



MULTI-YEAR PROTECTION & SOLUTIONS STRATEGY (2018 – 2020)

**UNHCR Representation Office in Sudan
Khartoum, Republic of Sudan**

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Country Overview

The United Nations Refugee Agency¹ (UNHCR) operation in Sudan started almost 50 years ago in Gedaref State. Today, the general humanitarian situation in Sudan is a complex mix of asylum seekers, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), Sudanese refugee returnees and IDP returnees. Sudan is also a source, transit and destination country for mixed migratory population movements. There is also high incidence of statelessness or potential statelessness that requires UNHCR's engagement.

Sudan is a state party to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, as well as the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee problems in Africa. Sudan has entered a reservation in relation to Article 26 (Freedom of Movement), which has become the basis of its encampment policy. In 2014, Sudan adopted a new national law on refugees, the Asylum (Organization) Act, replacing the previous Regulation of Asylum Act, 1974. Although not fully reflective of Sudan's obligations under international treaties on asylum, the new Act contains several positive aspects, including the recognition of the three durable solutions of voluntary repatriation, local integration through naturalization and resettlement to third countries.

Sudan also applies the Arab/Islamic notions of asylum with respect to some refugee nationalities. Currently this is applied to Syrian, Yemeni, Iraqi and Palestinian nationals. Refugees of these nationalities are allowed to enter and remain in the country and are notionally treated as nationals in terms of freedom of movement, choice of residence and access to social amenities, including health and education. Access to employment is also substantively easier for refugees of these nationalities.

UNHCR supports the Government of Sudan to fulfill its obligations under international and regional treaties on asylum, and other national laws that impact the protection and wellbeing of persons of concern in Sudan. UNHCR is also a part of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) response to internal displacement in Sudan. This part of UNHCR's extended mandate is also referenced in the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD)². UNHCR has responsibility for the Protection Sector and the Emergency Shelter and Non-Food-Item (ES/NFI) Sector. The Camp Management and Coordination sector has not been activated in Sudan.

The phenomenon of mixed migration continues to be a major area of engagement for UNHCR in Sudan to ensure that asylum-seekers and refugees caught in these movements have access to asylum procedures in the country. Approximately 70 per cent of new arrivals who end up in Shagarab Reception Centre in Kassala move onward before they are registered by the Government of Sudan's Commission for Refugees (COR) and UNHCR.

Under the 2014 Asylum (Organization) Act, COR oversees the implementation of Sudan's obligations under international treaties on asylum and national legislation. COR's mandate falls under the overall responsibility of the Minister of Interior. UNHCR continues to build the capacity

¹ Or the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*.

² Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD): <https://unamid.unmissions.org/doha-document-peace-darfur>

of COR to manage reception, registration and refugee status determination (RSD), as well as the protection coordination and camp management aspects of the refugee response.

COR is UNHCR's governmental counterpart in Sudan, through which all policy development and the coordination of protection and other assistance to refugees goes. Collaboration with the National Information Security Service (NISS) and the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) remains of critical importance, especially at the state level in order to ensure smooth implementation of programming, both directly and through implementing partners. UNHCR also works with relevant line ministries (particularly the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Electricity) to ensure sectoral assistance activities are harmonized and in compliance with national protocols. This is especially relevant for the South Sudanese refugee response, where UNHCR's cooperation and dialogue with state level authorities (i.e., Governors' offices and state-level ministries) is essential because an estimated 80 per cent of refugees are living outside of camps in self-settlements that are largely integrated within Sudanese villages and towns, and access to services is largely streamlined through public systems. COR retains an overview of all refugee coordination and assistance issues, as per the provisions of the 2014 Asylum (Organization) Act.

A key protection concern is that refugees and asylum seekers are often subject to harassment, imprisonment and threats of deportation, which necessitates interventions by UNHCR. Additionally, the prevention of and response to sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV) is highly sensitive and challenging to implement in Sudan.

The gains made from Sudan's National Dialogue and the United States of America (US) Government's decision to revoke the sanctions against Sudan³ are likely over time to contribute to expected to a more conducive political, security and economic environment. This may eventually create conditions that are favourable for achieving higher levels of economic self-reliance, with better protection safeguards for refugees. However, Sudan has embarked upon a new structural adjustment programme in December 2017 which has led to rapid destabilization of the economy, including inflation of the Sudanese Pound (SDG), fuel shortages and import restrictions that have slowed the delivery of goods and services, as well as movements to and from the field. According to the World Food Programme (WFP), the price of sorghum (Sudan's main staple) increased by 47 per cent across Sudan from the last week in December 2017 to the end of January 2018. Consequently, only 1 per cent of refugees can afford the local food basket. Limited livelihood opportunities makes the situation challenging for refugees, especially those living in out-of-camp areas, with an increased risk of tensions with host communities and risks to the safety and wellbeing of refugees.

Working Environment

UNHCR's operations in all Darfur States and in South and West Kordofan must continue to be viewed in the context of potential risk to staff safety due to the presence of multiple armed non-state actors, and increased criminality. This includes the threat of kidnapping and carjacking, as evidenced by the abduction of UNHCR staff during the last quarter of 2016.

³ Revocation of Certain Sanctions with Respect to Sudan and the Government of Sudan on October 12, 2017: <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/pages/sudan.aspx>

In Darfur, fighting continues predominantly in the Jebel Mara area, which has resulted in some civilian displacements, mostly women and children. This has also slowed the return of IDPs to their areas of origin. While access has improved in some areas, others areas with active conflict remain inaccessible, including the 'Two Areas' in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States. Protection space for UNHCR's work with IDPs has been very limited since 2009; however, the December 2016 HAC Directives and Procedures for Humanitarian Work⁴ have significantly improved the operating environment for UNHCR in the Greater Darfur area, with the explicit reference to the importance of protection mentioned in the Directives. Travel Permit requirements have also been relaxed, which has improved access for humanitarian actors and reduced bureaucratic hurdles. In addition, the convergence of government interest in IDP and refugee returns in Greater Darfur provides a clear opening for UNHCR to increase the profile of its protection and durable solutions work for IDPs in Sudan.

In July 2018, the mandate of the UN/African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) was renewed until 2020, and an exit strategy was established.⁵ This includes a planned drawdown of UNAMID's military component by over 4,600 personnel by 30 June 2019, with the elimination of civilian posts. Police component will maintain an overall strength of 2,500 personnel. The mission's military component will maintain a presence in the greater Jebel Marra area, focusing on traditional peacekeeping functions while maintaining the flexibility to respond in the rest of Darfur if the situation demands.

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Sudan and UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations have agreed to establish of State Liaison Functions starting in 2019 to aid in transitioning oversight responsibilities to the UNCT, notably in the areas of rule of law, resilience and livelihoods/durable solutions for the displaced populations and host communities, immediate service delivery for internally displaced persons, and human rights. UNHCR is working with the UNCT to finalize a concept note outlining the transition arrangements, including possible secondment of staff from UNAMID to the UNCT, as well as joint resource mobilization efforts.

Profiles of POCs in Sudan

Refugees and asylum-seekers

As of 31 December 2017, the total refugee and asylum-seeker population stands at nearly 968,000 individuals. This includes: nearly 773,000 South Sudanese refugees (comprised of an estimated 352,000 South Sudanese people who remained in Sudan after the secession of South Sudan in 2011, and those who fled to Sudan after the start of the South Sudan conflict in December 2013); 113,144 Eritrean refugees; 13,477 Ethiopian refugees; 11,679 Syrian refugees; 7,463 Chadian refugees; 2,283 Central African Republican (CAR) refugees; and 2,562 Yemeni refugees. Additionally, there are 1,487 urban refugees in Khartoum from 12 other countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Somalia.

⁴ HAC Directives and Procedures for Humanitarian Work, December 2016:

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/sudan/document/amended-hac-directives>

⁵ UN Security Council Resolution 2429 (13 July 2018): [http://undocs.org/S/RES/2429\(2018\)](http://undocs.org/S/RES/2429(2018))

Approximately 80 per cent of South Sudanese refugees live outside of the 11 established camps (in White Nile and East Darfur States), mostly in rural settlements but also in urban settings, with large concentrations in Khartoum. South Sudanese refugees were formally recognized by the Government of Sudan as refugees in August 2016.

Syrian and Yemeni refugees are considered by the Government of Sudan as “Arab brothers and sisters” under an Islamic concept of asylum; therefore, they are not officially considered “refugees”, and so are not covered by the 2014 Asylum (Organization) Act. They have, at least in form, rights and freedoms similar to Sudanese nationals, and are not required to be registered. For this reason, it is believed that only a small percentage of both profiles are registered with COR (for Syrians) and UNHCR (for Yemenis) for assistance purposes. Various government estimates put the total population of both profiles at around 200,000 persons.

Approximately 88 per cent of all refugees in Sudan are women and children. This figure is greatly influenced by the demographics of South Sudanese refugees. Among the profiles registered in Eastern Sudan (nearly all Eritrean refugees), 73 per cent of the population are women and children, while in Khartoum the proportion is about 63 per cent for all profiles combined.

Table 1 outlines the arrival periods and length of asylum for each population group hosted in Sudan, as of 31 December 2017. The majority of Sudan’s refugee population (nearly 88 per cent) have been in Sudan for less than 5 years, with 10 per cent who have remained in Sudan for 11 or more years (including 3 per cent for 5-10 years; 4 per cent for 11-20 years; and 6 per cent for 20 or more years). These figures are inclusive of the pre- and post-December 2013 South Sudanese refugee population.

Table 1: Population per arrival period per country of origin (as of 31 December 2017)

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	ARRIVAL PERIOD								TOTAL POPN.
	Pre-1998 (20+ yrs)		1998-2007 (11-20 yrs)		2008-2012 (6-10 yrs)		Post-2012 (5 yrs or less)		
	Individuals	%	Individuals	%	Individuals	%	Individuals	%	
South Sudan	--	--	--	--	--	--	772,715	100	772,715
Eritrea	47,121	42	25,758	23	21,462	19	18,803	17	113,144
Ethiopia	5,158	38	4,575	34	2,741	20	1,003	7	13,477
Syria	13	0	22	0	553	5	11,091	95	11,679
Chad	6	0	4,716	63	2,486	33	255	3	7,463
Yemen	14	1	17	1	90	4	2,441	95	2,562
CAR	1	0	20	1	95	4	2,167	95	2,283
DRC	379	46	279	34	133	16	26	3	817
Others	32	5	84	13	270	40	284	42	670
TOTAL	52,724	6	35,741	4	27,830	3	808,785	87	924,810

In the East, the refugee response comprises a protracted caseload who are largely Eritrean and relatively well integrated, with many having good levels of self-sufficiency, and 55 per cent born in Sudan. New arrival flows from Eritrea continue to be small but steady, with approximately 70 per cent moving onwards without being registered in Sudan. The risk of trafficking remains a real danger for Eritreans and other nationalities entering through Sudan’s eastern borders. Sudanese police and security forces and COR are actively engaged in ensuring safe and timely transfers of new arrivals from border entry points to one of five UNHCR-built reception centres. From the policy perspective, UNHCR engages the Government through the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, and interacts with other stakeholders (including the European Union (EU), African Union (AU), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF),

the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)⁶ in tackling mixed migration issues. A key part of the Government of Sudan's agenda is to demonstrate concerted efforts in the prevention of smuggling and trafficking.

