

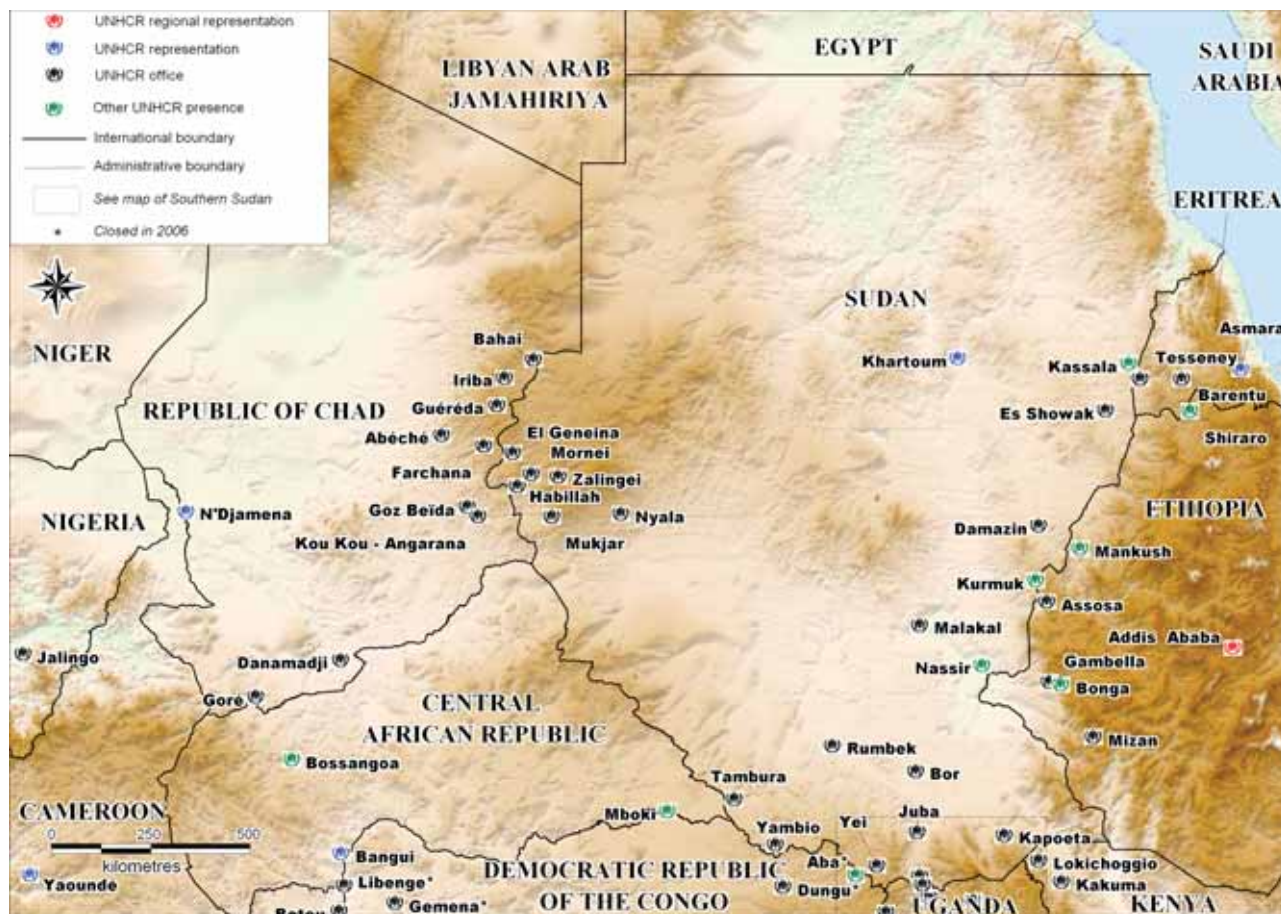
# Chad-Sudan situation

## Operational highlights

- More than 26,000 refugees and over 4,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were able to return to their places of origin in Southern Sudan with UNHCR's assistance.
- Nearly 45,000 refugees, mainly Eritrean, benefited from awareness-raising and peer education on the prevention of HIV and AIDS, sexual and gender-based violence and female genital mutilation.
- Two new refugee camps (Um Shalaya and Mukjar) were set up in West Darfur. More than 3,000 Chadian refugees were moved to the camps from the Chad-Sudan border.
- Refugees were registered in 13 of the 15 camps in southern and eastern Chad, strengthening UNHCR's ability to deliver protection and assistance.

Chad

Sudan



## Working environment

Relations between Sudan and Eritrea improved in April 2006 with the restoration of diplomatic ties and the reopening of the border. The withdrawal of the former Sudan People's Liberation Movement Army (SPLM/A) forces from Hamesh Koreb in eastern Sudan and their redeployment to Southern Sudan in August 2006, as well as the signing of the peace agreement between the Sudanese Government and the Eastern Front (a coalition of eastern rebel movements) in October 2006, raised hopes for stability in the region. However, throughout 2006, travel restrictions imposed on humanitarian agencies in eastern Sudan hindered their access to the refugee camps in Kassala State.

Although the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in 2005 was behind schedule, the outlook remained positive. Full implementation was hampered by significant political, economic and social challenges. Much still needs to be done to overcome the legacy of 20 years of war.

Despite the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in May 2006, the security situation worsened in West Darfur because of armed confrontations between signatories and non-signatories of the accord. Violent attacks increased and caused further displacement. Humanitarian staff were targeted and at least six relief workers and several African Union (AU) peacekeepers were killed in 2006. UN Security Council Resolution

1706, passed in August 2006, called for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force of more than 20,000 troops. Meanwhile, the international community agreed to a joint AU/UN force.

