Overview of spontaneous refugee returns
(as of October 2020)

Cumulative number of reported refugee returnees since Nov 2107, of which 224,747 returned following signing the revitalized peace agreement in October 2018.

Spontaneous refugee returnees by Country of Asylum

Overall: 168,945
July and August: 10,605

Uganda: 88,486
Sudan: 4,110
Ethiopia: 63,027
Democratic Republic of the Congo: 10,329
Kenya: 8,825
Central African Republic: 5,742
Other: 79

Spontaneous refugee return trend**

**Historical data might change retroactively due to delayed verification and triangulation of information in return areas

Spontaneous refugee returns by county (cumulative)
UNHCR and South Sudan’s Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) are pleased to share the October 2020 monthly update on spontaneous South Sudanese refugee returns. The dashboard highlights cross border refugee movements between neighbouring countries and South Sudan, verified returns and conditions in return areas across South Sudan in October 2020.

Key highlights on refugees’ returns and cross border movements

i. 3,321 spontaneous refugee returnees were verified to have arrived to South Sudan in October. This is a reduction as compared to the previous month. However, an additional 7,284 were verified in October, who arrived earlier in 2020 (mostly in August and September 2020). This brings total of spontaneous refugee returns verified in October to 10,605.

ii. The majority of spontaneous returns arrived from Sudan (4,110), Uganda (2,215), Kenya (2,141), Ethiopia (1,707), DRC (432). They mainly returned to Eastern Equatorial, Upper Nile, Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile states.

iii. An increase in cross-border refugee movement was also observed with Uganda and Ethiopia – with 6,908 individuals reported at key border crossing points, as shown below.

iv. The main reasons for return and cross border movements by the refugees are:

1) Inflows
- Lack of livelihoods opportunities in the countries of asylum

2) Outflows
- Floods
- Food shortage, mainly in Eastern Equatorial, Jonglei and Upper Nile states
- Insecurity in Central Equatoria – (led to South Sudanese movements from Kajo-Keji to Uganda)

v. The conditions at border points and in return areas, as reported by South Sudanese refugees, are:
- Reported cases of extortion by authorities at border points
- GBV incidences in return areas in Eastern Equatoria and Upper Nile States
- Lack of shelter in host communities as they plan to construct own shelter this dry season.
- There is limited capacity by authorities to respond to COVID-19 positive cases at Nimule border point. Among confirmed positive cases are spontaneous refugees.

Methodology
To inform the protection and humanitarian response and assess the needs of South Sudanese refugee returnees, the Government’s Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) – in coordination with UNHCR and partners – monitor cross border movements at 37 strategic border points, and their condition in return areas. Enumerators collect spontaneous returnees’ data via the KOBO data collection tool. These figures are then triangulated with data from focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and meetings with local leaders and religious leaders, law enforcement, and immigration officials in the area of returns. Regular protection information is collected at border points through key informant interviews and continuous household assessments in areas of high returns.

Contributing Partners
ADRA
American Refugee Council (ARC)
CARE International
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
Hope Restoration South Sudan (HRSS)
Humanitarian Development Consortium (HDC)
Mission to Alleviate Suffering in South Sudan (MASS)
South Sudan Older Persons Organization (SSOPO)
South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC)
Women Development Group (WDG)