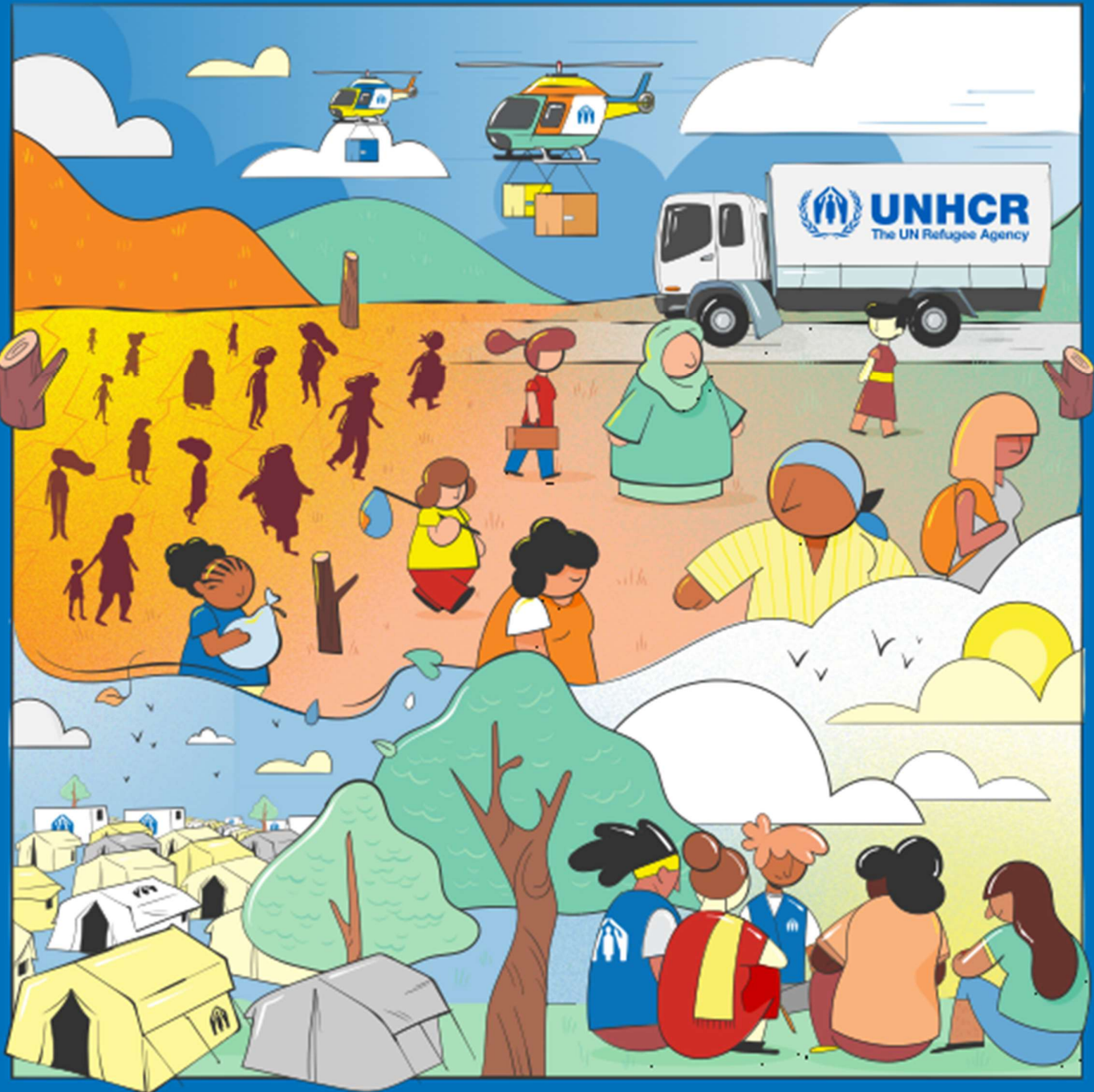# Evaluation of UNHCR's Multi-country L3 Emergency Response to the Sudan Situation
Evaluation report

MARCH 2025

UNHCR Evaluation Office

UNHCR's Evaluation Policy confirms UNHCR's commitment to support accountability, learning and continual improvement through the systematic examination and analysis of organizational policies, strategies, and programmes. Evaluations are guided by the principles of impartiality, credibility and utility, and are undertaken to enhance the organization's performance in addressing the protection, assistance and solution needs of refugees, stateless people and other persons of concern.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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[1] The Regional Bureau for the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes, the UNHCR Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa and the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Middle East and North Africa.

[2] The International Council of Voluntary Agencies.

Evaluation information at a glance

Title of the evaluation:	Evaluation of UNHCR's Multi-country L3 Emergency Response to the Sudan Situation (Sudan, Chad, Egypt and South Sudan)
Timeframe covered:	July 2023 - June 2024
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Commissioned by UNHCR

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

3RP	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data
AGD	Age, Gender and Diversity
CAR	Central African Republic
CBI	Cash-Based Interventions
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CFM	Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms
CNARR	Commission Nationale pour l'Accueil et la Réinsertion des Réfugiés et des Rapatriés
CO	Country Office
COR	Commission for Refugees
CRA	Commissioner of Refugees Affairs
CRIs	Core Relief Items
CWG	Cash Working Group
DESS	Division of Emergency, Security and Supply
DER	Division of External Relations
DSPR	Division of Strategic Planning and Results
DIP	Division of International Protection
DPO	Data Protection Officer
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DRS	Division of Resilience and Solutions
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
ECA	Emergency Cash Assistance
EHAGL	East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes
EPI	Evaluation Performance Indicator
EQ	Evaluation Question
ERC	Egyptian Red Crescent
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
ERT	Emergency Response Team
ET	Evaluation Team
EVO	Evaluation Office
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FO	Field Office
FSP	Financial Service Provider
FT	Fast-track
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCR	Global Compact for Refugees
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GDS	Global Data Service
GOE	Government of Egypt
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HDPN	Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
HNRP	Humanitarian and Needs Response Plan
HQ	Headquarters Divisions
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IM	Information Management
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner

ISWG	Inter-Sector Working Group
JMMI	Joint Market Monitoring Initiative
KAC	Key Aid Consulting
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPAs	Minimum Preparedness Actions
MPCA	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance
NARE	Needs Assessment for Refugee Emergencies
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OA	Outcome Area
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODP	Operational Data Portal
OL	Operating Level
OP	Operating Partner
PDM	Post-Distribution Monitoring
PE	Protection Expert
PLA	Participatory Leaning for Action
PMT	Proxy Means Testing
PRA	Participatory Reflection and Action
PROMS	Project, Reporting, Oversight and Monitoring Solution
QA	Quality Assurance
R-ARCSS	Revitalized Agreement on Conflict
RB	Regional Bureau
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCM	Refugee Coordination Model
RLO	Refugee-Led Organization
RRC	Regional Refugee Coordinator
RRRP	Regional Refugee Response Plan
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
RSF	Rapid Support Forces
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRM	Security Risk Management
TE	Thematic Expert
TL	Team Leader
TPM	Third Party Monitoring
UAMs	Unaccompanied Minors
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UN-SWAP	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WCA	West and Central Africa
WHO	World Health Organization

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In alignment with its Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Evaluation Office (EVO) commissioned Key Aid Consulting to conduct a centralized evaluation of UNHCR's Level 3 (L3) Emergency Response to the Sudan Situation. The evaluation examines UNHCR's response from July 2023 to June 2024 across four countries—Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan.

The evaluation is both summative and formative, aiming to assess UNHCR's response while identifying lessons learned and areas for improvement. The analysis is guided by six core evaluation questions:

- **Relevance:** To what extent were UNHCR's interventions appropriate to the needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of forcibly displaced persons and stateless people?
- **Effectiveness:** How well did UNHCR's interventions meet their intended objectives and address the evolving humanitarian crisis?
- **Efficiency:** Were UNHCR's interventions timely and cost-effective in their design and delivery?
- **Coordination:** How effectively did UNHCR coordinate with national governments, humanitarian actors and other stakeholders to maximize impact?
- **Sustainability:** What measures did UNHCR put in place to support durable solutions and longer-term development linkages?
- **Cross-cutting themes:** To what extent did UNHCR mainstream gender, Accountability to Affected Populations and protection principles in its interventions?

The evaluation follows a mixed-method approach, integrating both primary and secondary data. The methodology includes document reviews, 214 key informant interviews with UNHCR staff, implementing partners, government officials and sector representatives, 55 focus group discussions with refugees and host communities, and three targeted online surveys with UNHCR staff, sector members and implementing partners. Field visits were conducted in Chad and Egypt, the designated deep-dive countries, while data from Sudan and South Sudan were gathered remotely, as they were classified as light-touch countries within the evaluation scope.

On 15 April 2023, conflict broke out in Sudan as tensions escalated between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), triggering a severe, multidimensional forced displacement and humanitarian crisis.