For Chadian refugees in Sudan, a Tripartite Agreement for the voluntary repatriation of some 8,000 Chadian refugees in Sudan was concluded on 31 May 2017 among the Governments of Sudan and Chad and UNHCR. An Operations Plan detailing the practical mechanics of facilitated return movements was developed, and the voluntary repatriation of Chadian refugees from Darfur began in late 2017. Over 4,800 Chadians returned in the first half of 2018, with an additional 1,000 anticipated to return by the end of 2018. The remainder will repatriate in 2019 or will have their status regularized in Sudan.

Refugee returnees

There are an estimated 300,000 Sudanese refugees who have been living in eleven camps in Eastern Chad for the past 15 years. Considerable spontaneous returns of Sudanese refugees from Chad were reported in North and Central Darfur during the last quarter of 2015 and throughout 2016. Several Inter-Agency Joint Assessment missions conducted to the locations where Sudanese refugees have spontaneously returned have estimated that approximately 164,000 individuals have returned. Among these, 22,675 are verified with refugee documentation from Chad.

A Tripartite Agreement on the voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees living in Chad (i.e. refugee returnees) was signed in May 2017. In the first half of 2018, UNHCR assisted some 350 Sudanese refugees in Chad to repatriate to Sudan by September 2018. This return exercise will continue in the coming years as confidence in the security situation in Darfur continues to improve.

Spontaneous refugee returnees are arriving to locations where communal facilities are either non-existent or inadequate to cater for both host communities and returning populations. This trend is expected to continue to be observed in 2019 and beyond. UNHCR, WFP and UNICEF were requested by the Minister of Interior and Vice President of the Republic of Sudan to assist the spontaneous returnees in the locations where they have settled. UNHCR has received favourable responses from the UN agencies who committed to support the returnees either within the 2013-2019 Darfur Development Strategy (DDS)⁷, funded by the Government of Qatar, or through their regular activities from other sources of funding. Organised voluntary repatriation from Ethiopia and South Sudan to Sudan is not foreseen in 2018, but UNHCR will continue to closely monitor developments.

⁶ Or the *German Society for International Cooperation*

⁷ 2013-2019 Darfur Development Strategy (DDS):

<http://www.sd.undp.org/content/dam/sudan/docs/DDS%20English.pdf>

Persons at risk of statelessness

While no population of concern profile in Sudan is formally identified as stateless, some South Sudanese refugees and individuals born of mixed marriages face significant risk of statelessness, with children born to a Sudanese mother and a non-Sudanese father particularly vulnerable. Over 200,000 South Sudanese refugees from the pre-Dec 2013 caseload who have not been issued documentation by the South Sudanese Consulate in Khartoum are considered at risk of statelessness. Following secession, South Sudanese people who remained in Sudan became undocumented and needed to obtain nationality documentation in order to confirm their South Sudanese nationality. The majority still does not possess nationality documentation.

IDPs

Sudan has a large IDP population, with an estimated 2 million IDPs living across Sudan as of November 2017. The vast majority are in a situation of protracted displacement, with some new displacement often of temporary nature emerging in some areas. The UNCT is moving towards an approach that continued to ensure adequate emergency response capacity in situations of new displacement or newly accessible IDPs; however, for protracted IDPs there are efforts to strengthen the nexus between humanitarian and development assistance, with the view to focus on durable solutions wherever possible.

There have been significant return movements in Darfur. Prospects for large-scale IDP returns remain uncertain in parts of Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile. Furthermore, approximately 197,000 IDPs have spontaneously returned since 2015, as the security situation has stabilized in certain locations in the Darfur region. The Government of Sudan's Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) and IOM have registered approximately 104,000 Sudanese returnees from 2015-2017.

UNHCR is not involved in population data management for IDPs, which is done by IOM with some participation from WFP. The national figures are compiled by HAC and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and form part of the Humanitarian Country Team's (HCT) official figures. The agreed national figure for 2018 is nearly 2 million individuals across 8 states, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: IDP population by state in Sudan (Source: 2018 Sudan HNO)

STATE	IDP POPN. (Individuals)
South Darfur	537,833
North Darfur	480,828
Central Darfur	395,329
West Darfur	253,237
South Kordofan	179,665
East Darfur	94,438
Blue Nile	47,392
West Kordofan	8,300
TOTAL	1,997,022

Strategic Overview

The primary objective of UNHCR's Multi-Year Protection and Solutions Strategy for Sudan is to ensure that international standards of protection are met, upheld and applied to all POCs to UNHCR in Sudan. This includes:

- Improving Sudan's protection environment, including physical security and protection against refoulement for POCs, as well as improved access to protection services and other assistance;
- Supporting the security of civil, social and economic rights for POCs and maximizing opportunities for self-reliance;
- Advocacy with- and capacity-building for- the Government of Sudan to enhance protection mechanisms and improve asylum space in Sudan; and
- Pursuing durable solutions, including the development and implementation of comprehensive strategies to resolve protracted displacement situations, and supporting opportunities for local integration, voluntary return or resettlement.

The Strategy is aligned to UNHCR's Strategic Directions 2017-2021⁸. The focus on self-reliance requires a multi-year approach to support a transition to greater resilience and the strengthening of durable solutions opportunities, including investments in government capacity to build and maintain an effective protection environment.

The strategy is organized around UNHCR Sudan's key protection priorities, including: 1) prevention of- and response to SGBV; 2) child protection; 3) access to registration and Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedures; 4) provision of humanitarian assistance; 5) access to education; 6) enhanced resilience for refugees and support to host communities; 7) access to durable solutions; 8) responding to mixed migration and onward movement in Sudan; 9) prevention of statelessness; 10) responding to newly displaced and newly accessible IDP caseloads; and 11) support to refugee returnees.

Strategic Approaches

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

This strategy seeks to strengthen AAP, with an emphasis on ensuring the development and implementation of effective and quality programming that enhances access to protection while also recognizing the dignity, capacity, and abilities of UNHCR's POCs. The aim is to establish a culture of accountability across the operation by integrating AAP best practice, including prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) within UNHCR's protection functions. This includes the adoption of age, gender and diversity (AGD) policies to ensure that all POCs enjoy their rights, have access to protection, services and assistance on an equal footing, and can participate fully in decisions that affect them and their family members and communities.

⁸ UNHCR Strategic Directions 2017-2021: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/590707104.html>

UNHCR will also expand the use of community-based protection approaches, with the integration of community engagement in all aspects of protection work, with a greater emphasis on ensuring that persons of concern are at the centre of decisions that affect their lives.

Another key aspect is the annual Participatory Assessment process, which will enable to operation to build partnerships with refugee women and men of all ages and backgrounds by promoting meaningful participation through structured dialogue. Separate discussions with women, girls, boys, and men, including adolescents, enable UNHCR and partners to gather accurate information on the specific protection risks that different groups face, identify underlying causes, understand refugees' capacities, and hear their proposed solutions. The Participatory Assessment process will also be used to help communities to take collective action to enhance their own protection, and makes it possible to implement a rights- and community-based approach for improved protection of persons- and communities of concern.

Improving feedback and response mechanisms

By the end of 2020, UNHCR Sudan will ensure that community-based feedback mechanisms (for comments, suggestions, and complaints) have been established across the operation to ensure mechanisms are accessible to all POCs and are appropriate for both sensitive and non-sensitive feedback. In particular, expanded coverage of complaint mechanisms will enhance persons of concern's protection from SEA, fraud and other misconduct.

By the end of 2018, the establishment of complaint mechanisms for South Sudanese refugees will be completed for refugee camps in White Nile and East Darfur States. The expansion of complaint mechanisms to refugee collective self-settlements in out-of-camp areas will be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2019. Existing complaint mechanisms in Eastern Sudan and in Khartoum will be reviewed to ensure that they are working well. In this regard, UNHCR will enhance its actions to prevent, detect, investigate and report on sexual exploitation and abuse of refugees and asylum seekers by both staff and partners, as well as report on misconduct by government officials and other humanitarian actors throughout the operation.

Communicating with communities

Underpinning AAP and improved access to feedback and response mechanisms is the need for improved communication and transparency with POCs across the operation. UNHCR will improve its provisions to all POCs of timely, accurate, and relevant information on their rights and entitlements, the roles and responsibilities of UNHCR and its partners, and the organization's programmes, commitments and processes. This will be pursued through the development of a mass communications strategy and investment in communications expertise to ensure each community's information needs, preferred channels and trusted sources are accurately identified, and ensure that information is shared with persons of concern in the languages and formats appropriate to all groups within each community, and in a timely, systematic and consistent way.

Participatory Approach

A key component of this approach is the annual Participatory Assessment (PA) exercise, which is designed to gather first-hand information on protection concerns of persons of concern across Sudan. UNHCR works jointly with persons of concern to identify and analyze protection risks, understand capacities, and elicit proposed solutions through structured dialogue with persons of concern. The PA exercise helps to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers are at the centre of decision-making concerning their protection and welfare, and on other issues that affect their

lives in Sudan. The PA methodology is guided by UNHCR's Tool on Participatory Assessment in Operations⁹. The PA is one phase of a comprehensive situation analysis for UNHCR operations. The process ensures a meaningful exchange with the persons of concern alongside implementing and operational partners, through thematic discussions in multiple fora with separate discussions with women, men, girls and boys disaggregated by age and nationality or ethnicity.

This approach also recognizes that persons of concern have lived in Sudan for decades, and are not simply passive recipients of aid and assistance. In most cases, persons of concern are able and willing to- contribute to the communities where they live when they are supported in achieving self-reliance in a way that is adapted to local conditions and markets. UNHCR will work closely with persons of concern to expand their active participation in improving and maintaining the communities they live in. This includes greater participation by refugees in camp management, shelter and latrine construction, protection and security functions within their communities, community mobilization and service delivery.

Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Approach

UNHCR Sudan will apply the AGD approach to all aspects of the country operation to ensure that POCs can enjoy their rights on an equal footing and participate meaningfully in the decisions that affect their lives, families, and communities. The approach is in line with UNHCR's Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity, and is informed by the imperatives of promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls, as well as by the best interests of the child¹⁰. In upholding AAP, the views of women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds need to inform UNHCR's interventions, advocacy, and programmes. This includes:

- AGD-inclusive programming and communication, including disaggregation of all UNHCR data by age and sex and by other diversity considerations, as contextually appropriate and possible, for the purposes of analysis and programming;
- Efforts to ensure that women and girls can participate equally and meaningfully in all decision-making, community management and leadership structures, and committees of persons of concern.
- Advancing gender equality, such that women and girls have equal access to refugee assistance and services, as well as individual registration and documentation; women and girls have equal access to- and control over management and provision of food, core-relief items (including menstrual hygiene kits), and cash-based interventions; and women and girls have equal access to economic opportunities, including decent work and quality education and health services, as well as comprehensive SGBV prevention and response services.

⁹ UNHCR Tool on Participatory Assessment in Operations (May 2006):

<http://www.unhcr.org/publications/legal/450e963f2/unhcr-tool-participatory-assessment-operations.html>

¹⁰ UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity 2018:

<http://www.unhcr.org/protection/women/5aa13c0c7/policy-age-gender-diversity-accountability-2018.html>

Out-of-camp assistance approach

As the South Sudanese refugee emergency enters its fifth year, there is a need to move beyond the emergency phase and focus on longer-term solutions that strengthen the resilience of refugees and allow them to become more self-reliant, especially for those living in out-of-camp settlements. In October 2017, UNHCR Sudan adopted an assistance model to respond to increasing protection and humanitarian assistance needs in out-of-camp locations for South Sudanese refugees in a more sustainable way. While Sudan is not officially implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), the approach to out-of-camp assistance follows a similar approach, with an aim towards improved humanitarian-development “nexus” approaches to supporting national service providers and host communities to meet the additional demand on services in refugee hosting areas.

Sustainability of out-of-camp assistance must remain the cornerstone of any assistance model adapted. It will be important to mitigate long-term commitments of humanitarian response given limited funding and lack of multi-year funding options. State-level out-of-camp assistance strategies will focus on asset building as a way to strengthen coping mechanisms.

UNHCR will seek to avoid setting up new parallel services for South Sudanese refugees alongside those available to host communities. Instead, humanitarian partners should seek to enhance refugees’ access to public services where possible. User fees for services will be established where possible to mitigate localized risks for tensions with host communities, where host communities typically have to pay for services and refugees do not. However, fees will need to be carefully examined and aligned with capacity to pay evaluations and livelihoods initiatives in refugee locations. . Communities hosting refugees can benefit substantially from investments in local infrastructure and services when these are enhanced to serve refugees’ humanitarian needs, reinforcing their ownership along the different phases of the activities, from the identification, prioritization to the implementation and evaluation. The increase in population and resulting productive activity, trade and human mobility can stimulate the local economy and agricultural productivity if managed carefully.

‘Humanitarian-Development Nexus’ approach in Sudan

While Sudan is not officially implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), out-of-camp assistance modalities follow a similar approach, which eschews the establishment of parallel service systems for refugees and instead aims to integrate refugees within national services and systems. The approach also aligns with ‘humanitarian-development nexus’ approaches in Sudan by focusing on investments in local infrastructure and services to enhance the capacity of local services and existing public facilities to expand service provision to refugees, and contributes to local development for improves access to quality services and facilities for host communities. The response also seeks to integrate cash based interventions (CBIs) where feasible, in order to support stabilization of the existing assistance programme, and to complement self-reliance initiatives and support local host community economies where possible.

For refugees living in protracted situations in the East, UNHCR will pursue a strategy of refugee camp consolidation within host communities in the East, which will allow Eritrean and Ethiopians refugees in the East greater freedom of movement and improved access to local services and

work opportunities. Consolidation will focus on handing over services to line ministries with cost-recovery being introduced for refugees, strengthening livelihood programming where necessary, and introducing targeted cash-based interventions (CBI) for extremely vulnerable cases. This will begin for refugee camps that have been identified as being largely self-reliant through a household-level socio-economic survey conducted by UNHCR in December 2015, as well as the Standardized Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS). Consolidation will be initiated for Fau 5, followed by Girba and Abuda.

Cash Based Interventions (CBI)

CBI is a particularly appropriate tool for addressing protection needs of refugees and other persons of concern within a context of UNHCR's solutions mandate and multi-year assistance programming. UNHCR has witnessed a gradual but significant increase in the number of refugees moving to urban centres in Sudan in search of better economic opportunities. Refugees often form part of the "urban poor" struggling to meet their basic needs, leaving them at heightened risk of harassment, exploitation and abuse, with women and children being particularly at-risk. CBI is increasingly being recognized as a tool that can help meet humanitarian needs while promoting the principles that guide the work of UNHCR. Hence, wherever new interventions are anticipated, UNHCR will assess the possibility of implementing CBI activities either as stand-alone activity or in combination with in-kind assistance. UNHCR will also play a catalytic and coordinating role within the interagency context for agencies exploring CBI as an implementing modality for refugee assistance.

Protection Priorities

1. Prevention of- and response to SGBV

Vision: Ensure that all POCs at risk of SGBV have access to comprehensive prevention and support services, including case management services, legal aid, health, psychosocial and other support services

Key challenges

While protecting POCs from violence and exploitation, especially SGBV, is a priority objective for UNHCR's Sudan Operation, the SGBV issue is very sensitive in Sudan and is compounded by gaps in national and state legal frameworks. There are also significant gaps on knowledge and understanding of protection obligations related to SGBV prevention and response, with limited engagement on SGBV-related protection issues and low capacity to respond. SGBV monitoring and reporting is difficult and sensitive in Sudan. There is a notably lack of access to data, weak case management and limited referral pathways, all of which undermine the capacity of the operation and its partners to provide support services for survivors.

Response Strategy

UNHCR will continue working with partners to strengthen and expand case management systems and referral pathways. This includes improving the coverage of legal aid and support services to ensure access for POCs at risk of SGBV. Additional attention is needed to identify SGBV risks and implement prevention strategies and awareness-raising campaigns. The creation of new international protection positions for the South Sudanese refugee response will allow the Operation to increase data collection, analysis, coordination and programming on SGBV and women's empowerment. These efforts will be complemented by a greater focus on community-based SGBV prevention and response, through the strengthening of refugee committees, women's and youth groups and refugee outreach volunteer mechanisms in order to empower POCs to identify, refer and provide support to survivors of SGBV. Stronger case management and support services will facilitate links with protection solutions initiatives, including referrals for resettlement for survivors who are particularly at risk. UNHCR will also seek to engage with the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW) in SGBV prevention and response programming to strengthen the national systems and ensure sustainability.

2. Child protection

Vision: Displaced children in Sudan are protected from violence, exploitation and abused, and are supported to reach their full potential.

Key challenges

Children comprise over half of the total refugee population in Sudan, including an estimated 10,500 unaccompanied or separated children (UASC). Refugee and asylum seeker children across all populations of concern in Sudan, especially UASC, are at heightened risk of harassment, exploitation, neglect and abuse, given the broader challenges refugees face to meet their basic needs in an increasingly difficult economic environment, with limited access to livelihoods, services and assistance. Child protection outreach capacity remains a challenge throughout Sudan's refugee response. A lack of effective case management, prevalence of child labour, and early marriage are the main child protection risks identified through the 2017 Participatory Assessment. South Sudanese refugee children are also at high risk of involvement in armed elements before seeking asylum in Sudan.

Youth comprise nearly 13 per cent of the total refugee population in Sudan. There is a pronounced lack of targeted programmes for refugee adolescents and youth. This includes limited recreational and social activities targeting refugee children, adolescents and youth, which has a serious negative impact on their development and psychosocial well-being. Moreover, refugee youth suffer from a lack of educational opportunities, especially secondary school, or vocational skills training, making it difficult for them to find livelihoods when they become adults.

Some idle and disillusioned refugee youth are reported to seek onward movement toward Europe through irregular means, which exposes them to exploitation and abuse by human traffickers and smugglers. Eritrean UASC remain particularly vulnerable, with the majority thought to move onwards from Sudan shortly after their arrival.

Response Strategy

UNHCR will seek to establish or support existing national- and community child protection systems across all refugee communities. This will be done building on community-based protection mechanisms and ensuring they promote child rights, and through additional support to the Government of Sudan's national child protection services. Community engagement and child participation will be prioritized to strengthen the capacity of children, families and communities to overcome the effects of conflict and displacement, and to protect children from further violence, abuse and exploitation. Key interventions include establishment of child protection committees with increased participation of children and youths in the committees, and more systematic capacity building of community volunteers.

This emphasis on support for child protection systems and community-based protection mechanisms will facilitate the expansion of child protection intervention coverage to improve protection outcomes. Outcomes include: access to birth registration and documentation, family tracing and reunification in Sudan, in refugee country of origin and in third countries; improved

coverage and monitoring of care arrangements for UASC, with improved access to resettlement for cases with high vulnerability, especially for child victims of trafficking; targeted support for at-risk children and adolescents; and support for- and establishment of mechanisms for the prevention of- and response to abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation of children, including child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), child labour and child detention.

UNHCR will also work closely with UNICEF on child protection issues, and will focus on implementing the child protection division of responsibility and provisions of the revised Joint Plan of Action annex to the Letter of Understanding (LOU), signed in February 2018. UNHCR will also collaborate with UNICEF under the National Child Protection Strategy to work through line ministries on the establishment of rehabilitation centres for refugee children in order to enhance their access to psychosocial support. This initiative will also provide services for refugee children identified to have been associated with armed elements, with a focus on South Sudanese refugee populations.

3. Access to registration and RSD procedures

Vision: Asylum-seekers and refugees have equitable and timely access to registration, and transparent and quality RSD procedures.

Key challenges

Access to sufficient registration services remains inconsistent across different populations of concern in Sudan. In the East, NISS and the Immigration and Passport Police (IPP) screen asylum-seekers before they are referred to COR or UNHCR, which leads to length registration waiting periods and risk of refoulement. The Asylum (Organization) Act states that asylum seekers must register in the State of their initial entry to Sudan. This has led to registration gaps for refugees who have moved onward to Khartoum, especially for victims of trafficking, unaccompanied youth and other vulnerable populations. Gaps persist in access to documentation for POCs, which they require to access to assistance, work permits and broader social services, as well as for freedom of movement within Sudan.

UNHCR has limited oversight of- and influence on government registration processes. A high rate of onward movement of asylum-seekers before they are registered leads to significant gaps in both registration and reliable population data on asylum flows into Sudan.

