

Eastern Chad and Darfur

(I) Eastern Chad

UNHCR's main objectives in 2005 are to:

- Provide physical security for Sudanese refugees in and around the refugee camps in eastern Chad and maintain the civilian character of those camps.
- Provide basic humanitarian assistance in the form of shelter, potable water, food, sanitation, health care, community services and education.
- Attract complementary funding to assist the host population in the vicinity of the refugee camps.
- Establish the profile of the refugee population to target assistance effectively, and support self-reliance and activities related to future return prospects.
- Provide individual documentation for refugees through a full-fledged registration exercise.
- Assist in the repatriation and initial reintegration of 3,700 Chadian refugees returning from Sudan.
- Build the capacities of national implementing partners.

The Republic of Chad is just emerging from a major refugee crisis. Some 200,000 Sudanese refugees arrived during 2003-2004 in eastern Chad, a severely underdeveloped region. A major logistical challenge for the Government and the humanitarian community has been the relocation of refugees further inland where they would be safe from repeated cross-border attacks by the *Janjaweed* militia. The Government of Chad has provided an unconditional *prima facie* refugee status to Sudanese asylum-seekers.

Eastern Chad is an arid region without permanent surface water, but in the rainy season massive seasonal rivers render land transport difficult or impossible. The selection of refugee camp sites has been mainly guided by the availability of water. There are 11 refugee camps hosting 177,000 refugees, and half of the 18,000 refugees at the Chad/Sudan border have expressed a wish to be relocated to camps. A contingency plan has been put in place to receive further influxes of up to 100,000 refugees should the humanitarian situation in Sudan deteriorate further (this would bring the total Sudanese refugee population in Chad to 300,000).

The security and political situation in Chad remains volatile, with Chadian rebel groups operating from the Sudan side of the Chadian-Sudanese border. This may further affect the security and stability of refugees in camps.

A comprehensive re-registration of refugees in eastern Chad will be conducted as the basis for provision of international protection and humanitarian assistance. A profile of the refugee population will provide insights into the demographic structure of the population and facilitate targeting of assistance for persons with special needs in education, income-generating activities, and family reunification. Activities leading to self-reliance and education will be explicitly orientated towards the refugees' eventual return to Sudan. Re-registration will allow UNHCR and the Government of Chad to allocate ID cards to refugees. These cards will function as an additional tool for the protection of refugees, facilitating their freedom of movement.

There has been rising tension between refugees and the local population in eastern Chad because of access to resources such as fuel wood. It is reported that refugee women are often subjected to beating or rape when they go out in search of firewood. As a result of these developments, and in collaboration with the Government of Chad, UNHCR has established a camp security programme

designed to respond to the security needs of refugees. 180 police officers, 22 of whom are female, were deployed to refugee camps in eastern Chad during September and October 2004. In 2005, the deployed police officers will benefit from continued UNHCR training on international protection for refugees and adherence to the UNHCR Code of Conduct. The programme is designed to ensure the physical protection of refugees, notably women and girls at risk of assault and rape while collecting firewood. Furthermore, the programme will aim to uphold the civilian character of the refugee camps, reducing vulnerability to infiltration by armed elements.

Sudanese refugees of all ages and both sexes have been traumatized by witnessing atrocities including abduction, gang rape and murder at the height of the conflict in Darfur. Psychosocial assistance will help support and stabilise the situation of refugees. Subsequently, income-generating activities and skills training will be offered with a view to helping refugees to come to terms with their traumatic experiences. Apart from formal education, children will benefit from recreational activities. Unaccompanied or separated children will be monitored closely in their "foster families" and will receive material assistance and psychosocial counselling.

Malnutrition is endemic among the Sudanese refugees as well as the local population in eastern Chad. A blanket supplementary feeding programme implemented in the second half of 2004 is intended to reduce the levels of malnutrition to acceptable thresholds. UNHCR will maintain supplementary and therapeutic feeding centres in the refugee camps and conduct regular nutrition surveys.

Up to October 2004, UNHCR was able to provide the minimum of 15 litres of water per person per day in six of the 11 refugee camps. The other five camps were supplied with water from seasonal rivers and shallow wells. In 2005, water from seasonal rivers and shallow wells will be replaced with water pumped from deep wells. To help identify new water sources, UNHCR will use satellite imagery and hydro-geological surveys. Once identified, the extraction of water will be closely monitored so as not to deplete reserves unduly. However, in any consideration of consumption it must be remembered that the population in the eastern region has increased by more than 50 per cent with the arrival of the refugees.

UNHCR will supply kerosene stoves, firewood and improved cooking stoves to refugees to limit the use of natural resources. UNHCR will also provide mud bricks to replace the wood used by refugees as building material for showers and kitchens.

Health services, which have remained very basic in 2004, will be expanded in 2005 to include reproductive health and mental health programmes. Vaccination coverage in the refugee camps is insufficient. Priorities in 2005 will therefore be on epidemiological surveys and vaccination programmes, in close collaboration with WHO and UNICEF. Appropriate preventive and clinical regimes will be introduced to counter malaria, hepatitis, cholera and diarrhoeal diseases, which are prevalent in the refugee camps.

