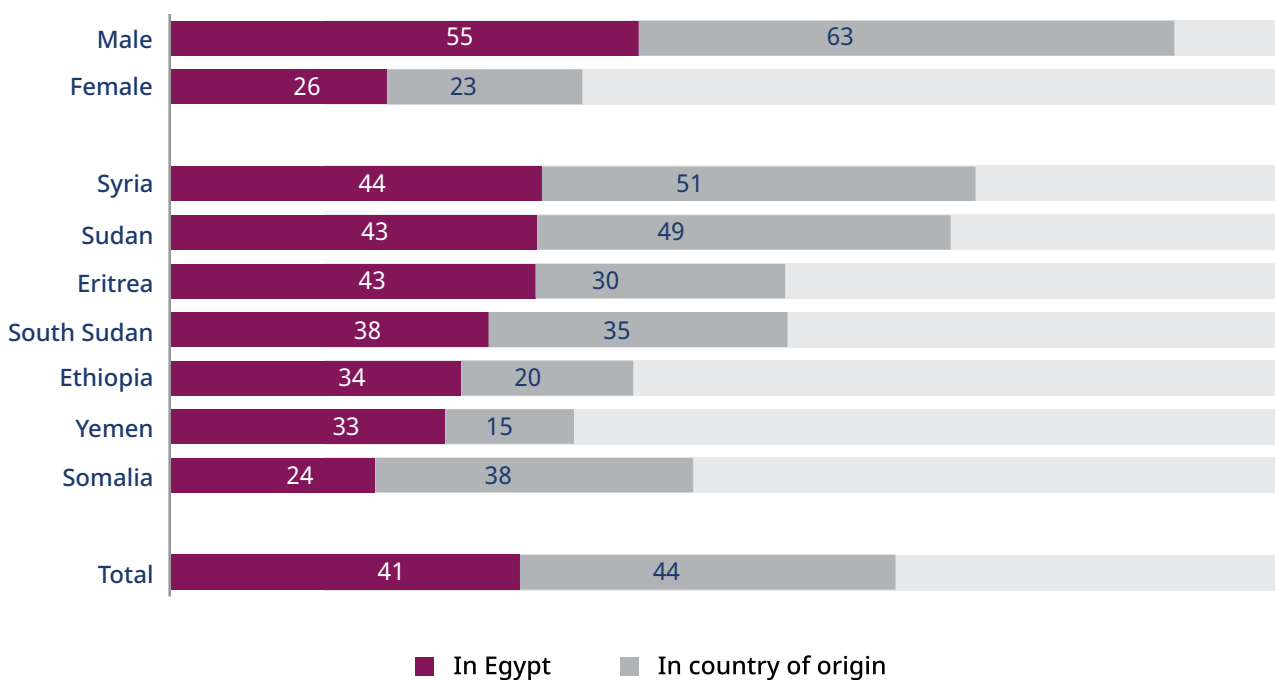


4.5.3 Previous employment experience in the country of origin

As shown in figure , 44 per cent of refugees were employed before they came to Egypt, a percentage not much higher than that of those employed in Egypt (41 per cent). The percentage of employed male refugees is lower in Egypt than in their home country (55 and 63 per cent, respectively). However, the percentage of employed female refugees is higher in Egypt than in their country of origin (26 and 23 per cent, respectively).

Refugees from Somalia, Syria and Sudan had higher employment rates in their home countries, while Yemenis, Ethiopians, Eritreans and South Sudanese have higher employment rates in Egypt.

Figure 26. Percentages of employed refugees in Egypt and country of origin.



4.5.4 Skills level

Figures 26.A and 26.B show that around 14 per cent of refugees changed from high-skilled to mid-level and low-skilled jobs when they left their home countries.⁷

More than a quarter of refugees (26 per cent) used to work in high-skilled jobs in their country of origin, but only 12 per cent in Egypt. The percentages of those working in mid-level and low-skilled jobs at home increased in Egypt. The decline in the percentage of refugees working in high-skilled jobs in their country of origin and in Egypt is particularly noticeable among Yemeni refugees (52 per cent compared with 10 per cent, respectively). The decline is also significant among Sudanese and Ethiopian refugees.

⁷ High-skilled jobs include managers, professionals and technicians, mid-level jobs include services and sales workers, skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, construction workers and crafters. Low-skilled jobs include clerical support workers, plant and machine operators and assemblers in addition to elementary occupations (including domestic work).

Figure 27.A. Work in country of origin by skills level.

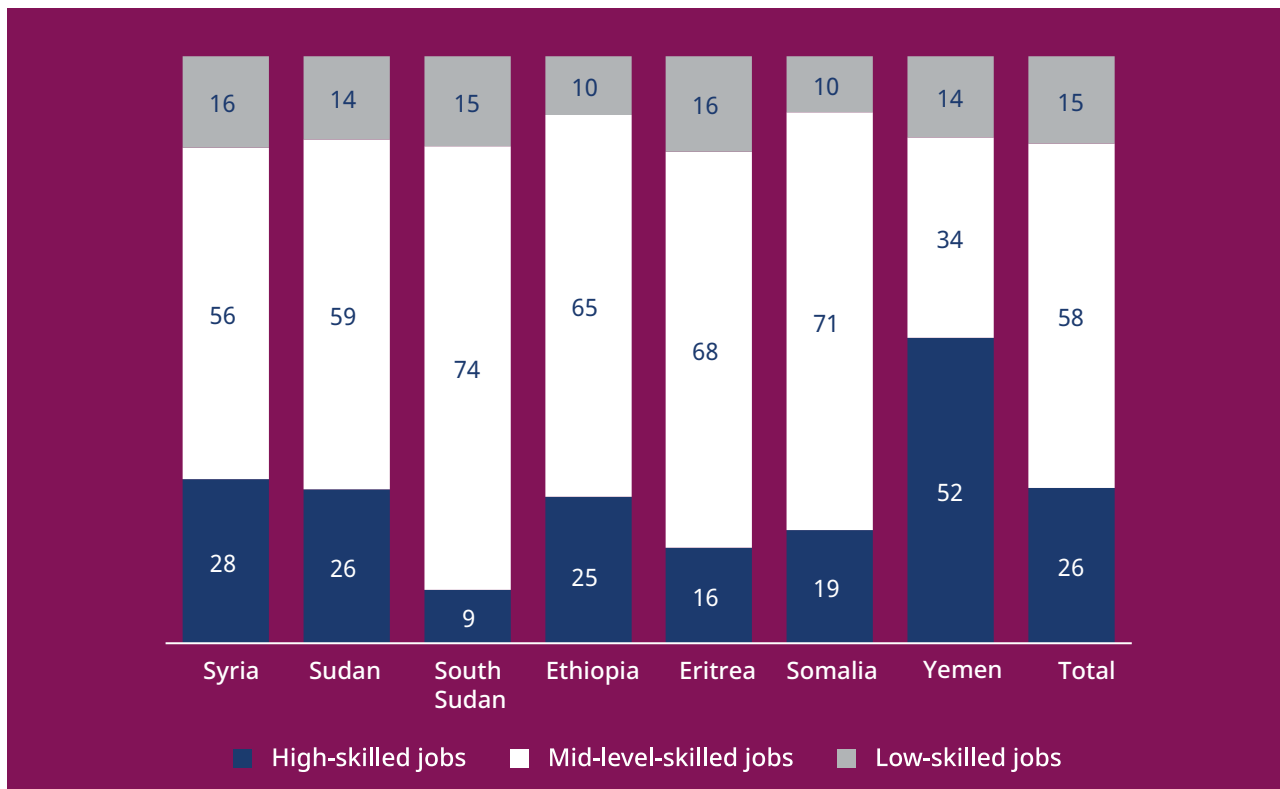


Figure 27.B. Work in Egypt by skills level.

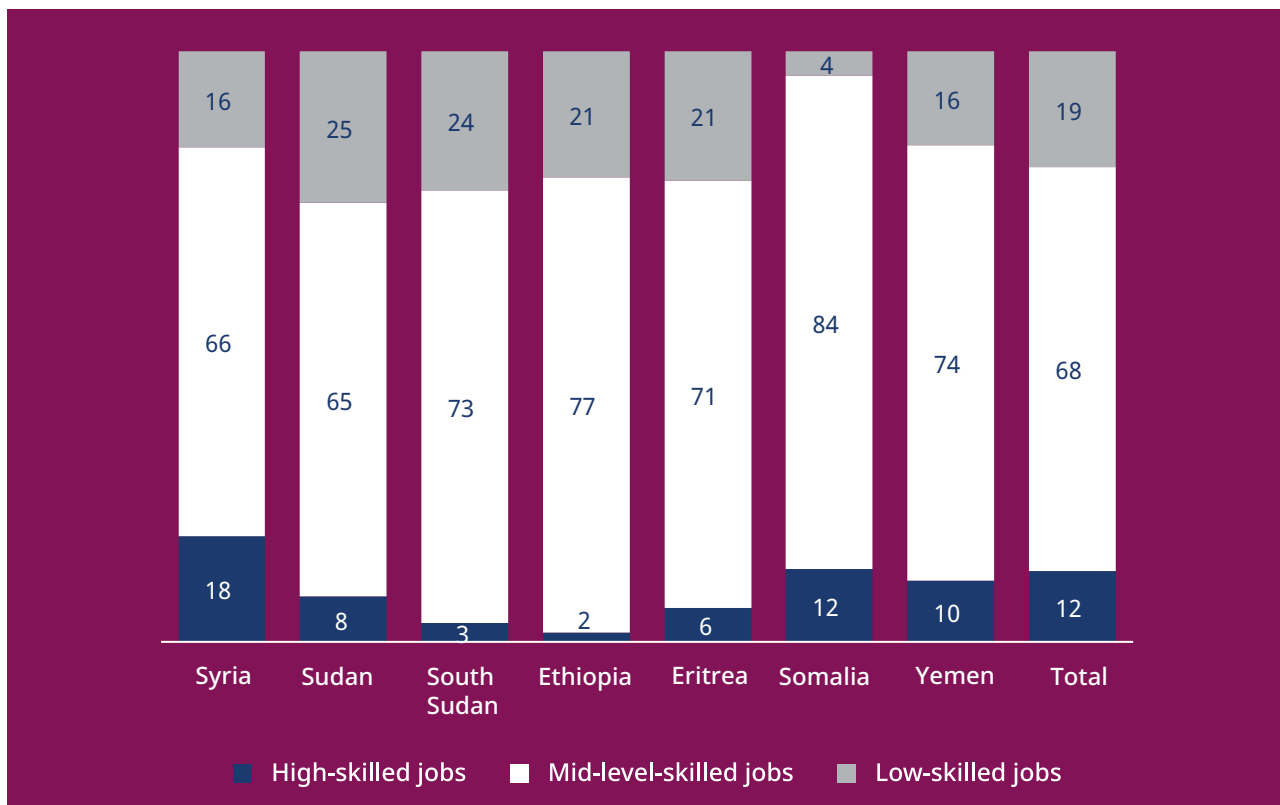
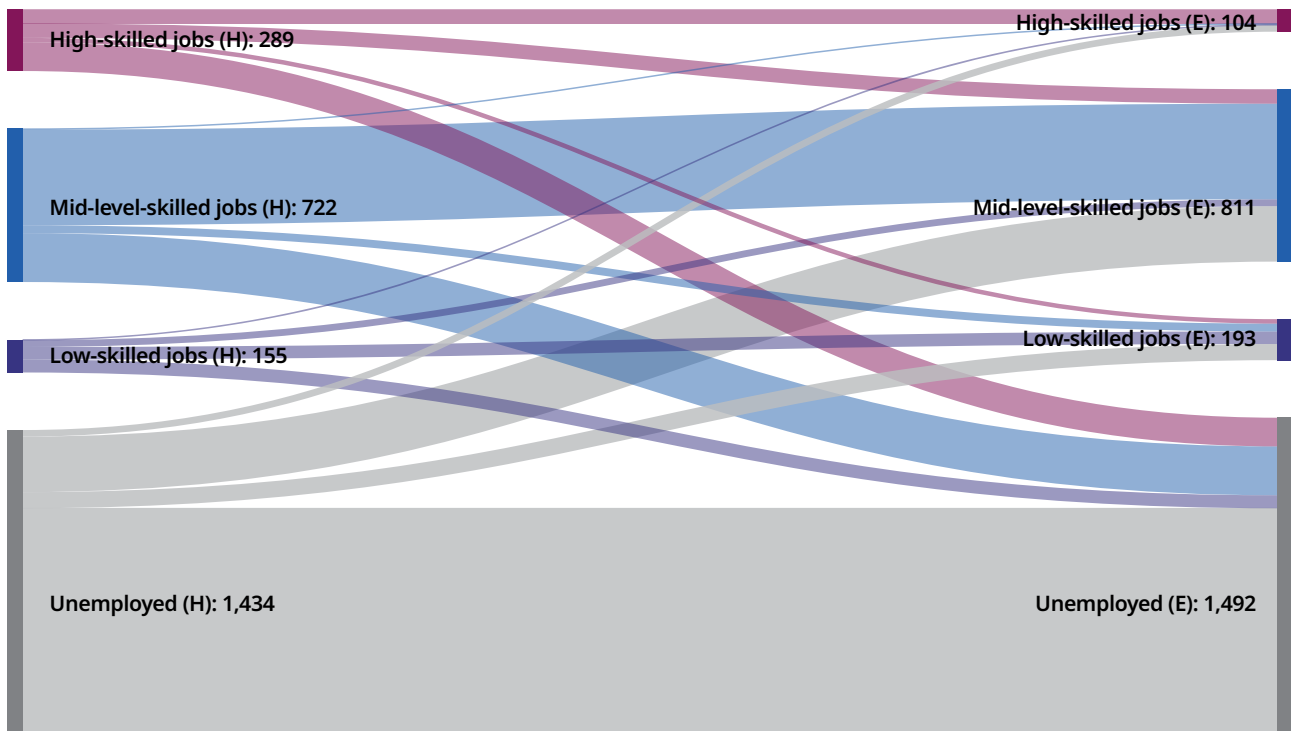


Figure 28. Number of respondents by skill level of occupation in home country (H) and in Egypt (E).