Resolving the biometric registration backlog for newly arrived South Sudanese refugees is challenging given the large number of refugee locations across the response and low COR capacity, especially in out-of-camp locations. There is also a need to register the pre-December 2013 South Sudanese population who are scattered across even more states. A lack of registration staff within UNHCR also limits the Operation's capacity to quickly close the backlog and sustain individual biometric registration services upon entry for new arrivals in key locations.

There is also limited UNHCR oversight and monitoring of RSD procedures. COR's RSD capacity is low and this is compounded by a lack of UNHCR RSD staff. This places asylum-seekers vulnerable to protection risks in the absence of timely, fair, transparent and accurate RSD decisions and procedures.

Response Strategy

In 2018, a key priority will be to expand coverage of biometric registration services for South Sudanese refugees living in out-of-camp locations, including in urban areas. UNHCR will also work towards implementing continuous registration and verification systems in key locations, with a focus on verification in all refugee camps in White Nile and East Darfur States. UNHCR will work closely with WFP and other partners to ensure that timely, detailed registration data is available to all partners to support their planning, targeting and fundraising efforts. By the end of 2020, individual biometric registration processes will be installed across all South Sudanese refugee operations.

This will require the roll-out of Bio-metrics Identity Management System (BIMS) nationwide and improved server connectivity to establish links to proGres across the response to allow for better management and tracking of persons of concern. Plans are also underway to introduce proGres v4 in 2018 and 2019.

As South Sudanese refugee population flows into Sudan stabilize, the focus will shift to ensuring more accurate data entry on Persons with Specific Needs (PSNs) and collecting household level socio-economic data to allow for more targeted assistance and service provision, including for the introduction of CBI where appropriate. By 2020, this will also allow for the implementation of a more structured and evidence-based livelihood strategy, with a move towards introducing fees for services for those refugees who already have means, as well as those who have graduated out of poverty.

UNHCR will also seek to strengthen the capacity of COR to conduct individual biometric registration that aligns with UNHCR standards. Access to documentation has been addressed through a recent UNHCR-COR agreement to ensure that all refugees and asylum seekers in Sudan have access to documentation by the end of 2018. This agreement guides the issuance of plastic machine-readable photo identity cards by COR and the Ministry of Interior, with a validity of two years for refugees and six months for asylum-seekers. The cards will serve as legally-recognized ID and will include an IPP foreigner number and refugee proGres number. This will greatly enhance the protection and freedom of movement of refugees and asylum seekers in Sudan, and support access to financial assistance.

In Eastern Sudan, UNHCR will work closely with COR and NISS to shorten the registration waiting period in Shagarab camp to a two-week period. UNHCR will also continue to support COR to conduct first- and appeal instances of RSD for asylum seekers in Eastern Sudan and in Khartoum. UNHCR will build the capacity of COR to conduct timely, transparent and quality first- and appeal instance RSD, in accordance with UNHCR's minimum standards and international refugee law. Greater emphasis will be placed on ensuring COR applies sufficient standards and child protection principles in the interviewing of children, and has access to- and applies updated and accurate country of origin information.

4. Provision of humanitarian assistance

Vision: Refugees' basic needs are met through access to quality public services within national service systems.

Key challenges

Approximately 1.2 million refugees are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance in Sudan.¹¹ Sudan's economic situation has increased food insecurity among refugee communities, with just 1% of refugees able to afford the local food basket, according to WFP. A lack of livelihood programming and access to work permits limits the capacity for self-reliance of some refugee groups and renders them dependent on humanitarian assistance provided by UNHCR and inter-agency partners. This is especially true for newly-arrived South Sudanese refugees and Eritrean refugees living in camps.

Free access to public primary health services and education for refugees and other persons of concern is only granted for certain nationalities, including Syrian, Yemeni and Palestinian refugees. However, the absorption capacity of public health facilities is limited and populations granted access are still required to pay nominal fees, which can deter refugees from accessing public services. In some locations, health, education and psycho-social services for refugees and asylum-seekers are provided through parallel service providers, usually through COR or non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Nutrition status remains a concern for refugees in Sudan, with global acute malnutrition (GAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) rates above emergency thresholds across all camps and informal settlements. Notably among South Sudanese refugees, results from the Standardized Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) in White Nile camps, and out-of-camp locations in South Kordofan (El Leri settlement) and West Kordofan (El Meiram and Kharasana) indicate critical GAM and SAM rates. While food insecurity remains a key driver of poor nutrition status, the wider effects of chronic underfunding, especially in WASH, health and livelihoods also play a part. These contribute to aggravating factors such as high anaemia, high prevalence of diarrheal disease, low coverage of measles vaccine (especially in out-of-camp locations), and low latrine coverage. Furthermore, ongoing pipeline breaks for general food assistance, nutritional resources such as therapeutic and supplemental foods, and lack of school feeding programmes constrains the delivery of comprehensive and targeted nutrition programming for the most vulnerable groups, notably pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under five years.

Coordination and communication with relevant line ministries (particularly the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Electricity) is challenging due to low capacity at the state-level, which hinders harmonization of- and compliance with national protocols in health and education and ultimately limits the potential for effective integration of refugees within national public service systems. This is somewhat mitigated for the South Sudanese refugee response, where UNHCR's cooperation and dialogue with state level authorities (i.e., Governors' offices and state-level ministries) is easier due to the

¹¹ 2018 Sudan HNO:

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Sudan_2018_Humanitarian_Needs_Overview.pdf

high proportion of South Sudanese refugees living outside of camps in self-settlements that are largely integrated within Sudanese villages and towns.

Response Strategy

Given the scale of humanitarian assistance needs of the refugee caseload in Sudan, UNHCR will seek to mainstream refugees and other POCs within national service systems where possible to enhance the sustainability of the refugee response.

Emergency preparedness and response will remain a cornerstone of the UNHCR operation in Sudan as continued influx from South Sudan and Eritrea are expected. UNHCR will lead the refugee response coordination in line with the Refugee Coordination Model through the Refugee Consultation Forum (RCF) and in close coordination with COR and the HCT. UNHCR will also advocate for- and advance the application of 'humanitarian and development nexus' principles and best practice in order to reduce risks, vulnerability and humanitarian needs.

Traditional humanitarian assistance in South Sudanese and Eritrean refugee camps is expected to continue as new influxes from South Sudan and Eritrea continue. The Operation will review the protracted refugee situations (i.e., Eritrean refugees in Eastern Sudan; Chadian and CAR refugees in Greater Darfur; and urban refugees) with a view to re-orienting the assistance model to a more sustainable approach, with a focus on the integration of refugees within national public services, and investments in permanent or more durable infrastructure, self-reliance, community participation, and durable solutions where possible.

For the South Sudanese refugee response, UNHCR will steer the humanitarian response in the camps towards more durable interventions, specifically in shelter, water and sanitation, as these sectors have traditionally been very costly with short-term emergency interventions. As part of the office's durable shelter strategy, designs for more durable shelters and household latrines will begin in 2018, with scale-up in 2019 and 2020. This will require community participation to cover the additional costs involved. Greater consideration of environmental impacts of prolonged displacement will be required, with a focus on fuel-efficient cooking options to reduce degradation of wood resources. Solar lighting and alternative sources of fuel will be pursued in coordination with the relevant stakeholders. The Operation will also invest more heavily in community protection and community mobilization programmes to encourage increased refugee community ownership of structures, services, communal spaces, and the identification of protection solutions. Participation of refugee women and youth will be an important aspect of this move as the majority of refugees fall into these demographic groups.

UNHCR will continue to work closely with UNICEF and other inter-agency nutrition partners to address malnutrition issues across South Sudanese refugee camps and out-of-camp settlements. This includes improved coordination at the field level and scale-up of nutrition outreach and integration of malnutrition response across sectoral activities to address the multi-sectoral issues impacting nutrition outcomes for South Sudanese refugees in Sudan.

For urban refugees in Khartoum, UNHCR, COR and implementing partners will focus on assisting the most vulnerable cases with financial assistance, education and health support, legal aid and psychosocial support, with increased emphasis in 2019 on targeting assistance based on household vulnerability using household socio-economic indicators. With a view to integrating urban refugees into the public health strategy of the Government of Sudan, UNHCR

has started a pilot to include Yemeni refugees into the national health insurance and the operation will further explore ways of including refugees in public health care programs. UNHCR will also review its secondary and tertiary health care support to refugees to ensure it is in line with global policies. Prevention and response to Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) and other communicable diseases will continue to be a focus for UNHCR's public health strategy for refugees and asylum-seekers across the country.

For other populations, UNHCR will aim to provide support and build capacity of public health services in order to improve refugee access to primary health care in public facilities. UNHCR will continue to assist refugees and asylum seekers with primary health care through its NGO health partners, while opportunities for mainstreaming into public primary health services will be pursued in coordination with the Ministry of Health and other sister UN agencies. This includes standardization and harmonization of health packages to align with Ministry of Health policy.

UNHCR will also focus on livelihood activities targeting the most vulnerable refugees to support their graduation from poverty and reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance by 2020. A key priority is to improve the Operation's livelihoods assistance targeting methodology UNHCR will explore the possibility of joint UNHCR-COR socio-economic surveys in 2019 and 2020, which will help assess the household-level needs for better targeting.

5. Access to education

Vision: All refugees in Sudan have access to quality basic, secondary and tertiary education.

Key challenges

Approximately 67% of primary-school aged and 94% of secondary-school aged refugee children are out of school.

While Syrian, Yemeni and Palestinian refugees are granted free access to public education, the absorption capacity of public schools is limited and refugees are still required to pay fees. This can deter refugee populations from accessing public schools. In many locations, education services for refugees are provided through parallel service providers, usually through COR or NGOs.

In Khartoum State, there are eight community schools hosting Eritrean, Ethiopian and Congolese refugees. These schools are supported by UNHCR and follow the Sudanese curriculum; however, language barriers often make it difficult for these children to pass standardized examinations, and school certificates are not consistently recognized in Sudan.

In the East, school dropout rates among Eritrean refugees students are high, especially amongst girls in upper primary classes. Classrooms are also congested and there is low participation of the community in school management and improvement

For refugees in Darfur, the quality of the education is poor, with significant gaps in availability of classrooms, furniture, textbooks and qualified teachers. Student dropout is very high due to poverty and inability to pay the fees. Parents often cannot afford to cover school cost due to a lack of livelihoods/income opportunities. A lack of school feeding also drives drop-out and retention issues.

There are also a lack of secondary schools that refugee students can access. Furthermore, UNHCR does not have data on the total number of refugee children attending secondary education, which makes it difficult to calculate the gap. Host communities generally do not have secondary schools that refugee children can access. Adult literacy levels are low and gaps in adult learning programmes persist.