UNHCR maintains close collaboration with the different humanitarian agencies in Chad, including members of the UN Country Team and non-governmental organizations. Likewise, UNHCR has participated in the Consolidated Appeals Process for Eastern Chad.

It should be mentioned that the services and assistance activities in the refugee camps, especially education, health and water are also accessible to the local population. In addition, UNHCR plans to implement projects aimed at strengthening physical security that will benefit the local communities. In addition, UNHCR is ready to join the international community to assist refugee-hosting areas in eastern Chad. UNHCR will assist with upgrading of the local infrastructure – clinics, schools, water points – and reduce environmental damage to populated areas with alternative fuel sources. Through these measures, tension between refugees and the local population will be mitigated.

Some of the 3,700 Chadian refugees presently in western Darfur have expressed the wish to return home. UNHCR will assist these Chadians to return after 20 years in exile in Sudan. The Office in Chad will aim to ensure their peaceful reintegration and rehabilitation in their areas of origin.

It is anticipated that improved assistance to Sudanese refugees will reach the level of established minimum international standards in 2005 and that the refugee population will be actively involved in camp management. Income-generating activities and education will help the refugees to develop their capacities to become self-sufficient. While it is too early to make plans for voluntary repatriation, frequent communication will be maintained between UNHCR offices in Sudan and Chad to monitor prospects for return.

In 2005, UNHCR's activities in eastern Chad will be administered by the branch office in N'Djamena with a sub-office in Abéché and five field offices in Adré, Bahai, Goz Beïda, Guéréda and Iriba. The programme will be supported by 61 international staff including 23 UNVs, 179 national staff and one JPO. In addition, the Office of the Director will have eight staff members.

Total provisional requirements¹: USD 55,957,566

¹ This SB does not include a 7 per cent support cost (USD 3,542,434) that is recovered from each contribution to meet the indirect support costs in UNHCR (field and headquarters).



Chad: Sudanese refugees being transported for their safety and security, by UNHCR, to a new camp away from the border (Oure-Cassoni, 30 km north of Bahai) which opened on 12 July 2004. *UNHCR / H. Caux*

(II) Darfur

UNHCR's role in Darfur has three main objectives:

- Support the establishment of a protection environment conducive to the voluntary and sustainable return of IDPs.
- Provide protection and humanitarian assistance to Chadian refugees, IDPs and returnees.
- Facilitate the voluntary return of 3,700 Chadian refugees in safety and dignity.

Security concerns in the Darfur region of western Sudan since early June 2003 have resulted in the displacement of over 1.5 million people within West, North and South Darfur. In addition, 200,000 Sudanese have fled to neighbouring Chad. Conditions do not yet favour the return of refugees to Darfur. However, UNHCR's strategy is based on the need to lay the groundwork for the implementation of viable solutions as soon as political and security/safety conditions permit. UNHCR has therefore reinforced its presence in Darfur during 2004.

In June 2004, UNHCR established a sub-office in El Geneina (west Darfur) and a field office in Nyala (south Darfur). Efforts are ongoing to open a field office in El Fasher (north Darfur). UNHCR is pursuing a protection strategy implemented through mobile teams which move along the border with Chad, visiting areas of IDP concentration as well as abandoned and destroyed villages. The principal aim is to provide protection through an increased and regular presence. In order to ensure the safety and security of staff, logistical support and telecommunications are essential on both sides of the border.

Through its protection and assistance activities in West and North Darfur, UNHCR will help to ensure adequate international protection as part of a UN collaborative effort for IDPs. The protection and assistance strategy in Darfur will recognize the urgent need for special protection of women, who are targets of sexual violence and abuse. The protection strategy aims at preventing further displacement of Sudanese IDPs in Darfur and additional outflows of refugees into Chad. The Office will ultimately help IDPs and refugees to return to their home communities in safety and security. In pursuing these endeavours, the focus will be on capacity building and identifying different needs and concerns of women, men and children. The United Nations Secretary-General has given UNHCR responsibility to play a leading role in West Darfur in terms of protection and voluntary return of IDPs to their places of origin.

UNHCR has identified implementing partners such as the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) for the repatriation of 3,700 Chadian refugees, as well as INTERSOS (*organizzazione umanitaria per l'emergenza*), Save the Children (USA) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). At the time of writing, there are ongoing discussions regarding work with other potential partners in 2005.

UNHCR is providing plastic sheets, blankets, sanitary materials and clothes for women through the United Nations common pipeline.

UNHCR will work with 100 staff members comprising 32 international, including 16 UNVs and 68 national staff.

Financial requirements are being finalised.



Sudan: The rainy season causes havoc for the displaced people who, for the most part, live in thatched huts. This is a typical IDP settlement in El Geneina, the capital of West Darfur. UNHCR / K. McKinsey