As shown in figure 27, there is a noticeable downgrading in skills level between refugees' occupations in their home country and in Egypt. For example, the highest percentage of refugees who had worked in high-skilled jobs in their home country worked in mid-level- jobs or became unemployed in Egypt.

► 4.6 Sector of activity

Figure 28 shows the current work sectors for working refugees by country of origin. Almost half the refugees (48 per cent) work in the sector labelled "other services", which includes a wide range of activities such as domestic work and catering. Almost a quarter of refugees (22 per cent) work in the manufacturing/handicraft sector, in addition to 10 per cent in construction, 9 per cent in wholesale or retail trade and 11 per cent in other sectors. Only 0.4 per cent of refugees (mainly Syrians) work in the agriculture/livestock/forestry/fishing sector.

Ethiopians, Sudanese and South Sudanese are more likely than other nationalities to work in construction, while Eritreans and Syrians are more likely to work in manufacturing/handicrafts.

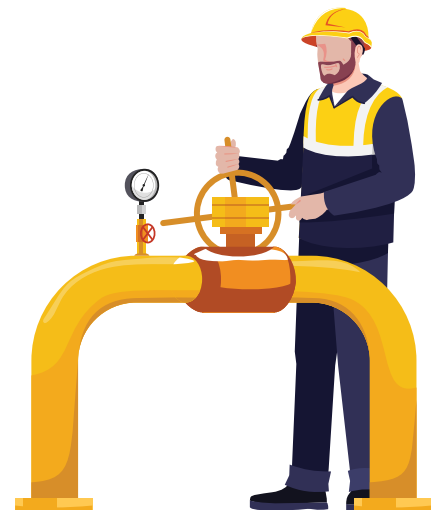


Figure 29. Sector of activity (%).



► 4.7 Mean working hours

Figure 29 shows that on average, an employed refugee works 48.4 hours per week. The mean working hours are much higher among male refugees than among females (53.6 and 35.9 hours per week, respectively). The highest mean values were observed among Syrians (54 hours) and Eritreans (47.1 hours), while the lowest mean was recorded for South Sudanese (36 hours per week). Refugees living in Alexandria work more hours on average (56.2 hours) than refugees in other regions (52.8 hours in Damietta and 47.3 hours in Greater Cairo).

Figure 30 shows some variations in the mean working hours per week by gender and by country of origin and region. For example, male refugees from Syria and Ethiopia tend to work longer hours (56 and 51.2 hours per week, respectively) than other nationalities. Female refugees from Somalia and Eritrea work more hours (47.8 and 44.3 hours per week, respectively) than female refugees from other countries.

Male refugees in Alexandria work 60 hours on average per week, compared with 52.6 hours for those in Greater Cairo. Similarly, the highest mean working hours per week were recorded for female refugees in Greater Cairo (36 hours), around 9 hours more than female refugees in Damietta.

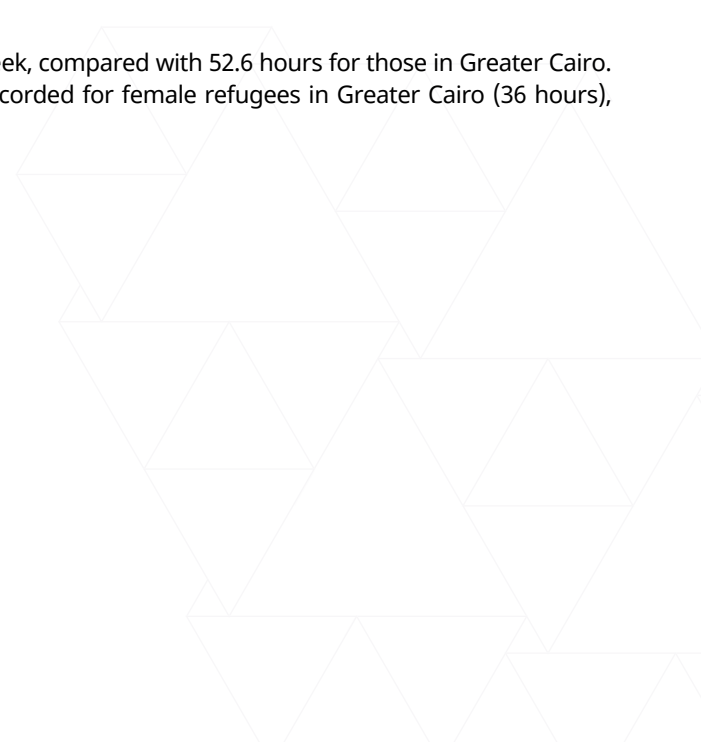


Figure 30. Mean working hours per week for working refugees.

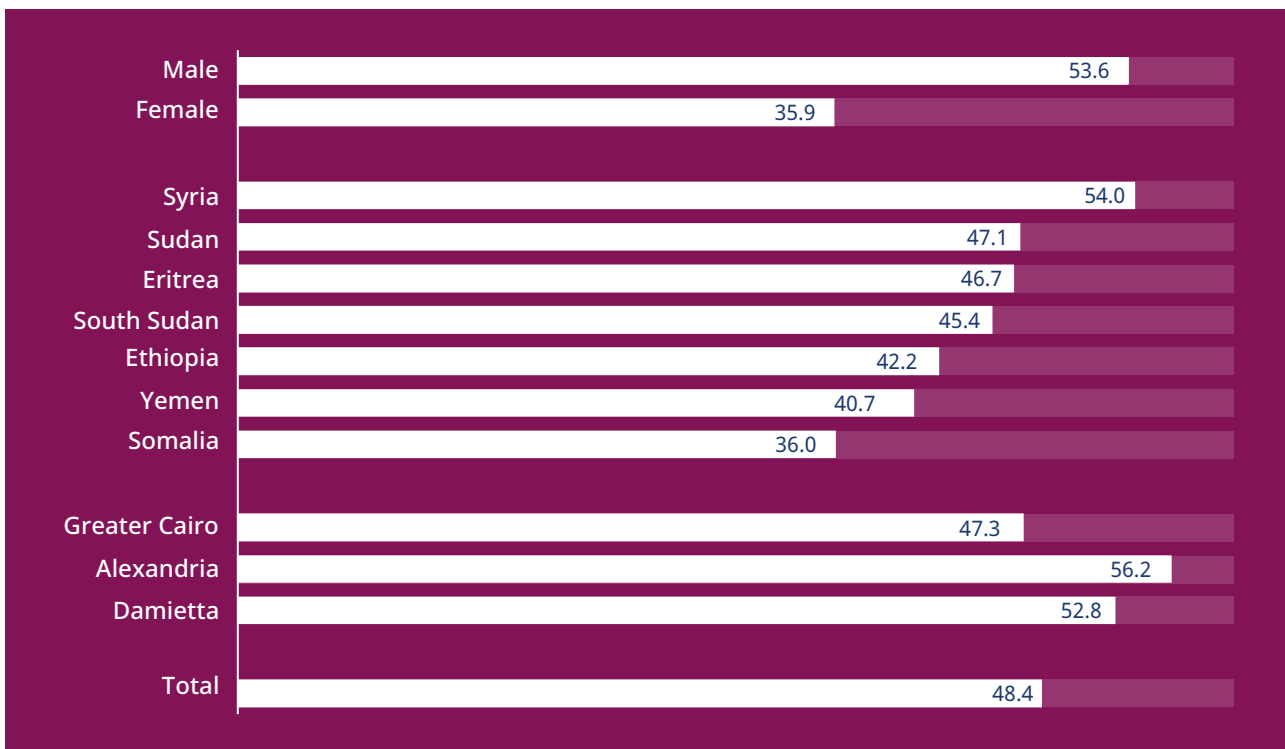


Figure 31. Mean working hours per week for working refugees by gender.

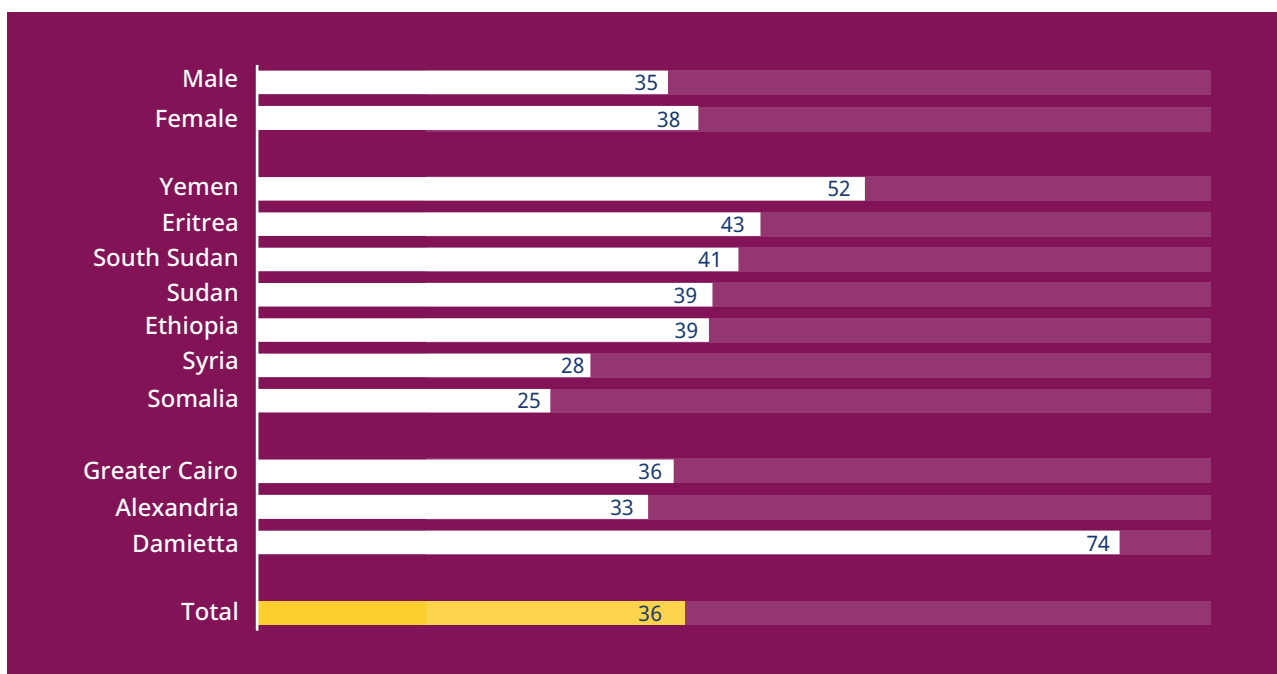


► 4.8 Underemployment (time-related)

Employed persons are considered to be in time-related underemployment when they work less than 40 hours per week and are willing to work more paid hours. As shown in figure 31, more than one third (36 per cent) of employed refugees are considered underemployed.

The percentage of underemployed female refugees is slightly higher than that of males (38 and 35 per cent, respectively). Yemeni and Eritrean refugees have the highest underemployment rates (52 and 43 per cent, respectively), while Somalis have the lowest rates (25 per cent). Around three quarters of the refugees in Damietta are considered underemployed, compared with 33 per cent in Alexandria and 36 per cent in Greater Cairo.

Figure 32. Percentages of employed refugees working less than 40 hours per week and willing to work more hours.