Many refugee hosting schools (including camp schools) face significant shortages of qualified teachers. Refugee teachers are engaged as volunteers in schools across the response in an attempt to address this gap; however, teacher shortages persist. UNHCR provides monthly incentives to refugee teachers, but this is not sustainable in the long term. The incentive payments are too small and drives high turnover as teachers leave to take up other forms of livelihoods.

Response Strategy

UNHCR will pursue closer direct cooperation with the Ministry of Education to ensure quality education for all refugee children in Sudan. This includes advocacy for South Sudanese refugee children's equitable access to public schools and quality education in out-of-camp locations. In camp situations, UNHCR will continue to focus on primary school education while seeking opportunities to ensure sustainability of education services by introducing user fees and

community involvement wherever possible. The operation will also utilise CBI for secondary education to ensure integration of refugee children into the national education system.

Focus on school dropout rates and ensuring girls' access to education will also be a priority, and will be pursued through awareness campaigns on the importance of education for girls and prevention of early marriages. UNHCR also will explore the possibility of initiating school feeding programs in partnerships with WFP as a student retention mechanism, given the high rate of school drop outs, particularly among South Sudanese refugees. This combined with tailored livelihood interventions targeted to parents will support a decrease in school dropouts, especially for girls. Continuous improvement of school facilities and (where needed) the coverage of costs for teachers will improve access to education. UNHCR will leverage the revised LOU with UNICEF to ensure better access to education by South Sudanese refugee children living outside camps.

In Eastern Sudan, UNHCR will work with COR to reduce and eventually eliminate COR's direct implementation of education programs for Eritrean refugees. The Operation will instead seek the gradual handover of refugee education management to the Ministry of Education, and introduction of fees for education, in line with the national practice.

In the context of prolonged asylum and limited prospects for return, UNHCR will increase advocacy and programming for secondary education. Increased access to tertiary education and vocational training will also be pursued through the promotion of tertiary education grants and improved access for refugee students to public universities. A focus on youth and education will also have benefits in terms of preventing onward movement.

UNHCR will deploy concerted efforts to ensure fees for services and CBI are explored where appropriate. In camps and out-of-camp areas, UNHCR will assess the possibility of hiring vocational trainers to build skills for youth in various domains as a means to build their self-reliance and competitiveness in the labour market. The initiative could also be a tool to deter negative coping mechanisms and youth involvement in criminal activities caused by idleness.

UNHCR will also continue its close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and World Bank on the Global Partnership for Education with a view to increasing the 2018-2019 allocation to the Ministry of Education to specifically cover refugee children accessing Sudanese national education. UNHCR's work with the Ministry will also focus on baseline data collection and analysis to quantify the contribution of the Government of Sudan to the education of refugee children in Sudan. UNHCR will also pursue partnerships with academic institutions (e.g., the partnership with University of Gedaref on the Refugee and Migration Studies Centre, established in 2017) to identify scholarship opportunities for refugee students to improve their access to tertiary education opportunities.

UNHCR will played a key role in advocating for the inclusion of refugee education in the Education Sector's Strategic Plan (ESP) (2018-2022) as a way to ensure that the government continuously plans for- and implements refugee education programs. The community schools initiative is recognized by the ESP, and UNHCR will seek to have the community schools formally integrated within the national system. The ESP also includes plans to integrate refugee teacher recruitment and management within the Ministry of Education, including formal recognition of their certification. This advocacy will continue, with an additional focus on mainstreaming refugee education within national systems through the establishment of Refugee Education Management Information System (REMIS).

6. Enhanced resilience for POCs and support to host communities

Vision: POCs are empowered to address their own protection needs.

Key challenges

UNHCR Participatory Assessments indicate high unemployment among the refugee population with majority relying on humanitarian assistance. With just 1 per cent of refugees able to afford the local food basket, livelihood access gaps compound food insecurity for refugee communities across Sudan.

Syrian and Yemeni refugees are slightly better off due to their relatively easy access to work permits. However, the majority of South Sudanese, Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees rely on informal labour opportunities. Refugees also lack productive assets, and many do not have sufficient technical and entrepreneurial skills. Inter-agency partner assessments indicate significant unmet livelihood needs for both South Sudanese refugees and their host communities' who have livestock assets and lack market access, particularly in East and South Darfur and South Kordofan States where communities rely on livestock-based livelihoods. Furthermore, the majority of refugees in Sudan are aged 15-30 years, and in the absence of livelihood opportunities face increased likelihood of onward movement and associated protection risks.

A lack of livelihoods opportunities or access to basic income also limits the Operation's capacity to avoid or dismantle parallel service systems because refugees are unable to pay user fees for access to national service systems. At the same time, detailed analysis of refugees' capacity-to-pay is hindered by a lack of household socioeconomic data.

While the Government of Sudan does not implement its encampment policy in relation to South Sudanese refugees, the government will likely continue to refuse to liberalize access to work permits for all refugee populations. There is a need for awareness raising for- and sharing of data and evidence with the Government on the potential economic gains of facilitating refugees' access to livelihoods more broadly, especially as it relates to support for entrepreneurship through access business development and vocational training.

Response Strategy

Over the next three years, these initiatives will be supported through the Operation's prioritization of the collection of household-level socio-economic data, through collaboration with humanitarian and development partners. This will also allow for the implementation of a more structured and evidence-based livelihood strategy, with a move towards introducing fees for services for those refugees who already have means, as well as those who have graduated out of poverty.

UNHCR will expand community-based assistance in out-of-camp locations to better serve refugees and host communities and ensure refugees are able to remain living outside of camps if they choose. UNHCR will continue to advocate for the recognition, maintenance and full implementation of South Sudanese refugees' freedom of movement, access to work, property and residence in Sudan, which are essential to self-reliance.

UNHCR will also assess the possibility of supporting construction of semi-permanent market structures in host communities (or develop existing ones) as a livelihoods integration strategy that could ultimately serve both refugee and host communities. The initiative would not only ensure refugee acceptance within the local trading cycle but also strengthen social cohesion and host community development.

Tariffs and user fees should be introduced for both populations where possible. Investment in livelihoods will be required to introduce moderate user fees/payment models to support sustainability. CBI will also be explored to ensure that the most vulnerable refugees have capacity to pay.

In Eastern Sudan, the focus will be on development in areas where camps have reached a critical mass of self-reliance among refugees. UNHCR will also focus more on community-based protection for protracted refugees to ensure community ownership, co-existence between refugees and host communities, sustainability and self-reliance. This will be achieved through community access to technology (e.g., activation and/or reactivation of Community Technology Access Centres in Shagarab and Um Gargur camps), community mobilization, refugee volunteers, and the strengthening of community groups and structures to ensure meaningful community participation in addressing protection issues of asylum-seekers and refugees. It will be important to ensure that links with preventing onward movement and irregular migration are highlighted to ensure funding opportunities are properly explored.

For the Eritrean refugees in Eastern Sudan, work will continue on camp closure and consolidation. UNHCR has adopted a 'Graduation Approach' for sustainable livelihoods programming in the East, which considers how the implementation of safety nets, capacity building and humanitarian support can be sequenced to create pathways for the poorest to graduate out of extreme poverty. Further investment in self-reliance is required; however, this must go hand in hand with policy discussions with the Government of Sudan to ensure that refugees' have equitable access to the labour market, as well as a gradual phase-down of free health, water and education services so that refugees are paying fees for services on par with nationals.

UNHCR will explore all opportunities to ensure refugees are included in development and nexus related initiatives including 2018-2021 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)¹² and Darfur Peace Plan¹³. In addition, UNHCR will promote and play an active role in area-based approaches that target mixed populations of refugees, IDPs, returnees and vulnerable host populations such as the ones in South Kordofan and North Darfur.

¹² UNDAF 2018-2021: http://sd.one.un.org/content/dam/unct/sudan/UNDAF/Sudan_UNDAF_En_2018-2021-E-Ver.pdf

¹³ Darfur Peace Agreement, May 2006: <http://www.un.org/zh/focus/southern Sudan/pdf/dpa.pdf>

7. Access to durable solutions

Vision: Refugees have equitable and transparent access to expanded durable solutions options (including resettlement, voluntary repatriation, local integration and alternative legal pathways to migration) that help them attain stable and dignified futures.

Key challenges

Access to durable solutions remains a significant protection gap in Sudan. Despite the inclusion of the prospect for naturalization in the 2014 Asylum (Organization) Act, this remains a sensitive issue with the Government of Sudan and is generally not accessible to all refugee populations except for Syrian refugees. South Sudanese refugees are not subject to an encampment policy and are largely allowed to settle within host communities and enjoy some degree of local integration, especially in communities with which they share historical ties.

Despite UNHCR's increased focus on- and advocacy for defacto integration with mainstreaming of refugees within national service systems, coordination and communication with relevant line ministries is often hampered by a lack of resources and limited capacity at the state-level. Furthermore, prospects for voluntary repatriation for the majority of refugees in Sudan are limited. The voluntary repatriation of Chadian refugees in West Darfur State began in 2018 and completion of the exercise is anticipated by the end of 2019.

Very small numbers (approximately 3,000 unverified) of spontaneous returns to South Sudan from Sudan have been observed in 2018. However, prospects for return of Sudanese refugees in South Sudan and Ethiopia are less likely, and UNHCR is not planning for the organized repatriation of these refugee populations.

While resettlement remains a viable and integral solution for eligible refugee populations, UNHCR faces challenges to meet its resettlement quotas due to case processing delays, a lack of urban outreach in Khartoum and complex family compositions in the East. Eritrean refugees have the greatest access to resettlement in Sudan, while resettlement opportunities are critically limited for Congolese, South Sudanese, Chadian, CAR, Syrian and Yemeni refugees. The office also faces challenges identifying lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI) people, survivors of SGBV, victims of trafficking and UASC who are eligible for resettlement, due to the limitations of current registration and RSD procedures, as well as weak case management systems for SGBV and UASC.

In the absence of viable durable solutions and given a lack of work opportunities and livelihoods programming, refugee community leaders have called for renewed practice of issuance of Convention Travel Documents (CTDs) so that refugees can travel abroad for work, which used to exist until about 1980.

Response Strategy

While UNHCR will continue to prioritize voluntary repatriation as much as possible, UNHCR will seek to improve the strategic use of resettlement to address the protection concerns of vulnerable refugees. Resettlement will remain an essential protection tool to support the most vulnerable members of UNHCR's populations of concern, and those who are least able to integrate locally and PSNs. This will include prioritization of resettlement outreach to- and

identification of survivors of SGBV, UASC, women-headed households, victims of trafficking, LGBTI people and religious minorities. UNHCR has started advocating with the Government of Sudan and resettlement countries to target more new arrivals, particularly Eritreans who have high propensity to onward movement. UNHCR will also review the resettlement needs of other population groups including South Sudanese, Syrian and Yemeni refugees with an aim to expand the resettlement programme to better meet the durable solution and protection needs of the most vulnerable refugees from a wider range of communities of concern.