The Sudan war caused the world's largest internal displacement and a major refugee situation. As of 3 November 2024, over 11 million people have been displaced by the conflict, including 8.16 million internally and 3 million who fled outside the country in search of safety and security (including refugees, asylum-seekers and migrant returnees) in neighbouring countries, including Egypt, Chad, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Libya and Uganda.

In each of the countries, UNHCR and its partners set up a large response across different sectors and activities, despite significant underfunding. In 2024, out of USD 350m. received, the largest proportion of UNHCR's interventions prioritised life-saving activities

in protection, shelter, well-being/basic needs, including distribution of Core Relief Items (CRIs) and Cash-Based Interventions (CBI). In the period May 2023-June 2024, UNHCR and its partners registered more than 1 million asylum-seekers and refugees.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance

UNHCR's interventions were broadly relevant and aligned with the needs of displaced populations, focusing on protection, shelter and basic services. Through robust data collection mechanisms, UNHCR effectively identified urgent needs and designed targeting strategies that were largely appropriate. The activities and modalities used in the response were relevant to the Sudan Situation, addressing both immediate and evolving needs. To enhance the contextual relevance of its interventions, UNHCR actively engaged with governments, local authorities and displaced communities, fostering social cohesion and strengthening national response mechanisms. Additionally, UNHCR has broadly adhered to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality in its response efforts.

However, gaps in relevance remained. A significant proportion of recipients lacked awareness of the targeting criteria applied in assistance distribution, leading to perceptions of unfairness. While there was evidence of programmatic adaptations to changing circumstances, these adaptations were often constrained by insufficient monitoring and funding. Insufficient monitoring remained, in fact, a factor limiting the relevance of interventions: activities were not systematically monitored, the data were often inconsistent and not sufficiently used. Across all countries, the lack of documented analysis on how data shaped strategies and interventions was notable. Furthermore, while UNHCR adhered to humanitarian principles such as humanity and impartiality, there was limited evidence on how discussions regarding these principles influenced operational decisions, and specific instances where their application could have been improved were not systematically documented.

Effectiveness

The organization played a vital role in multiple sectors, including protection, shelter/core relief items (CRIs), cash-based interventions (CBI), and health and education. Notably, there was a significant scale-up in life-saving activities to address immediate humanitarian needs. While UNHCR achieved notable successes, certain sectors faced challenges. In shelter and CRIs, issues related to both quality and quantity were evident, largely due to funding constraints. In registration and protection services, the overwhelming volume of needs hampered the ability to achieve full coverage.

The evaluation team faced limitations in conducting a comprehensive comparative effectiveness analysis across countries and years due to two main factors: The deep dive versus light-touch country approach, which affected data availability and depth of analysis, and inconsistent monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks between 2023 and 2024, making direct comparisons difficult.

Some unintended effects of UNHCR's interventions were identified, though their overall impact remained minimal. Examples include fostering social cohesion in Chad and the

unintended consequence of prolonged registration procedures increasing vulnerability in Egypt.

A critical constraint across all four countries was insufficient funding, affecting UNHCR and all Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) partners. As of November 2024, the Sudan RRRP received only 30 per cent of the required funding for 2024 and 38 per cent in 2023. The RRRP financing per country remains equal to or below 50 per cent across 2023 and 2024, while the Sudan Humanitarian and Needs Response Plan (HNRP) financing rate was a bit higher in 2024.

Considering this, UNHCR has been proactive in seeking additional funding, through extensive advocacy and donor diversification. Advocacy was shown by the numerous conferences, events and high-level visits organized in the four countries by different offices, as well as the supporting information products and fundraising documents developed by UNHCR. UNHCR also sought to capitalize on existing donors and diversify its donor base, seeking new non-traditional donors such as the governments of Gulf countries. Despite this, persistent resourcing gaps continued to impact the overall effectiveness of the response.

Efficiency

The response was timely given the complexity and rapid evolution of the crisis, facilitated by emergency protocols, HR rosters, pre-existing partnerships and strategic activity design. Delays in timeliness were primarily due to logistical bottlenecks, funding shortages, increasing caseloads and technical challenges. Centralized processes, such as biometric registration, enhanced operational efficiency but created accessibility barriers in remote areas.

A case study from Chad indicates that while UNHCR attempted to incorporate some cost-efficiency measures in its response, it lacks a systematic approach to embedding cost-efficiency in decision-making and programme design. UNHCR's security and access measures were generally robust, adapted to country-specific challenges, and supported by Regional Bureaux and HQ. However, the organization lacks a formal access guidance.

Coordination

UNHCR's leadership in coordinating the refugee response through the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) was relevant but faced challenges due to overlaps with other coordination structures, inter-agency tensions and gaps in global coordination with International Organization for Migration (IOM). The RCM was seen as overly UNHCR-centric, with concerns over transparency, data-sharing, and its dual role as both coordinator and last-resort provider and thus actively seeking funding.

Despite these challenges, the RCM was effective in establishing coordination structures, sharing information and mobilizing resources. However, limited strategic discussions, inconsistent local NGO and government participation, and difficulties securing sector co-leads' commitments remained issues. The RRRP was perceived as a useful tool for mobilizing resources, although achieving moderate fundraising levels, and overlapped with other humanitarian plans. The RRRP was less useful for planning, as it lacked

detailed needs analysis and operational details on programmatic strategies. The newly released 2024 RCM guidance is likely to fill these gaps.

Regarding internal coordination, UNHCR's emergency response in Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan benefited significantly from regional bureaux (RB) and HQ support, particularly in the initial stages of the response. The support provided by the RBs was especially critical given the scale of the response and limited availability of funding, which impacted staffing levels in the four countries. Operational coordination, however, faced challenges, including incomplete cross-functional processes and issues with cross-border operations.

Durable Solutions

Durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) in the Sudan crisis remain limited, with UNHCR issuing a non-return advisory in June 2023. Resettlement is the only viable option but remains small in scale. Despite this, UNHCR has adopted a "solutions from the start" approach, integrating durable solutions into planning, coordination, and national frameworks, such as asylum laws in Chad and Egypt, and South Sudan's National Durable Solutions Strategy.

The response demonstrated the relevance of the nexus approach in both emergencies and protracted crises. UNHCR engaged development actors, including joint initiatives with the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and prioritized resilience building. However, the implementation faced obstacles, including limited development funding, humanitarian prioritization, protection challenges (notably in Egypt), and unclear integration of the nexus into the RCM and RRRP.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Protection, gender and accountability mechanisms were incorporated into UNHCR's response, with notable efforts to mitigate gender-based violence risks. However, gaps persisted in participatory engagement and the implementation of feedback mechanisms, limiting Accountability to Affected People (AAP). In fact, UNHCR did not ensure sufficient feedback to forcibly displaced and stateless persons, and their participation in the design and delivery of assistance was limited.

CONCLUSIONS

The full report includes a detailed narrative for each of the conclusions and recommendations that are discussed below:

1. UNHCR demonstrated some capacity to scale up, deliver and steer a timely and relevant regional response in a very challenging context, although these challenges are expected to persist.
2. UNHCR delivered contextually relevant emergency interventions based on the needs of forcibly displaced and stateless persons, and has simultaneously and rapidly incorporated the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus (HDPN) approach to ensure a long-term strategic approach, although the results of this are yet to materialize.

3. The scale of the UNHCR response was hindered by insufficient funding, which highlighted the challenges of how best to prioritize programmatic interventions in a resource-scarce environment.
4. Investment in the RCM rendered coordination generally effective, although inconsistent participation and its coexistence with other coordination mechanisms raised questions about the appropriateness of its roll-out in some countries. The newly released 2024 RCM guidance is expected to address some of these gaps.
5. The lack of certain types of data and insufficient analysis by UNHCR hindered strategic, programmatic and operational decisions-making related to the design of interventions, the prioritization of the response and accountability to aid recipients.
6. UNHCR worked well regionally across three regional bureaux, providing technical resources and expertise to the Country Offices (CO) albeit raising some interoperability issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing from the findings and conclusions, the evaluation has identified five overarching recommendations. The full report includes a detailed narrative of each recommendation as well as suggested actions.

Recommendation 1: UNHCR should expand minimum requirements for monitoring to ensure that they are the same across all forms of material assistance provided by UNHCR to ensure inclusive and results-driven responses, with a focus on regular data collection, real-time analysis and effective communication with affected populations.

Recommendation 2: UNHCR should strengthen its approach to prioritization by establishing, within its planning and programme development procedures, clear criteria and procedures to prioritize sectors, activities, modalities and vulnerable populations in order to justify the allocation of resources and to inform operations for the Sudan Situation as well as future L3 emergencies. This applies to UNHCR as coordinator of the response as well as UNHCR as last-resort provider in emergency as well as non-emergency settings.

Recommendation 3: UNHCR should invest in the roll-out and implementation of the new RCM Guidance to improve aspects related to the participation in the RCM, the RRRP process, and the interactions with other coordination mechanisms in mixed settings.