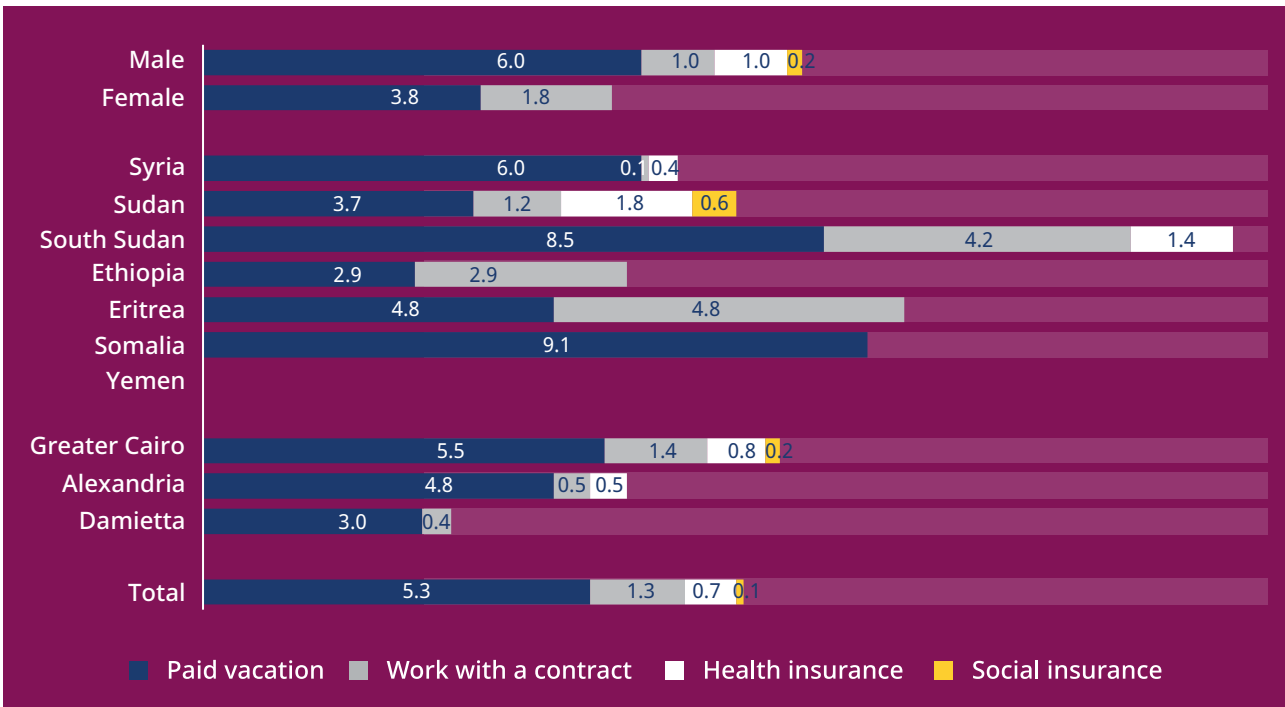
► 4.9 Work benefits

The results in figure 32 show that very few employed refugees enjoy basic work benefits. For example, only 5.3 per cent of employed refugees have paid vacations, 1.3 per cent have a work contract and less than 1 per cent have health or social insurance.

Working female refugees are more likely than males to have a work contract but less likely to have paid vacation, health and social insurance. The results given in the appendix show that only 0.5 per cent of working refugees had to issue work permission when they started to work.



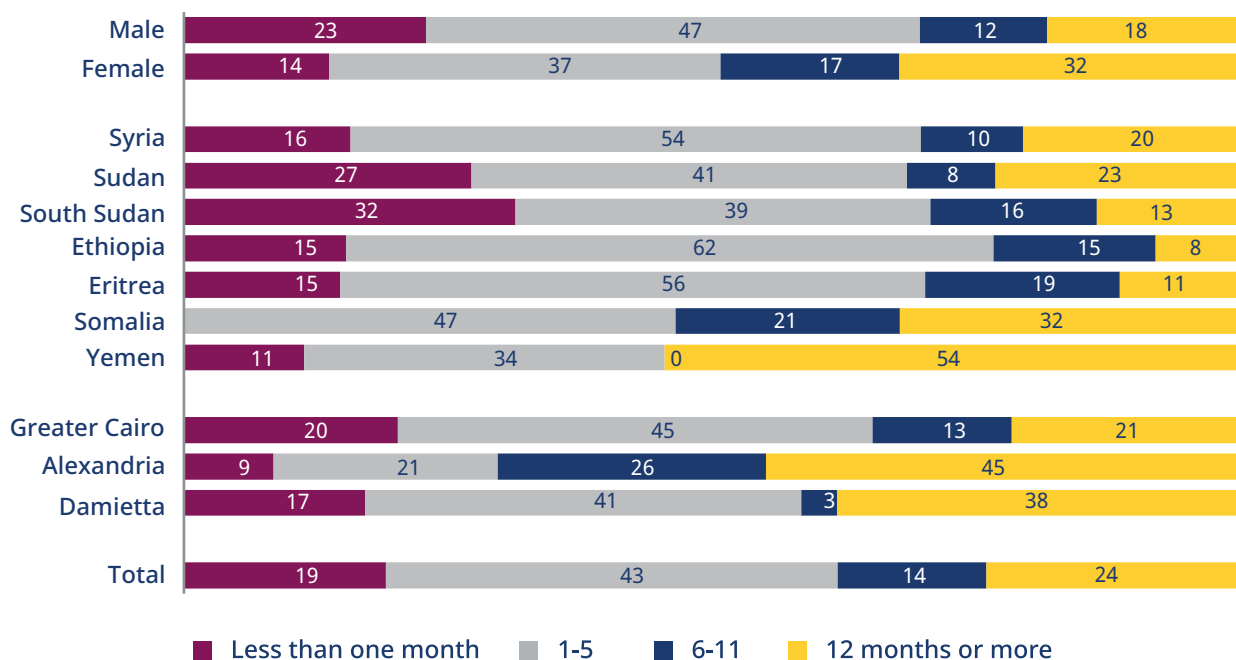
Figure 33. Percentages of working refugees enjoying some work benefits (%).



► 4.10 Job search

Around 11 per cent of refugees are unemployed, that is, not working and searching for jobs (12 per cent for males and 10 per cent for females). Figure 33 shows that around a quarter of those willing to work and searching for jobs spent 12 months or more in job search. Job search duration is higher among females, Yemenis and refugees living in Alexandria.

Figure 34. Duration of job search (%).

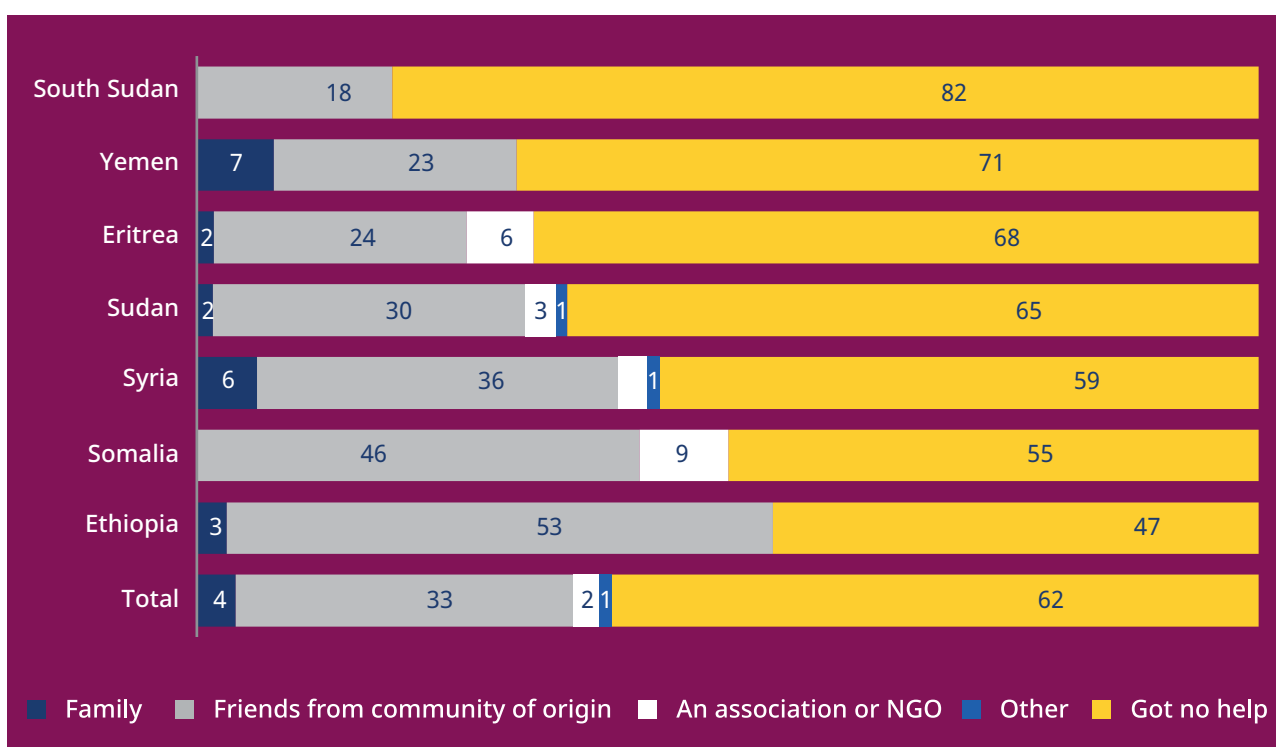


► 4.11 Sources of help in obtaining the current job

Employed respondents were asked about the sources of help they received for obtaining their current job. As presented in figure 34, family members and friends from the community of origin are the main sources of help for 36 per cent of respondents. A small percentage received help from an association or an NGO (2 per cent) or from other sources (1 per cent). More than three fifths of respondents (62 per cent) mentioned that they had no help in obtaining their current job.

Syrian and Yemeni refugees are more likely to receive help from family members (7 and 6 per cent, respectively). Ethiopians depend more on friends from their community of origin, while Somalis have the highest percentage of obtaining help from associations and NGOs.

Figure 35. Sources of help obtaining the current job.



► 4.12 Reasons for not searching for paid jobs

As presented in figure 35, respondents who are not working and not searching for jobs gave the main reasons as household or family responsibilities (74 per cent), long-term illness, injury or disability (39 per cent), study or training (10 per cent), other reasons (4 per cent).



Figure 36. Reasons for not searching for a paid job (%).



Female refugees are more likely to report being engaged in family responsibilities than males (85 and 52 per cent, respectively). Male refugees, however, are more likely to report illness, injury or disability, study or training.

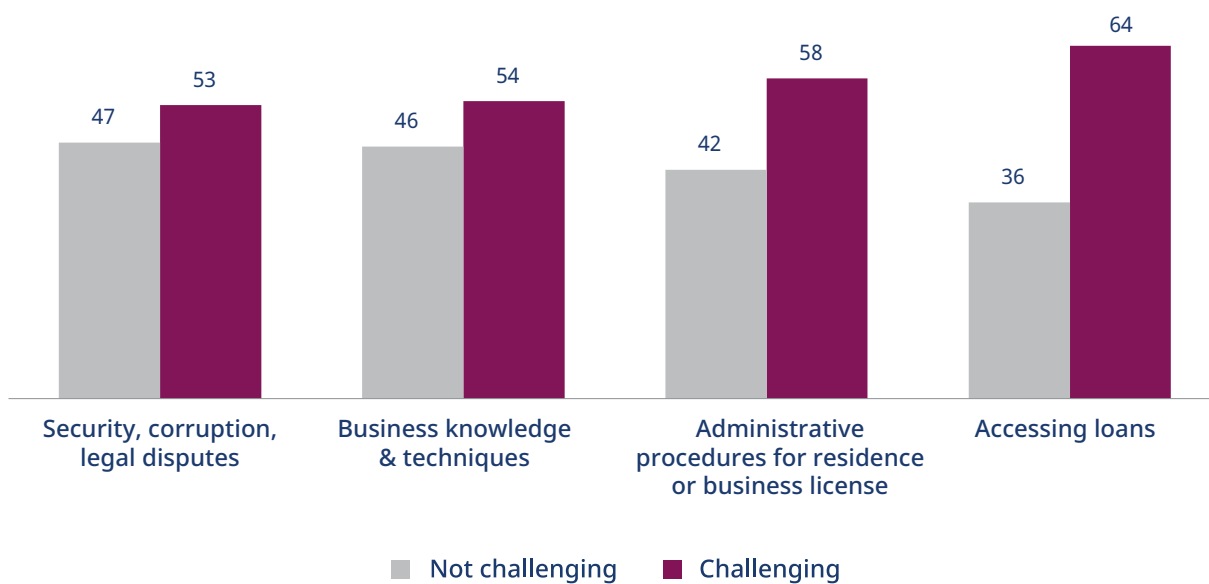
Among young refugees aged 15 to 24, 44 per cent reported that they did not work because they are studying or training, leaving a large share of youth not in employment, training or education (NEET).



► 4.13 Challenges in running businesses in Egypt

A small percentage of refugees (around 3 per cent) run their own business in Egypt. The key challenges they face are presented in figure 37. Accessing loans was considered a challenge for 64 per cent of them, followed by administrative procedures related to residence or business license (58 per cent), business knowledge and techniques such as planning, accounting and marketing (54 per cent) and security and legal disputes issues (53 per cent).

Figure 37. Challenges in running businesses in Egypt.





5

Skills and qualifications

This section provides information about respondents' skills and qualifications, and the skills needed to find better job opportunities in Egypt. The results include information about language and computer skills, job training received, type of job training, work experience, and skills acquired compared with skills required to do their jobs.

► 5.1 Language skills

As presented in figure 38.A, almost all refugees (98 per cent) speak Arabic or can read and write it, while 16 per cent speak English and 13 per cent speak other languages such as French, German, Somali, Tigrinya and others. Males are more likely to speak English, while females are more likely to speak other languages.

As shown in figure 38.B, two fifths of respondents believe that improving their language skills can provide them with better job opportunities in Egypt. Male refugees, and refugees from Yemen, Eritrea and Ethiopia, are more likely to believe that improving their language skills can provide better job opportunities.



Figure 38.A. Spoken languages.