For protracted refugee situations (i.e., Eritrean refugees in the East, urban refugees in Khartoum and Central African Republican refugees in South Darfur), UNHCR will seek to advance de facto local integration through enhanced self-reliance and mainstreaming of refugee service access within national services (including education, healthcare, water and social services), with refugees paying fees for services as self-reliance is achieved. In parallel with this approach, UNHCR will also advocate for 'de jure' local integration as part of durable solution priorities. Engagement of POCs in decisions that affect their lives will also be prioritized. The consolidation of services in camps in the East will support greater collaboration with relevant line ministries in the management of services, as well as greater involvement of refugees in the management of community-based services, with potential for a more conducive policy environment to support renewed discussions with the Government of Sudan on local integration and/or naturalization of protracted refugees.

Within the framework of Comprehensive Solutions, alternative legal pathways for migration will be explored, including issuance of CTDs for work and/or study opportunities outside of Sudan (e.g., to the Gulf States), family reunification and private sponsorship. Such schemes would reduce the competition for resources in the East and would increase capital inflows into the East through remittances. This will also support skills-building for refugees.

UNHCR will continue to monitor the situation in South Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia following the signing of peace agreements in September 2018. Prospects for return are limited at this time, and no organized UNHCR repatriation exercises are planned.

8. Responding to mixed migration and onward movement in Sudan

Vision: Trafficking incidents are reduced and POCs have access to the information and protection services they need to make informed choices about onward movement.

Key challenges

Asylum-seekers face significant risk of refoulement when attempting to transit through Sudan in order to seek asylum in another country due to the Government of Sudan's current asylum policy. Migrant POCs are frequently intercepted by government authorities when attempting to leave Sudan. Individuals lacking regularized immigration status are at risk of detention and deportation, and are often subject to fines due to their irregular status. A lack of formal screening and referral mechanisms for the identification and referral of victims of trafficking and asylum-seekers in government custody (to COR or UNHCR for asylum seekers, and to IOM for migrants) further aggravates protection risks and violates the principles of non-penalization and non-refoulement. Furthermore, encampment policies and movement restrictions force POCs to use people smugglers to facilitate their onward movement, which often exposes them to human trafficking.

In addition to the lack of regularized immigration status, key drivers of onward movement of POCs in Sudan include security threats posed by host communities and government authorities, and a lack of livelihood and educational opportunities which leave persons of concern with few options but to make dangerous onward journeys in search of protection, livelihood and other basic refugee rights.

Response Strategy

Sustained policy and operational dialogue will be pursued with the Immigration Department of the Ministry of the Interior (including the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking), the EU Working Group on Migration; the Counter-Trafficking and Mixed Migration Working Group¹⁴; governments of- and actors in destination countries; GIZ's Better Migration Management (BMM); French Expertise; FRONTEX; and others. Concerted efforts will be exerted to ensure buy-in by the government on the Urban Refugee Policy, with a view to increasing opportunities and rights for refugees in urban areas. UNHCR will also advocate with federal and state-level government for greater freedom of movement outside of camps for certain population profiles who are more inclined to resort to onward movement.

UNHCR will also seek to address the underlying push factors for onward movement by increasing access to higher education, scholarships and vocational training. Existing livelihood programmes will be continued and scaled up where possible, including in cooperation with other agencies. Resettlement will continue to be used as a strategic alternative legal option to irregular onward movement, taking advantage of EU member states' reported interest in increasing resettlement quotas for refugees living in Sudan. UNHCR will continue to facilitate family reunification in third countries wherever possible, and will review the possibility of extending its engagement in facilitating and managing refugees' access to alternative migration streams.

¹⁴ Current membership includes UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNODC, UNDP, GIZ-BMM, Danish Red Cross and representative organizations of the INGO-Forum.

UNHCR will continue to support the Government to engage in addressing mixed migratory population flows, including its role in combatting smuggling and trafficking in persons through the implementation of the Government of Sudan's National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, drafted with technical support from IOM. The Action plan has four key strategic approaches: 1) Prevention; 2) Protection; 3) Investigation and prosecution of traffickers; and 4) Internal, regional and international partnerships and cooperation. While paying special attention to the needs of UASC caught up in these movements, UNHCR will apply child protection principles that ensure family tracing and reunification is pursued where possible. To achieve this, engagement will need to be strengthened between the Government of Sudan, destination countries for family reunification and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the Government of the State of Eritrea (to the extent possible). Additional efforts will be deployed to improve case management, community-based care solutions, education and durable solutions for these children.

UNHCR will continue programming to support victims of trafficking, as well as for witnesses testifying at the Special Anti-Trafficking Court in Kassala, in collaboration with IOM and other stakeholders, including government counterparts where possible. In this regard, UNHCR will continue to maintain existing Safe Houses in Kassala to provide physical protection, psycho-social support, health services and legal aid to people at risk. The installation of "reception centres" at entry points or interception points, such as Dongola in Northern state, and the provision of support to these facilities will be considered when necessary. Improved case management and efforts to reintegrate victims into communities to avoid prolonged institutionalisation will be pursued.

UNHCR will continue conducting capacity-building activities to train law enforcement agents, government officials as well as prosecutors and judges on migrant and refugee rights, international and national legal frameworks to combat human trafficking, case identification and referral and victim protection. Special attention will be paid to strengthening coordination between UN partner agencies and government counterparts at national and state levels. UNHCR will also support the development of formal identification and referral mechanisms for detained asylum-seekers, refugees and victims of trafficking in order to mitigate refoulement risk, ensure principle of non-penalization is upheld, and strengthen access to registration for vulnerable groups. Advocacy on the need for regularized immigration status for vulnerable populations of concern will also be pursued.

Existing awareness-raising campaigns on the risks and real dangers related to irregular migration will continue through the "Telling the Real Story" project and during standard counselling and information sessions with refugees and other POCs.

9. Prevention of statelessness

Vision: Persons at risk of statelessness are systematically identified and assisted in obtaining nationality documentation and relevant protection services.

Key challenges

Consular services for South Sudanese refugees are only available in Khartoum, and the capacity of the consulate is very low. A key barrier is the cost of nationality documents. Furthermore, South Sudanese refugees likely to face challenges in proving their nationality are individuals of mixed origin or ancestry with a long residency period in Sudan (i.e., individuals from the pre-Dec 2013 caseload); individuals living outside of tribal communities; and those originating from border or disputed areas. UNHCR refers cases of nationality determination to the South Sudan Consulate in Khartoum; however, the finalization of nationality determination procedures requires individuals to travel to Juba due to a lack of proper referral system between Juba and the Consulate in Khartoum. There is also no appeal procedure in place. UNHCR maintains a non-return policy to South Sudan; therefore, return for nationality confirmation is not a viable solution for South Sudanese statelessness risk.

Due to political sensitivities, the Government of Sudan is reluctant to fully engage UNHCR in the discharge of its statelessness mandate. This has contributed to a complete gap in official statistics of persons at risk of statelessness.

A lack of access to birth registration further increases statelessness risk for children born in asylum in Sudan. In Kassala State, only an estimated 45 per cent of newborn children in the host community are registered and issued with birth certificates. The lack of birth certificates not only exposes children to the risk of statelessness but also hampers their access to some basic services, including education. Sudanese law requires children to be registered within 30 days of birth, while making provision for late registration through administrative and legal procedures. There is no systematic late birth registration system for refugee children in the camps. Late registration of refugee children in urban areas is not supported. Existing birth registration systems are weak and lack the necessary information and communication technologies (ICT) equipment to support accurate record keeping and storage.

Response Strategy

From 2018-2020, UNHCR will continue activities related to the development and strengthening of law and policy in the areas of nationality and civil registration, as well as on improving access to birth registration, civil status documentation, and to legal assistance and legal solutions in to reduce and prevent statelessness. UNHCR will scale-up its engagement on access to birth registration for refugees through its broader capacity building support for Parliamentarians and government officials on statelessness issues.

With the official recognition of South Sudanese refugees by the Government of Sudan, UNHCR will target statelessness activities to address the risks faced by South Sudanese refugees of mixed origin or ancestry with a long residency period in Sudan (i.e., individuals from the pre-Dec 2013 caseload); individuals living outside of tribal communities; and those originating from border or disputed areas. The South Sudan Consulate will be supported to issue nationality

documentation to 3,000 extremely vulnerable individuals in Khartoum State. The Consulate will also be supported to expand nationality documentation activities to other areas of Sudan where high numbers of South Sudanese refugees are living. Registration programmes will be continuously monitored to ensure registration standards and adherence to procedures are met. UNHCR will engage with the Consulate on a continuous basis and provide technical assistance and training. Data on registration and documentation will be obtained and analyzed in order to identify and address cases of individuals whose claim to nationality is denied.

In light of the global ‘Campaign to End Statelessness’ and the regional Declaration of International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Member States on the Eradication of Statelessness¹⁵, to which Sudan is a signatory, UNHCR will prioritize capacity-building activities with the Government of Sudan to support the implementation of its commitments under the Declaration. This includes: support to the Government’s identification of a national focal point and task force for statelessness issues; the drafting of a national action plan on statelessness by 2020; and support for Sudan’s adoption of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. UNHCR will also support the Government to mainstream birth registration for refugees within the national system and to expand late birth registration activities to cover refugee children in urban areas. Support will also be provided for ICT equipment to improve record keeping.

¹⁵ Declaration of International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Member States on the Eradication of Statelessness, 16 October 2017: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/59e9cb8c4.html>

10. Responding to newly displaced, newly accessible and protracted IDP caseloads

Vision: Vulnerable IDPs receive protection, material assistance and support in a context of safety and dignity.

Key challenges

Protection space for UNHCR’s work with IDPs has been very limited since 2009; however, the December 2016 HAC Directives and Procedures for Humanitarian Work have significantly improved the operating environment for UNHCR in the Greater Darfur area and the Kordofans, with the explicit reference to the importance of protection mentioned in the Directives. While the Government of Sudan continues to promote the reduction of humanitarian assistance in IDP camps and returns, protracted IDP caseloads are facing greater protection risks, with increased prevalence of child labour and exposure to exploitation and abuse due their increased vulnerability in the face of the loss of assistance without social safety nets in place. Furthermore, protracted conflict in Darfur has undermined peaceful coexistence among communities, leading to frequent tension between tribes, localities and host communities, which further aggravates IDP protection risks, including marginalization and exclusion from access to resources and available services within host communities.