Recommendation 4: UNHCR should further integrate resilience and sustainable responses in the design of L3 scaled-up responses, notably via the selection of response modalities at area level, to better address the long-term needs of acute crises from the outset through the nexus approach.

Recommendation 5: UNHCR should capitalize on the cross-regional ways of working put in place for the Sudan situation (contingency planning, cross-border operations and regional communication plans) so that good practices and lessons learned can be adopted in future L3 responses.

1. This report presents the results of the UNHCR's Level 3 Emergency Response to the Sudan Situation, commissioned by the UNHCR Evaluation Office. The report first introduces the evaluation and context, and then spells out the methodology used to conduct the evaluation. Subsequent sections discuss the findings as per the six areas of inquiry: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coordination, Durable Solutions as well as the integration of Cross-Cutting Themes.[3] Finally, it provides Conclusions and Recommendations.

Definitions and Terminology

Implementing Partner (IP):
An Implementing Partner is an organization directly funded by UNHCR to execute specific programmes or activities aligned with UNHCR's mandate. These partners work under formal agreements to deliver targeted assistance and services to displaced and stateless populations on behalf of UNHCR.

Operational Partner (OP):
An Operational Partner is an organization that collaborates with UNHCR to deliver services or support displaced populations but operates independently without direct funding from UNHCR. These partners contribute resources, expertise, or operational capacity alongside UNHCR's efforts to address humanitarian needs. **When the authors mention "partners", it includes both IPs and OPs.**

Sector Member:
Sector members are entities participating in the Refugee Coordination Model. They include IPs, OPs as well as donors.

Use of the term *Forcibly Displaced and Stateless Persons*:
UNHCR has updated its glossary of terms, asking for the replacement of the term Persons of Concern with Forcibly Displaced and Stateless Persons. In line with this update, the report adopts this terminology in full. However, readers should keep in mind that the evaluation scope does not include stateless persons. As much as possible, the authors tried to be precise with the caseloads throughout the report when country-specific findings were brought forward (e.g. asylum-seekers, IDPs…).

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1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

2. This section provides a brief introduction to the evaluation and outlines how the report is organized.

1.1. Introduction to the evaluation

3. In line with its Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response,[4] the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Evaluation Office (EVO) has commissioned Key Aid Consulting to undertake a Level 3 (L3)[5] centralized evaluation of UNHCR's Level 3 Response to the crisis in Sudan, focusing on four countries: Sudan, Egypt, Chad and South Sudan.

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[3] As per the Terms of Reference, the evaluation does not cover impact criteria because the emergency nature of the activities being evaluated is incompatible with assessing this evaluation criterion.

[4] UNHCR, "Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response 2023," February 2023.

[5] Within UNHCR, a Level 3 emergency signifies an exceptionally serious situation in which the scale, pace, complexity, and consequences of the crisis significantly exceed the existing response capacities of the country operation and regional bureau. Therefore, an institutional, whole-of-UNHCR response is necessary for UNHCR to deliver effectively and at scale. See UNHCR (2023) Emergency Management FAQs.

4. The evaluation, managed by UNHCR's EVO, analyses the extent to which UNHCR provided a timely and effective response to the crisis in Sudan and its regional ramifications. This evaluation offers an opportunity for learning from the organizational adaptations and innovations that may be relevant for future regional (and potentially global) emergency responses of such scale, complexity and length. The evaluation documents achievements, challenges, lessons learned, good practices and future positions and adaptations required to further strengthen UNHCR's programming, response and advocacy.

1.2.   Context overview

1.2.1. Humanitarian Context

5. **A severe and multidimensional humanitarian crisis.** On 15 April 2023, conflict broke out in Sudan as tensions escalated between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), triggering a very severe and multidimensional humanitarian crisis. The inter-agency Humanitarian and Needs Response Plan (HNRP) for Sudan estimates that the number of people in need in the country increased from 15.8 million in November 2022 to 24.8 million in 2024 (corresponding to a 57 per cent increase in two years).[6]

6. **An already fragile setting**. In Sudan, heaviest fighting has been witnessed in Khartoum State (Capital), in North, West, Central and South Darfurs as well as in Kordofan States.[7] The conflict disrupted supply chains and destroyed critical infrastructure. This caused price increases for essential goods such as water and fuel, and medical supply,[8] adding to pre-existing rising inflation. Additionally, the closure of banks has severely restricted access to cash, compounded by poor connectivity, while the widespread destruction and looting of warehouses and offices across the country have further exacerbated the crisis.[9] The conflict has also spilled into Al Jazerah and Sennar States, two fertile territories critical to accessing the White Nile and Blue Nile from Port Sudan. This has resulted in mass displacement from these areas and further complicated humanitarian intervention efforts, amplifying the challenges in an already precarious situation.

7. **The world's largest internal displacement and a major refugee situation**. Sudan has one of the largest internally displaced populations ever reported, in addition to hosting more than 1 million refugees. As of 3 November 2024, over 11 million people have been displaced by the conflict, including 8.16 million internally and 3 million who fled outside the country in search of safety and security (including refugees, asylum-seekers and migrant returnees) in neighbouring countries, including Egypt, Chad, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Libya and Uganda.[10] The table below presents the data available on internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sudan and Refugees and Asylum-seekers (R/AS) in Chad, Egypt and South Sudan, the target populations included in the scope of this evaluation.

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[6] OCHA. "Sudan: Situation Report," Nov 3, 2024.

[7] UNHCR. Protection Brief. Sudan June 2023.

[8] UNHCR. Sudan: Country Response Plan Addendum January- December 2023.

[9] UNHCR. Sudan Fact Sheet September 2023.

[10] UNHCR. Global Focus. Sudan Situation. November 2024.

Table 1: Number of Sudanese forcibly displaced persons[11;12] in the countries of focus

Country	31 December 2023	31 June 2024	November 2024[13]
Sudan (IDPs)	3,663,697	10,540,215	10,890,722
Chad (R/AS)	484,628	612,286	1,077,920
Egypt (R/AS)	400,000	500,000	1,200,000
South Sudan (R/AS)	453,140	722,313	472,852

8. **A grave protection crisis**. The conflict in Sudan has been marked by devastating attacks on civilians and widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) classifies the conflict in Sudan as "extreme" on the Conflict Index.[14] Since its beginning and as of August 2024, 1,258 events of violence have affected civilians, and more than 27,120 fatalities in Sudan were recorded.[15] Active conflict and heavy displacement caseloads have further challenged state capacity to provide protection services.

9. **The Sudan crisis has affected women and girls disproportionally**, with instances of conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls, experienced or witnessed during their flight from Sudan to neighbouring countries.[16] In Sudan itself, more than 2.8 million IDPs are in need of protection following instances of gender-based violence (GBV) in 2024.[17] As such, the majority of new arrivals in neighbouring countries were women and children (see graph below), many of them having been subjected to significant protection risks and human rights violations, including men and boys.

Figure 1: Gender breakdown of forcibly displaced and stateless Sudanese arriving in host countries[18;19]

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10. **The crisis has exacerbated challenges for host countries already burdened with hosting displaced populations.** South Sudan, Chad and Egypt were hosting significant numbers of refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants and internally displaced persons before the current Sudan crisis. Chad, for instance, was already home to over 400,000 Sudanese refugees who had been in a protracted situation in eastern Chad for nearly two decades. In South Sudan, an estimated 76 per cent of the population required humanitarian assistance, alongside more than 290,000 Sudanese refugees who had arrived prior to April 2023. Similarly, Egypt, with its historical role as a host for Sudanese communities and Syrian refugees, saw the second-highest number of Sudanese refugee arrivals in 2023.[20]

11. **Prior to the Sudan crisis, Egypt, Chad and South Sudan were already facing significant fragility, exacerbated by their respective socioeconomic and political challenges.** Grappling with regional conflicts and geopolitical instability, **Egypt** saw mounting pressures on its public services and infrastructure as a result of the Sudan conflict. Disruption to key trade routes vital to Egypt's economy led to shortages of essential goods, rising inflation and escalating rental prices in cities such as Cairo and Alexandria, affecting refugees, asylum-seekers and local residents, in addition to overwhelmed health care and education systems.[21] **Chad,** classified as an extremely fragile state by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2023, was already dealing with a "triple storm" of humanitarian, peace and development issues, and a delicate political transition process. With a Human Development Index of 0.394 and compounded by climate risks, Chad faces socioeconomic challenges made worse by the Sudan crisis, including increased humanitarian and security expenditures, trade disruptions, reduced investments, declining export revenues and fluctuating oil prices. These pressures have raised concerns about social discontent and tensions with host communities, stemming from the strain on natural resources and social services.[22] **South Sudan**, similarly fragile, has been chronically underdeveloped and vulnerable to instability due to decades of conflict, compounded by high levels of poverty and hyperinflation. The conflict in Sudan threatens to further destabilize South Sudan, particularly with the increased cost of oil production, as the country depends heavily on Sudan's oil pipelines for its exports,[23] one of which was severely damaged and not accessible for restoration, as it is situated in the conflict zone.[24]

1.2.2.UNHCR Interventions Across the Four Countries

12. **Strong pre-existing presence.** At the onset of the Sudan Situation, UNHCR had an established and extensive presence in all four affected countries, managing large-scale operations that addressed the needs of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons with varying levels of engagement and support. Chad was one of the largest UNHCR operations in West Africa,[25] with operations in various parts of the country, some aimed at 500,000 refugees in eastern Chad from the last Darfur crisis in 2003. In Egypt, UNHCR had already developed funding frameworks for refugee responses, notably the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) for Syrians—the

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[20] UNHCR. Sudan Emergency Regional Response Plan. End of Year Report. December 2023.

