

Sudan (Annual programme)

Main objectives

UNHCR's main objectives in Sudan were to pursue recognition of refugee rights through strengthening of the asylum system; ensure protection and assistance to urban and camp-based refugees; seek durable solutions for refugees by facilitating voluntary repatriation; resettle those who cannot be locally integrated; rehabilitate the infrastructure and the environment in and around closed and vacated camps and improve livelihoods of refugees and host communities; promote gender equality among refugees, returnees, and within host communities; and implement policy priorities on the needs of women, older refugees, and children including adolescents.

Impact

- As a result of capacity building and training provided to the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) and local authorities, 95 per cent of asylum applications were processed without delays; there was a sharp fall in the number of reported cases of *refoulement*; and the regional COR office in Kassala assumed management of the asylum reception centre as well as responsibility for refugee status determination (RSD) processing in eastern Sudan.
- Provision of food, basic medical and other services in refugee camps kept malnutrition, morbidity and mortality rates at minimum levels.
- With no prospect of local integration, 508 people were resettled in Australia, Canada and the Netherlands.
- Two refugee camps (Wad Hileau and Um Ali) were closed, rehabilitated and handed over to state authorities. The host communities benefited from the rehabilitated infrastructure and facilities.
- Refugees and host communities restored degraded land, renovated tree nurseries and established forest plantations under the Sustainable Options for Livelihood Security in Eastern Sudan (SOLSSES) programme. These community-based projects resulted in better yields from agro-farms, increased the income of the households involved, and helped improve relations

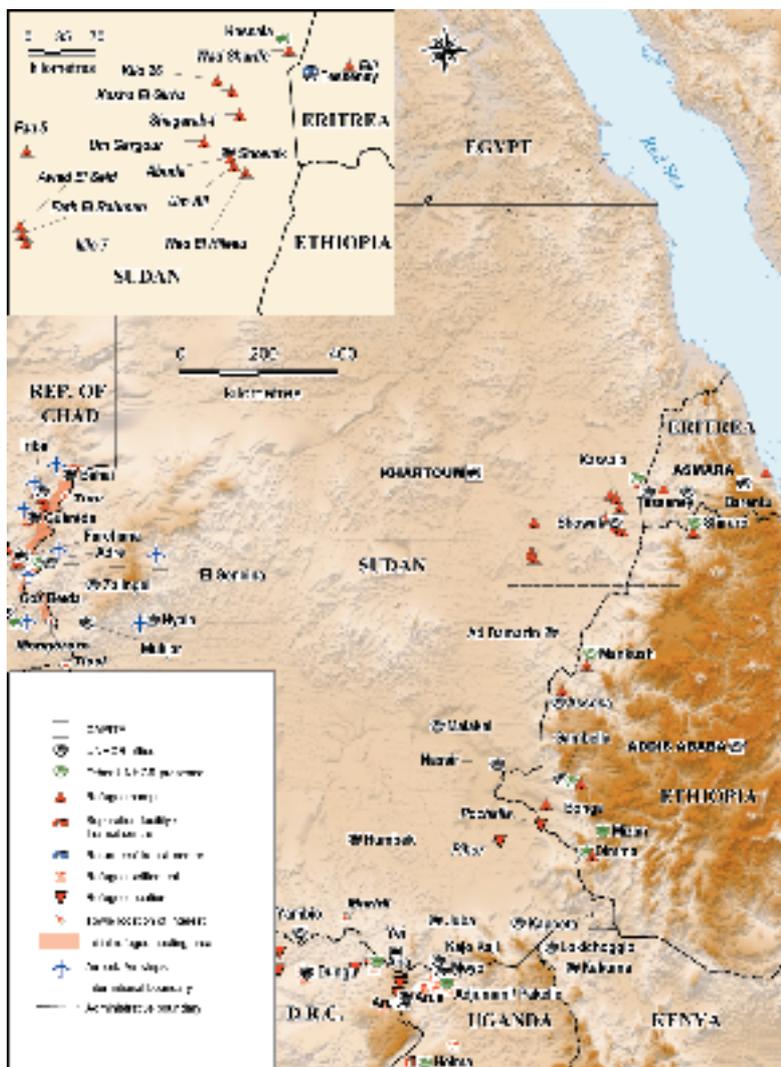
between the host population and the remaining refugee groups.