Despite ongoing peace efforts, fighting has continued in Darfur’s Jebel Mara region, resulting in over 100,000 newly-displaced persons in 2017, in critical need of life-saving assistance with emergency shelters, NFI/core relief items (CRI) and transitional shelters. The concentration of IDPs in inaccessible areas makes the delivery of assistance challenging within a context of ongoing conflict.

UNAMID is on course to reducing its military component by 3,265 personnel by December 2018, and by an additional 1,420 by June 2019. All civilian posts will also be eliminated, an police components will be limited to 2,500 personnel. While UNAMID’s presence will be maintained in the Jebel Mara region, significant gaps are anticipated in the areas of rule of law, protection monitoring, human rights promotion, and the administration of- and support for durable solutions and service delivery to IDPs. Given UNHCR’s field presence in Darfur, UNHCR will need to assume some of these responsibilities, which will require additional resources and the likely expansion of the IDP operation.

Response Strategy

UNHCR will promote international and regional standards applicable to the protection of IDPs and returnees with the view to improve the protection of their rights in national laws and policies. Training workshops will be conducted for the relevant government officials to raise their awareness of legal and policy standards. Advocacy will also be pursued for a comprehensive review of the legal and policy framework, with the view of Sudan’s accession to the Kampala Convention¹⁶. Surveys will be conducted with the Government of Sudan and other partners to

¹⁶ African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, adopted October 2009, Entry into force December 2012: <https://au.int/en/treaties/african-union-convention-protection-and-assistance-internally-displaced-persons-africa>.

assess relevant laws and policies, and conditions of access to particular services on the ground, and to identify and promote corrective measures and legal or policy changes required to remove obstacles/discriminatory provisions and practices.

In situations of new displacement, or newly-accessible IDP populations, UNHCR will ensure that IDPs and host populations receive timely assistance and protection services in conditions of safety and dignity. UNHCR's emergency response will focus on needs relating to the two sectors under its leadership: protection and ES/NFI. UNHCR will actively pursue protection advocacy at all levels of the humanitarian community, donors and Government partners.

UNHCR will continue to strengthen state-level Protection Sector Working Groups to address new displacement and manage protection information management and coordination. UNHCR will ensure that protection and ES/NFI are systematically included in humanitarian assessments jointly with gender-based violence (GBV), Child Protection and Mine Action partners. UNHCR and its partners will be trained on protection and ES/NFI needs assessments. UNHCR emergency response will be protection driven, with the objective to ensure that displaced communities have access to humanitarian assistance in conditions of safety and dignity, vulnerable people are protected against risks of violence or neglect. UNHCR will put in place community-based protection responses and support community-based structures. UNHCR will also contribute towards capacity building and protection awareness raising among IDPs, service providers and authorities.

UNHCR will coordinate the provision of ES/NFI assistance to support safety for IDPs and host populations, and improved access of vulnerable people to humanitarian assistance. UNHCR will draw on its own ES/NFI stocks to contribute to the overall response as required, and within the limit of available resources. ES/NFI distributions are planned and implemented with the support of the ES/NFI sector/ community leaders/protection/social workers deployed on the ground. This includes the identification and verification of vulnerable people/people with specific needs, distribution and monitoring.

UNHCR will continue to be part of inter-agency assessment missions for IDPs in protracted displacement throughout the country, but UNHCR specific interventions will be limited to areas affected by floods, fire, protection/security incidents and other shocks. UNHCR contributions for NFI distributions will therefore be limited to these situations, based on identification and verification of the most vulnerable individuals.

From the protection perspective, UNHCR will continue capacity building for community leaders, service providers and local authorities on protection for protection priority areas in situations of protracted displacement. UNHCR will also engage the HCT in advocacy and policy discussions through the Protection Working Group, as well as through the state-level protection Working Groups.

UNHCR will ensure a coordinated and wherever possible harmonised approach with the refugee operation wherever IDPs and refugees are living in the same locations. This is particularly the case in IDP camps hosting South Sudanese refugees and in dispersed villages where refugees and IDPs are living side by side.

Durable solutions for IDPs

UNHCR will support the search for durable solutions for IDPs, with a focus on situations of return to places of origin, and local integration of protracted IDPs in areas of displacement. UNHCR will ensure that conditions for durable solutions are assessed and monitored in areas of return or local integration of IDPs and returnees, in cooperation with partners from other sectors. UNHCR will ensure that assessments and monitoring missions are conducted on an inter-agency basis, in particular within the framework of inter-agency durable solutions coordination fora. UNHCR's response will prioritise areas of mixed return of refugees and IDPs. UNHCR will advocate for the realization of safe and dignified durable solutions for IDPs and assist in return and/or integrated areas based on an agreed upon response framework.

The ES/NFI sector under UNHCR's lead will increase focus on sustainable shelter solutions and capacity building in the production of shelter material and other domestic NFIs to ensure that communities can generate income and are more resilient to future shocks. Material support will be provided with a strong community-based approach, with the aim of helping communities improve their security and ensure their safe access to essential utilities, services and livelihoods, in particular for vulnerable people. UNHCR partners providing assistance will be requested to systematically include a strong community- and protection-based approach in the design and implementation of their response. Community mechanisms will be put in place to ensure the inclusive participation of all gender, age and other relevant segments of the communities in the design, implementation, evaluation and management of the facilities or other forms of support provided. These mechanisms will be used to monitor the protection of the communities, in particular women and girls, and vulnerable people, and develop an appropriate response to protection concerns.

In the context of reported IDP returns, UNHCR is expected to lead joint verification of return missions and produce reports, which will trigger IOM registration and inter-agency assessment missions. UNHCR will engage in distribution of NFIs, and if additional funding is obtained, transitional shelters based on needs assessments and endorsement by RRR inter-agency mission reports.

UNHCR will seek synergy and complementarity in its programming for voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees from Chad and support to IDP returns, by prioritising refugee returnee areas for IDP return interventions.

UNHCR has already begun engagement with the UNCT on transition planning for UNAMID functions following the conclusion of the planned drawdown and exit. The establishment of State Liaison Functions has been agreed to, and a draft concept note is being finalized and outlines agency-level commitments on transition arrangements. UNHCR will scale up protection monitoring capacities, community based protection activities, and durable solutions initiatives, for the benefit of both refugee and IDP returnees. As a result, additional resources will be needed for UNHCR to assume these responsibilities. UNHCR will engage in joint resource mobilization efforts with the UNCT to ensure adequate funding is in place to support the transition arrangements.

11. Support for refugee returnees

Vision: Returning refugees have access to protection and assistance upon their return to Sudan.

Key challenges

Many Sudanese refugee returnees have already spontaneously returned to their areas of origin and have already settled in their communities without necessarily registered with COR and UNHCR upon return. Reports indicate that this could be due to the concerns of refugee status deactivation.

Assessment missions conducted in return areas indicate critical gaps in basic needs and essential services including food, water, education, health, NFIs, and shelter. There is a need to upgrade existing facilities in order to ensure regular provision of water to returnees and the local population in the area. Key protection challenges including SGBV, Child Protection, Rule of Law and immediate response to the most vulnerable, all of which require urgent intervention in order to better support refugee returnees and create a conducive atmosphere for sustainable return and reintegration.

Response Strategy

UNHCR will work within the tripartite agreement framework on ensuring the preparation and implementation of organised return of Sudanese refugees from Chad. It is expected that voluntary repatriation will start at a moderate pace to selected return areas, primarily in North, West and Central Darfur. The first phase of the operation will start in the second quarter of 2018 with a projected 20,000 Sudanese refugees opting for voluntary repatriation from Chad to Darfur during the course of 2018. The planning figure for 2019 is an additional 20,000 organized returns. These planning figures are based on an intention survey conducted by UNHCR and the Commission Nationale pour l'Accueil et la Réinsertion des Réfugiés et des Rapatriés (CNARR)¹⁷ in March 2017.

UNHCR will continue to coordinate with UNHCR Chad, as well as engage with the Return, Recovery and Reintegration (RRR) Sector, the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID¹⁸), the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS), other agencies, COR, the Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission (VRRC) and local authorities to review the conditions in refugees' places of origin with a view to providing independent information on the situation in return areas.

The voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees to Sudan will link to a broader humanitarian, resilience and development dynamic in Darfur under the DDP and RRR Sector initiatives related to the 2011 Secretary General's Decision on durable solutions for returning refugees and IDPs. UNHCR Sudan is already working with a broad range of humanitarian and development actors to strengthen community resilience and improve the protection and wellbeing of Sudanese spontaneous refugee returnees who have already returned to their communities of origin in

¹⁷ Chadian National Commission for Reception and Reintegration of Refugees and Returnees

¹⁸ United Nations African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur

North, Central and West Darfur. UNHCR Sudan will work with WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on food security and livelihoods as well as transitional initiatives in education and health with other UN agencies. Members of the RRR Sector will also help provide the basis for the long-term sustainability of organized refugee voluntary returns from Chad.

UNHCR Sudan is already working with a broad range of humanitarian and development actors to strengthen community resilience and improve the protection and wellbeing of Sudanese spontaneous refugee returnees who have already returned to their communities of origin in North, Central and West Darfur. UNHCR Sudan will continue to work with WFP and FAO on food security and livelihoods, as well as transitional initiatives in education and health with other UN Agencies. Members of the RRR Sector will also help provide the basis for the long-term sustainability of organized refugee voluntary returns from Chad.

Co-ordination and partnership

UNHCR will continue to cooperate with COR, which will remain UNHCR's primary counterpart when it comes to refugees. Specifically, UNHCR will work with COR on protection (especially reception services, RSD and registration), camp management and overall coordination of the refugee response throughout the country. UNHCR will continue to strengthen its coordination with relevant line ministries in Sudan, including the Ministries Education, Health, WES and Social Affairs, especially for the South Sudanese refugee response. Particular coordination will take place with the Ministries of Education and Health to ensure mainstreaming of refugees and asylum seekers into national service provision as much as possible. In the context of statelessness, UNHCR will also continue to partner with Sudanese Civil Registry in areas of birth and civil registration. Maintaining close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Interior will also remain important.

UNHCR will work closely with local government counterparts to ensure protection space is maintained for refugees, particularly in relation to self-reliance and an “out-of-camp” approach to hosting refugees. UNHCR and the humanitarian community's support to Government services at the point of delivery will ensure added value to the host community, as well as targeted support for host communities.