[21] Abazar, "Egypt Economy Amidst Regional Conflicts," 2024

[22] Humanitarian Action, "Analyzing Needs and Response. Global Humanitarian Overview, 2024.

[23] African Development Bank, "South Sudan Economic Outlook," African Economic Outlook 2024.

[24] Nashed, "South Sudan on the brink after oil exports derailed by Sudan' civil war. March 2024.

[25] https://www.unhcr.org/countries/chad.

largest refugee population in Egypt before the Sudan crisis, with refugees from over 50 nationalities.[26] In South Sudan, UNHCR implemented large-scale programmes targeting IDPs and refugee returnees following the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement. Efforts were focused on providing life-saving responses and comprehensive protection and assistance to those returning to the country.[27] Prior to the start of the war, Sudan had the second-highest refugee population in Africa, hosting over 1 million refugees and more than 3.7 million IDPs as of January 2023.[28] UNHCR in Sudan provided protection and multisectoral assistance.

13. **One of the longest Level 3 emergency response**. In July 2023, UNHCR declared a Level 3 emergency response for Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan to respond to the rapidly unfolding humanitarian crisis and ensure an accelerated and scaled-up delivery of assistance.[29] The Level 3 emergency for Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan was extended in December 2023 and was supposed to expire in April 2024.[30] A new L3 emergency declaration was issued for an additional six months in May 2024 with the inclusion of Ethiopia, and again for three months in November 2024, until February 2025. In total, the L3 emergency has been declared for 19 months, which underscores the persistent gravity of the humanitarian situation and the insufficient resources to normalize the response.

Figure 2: Timeline of emergency declarations

26 April 2023: Initial **L1** declared for Sudan, Chad, and South Sudan

17 May 2023: All L1 emergencies (Sudan, Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, CAR, and Egypt) escalated to **L2**

20 May 2024: A new **L3** declared for Ethiopia, Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, and Sudan

04 May 2023: Egypt added to the L1 declaration

06 July 2023: Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, and Sudan escalated to **L3**

19 February 2025: end of an extension of the **L3**

14. **An organization-wide mobilization.** As per UNHCR's Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response, an L3 emergency response declaration triggers the set-up of organization-wide mobilization to streamline internal emergency procedures and mobilize the operational capacities and resources needed to match the scale, complexity and urgency of the crisis. Specifically, the whole-of-UNHCR's emergency response activates enhanced leadership and coordination, and the mobilization of resources, including staffing and funding. The response to the Sudan conflict required the setting up of internal coordination within UNHCR among the HQ, the different

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[26] UNHCR. Annual Results Report Egypt 2023

[27] UNHCR Annual Results Report. South Sudan 2023. Furthermore, UNHCR had several offices in South Sudan that existed for over a decade prior to this crisis, with a dedicated refugee focus in Maban and Jampang. While there was a strong presence, in the course of the response, UNHCR had to create offices in three new locations - Abyei, Renk and Wedweil (Aweil), while also reinforcing the Juba Field Unit.

[28] UNHCR. Sudan Fact sheet. January 2023.

[29] Starting from the end of April 2023, there were L1 and L2 declarations in all the countries included in the scope, which granted country offices with simplified procedures and access to UNHCR' emergency reserve.

[30] Evaluation ToRs.

regional bureaux[31] and the country offices. By the end of 2023, financial requirements by UNHCR reached over US$ 339.4 million in Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan.[32] By June 2024, requirements had increased to $ 887.8 million.[33]

15. **A multilayered coordination structure.[34]** The refugee response to the Sudan conflict was based on predictable coordination arrangements based on the type of settings, i.e. refugee, mixed settings or Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) settings. In all neighbouring countries to Sudan, UNHCR has coordinated the refugee response through the RCM. In Egypt, the RCM initially established during the Syrian crisis was extended to also coordinate the Sudan refugee response. In parallel to UNHCR's RCM, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) also coordinates IASC coordination mechanisms for the humanitarian response to other crisis-affected populations, e.g. IDPs and host communities, in Chad and South Sudan, with shared responsibilities with UNHCR.[35] Specifically, in Chad, in the East of the country, UNHCR led the refugee response via the RCM,[36] which operates alongside IASC coordination mechanisms led by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and supported by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). In South Sudan, UNHCR established the RCM in Renk, co-led phase 1 of the return plan with IOM, while phases 2 and 3 in the areas of return were coordinated through the IASC clusters.[37] Moreover, South Sudan was one of the four pilot countries where area-based leadership was trialled: UNHCR was a coordinator for the Upper State both prior to and after April 2023. Inside Sudan, only IASC coordination structures have been relevant to the response that UNHCR supports through its cluster responsibilities on protection, shelter/CRIs,[38] camp coordination and camp management (CCCM). The internal coordination within UNHCR involved three regional bureaux and required a regional coordination with external stakeholders involved in the response. UNHCR appointed the Regional Director of the RB for the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes (EHAGL) as the Regional Refugee Coordinator (RRC) for the Sudan situation.

16. **Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan.** With the activation of the RCM,[39] UNHCR has established response procedures in close collaboration with RRRP partners, aimed at supporting host governments' efforts to respond to the crisis. UNHCR has coordinated, planned and mobilized resources for the refugee response through the Sudan RRRP,[40] which was launched shortly after the start of the conflict and was updated several times and most recently for 2024. Coordinated by UNHCR, the plan brings together 82 partners including UN agencies, national and international

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[31] Three UNHCR Regional Bureaux played a key role in addressing the Sudan situation: the Regional Bureau for the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (RB EHAGL), the Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa (RB WCA), and the Regional Bureau for the Middle East and North Africa (RB MENA). Their efforts were coordinated under the leadership of a Regional Refugee Coordinator (RRC), who also served as the Director of RB EHAGL.

[32] UNHCR Sudan Emergency Supplementary Appeal August 2023.

[33] UNHCR Sudan Emergency Supplementary Appeal June 2024 (Revision). This amount covers the four countries only, Egypt, Chad, South and South Sudan.

[34] The coordination of the response in Sudan falls outside the scope of the evaluation and is therefore not described in this paragraph.

[35] In Eastern Chad, OCHA was already present and UNHCR strengthened the RCM to coordinate the response for newly arrived refugees. In South Sudan, the RC/HC was implementing an area-based model of coordination wherein UNHCR was in charge of coordination in the Upper Nile province before the war.

[36] OCHA, "Plan de Réponse Humanitaire Révisé - Tchad," September 2023.

[37] UNHCR-led Protection and CCCM clusters in South Sudan as part of the IASC system.

[38] The ET uses, throughout the report, UNHCR terminology of CRI, which is the equivalent of NFI.

[39] The RCM is a model for leading and coordinating refugee operations. It establishes a framework and guiding principles for addressing refugee and mixed migration situations. UNHCR is accountable for coordinating refugee responses, by ensuring preparedness, protection strategies, resource mobilization and sectoral set-ups.

[40] First edition, later revised, available here https://reporting.unhcr.org/sudan-emergency-regional-refugee-response-plan

non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to support the host Governments of Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia,[41] and South Sudan, in responding to the needs of Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers.[42] Working with its partners, UNHCR has developed the RRRP to intervene across different sectors including protection, GBV, education, food security, public health and nutrition, livelihoods and economic inclusion, logistics, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), CRIs, and cash-based interventions (CBIs). The RRRP outlines the multi-partner and multi-sectoral response strategy and is aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees. In Sudan, UNHCR was a key contributor of the Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP).

17. **In each of the countries, UNHCR set up a large response across different sectors and activities.** The table below presents the different Outcome Areas (OA) of the response. The largest proportion of financial resources was dedicated to protection activities (OA1), shelter/CRIs (OA9) and well-being (OA8).