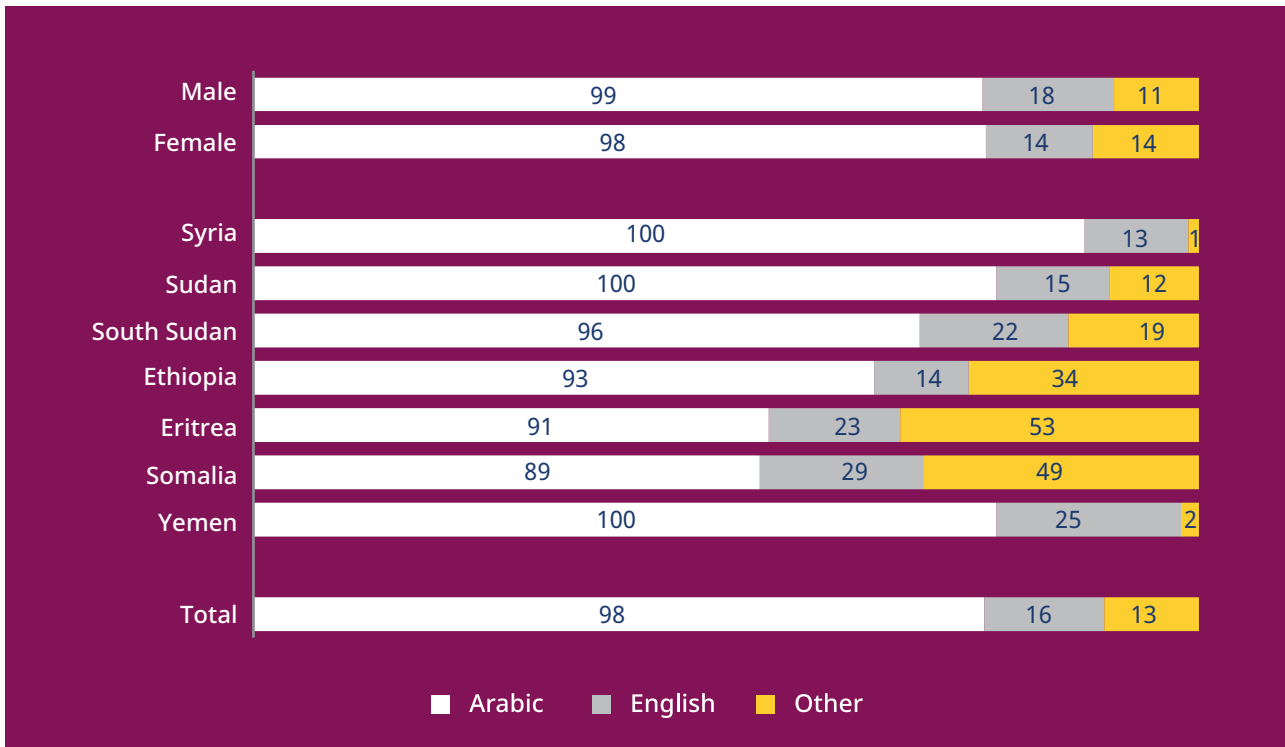
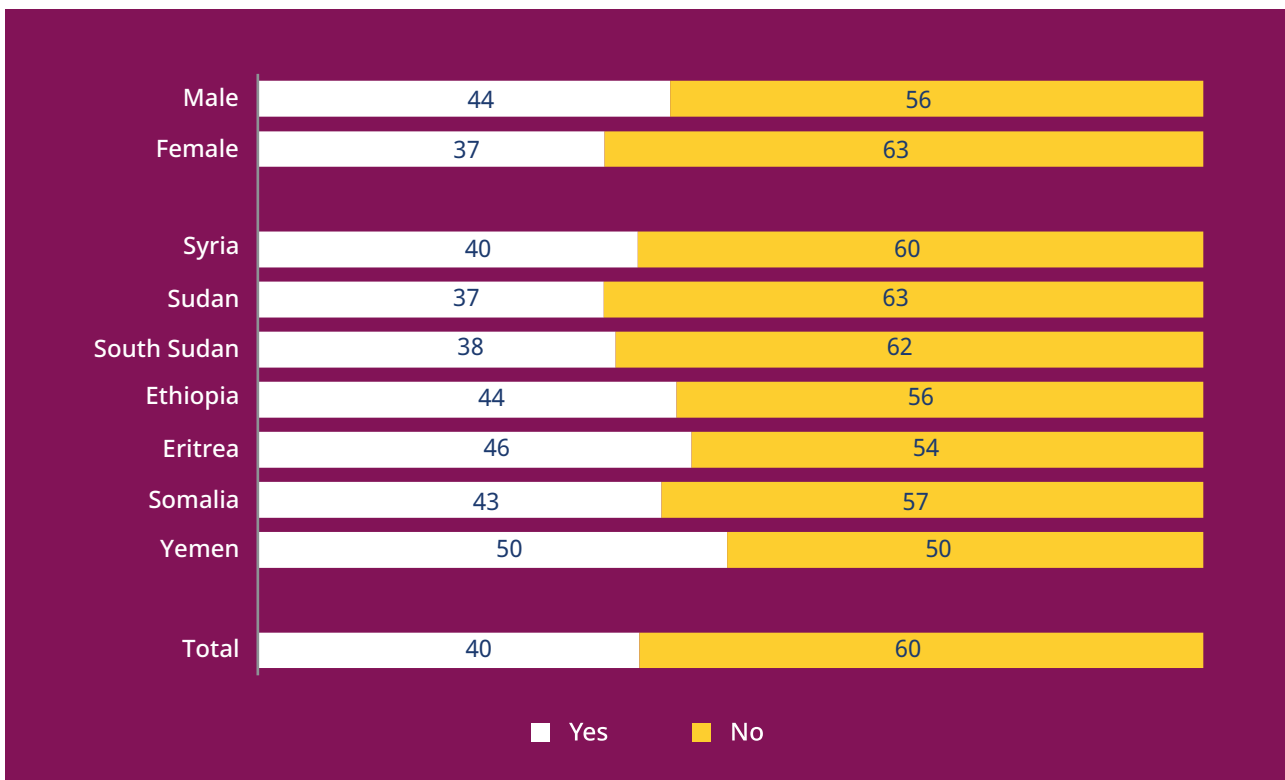


Figure 38.B. Can Improving language skills provide you with better job opportunities in Egypt?



► 5.2 Computer skills

As shown in figure 39.A, more than four fifths of refugees (81 per cent) have poor or no computer skills. Only 3 per cent have programming or software development skills, 8 per cent have knowledge of Word or spreadsheet software. The most reported computer skills include social media (79 per cent), internet use (68 per cent) and Microsoft Office. In general, male refugees have higher computer skills than females. Yemeni refugees have relatively higher levels of computer skills than other nationalities, while Ethiopians have the lowest levels.

As summarized in figure 39B, two fifths of respondents believe that improving computer skills can provide them with better job opportunities in Egypt. Male refugees, and refugees from Yemen and Eritrea, are more likely than females and refugees of other nationalities to believe that improving computer skills can provide better job opportunities.

Figure 39.A. Level of computer skills.

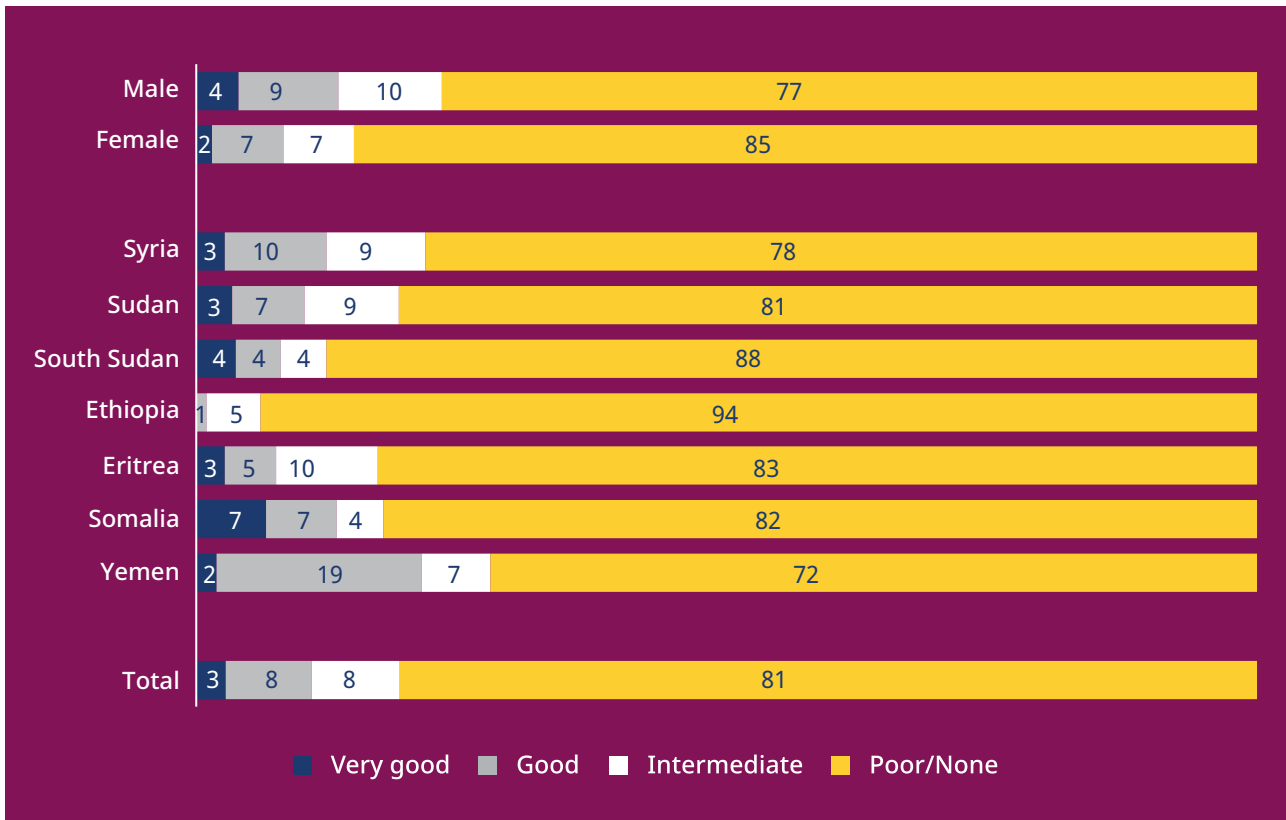
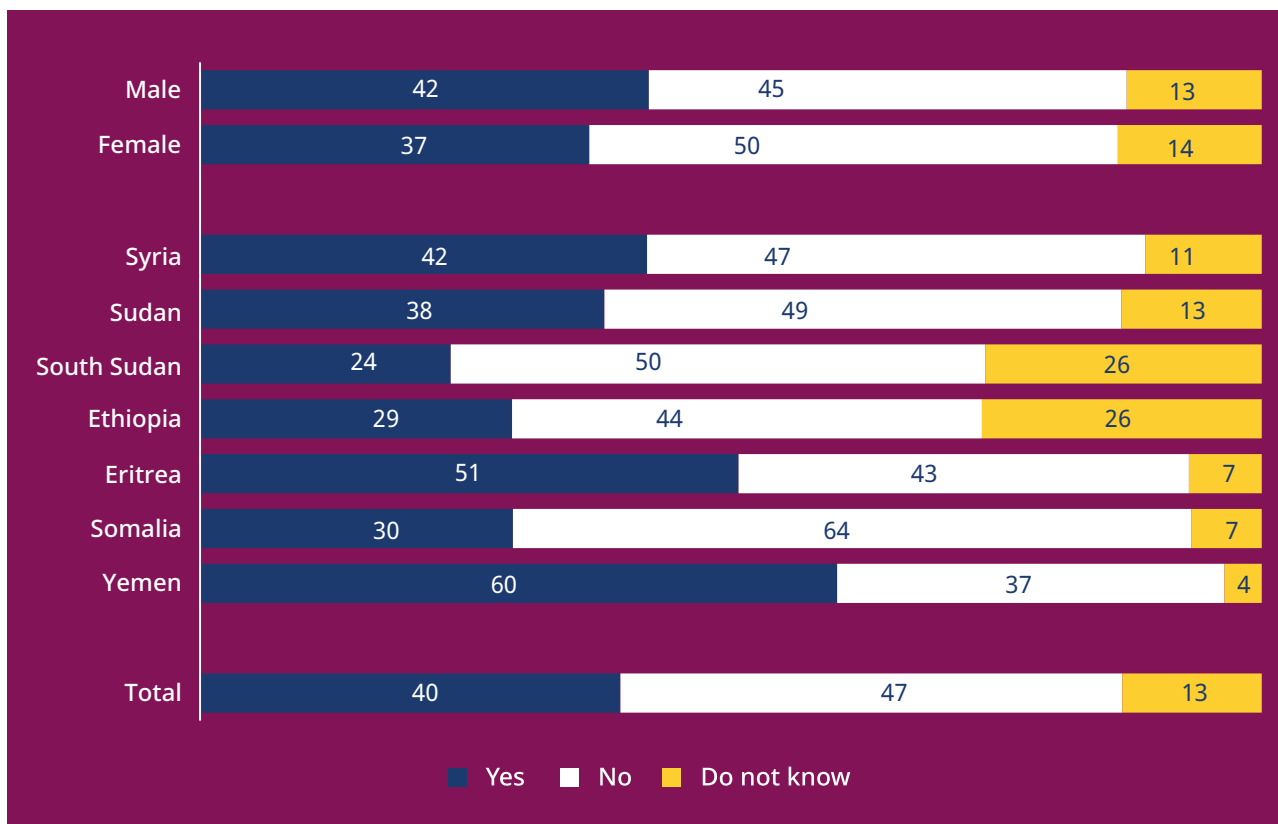


Figure 39.B. Can improving computer skills provide you with better job opportunities in Egypt?