Working environment

The context

In 2005, UNHCR continued to work in a politically volatile environment in eastern Sudan. The opposition parties in the eastern states of Sudan felt excluded from the peace process in the South and continued to press for greater power and resource-sharing. Existing tensions were further exacerbated when the opposition in Kassala State failed to hand over to the Government of Unity a strip of territory under its control known as Homesh Korieb.

In the second half of 2005, the border dispute between neighbouring Ethiopia and Eritrea almost regressed into



a large-scale military conflict. UNHCR and its partners had to prepare a contingency plan for a potential refugee influx. Moreover, the strained relationship between Sudan and Eritrea halted the repatriation of Eritrean refugees, leaving some 120,000 refugees in extended temporary exile. The deteriorating human rights and security situation in Eritrea caused some 6,300 new asylum-seekers to cross the border into eastern Sudan at the end of 2005.

The general underdevelopment of eastern Sudan meant daily hardship for the Sudanese and refugee populations alike. In the absence of economic opportunities, ethnic and political conflict flared up repeatedly throughout the year, adversely affecting UNHCR's operations.

Constraints

In 2005, political developments in Darfur and in South Sudan overshadowed the situation in the East, as the international community concentrated its attention on the West and South of the country. Limited participation of humanitarian and development agencies and weak national capacities in eastern Sudan resulted in considerably

reduced humanitarian aid to refugees and host communities. This reduced the likelihood of successful local integration for refugees who opted to stay in Sudan. Due to the continued presence of refugees and the interdependent relationship between refugees and host communities, UNHCR revised the ongoing SOLSES programme to make improved livelihoods and self-reliance of refugees, rather than the planned infrastructure rehabilitation, a priority in 2005. Settling the termination benefits claimed by the staff of COR also was a major constraint in adapting the operation.

Restrictions on movement and access to the refugee settlements were another significant constraint in 2005. Most refugee camps are located in Kassala State and are subject to special national security regulations. In order to move in the area, or enter camps, staff required UN security clearance and permits issued by local authorities. This hampered access to refugees, limited field monitoring and decreased the efficiency of the operation. Towards the end of 2005 UNHCR was negotiating with the local authorities on simplified procedures to accelerate the issuance of travel permits.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total in country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
IDPs	IDPs	842,000	-	-	-
Refugees	Eritrea	117,000	75,200	-	-
	Ethiopia	14,600	200	-	-
	Uganda	7,900	-	-	-
	Chad	5,000	-	-	-
	DRC	1,600	-	-	-
Returnees	From DRC	18,300	-	-	-
Asylum-seekers	Various	4,000	-	-	-
	Ethiopia	200	-	-	-
	Eritrea	200	-	-	-
Others of concern	Former refugees from Eritrea	36,100	-	-	-

Budget, income and expenditure (USD) Annual and supplementary programme budgets					
	Final budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
Annual programme	14,606,042	11,311,359	2,437,314	13,748,672	13,748,672
Supplementary programme ³	80,577,544	40,566,623	11,243,824	51,810,447	49,094,247
Total	95,183,586	51,877,981	13,681,138	65,559,119	62,842,919

1 Includes income from contributions earmarked at the country level.

2 Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

3 The supplementary programme figures apply to the Supplementary Appeal for Eastern Chad and Darfur, Western Sudan and Return and Reintegration of Sudanese Refugees to Southern Sudan.

Note: The supplementary programme budget does not include a 7 per cent support cost that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.