Insecurity hampered operations in eastern Chad. In April, a coup attempt in the capital, N'Djamena, by rebel forces, was foiled by the Government. In November, after a rebel attack on Abéché, the Government declared a six-month-long state of emergency. These events narrowed humanitarian space and heightened insecurity. Internal displacement continued unabated, and by the end of 2006 there were more than 112,000 IDPs in Chad.

## Achievements and impact

### Main objectives

UNHCR's main objectives in Chad and Sudan in 2006 were to protect refugees, IDPs, returnees and others of concern; achieve durable solutions, including resettlement; and promote the self-reliance of Eritrean refugees in eastern Sudan.

The Office developed a strategy to address the protracted situation of mainly camp-based Eritrean refugees in eastern Sudan by finding durable solutions within a reasonable period of time. The plan also aimed

to improve the general refugee programme in Sudan by enhancing the quality of asylum and providing access to services and opportunities for self-reliance to urban and camp-based refugees. A multi-year resettlement programme for long-staying camp-based refugees is an essential component of the strategy.

In addition, the strategy falls within the context of recovery and sustainable development in eastern Sudan and the need to support implementation of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement, which was signed in October 2006 in Asmara. In this regard, the strategy reinforces and complements the Sustainable Options for Livelihood Security in Eastern Sudan (SOLSES) programme. SOLSES targets refugees and their host communities, including IDPs, who are equally destitute and impoverished. The aim is to help them contribute to the recovery and development of eastern Sudan by becoming productive members of society, instead of passive recipients of relief handouts.

While the geographical focus of UNHCR's interventions for the voluntary repatriation of Southern Sudanese refugees in 2005 was mainly Central and Western Equatoria, in 2006 this coverage was expanded to Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei and Upper Nile States. As per the objectives established for the Sudan Operation for 2006, including durable solutions through voluntary repatriation and reintegration, UNHCR's efforts in Southern Sudan and Blue Nile State were focused on facilitating repatriation from seven neighbouring countries. Repatriation by air and by road continued through most of the dry periods (January to May and November to December) in 2006, albeit with interruptions due to insecurity.

Furthermore, returnee monitoring, village assessments and mass-information campaigns for the voluntary repatriation of Southern Sudanese refugees continued in 2006. About 270 village assessments were completed and the information obtained from the water, health and education sectors was used to guide UNHCR's reintegration interventions. Village assessments were also shared with countries of asylum and used in information campaigns so that refugees could make free and informed decisions on whether to return or not.

UNHCR implemented more than 100 protection and community-based reintegration projects in areas of return. UNHCR reintegration assistance aimed at creating conditions for return where few or none existed before. The Office provided safe drinking water, improved primary health care and educational services, renovated infrastructure and providing equipment and training to selected communities.

In Darfur, UNHCR set up the Um Shalaya and Mukjar camps for Chadian refugees, expanded its protection presence in the field, and regularly monitored border and rural areas. It also established 34 women's and 12 youth centres where some 2,000 women and 4,500 young people per month participated in various activities.

To maintain the humanitarian and civilian character of refugee camps in eastern Chad, UNHCR deployed three refugee security liaison officers. They assisted the Government in carrying out its responsibilities through its Brigade for Refugee Security. The focus was on helping the Government implement measures within a strictly defined timeframe while maintaining effective policing standards.

## Constraints

Insecurity remained the major constraint for UNHCR's operations in the subregion. The security situation in many areas of Southern Sudan was unpredictable, mainly due to inter-tribal clashes, cattle rustling and attacks on civilians by militias and other armed groups. In addition, the presence of land mines was an obstacle for repatriation to many areas. Other constraints included the long rainy season, which halts repatriation activities for a good part of the year. This was compounded by poor infrastructure (impassable roads and bridges) and bad weather conditions, which hindered movements by air. Repatriation was also affected by outbreaks of epidemics. Although experience shows that outbreaks of cholera and meningitis can be brought under control, there were not enough vaccines and medical facilities to address recurring outbreaks.

In Darfur, the security situation made it very difficult for the Office to maintain effective humanitarian operations. The absence of new commitments to the peace process and the presence of armed militias in West Darfur remained of serious concern to UNHCR. Without improved security, road access to rural areas and settlements will be hampered by bandits and armed factions. Accordingly, access to rural areas and field offices can only be maintained by helicopter.

In Chad as well, insecurity remained the greatest obstacle to UNHCR's operations, particularly with respect to IDPs, to whom the Office had very limited access. Insecurity in eastern Chad forced UNHCR to evacuate many of its staff to other parts of the country in April and November 2006.



UNHCR/M. Conway

In November 2006, UNHCR began moving some 1,500 refugees, who had fled a violent attack on West Darfur a month earlier, away from the Sudanese border to a camp at Kounoungou, near Guéréda.

## Operations

Details of operations in **Chad** and **Sudan** are described in separate chapters.

## Financial information

Owing to the deteriorating security situation, the budget for Darfur was revised downwards from USD 33 million to USD 18.5 million. While the Darfur programme was eventually fully funded, UNHCR's operations in Southern Sudan faced a serious funding shortfall in mid-September.

Financial allocations for assistance to Eritrean refugees in eastern Sudan had been on the decrease since 2004. This reduction contributed in 2006 to the accumulation of problems in the camps, such as a deterioration of infrastructure and a decline in the quality of services for refugees.

The supplementary programme for eastern Chad was mainstreamed into the annual programme in 2006. The 2006 annual programme included Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad, urban refugees in N'Djamena and refugees from the Central African Republic in southern Chad. IDPs were assisted under a separate supplementary programme set up in mid-2006.