► 5.3 Job training⁸

Respondents were asked whether they received any job training programme or any type of training to improve their skills. As shown in figure 40.A, only 7 per cent of refugees reported that they received job training. The highest percentage of those who received job training was observed among Yemeni refugees (15 per cent), while none of the Ethiopian respondents received any type of training.

Regarding the type of training received, as shown in figure 40.B, around two thirds (64 per cent) of those who received training had professional training: 28 per cent received training to improve their computer skills, 18 per cent to improve language skills, and 5 per cent received other types of training (mainly for handicrafts). Male refugees are more likely to receive training on computer and language skills, while females are more likely to receive professional training and other types of training (especially handicrafts). Yemeni refugees are more likely to receive professional training, while Somalis are more likely than refugees of other nationalities to receive computer and language skills.

⁸Job training or skills training refers to a short-cycle training on key job-related competencies, including languages, IT, management, and other core skills

Figure 40.A. Have you ever received job training to improve your skills?

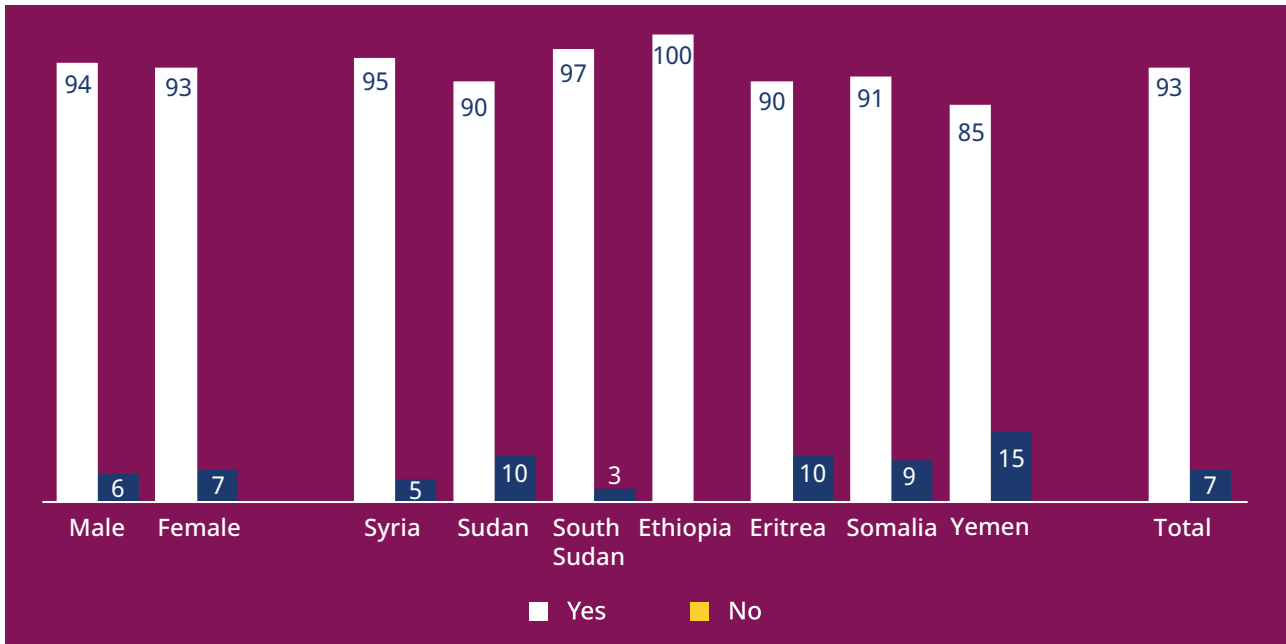
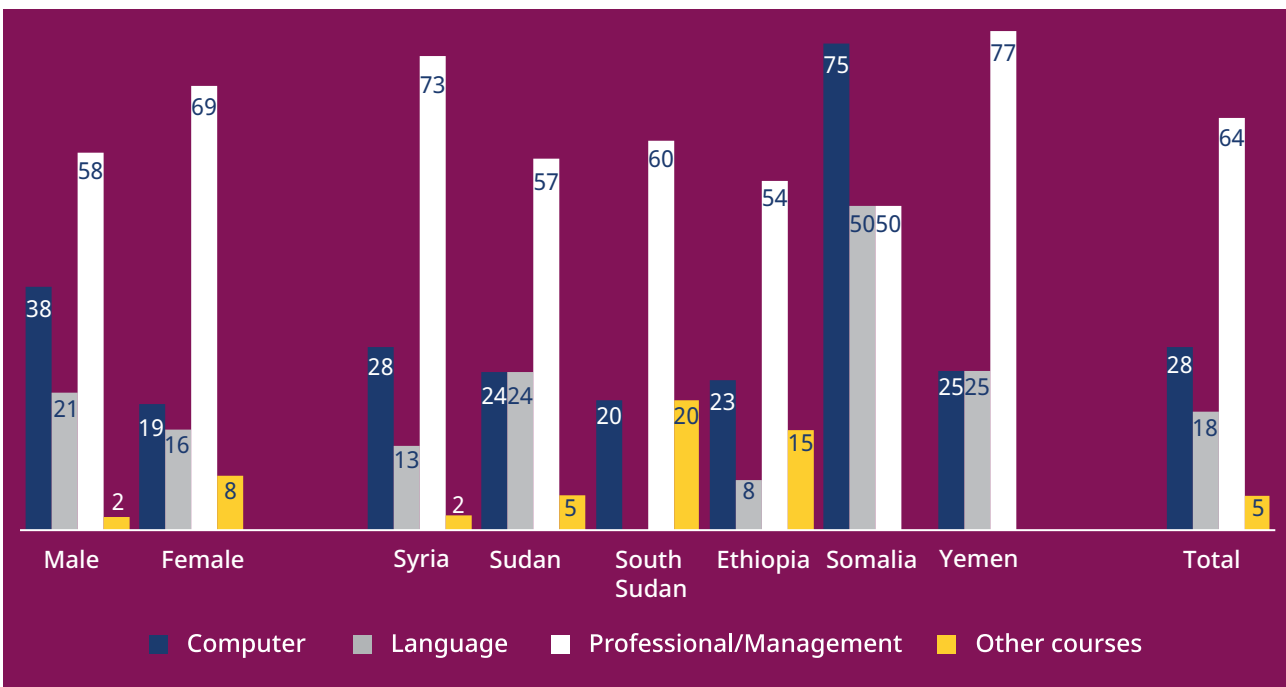


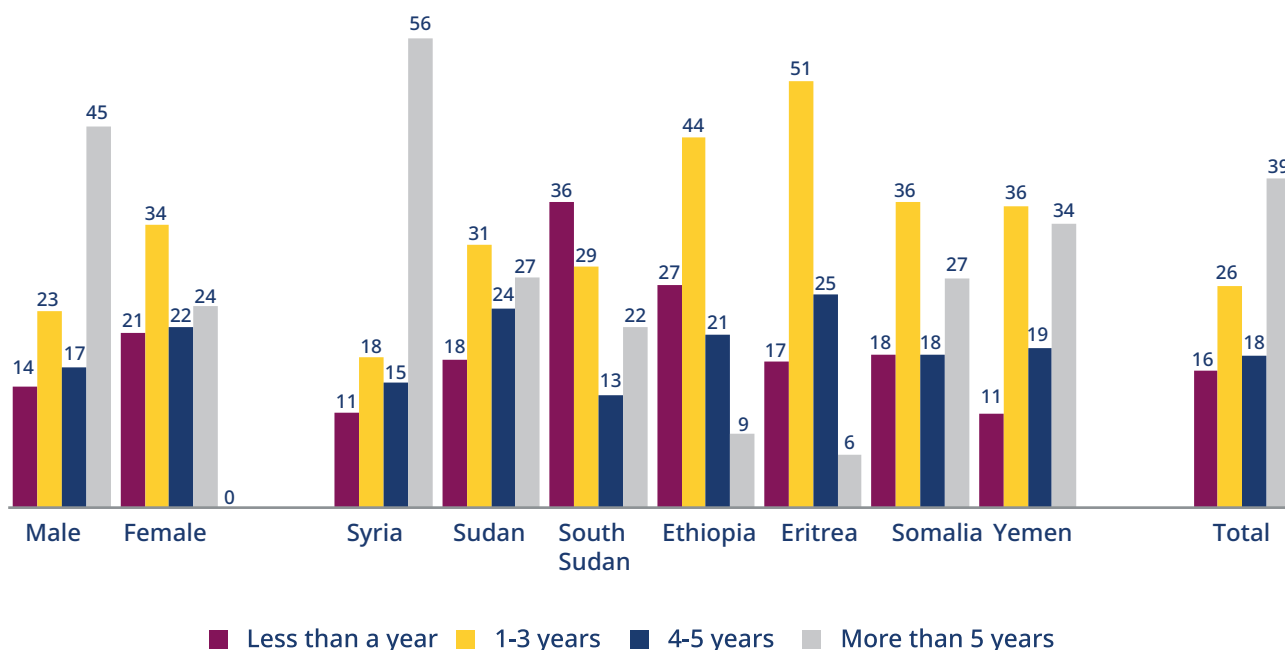
Figure 40.B. What type of training did you receive?



► 5.4 Work experience

Figure 41 presents percent distribution of currently employed respondents by years of work experience. Around one thirds of currently employed refugees (39 per cent) have more than five years of work experience, 18 per cent have four to five years of experience, while 16 per cent have less than a year or no previous work experience at all. In general, the highest percentages of those with more than five years of experience were observed among male and Syrian refugees.

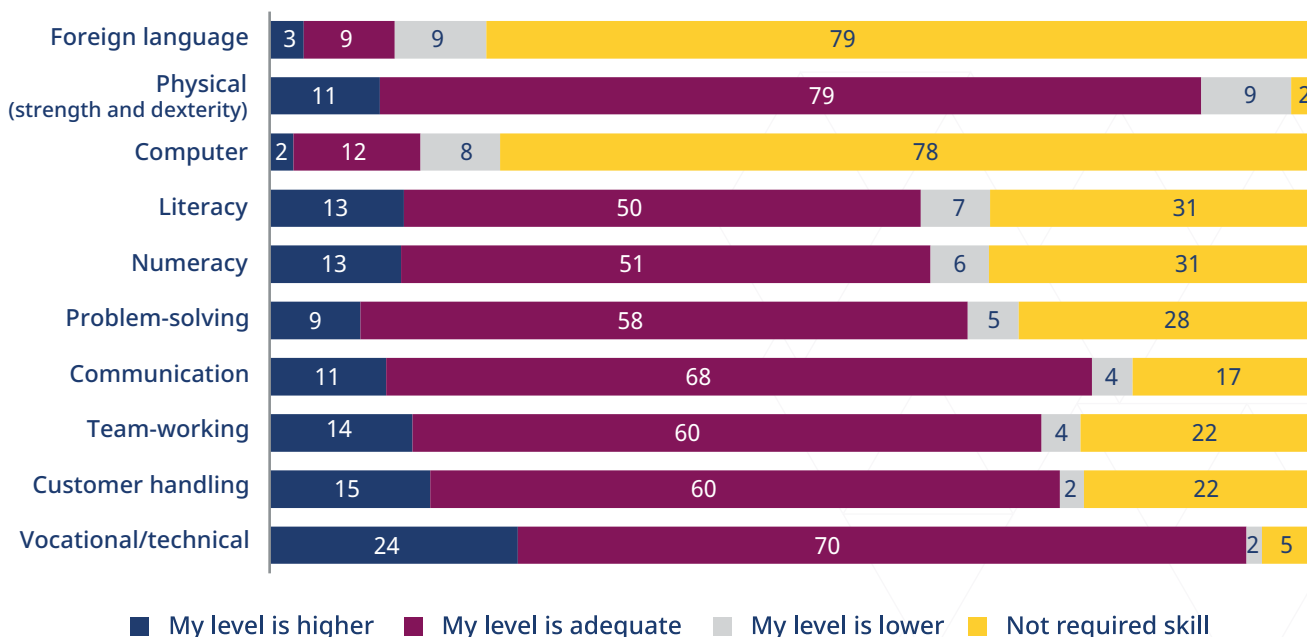
Figure 41. Years of work experience for currently employed refugees (%).



► 5.5 Respondents’ skills compared with required skills

Employed respondents were asked to evaluate their current skills levels compared with the required level at their work for ten important skills, as summarized in figure 42. As many as 90 per cent believe that their skills are adequate or higher than those required by their jobs. The most reported deficiencies were in physical skills (strength and dexterity), foreign languages and computer skills.

Figure 42. Respondent’s skills compared with required skills at work (%).