Table 2: Sudan Situation Operating Level Budget per Outcome in the four countries in 2024 for UNHCR (US$ in Millions)[43]

	Chad	Egypt	South Sudan	Sudan	Total
OA8: Well-being	3.57	10.61	6.34	23.07	**43.58**
OA9: Housing	20.05	0.00	7.42	4.66	**32.12**
OA1: Access/Doc	3.49	5.85	3.55	17.40	**30.29**
OA12: WASH	9.13	0.00	4.01	5.87	**19.01**
OA10: Health	4.17	4.07	3.41	6.77	**18.43**
OA11: Education	2.57	5.55	3.69	3.01	**14.83**
OA7: Community	1.66	2.67	4.05	6.04	**14.41**
OA4: GBV	1.37	1.09	2.69	3.93	**9.07**
OA5: Children	0.93	2.37	1.56	3.70	**8.56**
OA6: Justice	0.41	1.30	2.38	2.86	**6.95**
OA3: Policy/Law	0.00	1.94	0.00	3.78	**5.72**
OA2: Status	0.00	2.16	0.00	2.17	**4.34**
OA13: Livelihood	1.54	1.17	0.00	0.74	**3.45**
OA16: Integrate	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.81	**2.81**
OA14: Return	0.00	0.37	0.00	1.38	**1.75**
OA15: Resettle	0.00	0.91	0.00	0.03	**0.94**
TOTAL	**48.89**	**40.06**	**39.09**	**88.22**	**216.26**

18. **An underfunded RRRP and UNHCR's interventions**. The **joint launch** of the **2024 Sudan HNRP** and **2024 Sudan Situation RRRP** took place on 7 **February** in Geneva. Similarly, the **2023 Sudan HNRP and RRRP** were launched together on 17 **May 2023**. The 2024 Sudan RRRP was projected to cover the needs of 2.7 million people, including refugees, returnees (both refugees and migrants),[44] third-country nationals and host communities. The 2023 Sudan RRRP targeted 3.8 million people. Both plans focused on resilience, systems strengthening, and critical humanitarian and life-saving activities. The 2024 Sudan RRRP was 7 per cent funded at the end of April 2024. At the end of 2023, the 2023 Sudan RRRP was 38 per cent funded. The underfunding led to critical

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[41] Ethiopia is not included in the scope of the evaluation, as UNHCR had recently conducted an evaluation there.

[42] UNHCR's Operational Data Portal considers four categories for the Sudan Situation: newly arrived refugees/asylum-seekers, newly arrived refugee returnees, IDPs and self-relocated refugees.

[43] OL Budget file shared by UNHCR.

[44] In the case of South Sudan both South Sudanese refugees and returning migrants.

gaps in many operations and across several sectors, including protection, food and shelter.[45] As of 30 September 2024, the total funding for the RRRP remained insufficient, at around $ 439 million, or 29 per cent of the requirements.[46]

19. **The Humanitarian crisis in Sudan remains also underfunded.** UNHCR is also part of the HNRP for inside Sudan. In 2023, the Sudan HNRP received funding equivalent to only 49.5 per cent of its total requirements.[47] The 2024 HNRP targeted 14,7 million people for humanitarian assistance out of 24 million people in need of assistance. The HNRP required $ 2.7 billion, but as of November 2024, it had only received $ 1.6 billion, or 59 per cent of requirements.[48] In 2024, the Sudan RRRP and HNRP required a combined $ 4.1 billion to meet the needs of 17.4 million people.

20. **Legal frameworks for refugee protection vary across countries, shaping UNHCR's operations and outcomes**. In Egypt**,** the 1954 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) delegated key responsibilities to UNHCR, making it the largest global operation for refugee status determination (RSD).[49] Despite being a signatory to key international agreements, Egypt's reservations about the 1951 Refugee Convention limit socioeconomic rights for refugees, leaving many reliant on informal labour. A refugee law was being drafted to address these gaps, yet, as it had not been passed during the period of evaluation, the evaluation team (ET) had not considered it. In Chad, the 2023 implementation of the 2020 Asylum Law, amid the Sudan crisis, enabled a coordinated emergency response and was a foundation for sustainable refugee support.[50] In South Sudan, the Refugee Act of 2012 serves as the cornerstone of the country's legal framework for protecting refugees, ensuring their rights and addressing their needs. Building on this foundation, the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons Act of 2019[51] and the 2018 Revitalized Agreement on Conflict (R-ARCSS), outline provisions for the return and reintegration of displaced persons and refugees. These efforts were further strengthened by the adoption of the National Durable Solutions Strategy and Action Plan in 2023, which aim to address the needs of IDPs, returnees, refugees and host communities. In Sudan, the 1974 National Asylum Act remains the legal cornerstone,[52] but recent conflicts exposed weaknesses, prompting UNHCR to advocate for the country's adoption of international conventions to address the mass displacement.[53]

2. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHOD OF THE EVALUATION

21. This section outlines the purpose and scope of the evaluation and provides a summary of the methods that were employed. ANNEX 2 provides a detailed overview of adjustments that were made to the evaluation questions (EQ), the data collection and

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[45] UNHCR. Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response Plan. Progress Report January to April 2024.

[46] "Refugee Funding Tracker Power Bi Report." Accessed November 21, 2024.

[47] OCHA. "Humanitarian Action Sudan 2023," n.d.

[48] OCHA. "Humanitarian Action Sudan; Financials 2024," n.d.

[49] UNHCR Egypt Fact Sheet November 2023.

[50] UNHCR, "Le Tchad Dispose d'une Loi d'asile et de Son Décret d'application," Mai 2023.

[51] Forced Migration Review. *The potential of South Sudan's national Law on Protection and Assistance to IDPs*. FMR 65 Recognizing Refugees. November 2020.

[52] The Republic of Sudan. Ministry of Interior, Commission of Refugees. 2014.

[53] UNHCR. UNHCR Position on Returns to Sudan. May 2023.

analysis methods, the limitations and mitigation measures that were employed, and issues of ethics and safeguarding.

22. As per UNHCR Evaluation Policy and Strategy,[54] the purpose of the evaluation was to **assess the appropriateness and results of UNHCR's emergency response and overall approach, and to advise on UNHCR's future positioning and response to the Sudan Situation and future emergency responses**. First, it is **summative**, providing an independent assessment of UNHCR's programmatic performance and outcomes in response to the needs of Sudanese forcibly displaced and stateless persons. Second, it is **formative**, highlighting lessons learned, good practices, areas of improvement, and overall strategic and operational recommendations for UNHCR's response.

23. The evaluation has three specific objectives:[55]

- Strengthen the design of UNHCR's emergency response operations globally and in **Chad, Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan.**

- Improve the **results for** forcibly displaced and stateless persons globally and in the focus countries – through an analysis of the engagement, partnerships and results of UNHCR's activities as part of a broad, inter-agency effort.

- Help UNHCR plan for and support the transition towards **medium and longer-term solutions** for refugees, with particular attention to the engagement of development actors in the three regions: West and Central Africa (WCA), Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes (EHAGL).

24. The evaluation was framed **around five areas of inquiry**,[56] using as a guide the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) and ALNAP criteria,[57] as laid out in the Terms of References. Additionally, based on their experience with the Ukraine Refugee Response L3 evaluation, the ET suggested a sixth area of inquiry, focusing on cross-cutting issues.

25. The evaluation design was formalized in ANNEX 2: Evaluation Matrix, indicating the Key EQs, sub-questions, indicators as to how judgment was formed, as well as the plausible sources of data[58] to inform the indicators. Indicators as to how judgment was formed are derived from a variety of internal[59] and external[60] guidance and standards, as well as preliminary key informant interviews (KIIs) conducted by the ET during the inception phase. The final evaluation questions and sub-questions are listed below:

1. **Relevance:** To what extent are UNHCR's interventions relevant and appropriate, considering the different operational contexts and the nature of needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of the refugees, IDPs and host communities?

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[54] UNHCR. "Policy for Evaluation in UNHCR," 2022.

[55] As per the Terms of Reference of this evaluation.

[56] As per the Terms of Reference, the evaluation does not cover impact criteria because the emergency nature of the activities being evaluated is incompatible with assessing this evaluation criterion.

[57] ALNAP, "Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide," 2016.

[58] The evaluation team used the evaluation matrix to design a coding matrix where all corresponding data sources were coded according to their type (e.g. Desk review, KII, etc.) and used for the analysis and triangulation. This document was used to list which data sources are used to answer which specific evaluation questions & sub questions.

[59] Such as: UNHCR Evaluation Policy, UNHCR Emergency Handbook and Policy, UNHCR Guidance on AAP, UNHCR Policy on AGD, etc.

[60] ALNAP Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide, ALNAP Evaluation of Protection in Humanitarian Action, SPHERE standards, UNEG, "ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION," 2020., UNEG guidance on integrating Humanitarian Principles in evaluations.

1.1. To what extent has the UNHCR response been designed and implemented based on quality and reliable data throughout the duration of the L3?

1.2. Did the UNHCR response align with the needs of refugees, IDPs and host communities, reaching the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?

1.3. How has UNHCR considered the political and security context to design its response?

2. **Effectiveness:** To what extent has UNHCR responded effectively to the regional L3 emergency triggered by the Sudan conflict?

2.1. To what extent are UNHCR's interventions achieving their objectives and intended outcomes, including their contribution to protection objectives?

