

# Smuggling, Trafficking and Kidnapping

## in Eastern Sudan and Khartoum

Fact Sheet | November 2013

### FACTS & FIGURES

#### Smuggling:

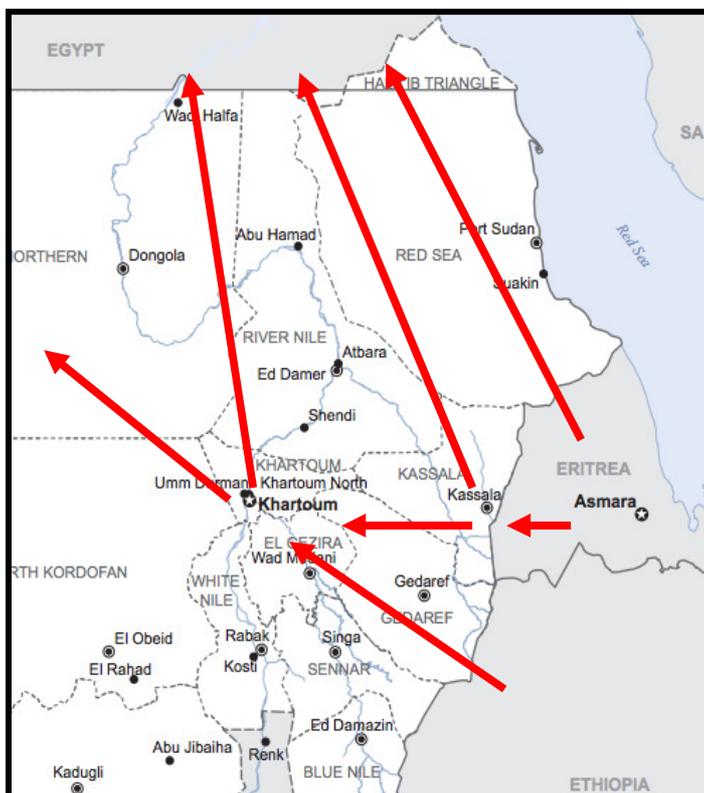
- ✓ Thousands of refugees and migrants smuggled into, through and out of Sudan every year

#### Most victims of kidnapping and trafficking are Eritrean refugees:

- ✓ 107,000 Eritrean refugees in Sudan
- ✓ 400-600 new arrivals per month
- ✓ 80% leaving the camps shortly after arrival

#### Trafficking: 338 cases verified in 2012

- ✓ **Drop in 2013: 89 new incidents verified**
- ✓ Total number of victims of trafficking estimated to be much higher
- ✓ 195 victims rescued by authorities
- ✓ 25 perpetrators charged for trafficking



### PROTECTION CONCERNS

While Eritrean refugees living in a protracted situation have reached a certain level of integration due to their cultural links with host communities, refugees who have arrived more recently have a different profile: they are mostly young, educated and urban refugees, fleeing compulsory indefinite military service.

Strict Eritrean exit requirements leave asylum-seekers little alternative but to resort to smugglers to enter Sudan. **80 per cent of new arrivals leave** the camps within two months, often using **smuggling networks** in order to avoid Sudan's encampment policy, and seek better opportunities in Khartoum or abroad. Smuggled individuals become easy targets for traffickers.

A significant number of refugees and asylum-seekers have been abducted and held for ransom by tribes in Sudan and neighbouring countries. Others have become **victims of trafficking** while being smuggled into, through or out of Sudan. While being held in captivity, many are subject to **torture, sexual violence or other types of abuse**. Some have been killed or have died as a result of mistreatment. Survivors of trafficking regularly approach UNHCR after managing to escape their captors, being released upon ransom payment, or being freed by the authorities. **They are being assisted both in the East and in Khartoum.**

The great number of **unaccompanied minors** (400 UAMs registered in the East in 2012) and their high vulnerability (10% of the victims of trafficking are UAMs) requires a reinforced **child protection strategy**.

# RESPONSE – UNHCR/IOM JOINT PROJECT

*Research - Capacity Building - Awareness Raising  
Security - Victim Support - Coordination*

## Achievements to date

- ✓ Border assessment conducted in the East
- ✓ Advocacy and reviews conducted on the draft law on human trafficking
- ✓ Material support to police and increased police presence in and around the camps
- ✓ Security committee established in East Sudan to ensure greater coordination
- ✓ Information on the risks of smuggling and trafficking provided to new asylum-seekers
- ✓ Direct assistance to victims of trafficking, including food, medical assistance and psychological support
- ✓ Legal interventions to assist victims in detention, ensure release and prevent deportation
- ✓ Provision of legal aid and temporary protection to victims testifying in court
- ✓ Establishment of a tracking system for unaccompanied children leaving the camp
- ✓ Awareness raising workshops on smuggling and trafficking for various stakeholders
- ✓ Trainings on trafficking and refugee rights for COR, police field staff, national security, immigration, prosecutors and judges

## CHALLENGES

- Cross-border organized criminality
- Regional dimension
- Limited actors in the East
- Need for a coordinated Government response
- Funding

## WAY FORWARD

### Joint UNHCR-IOM Strategy

- Enhancing security and mitigating risks
- Strengthening protection responses
- Identifying solutions and alternatives
- Building national capacity
- Enhancing cooperation

### Enhanced Regional Approach

For further details, please contact:

**UNHCR Sudan**  
PO Box 2500 – Khartoum  
Mr. Nicolas Brass  
External Relations Officer  
+249-912-179-443  
[brass@unhcr.org](mailto:brass@unhcr.org)

**IOM Sudan**  
PO Box 8322 - Khartoum  
Ms. Renata Bernardo  
Project Officer  
+249-922-406-645  
[rbernardo@iom.int](mailto:rbernardo@iom.int)