Access to and demand for services

This section presents the results of the study about financial and social services available for refugees or which they perceive as accessible. It also examines the services that are perceived as most important by the refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt.

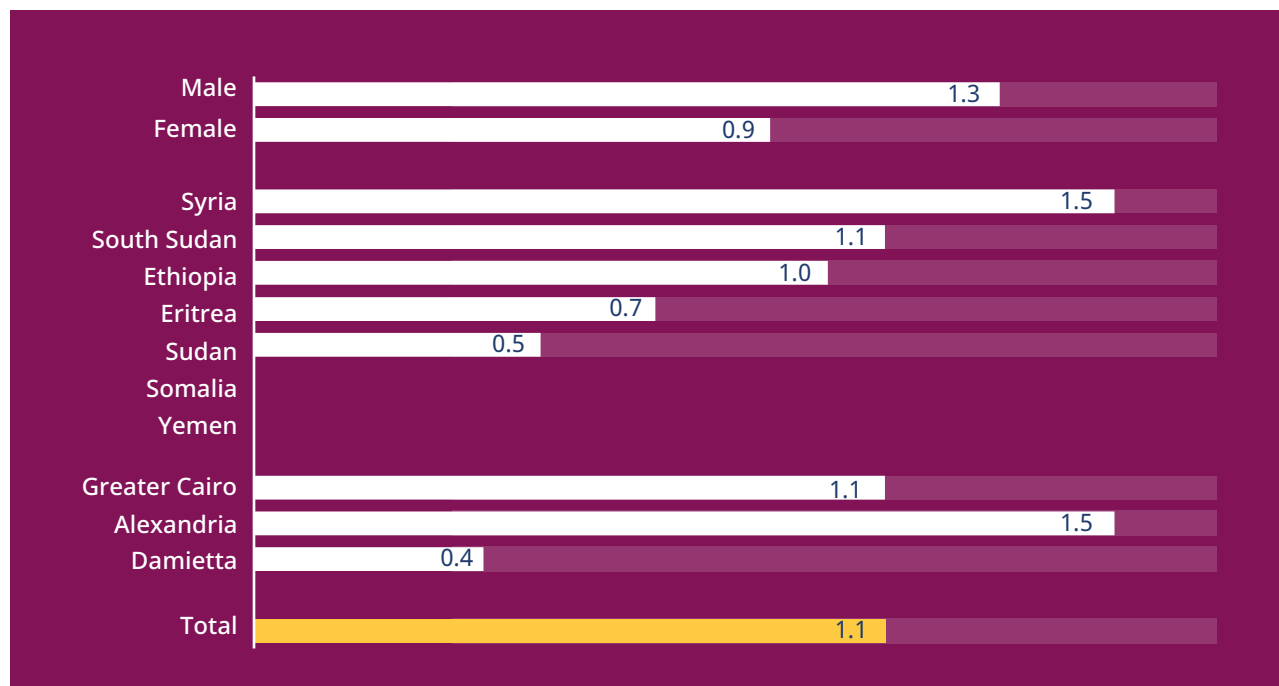
► 6.1 Financial services

6.1.1 Bank accounts

The results in figure 43 show that a very small percentage of refugees interviewed or one of their household members have a bank account or an account in other financial institutions in Egypt (only 1.1 per cent). The highest percentage of refugees with bank accounts were recorded for Syrian refugees (1.5 per cent) and South Sudanese (1.1 per cent), and for refugees living in Alexandria (1.5 per cent), while the lowest percentage was recorded for refugees living in Damietta (0.4 per cent); no Yemenis or Somalis had an account.



Figure 43. Percentages of refugees with bank accounts in Egypt.



6.1.2 Perception about available sources of loans

Respondents were asked if they thought they could apply for loans, other than from relatives or friends, in Egypt and the possible sources that would be available for these loans. As shown in figure 44.A, only 6 per cent of respondents believe that they can apply for a loan in Egypt if they need to. The percentage varies from 8 per cent among Syrian refugees to 0 per cent among Somalis.

As shown in Figure 44.B, the available sources of loans for those who believe they can apply for a loan, as perceived by refugees, are NGOs, associations and microfinance organizations (76 per cent), commercial banks (36 per cent) and business incubators (14 per cent).

Figure 44.A. Can you apply for a loan, other than from relatives, if you need to? (%).

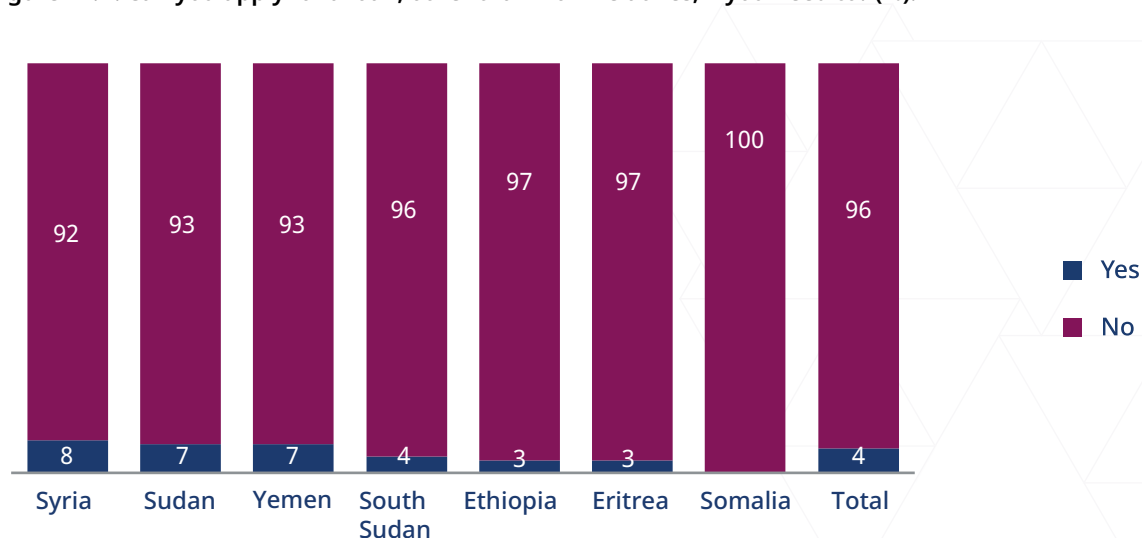
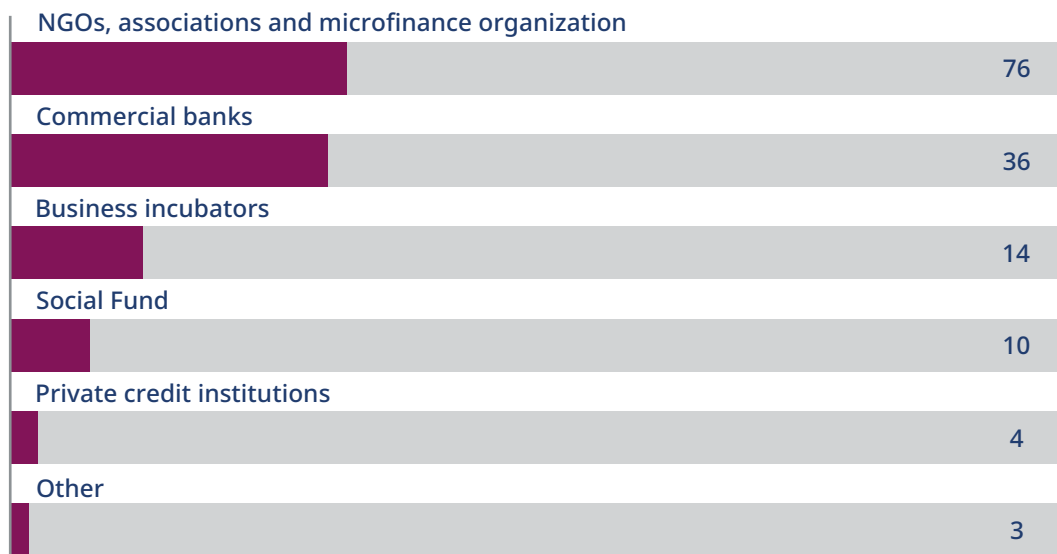


Figure 44.B. Perceived available sources of loans (%).

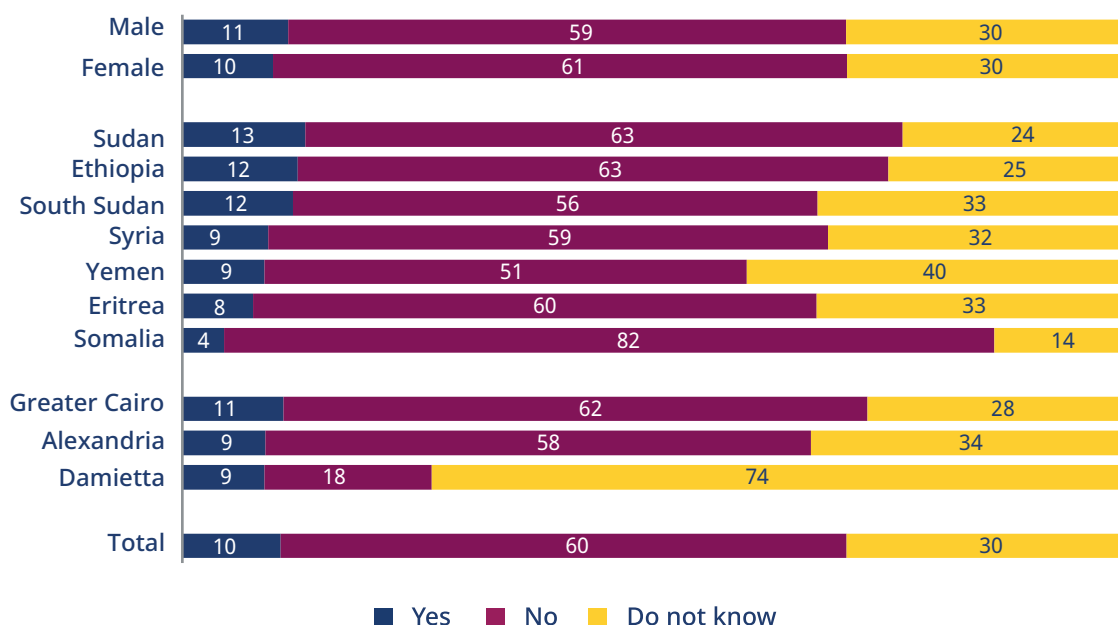


► 6.2 Youth centres

Respondents were asked if they were allowed to join a youth centre and use its facilities. As shown in figure 45, only 10 per cent of refugees replied positively, while 60 per cent do not think they can, and 30 per cent do not know if they can.

Male refugees, Sudanese and refugees living in Greater Cairo are slightly more likely to believe that they can join a youth centre and use its facilities than females and refugees of other nationalities and regions of residence.

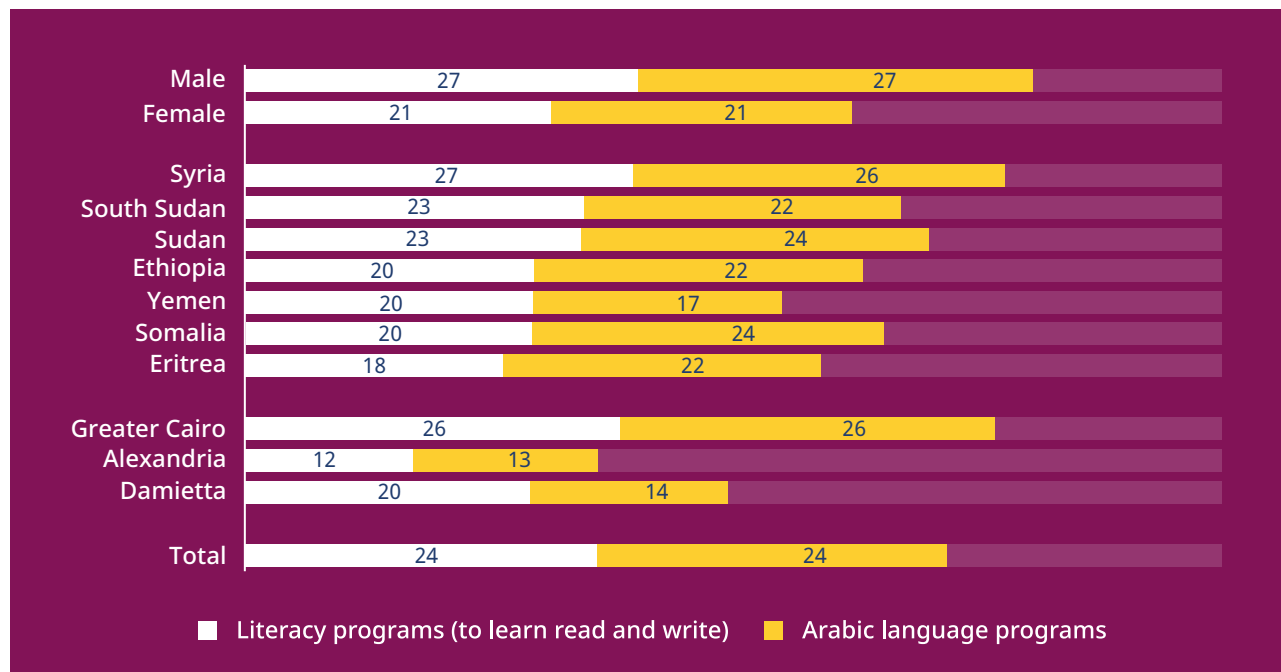
Figure 45. Are you allowed to join a youth centre and use its facilities? (%).