2.2. What factors have impacted the level of activities and the effectiveness of the response?

3. **Efficiency**: To what extent are UNHCR interventions delivered in an efficient manner and promote access to forcibly displaced and stateless persons of focus, while ensuring the security and welfare of staff?

3.1. Has UNHCR assistance been delivered in a timely manner, adapting and scaling up activities, avoiding duplication and filling gaps?

3.2. Has UNHCR assistance been delivered in a cost-efficient manner, with a focus on value for money?

3.3. To what extent has UNHCR taken appropriate steps to promote, address and ensure security and welfare concerns for the workforce, particularly given the high-risk and hardship duty stations?

4. **Coordination:** How does UNHCR co-lead effective cross-sectoral coordination and broker successful partnerships?

4.1. To what extent has UNHCR's approach to coordination, particularly under the Refugee Coordination Model, been effective and avoided gaps and duplications?

4.2. What lessons can be learned from the internal coordination mechanism (considering that this response involves four countries, three Regional Bureaux, and Headquarters) and the potential impact of scarce funding conditions and limited visibility of this crisis?

5. **Connectedness/Sustainability:** To what extent is UNHCR's emergency response connected to longer-term development and durable solutions?

5.1. To what extent has the pursuit of durable solutions been embedded in the emergency response from the start, especially in contexts of transitioning from a protracted situation to an emergency response and vice versa?

5.2. To what extent has the UNHCR response addressed both the immediate humanitarian needs and the resilience and development goals, including the humanitarian-development nexus?

6. **Cross-Cutting Themes:** To what extent do UNHCR interventions mainstream gender, Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) and protection?

6.1. To what extent do UNHCR interventions mainstream gender, AAP and protection?

26. **Geographical scope** – The evaluation covers four countries: **Chad, Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan.**[61] The four countries **were upgraded to emergency Level 3 in July 2023.**[62] The evaluation placed a heavier focus on **Chad and Egypt,** as **deep dive countries.**[63] In contrast, **Sudan and South Sudan** were **light-touch countries** (remote

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[61] Countries having also received Sudanese refugees, such as Ethiopia, Libya, Uganda, Central African Republic, are not included in the scope of the evaluation as per the ToR.

[62] UNHCR Broadcast, 6 July 2023.

[63] Comprehensive country case studies were conducted for both Chad and Egypt with primary data collection taking place in these two countries.

data collection) due to security and access constraints, and recent UNHCR evaluations that have been completed there (2022 and 2023).[64]

27. Thus, the evaluation has a regional focus and is intended to draw regional trends, focusing on the regional strategic level while highlighting relevant context differences. It does not provide a detailed assessment of output achievement in each of the four countries of focus but includes two separate (internal) case study reports for Chad and Egypt.

Figure 3: Geographical scope of the evaluation

28. **Programmatic scope** – The evaluation covers the entirety of UNHCR's emergency response activities, across all sectors and thematic approaches in the four countries and coordination responsibilities with the RCM and IASC coordination structures. The evaluation covers UNHCR's response across the whole organization, and looks at the extent to which support and mobilization within Headquarters Divisions (HQ) provided support to the three Regional Bureaux, the UNHCR Regional Bureau for the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes (RB EHAGL), the UNHCR Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa (RB WCA) and the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Middle East and North Africa (RB MENA) and to the RRC.

29. **Forcibly displaced and stateless persons of focus** – The focus of the evaluation changes depending on the countries, as this L3 evaluation exclusively focuses on the newly displaced caseload in the countries of focus. Therefore, in Chad, Egypt and South Sudan, the evaluation focuses on newly arrived and returning refugees and asylum-seekers who arrived after April 2023.[65] In Sudan, it focuses on IDPs displaced after April 2023 and not on the existing caseload of refugees present in the country prior to the crisis. The evaluation does not look at UNHCR activities targeting only host communities.

30. **The temporal scope** under review is of 12 months, from July 2023 to June 2024 (nine months of the initial L3 activation period from July 2023 to April 2024, plus the three following months following the extension of the L3 in May 2024).[66]

31. **The primary intended users** of this evaluation are UNHCR's country operations in Chad, Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan, the RB EHAGL, the RB WCA, the RB MENA, the UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator and Coordination team for the Sudan

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[64] See for example: Country Strategy Evaluation for UNHCR South Sudan (2018-2022) published in 2023; Sudan Country Strategy Evaluation (2018-2021) published in 2022.

[65] Refugees that were in these countries prior to the Sudan situation are not part of the scope of the evaluation.

[66] However, as the months of May and June 2023 were critical in framing the design of the response, the ET considered it as much as possible in their analysis.

Situation, the Representatives and Senior Management Teams and several divisions in HQ, e.g. the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS) and the Division of International Protection (DIP).

32. **The secondary intended users** of this evaluation are government representatives in each of the four countries, implementing partners, UN agencies, donors and other operational partners. Finally, the evaluation is intended to provide a space for people with and for whom UNHCR works[67] to share their experiences with the response.

2.1. Evaluation methodology

33. The evaluation adopted a **non-experimental mixed method approach.** A non-deductive approach was used and, as such, a theory of change was not employed.

34. The team made its evaluative judgments using **a variety of sources of primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative data**. The data sources are the desk review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGD) and three online surveys. The diversity of the data collected and analysed allowed the team to triangulate and substantiate the findings presented in this final evaluation report. A detailed outline of data collection approaches can be found in ANNEX 3: Detailed Methodology.

35. **Secondary data collection**: The ET used reliable data and documents that had already been produced by UNHCR and other actors throughout the response. This includes documentation but also quantitative data (e.g. on forcibly displaced and stateless persons, financial data, outcomes/outputs and partnerships).[68] The team also reviewed pre-existing data for their relevance to the evaluation questions (population surveys, protection monitoring and post-distribution monitoring (PDM) exercises, intention surveys, evaluations, audits, etc.). As such, the team scanned around 1,000 documents and coded around 270 documents.[69] **The document review** was iterative and continued throughout the evaluation.

36. **Primary data collection**: Primary data were collected through a variety of complementary methods, which included KIIs,[70] FDGs and three online surveys[71] that targeted UNHCR and IP staff, as well as sector members. The ET conducted in-person data collection in Chad and Egypt, while remote data collection was conducted in Sudan, South Sudan and with the HQ and the regional bureau. A summary is provided in the table below.

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[67] Refugees, IDPs or host communities depending on the countries.

[68] Relevant documents identified for the evaluation questions included RRP reports, Annual Results Reports, Strategic reports per country, mission reports per country and situational update reports.

[69] A set of key strategic documents was provided to the ET by UNHCR in the early stages of the evaluation and the document library was subsequently expanded with documentation obtained during the data collection visit.

[70] Using purposive sampling based on key informants' lists obtained from UNHCR COs.

[71] The online surveys were disseminated by UNHCR or by the ET depending on what arrangements made the most sense for each country.

Table 3: Primary data collection overview

Data collection methods	Total	Egypt	Chad	Sudan	South Sudan	HQ/RB
Desk Review	270 documents coded and more than 1,000 reviewed[72]					
Key Informant Interviews	**214**	70	70	24	26	24
Focus Group Discussions	**55**	20	35	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
UNHCR Staff Survey	**65**[73]	22	15	17	10	*N/A*
IP Survey	**37**	1	11	14	11	*N/A*
Sector Members Survey	**51**	28	16	*N/A*	7	*N/A*

37. **The evaluation team incorporated age, gender and diversity considerations into the sampling to ensure a diversity of voices and experiences**. The ET conducted a total of 55 FGDs in Chad and Egypt with 420 refugees and asylum-seekers[74] that fled Sudan.[75] The data disaggregation in the report is presented selectively, focusing on cases where the evaluation team identified significant differences based on age, gender and specific needs. Evaluators selected the key informants purposefully, targeting stakeholders[76] who were best positioned to respond to the evaluation questions.

38. The evaluation team applied an ethical approach to primary data collection by systematically explaining the purpose of the evaluation to participants, collecting informed consent and ensuring confidentiality and access to all subgroups of refugees, and to avoid causing harm to participants. Throughout the evaluation process, the evaluation team followed data protection and responsibility principles and practices that are aligned with UNHCR data protection policies and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Finally, the team produced the analysis and findings presented in this report with independence and impartiality, ensuring systematic triangulation to produce credible findings.

2.2. Limitations

39. Limitations to the evaluation include:

   ▪ **Secondary Data Availability** – The evaluation was constrained by the limited availability of secondary data and documents across key indicators in the Evaluation Questions. With limited data and information available on the Operational Data Portal (ODP), the ET liaised with the different COs to collect as much documentation as possible to bridge the gaps identified during the inception

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[72] When the ET "coded documents", it did so in an excel matrix, coding each paragraph segment according to evaluation indicators. When it reviewed documents, it assessed whether the document should be coded.

[73] Note that out of this total number, some of the respondents were not qualified to continue the survey if they were not part of the L3 response, explaining why the total survey responses were higher than the total considered here.

