



DONOR UPDATE: SUDAN

JULY 2011

Across Sudan, the humanitarian situation is characterized by a diversity of operational contexts, conflicts and displacements. While the independence of the Republic of South Sudan on 9 July 2011 is approaching, negotiations on several Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) benchmarks remain unresolved, resulting in a deterioration of the security situation. Sudan has the largest number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world, with **over 4 million IDPs**. Questions of how Sudanese citizenship will be retained could potentially put at risk of statelessness an estimated 1.5 to 2 million southerners in the north, as well as 80,000 northerners in South Sudan. The two parties have recently agreed to have a transitional period of nine months, but this agreement has not yet been formalized. Given the prevailing uncertainty, the humanitarian situation in Sudan could deteriorate rapidly and UNHCR is appealing for urgent financial support.

The **Three Protocol Areas**, namely **Abyei, Southern Kordofan** and **Blue Nile**, have long been identified as flashpoints for potential conflict and displacement. UNHCR has strengthened its presence in the Three Areas in early 2011 to enhance its protection monitoring capacity in light of the large number of southerners returning to the Three Areas or passing through them to reach the South. Where access is available, UNHCR supports peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities in this highly volatile area. Competition over transit rights, water and land continues to drive local conflicts. Recent fighting in Southern Kordofan and Abyei in May and June 2011 has resulted in the displacement of **more than 170,000 people**. The Office is responding to these new emergencies, where possible, while continuing to engage in return movements in collaboration with other national and international partners.

Due to a **lack of funding**, the large-scale returns organized by the Government of South Sudan ended in late 2010, leaving approximately 17,000 returnees stranded in the open-air departure points around Khartoum. Returnees also continue to arrive in Kosti--with numbers reaching over 16,000--where they face delays in onward transportation, thereby putting an additional strain on the overwhelmed transit stations and the provision of basic services. UNHCR continues to monitor the 19 departure points in Khartoum and provides assistance to the particularly vulnerable. It also supports the Government with registration and the provision of basic services. Given the logistical challenges, the number of people who are stranded in Khartoum and *en route* has grown exponentially, leaving them in a precarious situation with limited access to basic services.

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UNHCR, within the [inter-agency framework](#), has started to support the organized movement of this group of returnees, as well as to help address some of the urgent needs identified during the latest inter-agency assessment at the IDP open-air areas in Khartoum. Funding is therefore urgently required to support this effort, which aims at complementing and supporting the Government of Sudan's endeavours in organizing returns and addressing the needs of those who are willing to return to various locations in South Sudan. Longer-term contingency plans are also being prepared to face additional potential massive returns from the north. These plans and activities will require further support as the return situation evolves.

In [South Sudan](#), the humanitarian situation has become increasingly precarious during the first half of 2011 due to increasing conflicts and the deteriorating situation in Abyei and South Kordofan. By mid-June 2011, more than 300,000 IDPs have returned to South Sudan. A second peak in returns is taking shape and may increase rapidly, depending on developments in the next few weeks. Unclear reintegration policies and a slow pace of land allocation for returnees emerged as major challenges, causing populations to be stranded for protracted periods in certain locations and impeding progress on food security, livelihoods and protection. Further support from the donor community is urgently required to ensure the implementation of [UNHCR's programme in supporting IDP returns](#), which includes: protection monitoring; citizenship, shelter and NFI assistance to vulnerable individuals, small-scale rehabilitation projects to address overstretched basic services in areas of high return; promoting sustainable community-based support; and livelihood opportunities aiming at improving the level of self-reliance of IDPs and returnees. The Office is also pursuing its protection and assistance programmes in South Sudan for returnees and some 20,000 refugees, mainly of Congolese and Ethiopian origin.

In the [Darfur](#) region, up to 2.7 million people remain internally displaced. In 2011 alone, some 80,000 people were newly displaced due to violent clashes in some parts of Darfur. Despite the insecurity, the first half of 2011 has also seen some limited returns, including in west Darfur and south Darfur. Security, lack of basic services and infrastructure in areas of return, as well as lack of sustainable livelihoods remain major challenges for returning IDPs. In March 2011, UNHCR assumed the lead role on returns in the whole Darfur region and has taken over from IOM as co-lead of the Joint Verification Mechanism. The Office also continues to lead the protection cluster coordination in Darfur.

In [eastern Sudan](#), UNHCR is redoubling its efforts to support the self reliance and local integration of Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees to ensure that most of the remaining 12 refugee camps can be converted into Sudanese villages before the end of 2013. Approximately 67,000 refugees currently reside in 12 camps; the large majority is composed of long-staying Eritreans and Ethiopians who first arrived in the 1960s. The refugees depend heavily on assistance and UNHCR will focus on increasing their economic self-reliance while ensuring that state authorities are in a position to provide basic services. A joint UNHCR/UNDP strategy is in the final stage of being developed under the Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI).

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Notwithstanding the diversity of operational contexts in Sudan, UNHCR's approach is to maintain a countrywide orientation towards **durable solutions**. Partnership is a central theme, recognizing that even where UNHCR has a unique mandate for protection, the Office cannot address the challenges on its own.

Changes in beneficiary population compared to the 2011 Planning figures (included in the Global Appeal 2011) are as follows:

OPERATION	2011 PLANNING FIGURES	ADDITIONAL AS AT 15 JUNE 2011
Refugees	134,600	-
Various persons in a refugee-like situation	13,500	-
Returnees (IDPs)	20,000	307,000 southerners returned to South Sudan by end of June
Returnees (refugees)	20,000	-
IDPs	1,386,000 (assisted)	Approximately 280,000 (115,000 Abyei; 73,000 Southern Kordofan; 10,000 Darfur; 80,000 within South Sudan)

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