Funding

Financially, with the primary focus of the international community on Darfur and South Sudan, the operation in the East was unfortunately left in the shade. Living conditions of refugees remained below or on the margins of the minimum standards. There was no money for upgrading the water supply and sanitation facilities in the camps. Funding shortages seriously hampered the implementation of income generation activities, without which refugee groups are far less likely to achieve self-reliance. The SOLSES programme for supporting refugee-hosting areas also required adjustments for the unforeseen lack of repatriation. The SOLSES programme, however, was generously supported in 2005.

Achievements and impact

Protection and solutions

In 2005, UNHCR helped COR to further improve its performance in refugee registration, status determination and documentation. As a result, the COR office in Kassala assumed responsibility for RSD. UNHCR's relationship with the Aliens Police and National Security Department facilitated the protection monitoring of detained asylum-seekers and refugees and prevented *refoulement*.

Political tensions in the countries of origin and the region precluded the voluntary repatriation of refugees to neighbouring countries. Only six people repatriated to Uganda, three to Somalia and one each to Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Government did not endorse local integration, nor did the majority of refugees desire it. Therefore, for the first time, resettlement was considered as an option for specific camp-based refugee groups. UNHCR also had to review its assistance strategy to emphasize the development of capacities of refugees and host communities to improve livelihoods. This strategy targeted improving the livelihoods and self-reliance of refugees, pending the identification of durable solutions.

UNHCR continued to address the protection needs of urban refugees in Khartoum. The Office provided limited health and education assistance and counselling to refugees from Ethiopia, Eritrea and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UNHCR introduced significantly improved counselling and RSD procedures which served to reduce the number of repeat applications.

Activities and assistance

Community services: As women constituted over half of the population in the refugee camps, UNHCR and WFP

actively promoted their participation in decision-making by conducting awareness-raising and training sessions on decision-making, the protection of women's rights and sexual and gender-based violence. The empowerment of women through access to work and income generation remained a high priority. However, material assistance was limited by funding shortfalls, and could therefore only be made available to vulnerable women.

Crop production: Over 1,300 refugee families in four camps were assisted to cultivate their family plots as a pilot initiative to promote self-reliance. The promotion of agroforestry resulted in the establishment of 99 hectares of new agroforestry farms and 351 home gardens. Some 431 refugee and local families earned their income from the partial sale of over 23 tons of produce.

Domestic needs and household support: Funding constraints prevented large-scale distribution of relief items to refugees, as non-food items were not procured. Medical services suffered shortages of medicines. In the camps, when spare parts for water pumps could not be obtained, water supplies had to be reduced. Of the 30,000 girls and women of reproductive age, only 3,170 received sanitary materials.

Education: UNHCR supported 18 primary schools and 10,500 students, of whom 4,089 were Eritrean and 606 Sudanese girls, and 142 teachers (50 per cent were women). With only 60 per cent school attendance, efforts were made to promote enrolment and reduce the number of girls dropping out. UNHCR also organized training sessions for 44 teachers to improve the quality of teaching. As there were no secondary schools in the camps, UNHCR funded secondary education scholarships for 43 students (33 girls and 10 boys); 65 students received university level DAFI scholarships. To facilitate refugee interaction with the host population, UNHCR organised an Arabic literacy programme for more than 2,000 refugees, 70 per cent of them women.

Food: Food distribution was managed jointly by UNHCR and COR. Some 89,700 refugees in 12 camps received food assistance from WFP. As WFP was only able to provide 80 per cent of the planned food supply, malnutrition among refugees increased. The "food for work" scheme was applied for a limited period in forestation and the construction of communal latrines for vulnerable refugees.

Forestry: UNHCR, through its partner, carried out a programme to improve agroforestry practices, especially tree planting within farms, and promoted the use of alternative natural resources benefiting over 3,000 people from the refugee and host community. Twelve community tree nurseries were renovated and over 2,300 hectares of new forest plantations were established.