► 6.3 Literacy and Arabic language programmes

Respondents were asked if they knew of any available programmes to learn to read and write, or to learn Arabic. As shown in figure 46, around one quarter of refugees (24 per cent) know about literacy and/or Arabic language programmes available for them.

Figure 46. Percentages of refugees who know about literacy and Arabic language programmes.

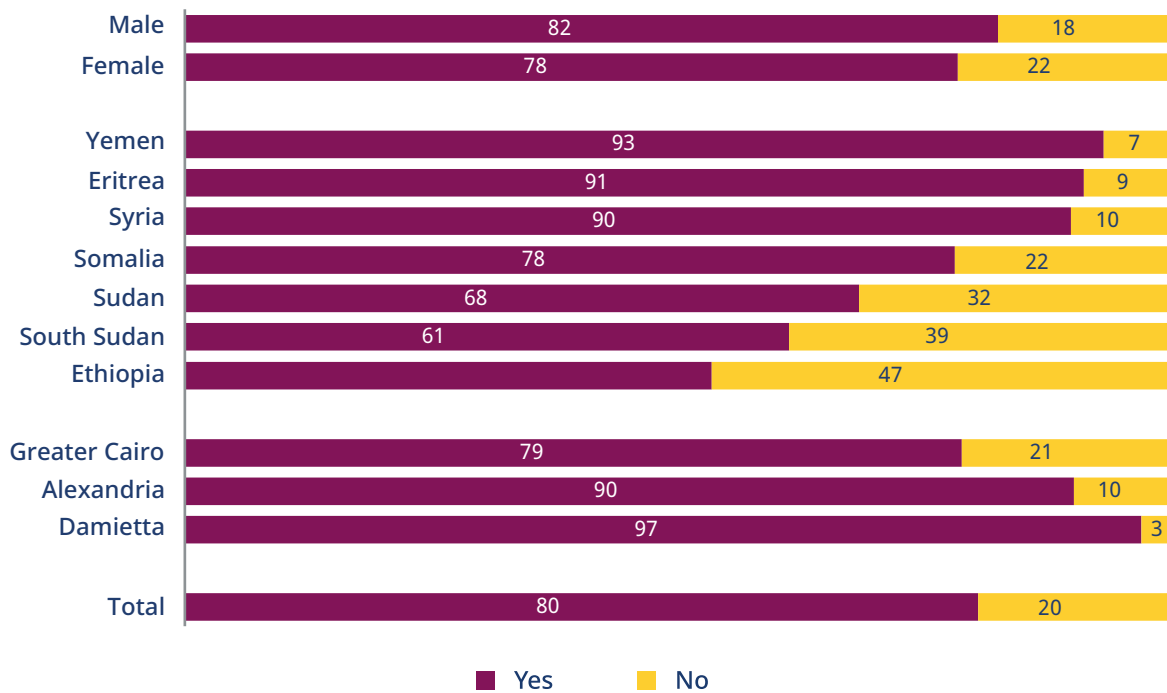


► 6.4 Vocational training programmes

As shown in figure 47, three out of ten refugees are aware of vocational training programmes available to them in Egypt, while the remaining 70 per cent do not know about any such programmes.

Male refugees, Syrians and refugees living in Alexandria are slightly more likely to know about vocational training programmes than females and refugees of other nationalities and regions of residence.

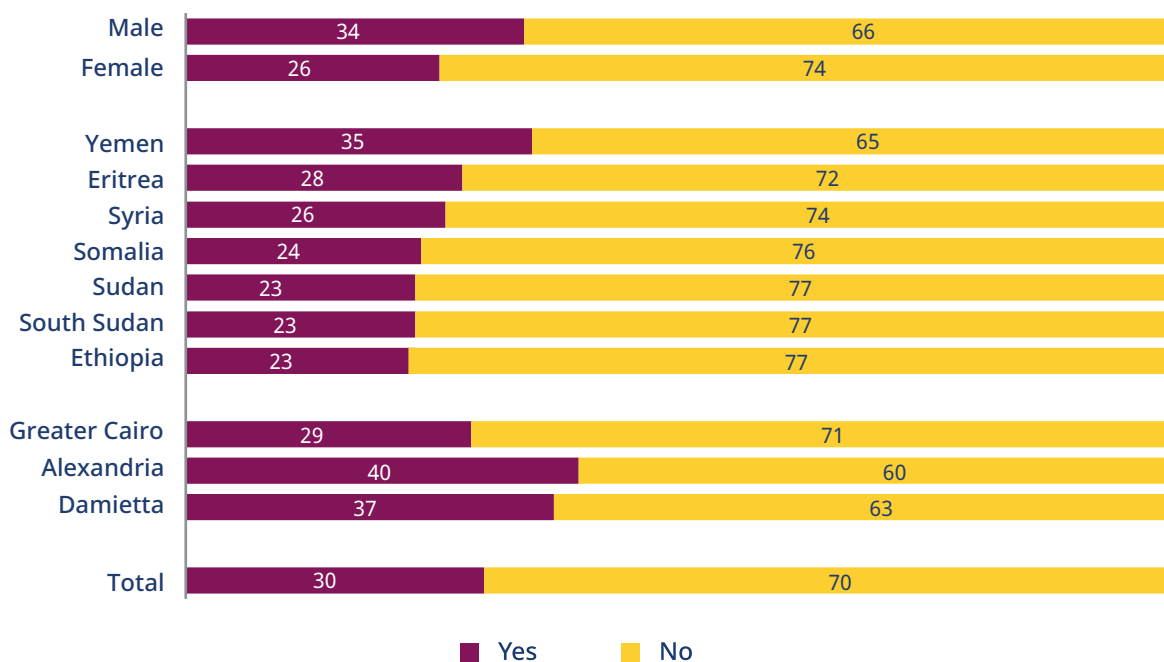
Figure 47. Do refugees have freedom of movement in Egypt? (%).



► 6.5 Freedom of movement in Egypt

Respondents were asked if refugees had freedom of movement in Egypt. As presented in figure 48, eight out of ten refugees believe that they have freedom of movement while 20 per cent disagree.

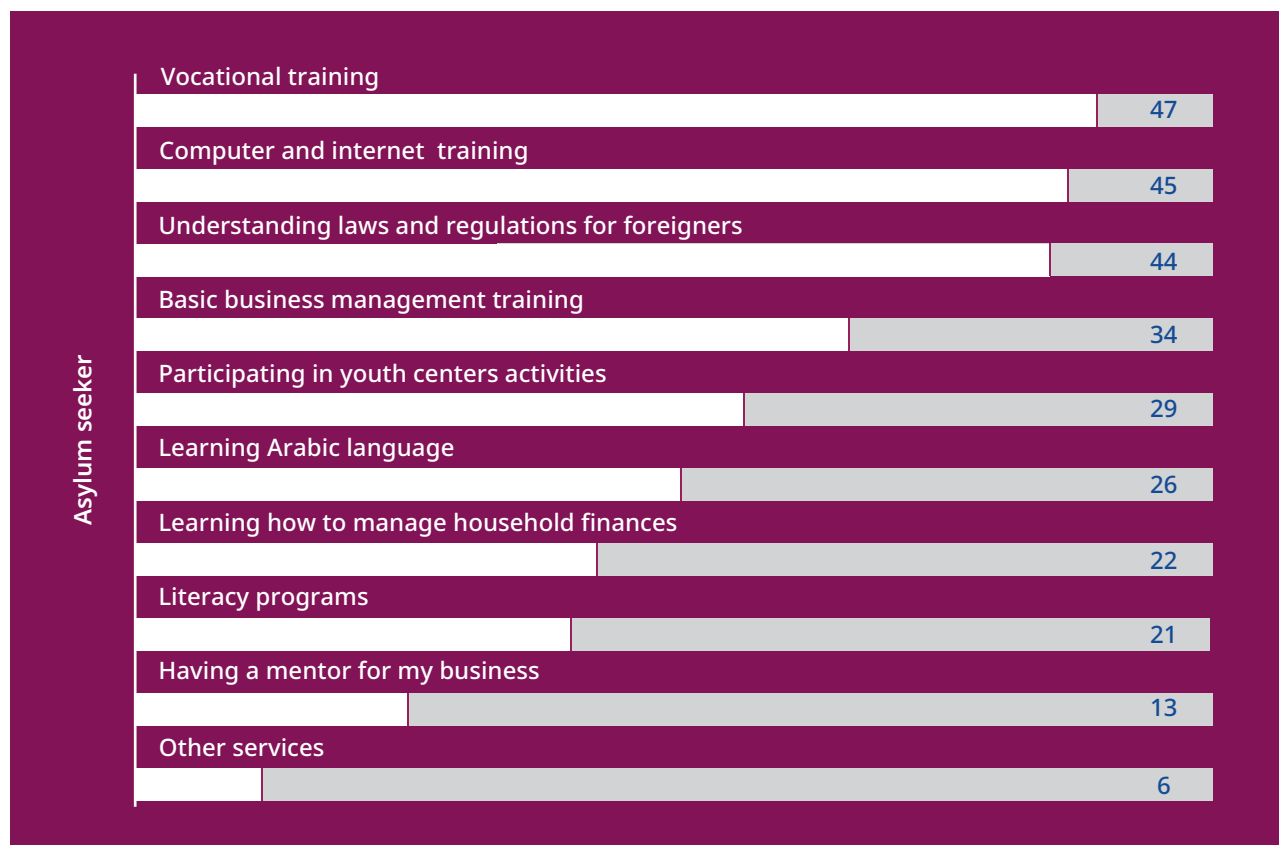
Figure 48. Do you know if there are vocational training programmes available to you? (%).



► 6.6 Most needed services

Respondents were asked about services and whether they need them in Egypt or not. The results are summarized in figure 49 and suggest that the most needed services for refugees are vocational training, computer training and understanding Egyptian laws and regulations for foreigners.

Figure 49. Services needed for refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt (%).



6.6.1 By country of origin

As shown in table 3.A, there are some variations in the most needed services perceived by refugees, depending on their country of origin. For example, vocational training is the most needed service for refugees from Syria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia, while computer and internet training is the most important for South Sudanese refugees, and understanding laws and regulations for foreigners is the most important for Yemenis.

Table 3.A. Needed services by country of origin (%).

	Country of origin						
	Syria	Sudan	South Sudan	Ethiopia	Eritrea	Somalia	Yemen
Vocational training	42	54	38	48	63	60	51
Computer and internet training	42	49	40	48	58	45	46
Understanding laws and regulations for foreigners	41	51	39	33	53	54	57
Basic business management training	31	40	24	21	45	45	49
Participating in youth centre activities	28	29	22	14	43	29	39
Learning Arabic	21	26	33	43	42	25	15
Literacy programmes	20	21	28	34	22	21	12
Learning how to manage household finances	19	29	19	13	30	21	20
Having a mentor for my business	9	22	14	9	19	13	19
Other services	7	6	4	3	8	7	10

6.6.2 By gender

There are also some variations in the most needed services by gender, as shown in table 3.B. For example, vocational training is the most needed service for male refugees, while understanding laws and regulations for foreigners is the most important for females.

Table 3.B. Needed services by gender (%).

	Gender	
	Male	Female
Vocational training	49	44
Computer and internet training	47	43
Understanding laws and regulations for foreigners	44	45
Basic business management training	34	34
Participating in youth centre activities	31	26
Learning Arabic	28	24
Learning how to manage household finances	20	23
Literacy programmes	22	21
Having a mentor for my business	15	11
Other services	6	7





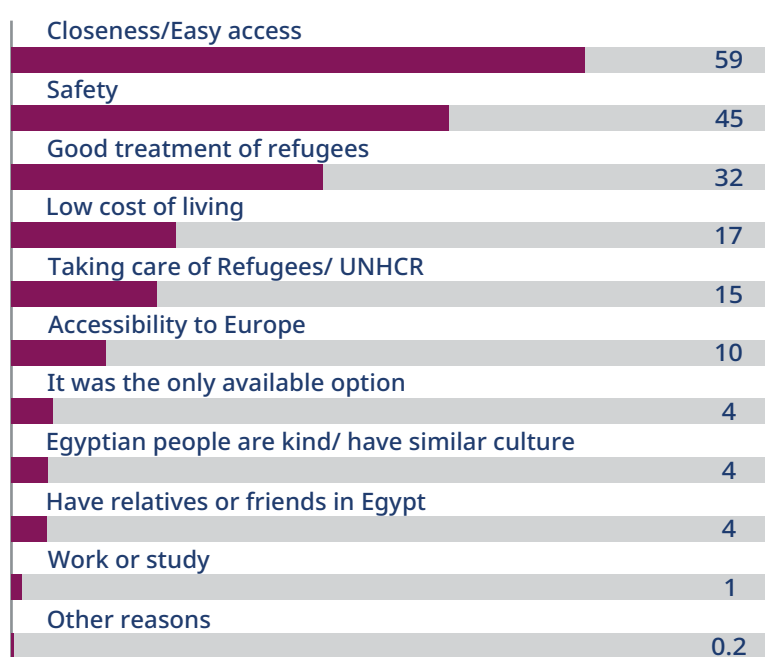
Community inclusion

This section provides information about the integration between refugees and asylum seekers and their host Egyptian communities. The results include reasons for choosing Egypt as a country of asylum, whether refugees and asylum seekers face any kind of discrimination or racism in Egypt and whether they have equal rights as Egyptians in accessing public services.

