Challenges

- Children remain largely out-of-school, while no school feeding programme is available.
- Most ‘Open Areas’ do not have access to safe water and latrines.
- Lack of permanent shelter due to restrictions on shelter distribution.
- Land claimed by private owners makes infrastructure improvements challenging.

South Sudanese refugee population in the State and are the most vulnerable.

Refugees living in Khartoum ‘Open Areas’. They make up approximately 55% of the overall South Sudanese refugee population in the State and are the most vulnerable.

From the registered population, it is estimated that around 2,500 are unaccompanied and separated children and more than 4,750 are people living with disabilities.

Origins of Open Areas

In 2018, before the referendum leading to the separation of South Sudan from Sudan, the South Sudanese population living in Khartoum was advised to assemble at 61 departure points (staging areas) to be assisted with their return to South Sudan. Many of these South Sudanese had lived in Khartoum for many years or all their lives in some cases.

Between 2010 and 2013, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and the Commissioner for Voluntary Humanitarian Works, in collaboration with IOM, assisted the return of some 75,000 people by road, river, train and air. However, in 2013, as conflict erupted in South Sudan, many South Sudanese people were left stranded and were unable or unwilling to return. As a result, the departure points in Khartoum have gradually evolved into so-called “Open Areas,” where South Sudanese people are now living as refugees in poor conditions.