Health and nutrition: In collaboration with three NGOs, UNHCR provided primary health care in all refugee camps and their local communities: 30 per cent of service users were Sudanese nationals. Despite the lack of drugs and the worsening condition of the available health facilities, the health situation remained stable with a comparatively low crude mortality rate of 0.34/1000/month. However, malnutrition rates remained high, between 10.6 and 11.7 per cent. According to government statistics, the prevalence of malaria and anaemia accounted for 47 per cent and HIV/AIDS accounted for four per cent of hospitalized cases. UNHCR helped to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and supported the training of 80 health workers in reproductive health and HIV/AIDS in partnership with UNFPA.

Income generation: UNHCR introduced a small revolving fund for refugee farmers to increase production capacity and thereby improve livelihoods and food security. However, lack of adequate resources prevented the scaling up of this pilot scheme in other camps and sectors. UNHCR helped 1,500 farmers to increase their agricultural output, thereby reducing their dependency on food assistance. UNHCR also supported skills and vocational training activities for some 1,000 refugees to enable them to earn their own living.

Legal assistance: UNHCR's legal advice and training sessions and workshops on asylum issues improved coordination and collaboration among the national security and military intelligence organs, COR and UNHCR. As a result, border crossing was eased for asylum-seekers and asylum claims processing accelerated. Improved dialogue with local authorities also permitted UNHCR to access "security-sensitive" areas as well as to monitor several entry points at the Sudan-Eritrea border. UNHCR regularly visited detention centres, ensured asylum-seekers' access to the RSD procedure and facilitated the issuance of refugee identity cards. The Office was actively involved in family tracing and unification, specifically for unaccompanied minors. SGBV survivors continued to receive legal assistance, counselling and representation in court.

UNHCR continued to address the protection needs of urban refugees. Due to financial constraints, only 130 urgent mandate RSD interviews and some 1,900 legal counselling sessions were held for protection and resettlement purposes.



A tree nursery with a production capacity of one million tree seedlings run by refugees at El-Fau. IUCN / G. Howard

Operational support (to agencies): Administrative support was provided to all implementing partners in the form of payment of staff costs, maintenance and repair of vehicles and other equipment, insurance of vehicles, rental of premises, communication equipment, utilities and office supplies.

Sanitation: Only 26 per cent of refugee households had access to family latrines. The target to increase coverage to 50 per cent was not achieved due to insufficient funding. Similarly, garbage collection was undertaken on a reduced scale. WHO supported insecticide spraying to combat malaria.

Shelter and infrastructure: Given the age of the refugee camps, most of the social infrastructure and facilities (health centres, schools and warehouses, water facilities and distribution centres) were in very poor condition. Maintenance on many sites was not carried out due to limited funds. However, two former refugee camps (Wad Hileau and Um Ali) were rehabilitated. Plots of land and shelter were given to 121 refugee families relocating to Abuda camp. In Um Gargour refugee camp, shelter was provided to 66 refugees with special needs relocating from Khartoum.

Transport and logistics: The operation was supported by 74 light vehicles and 38 heavy trucks. Lack of spare parts and ageing vehicles were a major operational challenge. Following a technical review, measures were undertaken to streamline the fleet, and fuel consumption was reduced by 35 per cent.

Water: The water supply dropped to an average of 12 litres per person per day, well below the minimum standard of 20 litres per person per day. The water systems and pumps are old and often broke down. Available funds were insufficient to meet all repair needs.

Organization and implementation

Management

UNHCR managed its operation in the East through a representation in Khartoum, a sub-office in Es Showak and a presence in Kassala. In 2005, the Office of Internal Oversight Services undertook a comprehensive audit of UNHCR's operational management in Khartoum and in eastern Sudan. Most of the audit recommendations were implemented, leading to an overall improvement in management. The operation was supported by 137 staff — 28 international staff, 13 UNVs, three consultants and 93 national staff.