[74] Sampling technique: availability sampling. Final sample breakdown: 48 per cent men and 52 per cent women; 28 per cent aged 18–25, 46 per cent 26–60 and 10 per cent above 60.

[75] In the case of Egypt, the consultants conducted 3 FGDs with Syrian Refugees.

[76] Out of the 214 key informants, 112 are from UNHCR, 47 from IP, 36 from sector members, 9 from Government, 10 from a Donor.

phase, although with limited success.[77] These gaps, particularly within the effectiveness and efficiency criteria, affected the depth of analysis and limited the ability to draw definitive conclusions in some areas. To mitigate this, the findings were formulated to reflect the level of confidence based on the available data.

- **Incomparable results framework** – The UNHCR's results framework and the RRRP framework posed several consistency and comparability issues across countries. First, the UNHCR 2023 annual results report did not distinguish between the Sudan Situation caseload and other caseloads within the same countries. As a result, the ET could not use this data source to evaluate effectiveness (meeting results and coverage). Second, the 2023 RRRP monitoring framework was based on different monitoring structures and indicators across countries that could not be aligned, preventing its use by the ET as an information source. As these issues were resolved with the 2024 RRRP, the ET was able to use the 2024 midyear RRRP reporting data to evaluate effectiveness, which resulted in a section skewed towards the end of the evaluation time scope.

- **Unreliable Planned/Actual figures for 2024** – In the effectiveness section, the ET presents coverage data across a range of sectors for the four countries. The following must be noted:

  - **2024 Planned Figures for Egypt**: The ET extracted planned figures from the RRRP 2024 Target Framework,[78] which are based on data reported by the Government of Egypt. KIIs and field visits revealed that the actual number of people in need likely exceeded the reported figures. As a result, the coverage percentages should be interpreted with caution, as they may not accurately reflect the true scale of needs.

  - **2024 Planned Figures for South Sudan**: The levels of attainment of results for South Sudan frequently exceed 100 per cent across certain sectors. However, based on qualitative data collection, the ET has identified discrepancies and has reason to believe that these figures may not fully reflect the actual outcomes.

  - **2024 Actual Figures for Chad**: UNHCR shared an output indicator dataset for RRRP countries in 2024, detailing UNHCR's coverage of needs exclusively. In Chad, the data show that UNHCR's actual figures are identical to the combined figures for UNHCR and its IPs and OPs, indicating potential discrepancies, as it would be unrealistic for UNHCR to be solely responsible for all sectoral interventions.

- **Sudan as a Light-Touch Country** – Due to the unique aspects of the UNHCR response in Sudan[79] and the limited secondary data availability (see the previous limitation), the ET was unable to collect as much data for Sudan as for South Sudan, the other light-touch country. While the findings presented in the report are applicable to Sudan, there are fewer examples from Sudan compared with the other three countries. Instances where data were insufficient to report on Sudan are clearly acknowledged in this report, e.g. the Coordination section that only touches upon the RCM in Chad, Egypt and South Sudan.

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[77] Various requests made by the ET to interviewees and focal points have remained unanswered after up to three follow-up emails and reminders.

[78] UNHCR. "SUDAN EMERGENCY REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN January-December 2024 Mid-Year Update, June 2024," n.d.

[79] The biggest differences are the population of focus, e.g. IDPs, and the coordination arrangements.

- Despite using similar dissemination strategies, **the uptake of the surveys was different and limited across countries**. The number of respondents for the survey with IPs and sector members also shows variations from country to country, with sample sizes varying respectively from [1-8] and [1-9]. Furthermore, the response rate for each survey was lower than expected by the ET due to most likely survey fatigue.[80] As a result, the evaluation team could not disaggregate the survey results per country and reported instead on aggregated descriptive statistics. However, when relevant to triangulate or corroborate other data sources, the evaluation team used country-specific data.

3. KEY FINDINGS

3.1. Relevance

40. The following section discusses the extent to which UNHCR used reliable data to inform the design of the response, whether UNHCR's interventions in Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan and Chad were relevant, taking the operational context into consideration. It also touches upon the humanitarian principles.

3.1.1. Use of reliable data to inform the design of the response

> **Key Finding 1: Data collection mechanisms were effective in supporting the large-scale approach to the response in the first months, but data collection has had less impact upon targeting within the response or upon the evolution of the response later.**

41. **UNHCR established mechanisms at border crossings and other locations to collect data on needs and protection risks through refugee registration and protection monitoring**.[81] In Chad and South Sudan, border monitoring was conducted by UNHCR and partners, with registration taking place in sites like Adré camps in Chad, and transit centres in South Sudan. In Egypt, UNHCR was not permitted at the border but worked through the Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC), allowing limited protection monitoring near Aswan, while registration occurred in Cairo and Alexandria. UNHCR compiled the collected data to inform policy and advocacy. In Sudan, insecurity hindered data collection, but multisectoral assessments and the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) supplemented efforts.[82] Registration was based on geographic accessibility, coordinated between UNHCR and the Commission for Refugees (COR), though coverage remained limited. To expand data collection, Third Party Monitoring (TPM) was introduced for CBI and CRI PDMs. [83]

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[80] The ET expected around 20-25 replies overall per country, based on previous L3 experience.

[81] UNHCR collected data on household composition and on immediate needs. In Chad, raw data collection was done using Kobo Collect forms, both at the border (IP 1), and for Protection Monitoring in the camps (UNHCR 3). At the Adré border crossing in Chad, there were morning briefings between the Protection Monitoring IP and UNHCR (IP 1), which constituted one of the first lines of reporting. In Egypt, Kobo was also used (UNHCR 5), and data could be shared by Kobo online, and the data were then transferred to the RAIS case management database. As an example, the Kobo form used in Egypt asks for household data, data on nationality and civil documentation, crossing point and planned final destination, and specific needs and protection risks; In Chad, the "Project 21" ('P21') tool was used to monitor for general protection issues, issues specific to child protection and GBV, as well as an overview of basic needs, and relations with host communities. In Egypt, UNHCR participated in a number of joint assessments with other agencies as well as inter-agency assessments. In South Sudan, the main tool was the UNHCR and IOM Joint Border Monitoring of Arrivals from Sudan to South Sudan.

[82] UNHCR. "Protection Brief - Sudan - July 2023," n.d.

[83] UNHCR - Sudan. "PDM Summary, CBI –Al Qadarif," 2024.

> 📋 **Good Practice – Joint UNHCR/IOM Border Monitoring in South Sudan.** In South Sudan, border monitoring was rolled out jointly with IOM across 27 border crossings. Border monitoring was rolled out almost immediately at the start of the crisis, looking at counting new arrivals by nationality, basic biodata and basic needs. This collaboration was then also part of the basis for further coordination of programming, for transportation away from the border, and the further provision of basic services.

42. **Across several locations, the scaling up of data collection was achieved through working with both IPs and other UN agencies, as well as sector co-leads for the response**. IP staff in Chad[84] and Egypt reported having received specific training in data collection. In Egypt, throughout 2023, more than 50 inter-agency assessments were conducted by various partners and agencies with the approval of the Government.[85] In Sudan, staff highlighted UNHCR's participation in data collection and data-sharing with UN OCHA.[86] The scaling up of data collection was also pursued through the protection monitoring undertaken by UNHCR and its partners, including IPs and Protection Cluster partners. The Protection Cluster developed and disseminated a standardized KII tool to support this scale-up.

43. **In Chad and South Sudan, UNHCR has also successfully established consultative mechanisms through which the needs and preferences of host communities were gauged.** The basis of these mechanisms are the local committees (many of which are "mixed" with the participation of refugees) in Chad and South Sudan, which FGD participants in Chad considered to be effective means of consultation. However, it was not clear how truly representative and inclusive the participation in these local committees had been. In Egypt, projects were reportedly set up to work with IPs and with the Egyptian Ministry for Youth and Sport, including reflection meetings where host community youth were able to raise and discuss the challenges faced and lessons learned, and to set priorities for 2025. The ET was not able to document the degree to which host communities were otherwise included in these processes, or the mechanisms used.[87]

44. According to interviewees and the documents reviewed**, there was limited connection between the data collected** and its use in strategic decisions or service design**.** Across all countries, an important middle step was often missing: the lack of documented analysis on how data shaped strategies and interventions, leading to a disconnect between evidence and decisions. In Chad, data from the Project 21 (P21) tool may have been a factor, in some cases, for encouraging partners to strengthen their presence, but more generally, larger decisions on, for instance, whether to have a camps or no-camps policy was driven by an a priori combination of UNHCR's global policy of "camps as last resort", tempered by national host governments' own policies towards camps and the free movement of refugees and asylum-seekers, rather than by any evidenced analysis

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[84] While at the same time in Chad, some IPs noted that their monitoring in the camps was affected by the small number of staff they were able to deploy, and by the limitations on vehicles and fuel.