Although Sudan is not part of the CRRF pilot, the Government of Sudan has been implementing substantive parts of the CRRF approach (i.e., self-reliance, allocation of land for refugees in Eastern Sudan, out of camp approach for South Sudanese refugees). Since the Government of Sudan has additional conditions to fulfil before it can access support from multilateral funding institutions (i.e., Bretton Woods institutions), as well as the reluctance of many bilateral donors to provide direct support to the government, the possibility of leveraging development funding to help the government better integrate refugees whilst obtaining significant benefits for host communities and local infrastructure is limited. UNHCR will continue to work closely with the government on laying the groundwork for future opportunities. In particular, UNHCR will work with COR and line ministries to collect baseline data and analyse trends in relation to refugees' integration into public services, continue to foster progressive refugee policies in alternatives to camps, freedom of movement, self-reliance, access to work and mainstreaming refugees into Government services.

UNHCR will continue the partnership and coordination with respective government authorities to address the issues of mixed migration and onward movement. UNHCR will closely coordinate with the Ministry of Interior, the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, the State Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, and relevant government counterparts in East Sudan to support the implementation of the Sudan National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking in order to prevent and mitigate the risks of onward movement. UNHCR will also coordinate with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) to strengthen SGBV prevention and response and child protection in the East.

UNHCR will work closely with HAC and the MoSA to ensure its responsibilities for Protection and ES/NFI for IDPs within the IASC sector division of labour are executed in an effective and efficient manner. The role of the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) and the HCT in advocating for protection principles and the centrality of protection in the UN's approach to IDPs will be important, all the more because of the draw-down of UNAMID over the coming years.

Inter-agency coordination

UNHCR Sudan has adopted the Refugee Coordination Model, and co-chairs the monthly Refugee RCF in collaboration with COR, which is attended by all UN and NGO (national and international) partners working on refugee issues. At national-level recently-established Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) on livelihood and energy, education, health and nutrition, WASH and protection allow for in-depth technical discussion at the interagency level, and UNHCR will seek to strengthen this level of coordination, in harmonization with IASC sector-level coordination structures if appropriate. Offices in the field have established Refugee Working Groups (RWGs) chaired by UNHCR and COR, while state-level sector coordination is done through the IASC sector working groups with refugees added to the agenda of these meetings. Fora for specific discussion on refugee protection issues at field level remain limited.

RCF brings together more than 40 partners working on the refugee response, however only a handful – mostly national NGOs – undertake protection programming, usually at a small-scale, with limited funding and weak capacity for case management. UNHCR will seek to build capacity and expand the pool of national and international NGO partners capable of implementing quality protection programming, including prevention and response to SGBV and Child Protection. In addition to improving protection at the operational level, strengthened protection partnerships will also help ensure coherent and principled advocacy on protection.

UNHCR will further strengthen interagency common analysis, planning, monitoring and reporting, as well as policy development through the RCF. A continued emphasis will be placed on Information Management processes at national level including production of 3Ws, population dashboards and indicator infographics to inform interagency common analysis and planning across all sectors, including protection. Regular and robust field-level data collection will be essential to achieving this to a high standard, and UNHCR will seek to strengthen field-level data collection and indicator monitoring at an interagency level, through the RWGs. Specific systems for Protection Information Management (PIM) will also be strengthened in line with HQ guidelines. More broadly, field coordination, identification of gaps, and ensuring adherence to minimum standards of assistance and protection in the operational response will remain key objectives, and will require strong coordination capacity and leadership on the part of UNHCR at field level.

The Office uses the implementing partner selection committee to ensure quality and transparency in selection for implementing partners. The selection and partnership process also aims at building the capacity of national NGOs and local structures for better provision of services to persons of concern.

With regards to coordination among operational partners, the South Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) is a nationally-led, regionally coherent strategy which is built on the national response plans of regional countries. UNHCR leads the development of the Sudan chapter through the RCF in consultation with the TAGs. UNHCR engages with key partners, to agree on clear division of responsibilities at the sector and geographic level that reflect each agency's capacity and comparative advantage within the response (e.g. LOU with UNICEF). Clear commitments will allow more predictability of service provision, reduce gaps and overlap, and allow for more targeted fundraising and preparedness. UNHCR also leads preparedness and contingency planning through the RCF and RWGs, particularly as it relates to evolving emergency contexts such as the South Sudan situation. UNHCR will continue to strengthen national and field-level preparedness for response to large-scale influxes, or rates of arrival that exceed interagency

planning (e.g. over and above RRRP planning figures). A key component of this will be to seek firm commitments from UN and NGO partners on scale-up capacity in the case of a contingency scenario, while at the same time maintaining a robust and flexible emergency response capacity within UNHCR in case of gaps in interagency service provision.

UNHCR also leads RCF participation in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and Multi-Year Humanitarian Strategy (MYHS) processes led by OCHA, to ensure representation of refugee needs as a distinct but integrated component of the inter-agency planning process. Sudan is a pilot country for the New Way of Working, and the UNDAF is also considered within the context of the inter-agency MYHS. Within this context, UNHCR will continue to actively engage in high-level interagency discussions on the 'New Way of Working', particularly as they relate to the humanitarian-development nexus in order to advocate and push forward the inclusion of refugees into national development plans, thereby promoting increased self-reliance of refugees, particularly in out-of-camp contexts.

Increased attention on migration issues, particularly from European donors, will necessitate greater interagency engagement and advocacy to ensure protection of vulnerable persons from trafficking, as well as respect for human rights amidst operations to curb onward movement of new arrivals, for example Eritreans in Eastern Sudan. UNHCR will lead a strengthened interagency focus on migration issues as they relate to refugees and asylum-seekers, seeking strengthened approaches to advocacy and policy development.

UNHCR will continue its commitment towards ensuring its responsibilities for Protection and ES/NFI for internally displaced persons within the IASC sector division of labour are executed in an effective and efficient manner. UNHCR will advocate for a stronger profile and role of the RC/HC and the HCT in advocating for protection principles and the centrality of protection in the UN's approach to IDPs particularly because of the draw-down of UNAMID over the coming years.

UNHCR will continue to engage in the interagency review of Sudan coordination architecture in relation to the 'New Way of Working', the humanitarian-peace-development nexus, and the UN development reform process.

Management strategy

During 2017, and continuing into 2018, UNHCR in Sudan has sought to re-adjust its management and staffing structure to be able to respond to the growing South Sudanese refugee caseload in a more robust and sustainable manner, whilst still maintaining sufficient presence in the East for the Eritrean refugee program and in Darfur to respond to the Chadian and CAR refugees, as well as to respond to IDP needs in Protection and ES/NFI, and the start of organised Sudanese voluntary repatriation from Chad.

Staffing for 2018 and 2019 is being unified and rationalized, with an increase in use of Affiliate Workforce, and ensuring that staff undertaking the same functions hold the same contract type.

Staff safety remains an on-going priority with a rise in crime, and the serious risk of kidnapping and carjacking, in the Darfur region and South and West Kordofan. Staff Safety Associates have been recruited in all duty stations and Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) compliance and SOPs for missions are regularly updated. Strong security risk management

remains an imperative to ensure that risks to UNHCR staff are actively monitored and mitigating measures are updated regularly. Plans for the establishment of field units in hard to reach areas are underway and improvements in communication systems are required across the board. The office will also continue to have contingency plans in place for any possible emergencies or influxes.

Staff welfare will be a priority, and concerted efforts are in place to improve working conditions for staff, especially given the remote locations of many existing offices and newly opening offices. Improvements to field offices and staff accommodation in South and West Kordofan, East Darfur and White Nile State began in 2017 and will continued throughout 2018 and 2019. UNHCR will also undertake measures to improve working conditions for women colleague in field locations, with the aim of establishing gender-balanced teams in the field. UNHCR also plans to invest in capacity building for staff, including training and other professional development opportunities, to strengthen staff skills and support staff to take on new challenges as they emerge.

UNHCR will continue to place significant importance on Results-Based Management and Risk Management by strengthening the role of project control, enhancing the operation's program management and information management capacity to better track progress against set indicators and benchmarks. Senior management will regularly review and monitor the operation's delegation of authority, risk register, consistently use strong financial management oversight tools, and enforce the use of multi-functional teams in the monitoring of the program. The roll-out and strengthening of complaint mechanisms and regular communication with beneficiaries is an important component of ensuring accountability to beneficiaries and mechanism to monitor and prevent the occurrence of fraud. Partnerships are valued, and programming will be in view of results-based management plans.

Resource mobilization

UNHCR Sudan continues to provide periodic updates and host bilateral and multilateral donor briefings to raise awareness and advocate for funding. UNHCR coordinates with headquarters and donors at the country level to elicit support, prepare proposals, and provide donor visibility and reporting. The office will continue to strengthen External Relations and Donors Relations efforts, increase awareness on refugee issues in Sudan and strive towards greater engagement with the Government of Sudan and among traditional and non-traditional donors.

UNHCR through the RCF leads coordination for inter-agency resource mobilization, including refugee submissions for pooled funding under the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF). Pooled funding grants have allowed for effective, timely and coordinated inter-agency response, particularly in emergency response contexts. UNHCR has strengthened its capacity for monitoring and reporting on pooled funds, ensuring quality of implementation and adaptation to evolving needs on the ground.

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
AGD	Age, gender and diversity
AU	African Union
AWD	Acute Watery Diarrhoea
BIMS	Bio-metrics Identity Management System
BMM	Better Migration Management
CAR	Central African Republic
CBI	Cash-based interventions
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
COR	Commission for Refugees
CRI	Core relief items
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CTD	Convention Travel Document
DDS	Darfur Development Strategy
DDPD	Doha Document for Peace in Darfur
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ES/NFI	Emergency Shelter and Non-Food-Item
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GBV	Gender-based violence
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HAC	Humanitarian Aid Commission
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IDP	Internally displaced person
IPP	Immigration and Passport Police
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex
LOU	Letter of Understanding
MOSS	Minimum Operating Security Standards
MYHS	Multi-Year Humanitarian Strategy
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NISS	National Information Security Service
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PIM	Protection Information Management
POC	Person of concern
PSEA	Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
PSNs	Persons with Specific Needs
RCF	Refugee Consultation Forum
REMIS	Refugee Education Management Information System

RRR	Return, Recovery and Reintegration
RRRP	Regional Refugee Response Plan
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
RWG	Refugee Working Group
SAF	Sudan Armed Forces
SENS	Standardized Expanded Nutrition Survey
SGBV	Sexual- and gender-based violence
SDG	Sudanese Pound
SHF	Sudan Humanitarian Fund
SOP	Standard operating procedure
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	United Nations African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UASC	Unaccompanied or separated children
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDSS	United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS)
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency/United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US	United States of America
VRRRC	Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission
WFP	World Food Programme