Working with others

UNHCR concluded agreements with COR, its main government partner, other governmental bodies and national and international NGOs. The SOLSES programme was jointly implemented by UNHCR, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and UN-Habitat, and was supported by UNDP. COR and the state authorities in Kassala, Gedarf and the central states were closely involved in objective and priority-setting and implementation of the SOLSES programme for 2006.

Overall assessment

In eastern Sudan, UNHCR continued to balance competing operational priorities: maintaining acceptable living conditions in the refugee camps and optimizing the impact of the SOLSES programme on the refugee-hosting areas. Simultaneously, UNHCR sought durable solutions for refugees and assisted new arrivals in the border areas.

New political realities in the region halted repatriation from Sudan in 2005, necessitating the continued provision of basic services in refugee camps. As a result, already limited resources were overstretched. Nevertheless, UNHCR managed to ensure normal functioning of the camps and prevented further degradation of refugees' living conditions. The prevailing circumstances forced UNHCR to review its assistance strategy in the second half of 2005, accentuating improving livelihoods towards self-reliance, especially food security, for the refugee population through increased involvement of refugee and hosting communities in the design of the projects, decision making and orientation of the

programme. The environmental rehabilitation segment of the SOLSES programme was re-orientated so as to focus more on improving income generation. The SOLSES programme opens up new opportunities for managing a protracted refugee situation. The programme remains instrumental and can serve as a bridge between relief and development, leading to large-scale development assistance for refugees and host communities.

Resettlement was used as a protection tool for camp-based refugees. Capacity building and constant dialogue with the central and regional Sudanese authorities improved UNHCR's operational relationships and enabled it to ensure unhindered admission and protection of asylum-seekers. However, further efforts will be required if the Sudanese asylum system is to meet internationally accepted standards.

Offices

Khartoum
Es Showak
Kassala

Partners

Government agencies

Commissioner for Refugees
National Forestry Corporation
Refugee Counselling Service

NGOs

Global Health Foundation
Human Appeal International
Ockenden International
Sudan Open Learning Organization
Sudanese Red Crescent

Others

UNDP
UNFPA
UN Habitat
UNICEF
UNV
WFP
WHO
World Conservation Union (IUCN)

Financial Report (USD)				
Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Prior years' projects
	Annual programme budget	Supplementary programme budget	Total	Annual and supplementary programme budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	2,767,966	17,612,830	20,380,796	0
Community services	86,239	1,019,782	1,106,021	111,570
Crop production	103,165	92,920	196,085	0
Domestic needs and household support	148,701	1,663,520	1,812,221	12,183
Education	414,534	532,338	946,872	177,677
Food	4,216	0	4,216	1,636
Forestry	665,607	0	665,607	65,323
Health and nutrition	1,552,708	1,206,680	2,759,388	287,688
Income generation	11,935	96,224	108,159	12,144
Legal assistance	350,716	1,504,830	1,855,546	332,808
Operational support (to agencies)	1,629,986	4,028,936	5,658,922	1,014,260
Sanitation	125,425	21,658	147,083	24,631
Shelter and infrastructure	521,056	1,132,085	1,653,141	(1,139)
Transport and logistics	900,079	5,761,806	6,661,885	171,500
Water	259,473	156,633	416,106	108,191
Instalments with implementing partners	2,158,250	10,643,487	12,801,737	(2,318,472)
Sub-total operational activities	11,700,056	45,473,729	57,173,785	0
Programme support	2,048,616	3,620,518	5,669,134	0
Total expenditure	13,748,672	49,094,247	62,842,919	0
Cancellation on prior years' expenditure				(450,553)
Instalments with implementing partners				
Payments made	5,773,182	14,710,384	20,483,566	
Reporting received	(3,614,932)	(4,066,897)	(7,681,829)	
Balance	2,158,250	10,643,487	12,801,737	
Prior years' report				
Instalments with implementing partners				
Outstanding 1 January				2,551,861
Reporting received				(2,318,472)
Refunded to UNHCR				(86,220)
Adjustments				(8,840)
Balance				138,329