► 7.1 Reasons for choosing Egypt for asylum

Respondents mentioned many reasons for choosing Egypt for asylum. As shown in figure 50, the most frequent reasons include closeness or easy access (59 per cent), safety (45 per cent), good treatment of refugees (32 per cent) and low cost of living (17 per cent). It is worth noting that 15 per cent of refugees chose Egypt for asylum because of the good care of refugees and the presence of the UNHCR.

Figure 50. Reasons for choosing Egypt for asylum (%).



7.1.1 By country of origin

As table 4 shows, the main reason for choosing Egypt for asylum for refugees from Syria, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea is the closeness or easy access of Egypt to their home countries. On the other hand, the main reason for Somali and Yemeni refugees is safety.

Table 4. Reasons for choosing Egypt for asylum

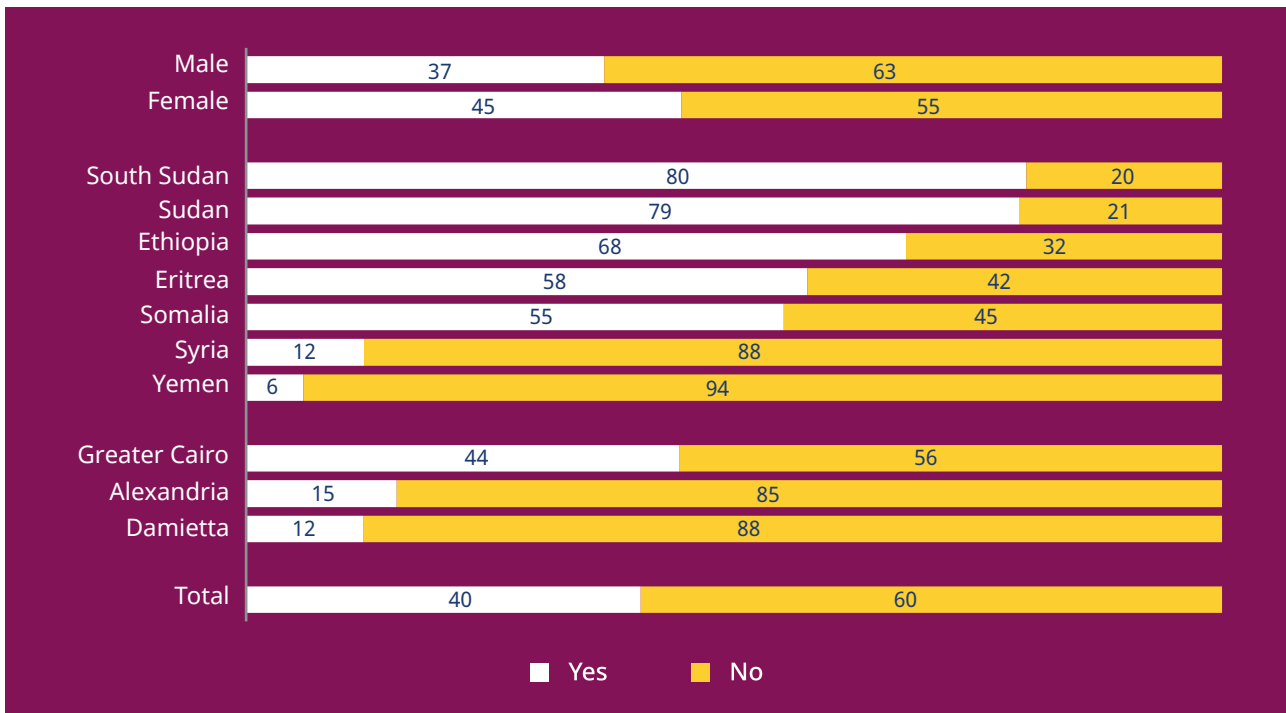
	Country of origin							
	Syria	Sudan	South Sudan	Ethiopia	Eritrea	Somalia	Yemen	Total
Closeness or easy access	56.1	70.4	66.8	42.3	58.2	39.7	53.6	58.6
Safety	44.7	43.8	43.5	33.4	45.9	44.1	62.7	44.7
Good treatment of refugees	42.3	19.7	21.1	9.1	30.8	19.8	40.8	31.8
Low cost of living	16.1	16.5	22.5	11.9	17.8	20.7	12.0	16.8
Taking care of refugees/UNHCR	15.4	12.8	16.5	10.1	15.8	11.0	26.0	14.9
Accessibility to Europe	8.0	11.9	12.2	22.3	4.1	17.6	2.4	9.7
It was the only available option	5.7	2.2	1.6	3.0	2.7	8.8	3.1	4.2
Egyptian people are kind/similar culture	6.4	0.6	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	10.4	3.7
Have relatives or friends in Egypt	6.1	0.7	0.5	1.0	3.4	2.2	3.5	3.6
Work or study	0.8	0.9	0.5	0.0	2.7	2.2	0.2	1.1
Other reasons	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	5.2	0.2

► 7.2 Discrimination

Respondents were asked if they faced racism or discrimination because of their origin. As presented in figure 51, 40 per cent of the respondents reported that this is the case.

The results show large variations according to the refugee's nationality. Refugees from South Sudan (80 per cent), Sudan (79 per cent) and Ethiopia (68 per cent) are more likely than other nationalities to report facing racism and discrimination, while few Yemeni and Syrian refugees were concerned by the problem. It was found that refugees living in Greater Cairo are more likely to report discrimination and racism than those in Alexandria and Damietta (44, 16 and 12 per cent, respectively).

Figure 51. Do you face racism or discrimination in Egypt because of your origin?



As shown in figure 52, refugees and asylum seekers who reported facing racism or discrimination mentioned that this usually happens within their neighbourhood (85 per cent), in transportation (71 per cent), at the workplace or while searching for a job (22 per cent for each), in addition to some other places and contexts.

Figure 52. Places where refugees face racism or discrimination (%).



► 7.3 Access to public services

Respondents were asked if they have equal rights in accessing some of the public services in Egypt. As shown in figure 53, around a quarter of respondents (24 per cent) replied that they enjoy the rights for suitable job opportunities, and 18 per cent said they have access to appropriate education for themselves and their children. However, only 3 per cent reported that they can subscribe to youth centres, 2 per cent have access to medical insurance, and only 1 per cent have access to social insurance.

Figure 53. Services available for refugees in Egypt (%).

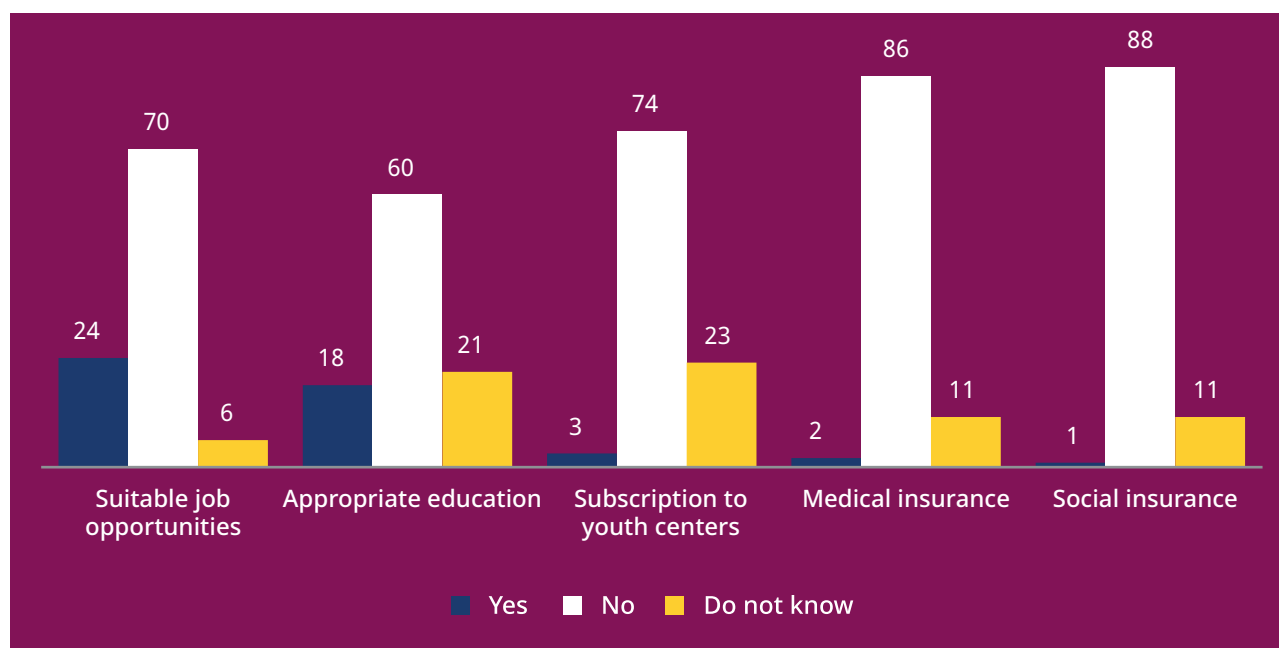
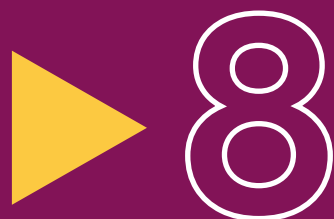


Table 5 shows some variations in the services available for refugees by gender and country of origin. The service most frequently mentioned by male refugees, and by refugees from Syria, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, was suitable job opportunities, while females and Somali and Yemeni refugees most frequently reported appropriate education.

Table 5. Available services by gender and country of origin.

	Gender		Country of origin						
	Male	Female	Syria	Sudan	South Sudan	Ethiopia	Eritrea	Somalia	Yemen
Suitable job opportunities	32.3	17.8	32.6	22.2	20.2	14.2	17.9	11.8	18.7
Appropriate education	25.1	21.1	29.6	19.2	20.0	5.4	12.6	23.4	22.4
Subscription to youth centres	3.9	3.3	3.7	4.3	6.2	2.6	0.0	0.0	2.5
Medical insurance	2.7	2.9	2.5	3.6	3.0	4.6	0.0	5.1	0.2
Social insurance	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.0	1.2	0.0	0.7	2.5	0.0



Conclusion and recommendations

- ▶ Refugees and asylum seekers can and should contribute towards the social and economic development of their destination country, making use of their acquired skills, experiences, willingness to work and other abilities. While for refugees in Egypt, there is no encampment policy but they are allowed to integrate in the Egyptian social fabric, they do face significant socio-economic challenges. Refugees and asylum seekers report many positive sides of Egypt 's hospitality, but discrimination is perceived as high. Access to employment is of paramount importance. More than 80 per cent of refugee households report wage employment as their main source of income, but this comes with lower earnings. Virtually all refugees who are employed are in the informal sector, and their work is conducted outside any legal protection or social insurance coverage. Many struggle to find work, with long spells in unemployment, or have to settle for jobs that are below their skills level.
- ▶ Vocational training is highly requested and sought after, but at the same time a huge loss of human capital can be observed with highly skilled refugees underemployed or unemployed. Vocational training for skills in demand within the local market should be considered, together with soft skills specifically targeting youth and women. Specific short training to update existing skills should also be considered, while generic training, missing a direct livelihood outcome, should be avoided.
- ▶ Computer skills and job-search assistance are the services most requested from refugees who hope to access employment or improve their current working conditions. Entrepreneurship support also appears as a priority to raise the very low levels of entrepreneurialism found in the refugee population, resulting from a lack of access to formal banking services, among other things. Though the number of refugees engaged in self-employment is relatively low, generally, the interest of refugees for entrepreneurial activities is high. The (few) refugees who do run businesses may be enrolled to help as mentors and coaches to navigate an often challenging economic environment. There appears to be a potential to promote geographical mobility towards governorates in Egypt with tighter labour markets, particularly Damietta and the Suez Canal - refugees residing there (mostly Syrians) display much higher employment rates and labour earnings. High levels of incapacity for work due to long-term illness or injury warrant dedicated social assistance. Highly skilled refugees (those with tertiary education, and/or prior experience in professional and other high-skill occupations) would warrant job search and soft skills support to allow them to secure jobs where they can apply their potential to their own and Egypt's benefit.

- ▶ The report shows how people UNHCR serves constitute a heterogeneous group of people with different levels of literacy, educational attainments and skills. It is, therefore, crucial to have detailed socio-economic information about refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt and to design well targeted interventions that can address the different needs of potential beneficiaries.
- ▶ Communication with communities could be improved, making sure that all members of the communities are reached, paying special attention to women, youth and members of small communities and nationals of sub-Saharan countries who do not speak Arabic. There is also a clear need, especially for Yemenis and women, to better understand the laws and regulations that apply to foreigners.
- ▶ The request to continue with advocacy efforts for more socio-economic inclusion is high and remains a priority.





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Kingdom of the Netherlands