[85] UNHCR, 'Sudan Emergency Regional Response Plan January-December 2024 Mid Year Update June 2024', 2024. The analysis of needs also benefited from data and information shared by the Government and by other humanitarian and development actors.

[86] Based on interviews with UNHCR staff.

[87] Although the Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response Plan January - December 2024 states that, 'Throughout 2023 more than 50 inter-agency assessments were conducted by various partners and agencies involving refugees, asylum-seekers, newly arrived displaced people from various nationalities, and host communities…' it does not go into further detail on how. (UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency Regional Response Plan January-December 2024 Mid Year Update June 2024," p.67. 2024.) One IP stated that although they did social-cohesion projects that included members of host communities, these projects were outside the UNHCR funding.

of data.[88;89] No evidence suggests comparative needs analysis influenced the prioritization of camps or provinces.[90] At the service design level, in Chad and South Sudan, shelter models for individual households were copied from "off-the-shelf" examples provided in UNHCR's *Shelter Design Catalogue*.[91] No evidence-based guidance was generated on how recipients may use and upgrade their shelters, and what resulting shelter needs may emerge over time. Nor was there any evidence that the shortcomings in the durability of shelter materials, identified in previous evaluations in the region,[92] had been taken onboard in the development of the shelter designs, e.g. in Chad. In South Sudan, a key informant noted that in one of the transit centres, public messaging posters had been put up inside the centre, as a response to reports of protection incidents. However, there is no documented evidence of a systematic protection response or how monitoring data influenced site layout, facility selection, or refugee well-being at the Renk transit site, as claimed in the Annual Results Report.[93]

45. **There remains greater potential for using a broader range of data to design services on the basis of accurate information and data on needs, as the situation stabilizes**. Assessment and monitoring data were inconsistent and lacked critical insights, particularly on activity impact and the evolution of refugees' coping mechanisms – both essential for targeted assistance and effective response design. Key assessment tools such as the P21 questionnaire[94] focus on the needs and protection risks of the respondents, but do not include questions to assess the degree to which refugees and asylum-seekers had developed their own positive coping mechanisms to face protection risks. The Sudan and South Sudan Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) monthly market overviews[95] provide information on market functionality, but there does not appear to be any analysis of whether refugees participate in the markets as sellers or as buyers. The Egypt Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) PDM End of Year Report 2023 extensively discusses the use of cash to support basic needs, but not the use of cash to support individual livelihoods.[96] Similarly, no data were collected on how refugees who received shelters in Chad or South Sudan repaired, adapted or upgraded these shelters,[97] or on any recurring needs for such self-maintenance of the shelters.

46. **UNHCR implemented a protection strategy and programming to address the main protection risks identified in each context, together with mitigation measures**.

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[88] In Egypt, the national government continued its pre-existing 'no-camps' policy from the start of the Sudan response, which meant that urban areas then automatically became the main targeted areas. In South Sudan, the ramping up of the border monitoring by UNHCR and IOM together informed the need to move populations away from the border, However, there has been no corresponding set of data providing analysis of the coping mechanisms or absorption capacities or environmental impact in the areas to which people were then transported, and which might have then informed the strategy for supporting that onward movement. An operational decision jointly taken by Chadian authorities and UNHCR required the relocation of asylum-seekers away from the borders and into newly established or existing camps from previous caseloads of Sudanese refugees.

[89] For example, in Chad and South Sudan, data on the numbers of people crossing the border may have informed the planning for the size of either stand-alone camps or sites, or extensions to existing camps or sites, or the number of camps, but not the decision whether to have camps or not in the first place.

[90] The seasonal accessibility of the sites and fears of insecurity were the primary driving factors for the targeting of existing sites away from the border in Chad and South Sudan.

[91] Specifically, Model I—Model IV, pp. 25-28.

[92] UNHCR, "West and Central Africa Regional Shelter and Settlement Evaluation," 2022.Section 4.1.

[93] UNHCR. "Annual Results Report South Sudan 2023," 2023.

[94] UNHCR, "Chad -- Project 21 MONITORING REGIONAL DE PROTECTION," n.d.

[95] As examples, CWG Sudan/REACH. "Sudan Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) Market Overview -- July 2024," 2024. And CWG South Sudan/REACH. "South Sudan | Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) Market Overview -- 1-7 July 2024," 2024.

[96] UNHCR. "MPCA PDM - End Year 2023 - Final Report - 19 April 2024-UNHCR," n.d

[97] Although staff in Chad were able to give visual demonstrations of examples of such upgrading, during visits to the camps.

Although there was some variation in the range of protection risks identified, all UNHCR staff and staff from partners were able to identify what they considered to be the key protection risks in the localities where they were working. More detailed information was given in the quarterly Protection Briefings for Chad and South Sudan, the monthly Protection Briefs for Sudan, and the monthly Protection Reports for Egypt.[98] UNHCR and partner staff highlighted the training provided to staff and the sensitization activities provided to the refugees and host communities, particularly concerning GBV, but also protection risks associated with social tensions between communities. In Sudan, UNHCR worked with a partner to rapidly pivot existing peacebuilding and youth-peacebuilding projects into scaled-up Community-Based Protection networks and protection monitoring, based on the same local context.[99]

47. **Examples of measures to mitigate protection risks tended to be at the level of individual households. Efforts at the level of entire camps or sites have had mixed results**. In camps and sites in Chad and South Sudan, block-level security committees and security patrols have been set up, with efforts to involve women, and training was provided by UNHCR. In Chad, there have been instances where block-security committees received additional staff in response to reported threats. UNHCR and partner staff identified major risks, such as acts of violence at a market within a camp that is used by refugees and host communities. Attempts to relocate the market outside of the camp were ongoing, but not yet successful. In Egypt, FGD participants highlighted the risk of deportation, which they had reportedly been threatened with by local authority staff. A number of participants were of the opinion that UNHCR was not doing enough to protect refugees and asylum-seekers from it. This issue had two dimensions: an individual one, affecting each person who faces the threat, and a national one, involving ongoing advocacy efforts with national authorities , with FGD participants not having a clear understanding of how these efforts were progressing.

3.1.2.Relevance of the response with regard to the needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of forcibly displaced and stateless persons

> **Key Finding 2: UNHCR's targeting strategies were broadly relevant, incorporating vulnerability and contextual criteria to address urgent needs; however, there was room for improvement in terms of inconsistencies in application of targeting criteria, limited clarity for affected populations, and challenges in inclusivity, particularly for unregistered individuals.**

48. **In Chad and South Sudan, the strategy adopted during the first months of the response of providing "blanket" basic-service support to all (including also registration and protection activities), as well as an emphasis upon transportation to decongest the borders, was a relevant and appropriate way to undertake life-saving activities, prioritizing WASH and shelter.** Given the scale of the needs and the early and continued reports of the dire state of all those crossing the border (particularly highlighted by staff at the border areas in Chad and South Sudan), this blanket strategy was the only effective and realistic way to ensure that everyone's basic needs were met.

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[98] As examples, UNHCR. "Protection Brief Chad," 2023.; UNHCR. "Protection Brief South Sudan," 2023.; UNHCR. "Protection Brief-Sudan- July 2023," 2023. For Egypt, the monthly protection reports were more likely to be according to specific themes, for example UNHCR. "GBV_Monthly Report_January 2024," n.d.

[99] Based on IP interviews.

49. **When used, targeting efforts have often relied on standard criteria to identify the most vulnerable populations, with additional contextual factors incorporated over time**. For instance, in Egypt, both MPCA and Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA) were distributed based on eligibility criteria, with Proxy Means Testing (PMT) applied for MPCA and 12 vulnerability criteria to guide ECA targeting, supplemented by acute poverty as an additional criterion.[100] Other cash assistance programmes, such as cash for child protection, involve distinct criteria, such as the capacity of caregivers, as specified in the CBI Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). In Chad, disability was used as a criterion for the selection or prioritization of recipients, although it was not used as a factor in the design of services in most sectors apart from health. Some FGD participants stated that issues such as chronic illness were not considered a disability. In Sudan, participatory targeting was used to take into consideration local contextual issues, but on the assumption that "most-vulnerable" criteria would be used. In at least one case, however, UNHCR agreed with local authorities to target all those who were living in schools to relocate them, so that the schools would be freed up.

> 💡 **Lessons Learned - ensuring that disaggregated data are backed up with tailored assistance for persons with disabilities.** As shown by experience in all contexts in the evaluation, collecting data on the needs of persons with disabilities has been taking place, but is not sufficient on its own to ensure that specialized and adapted assistance and services are provided to them.

50. **With some exceptions, many protection activities have been provided on a prima facie basis without clear targeting or prioritization of certain groups**. Registration backlogs occurred in Chad and Egypt, and to a lesser extent in South Sudan. Efforts to address these backlogs followed a first-come, first-served approach rather than prioritizing more vulnerable individuals who may cross later. This approach may have resulted in earlier arrivals – who likely had more resources – receiving support first. However, the alternative would have been to delay assistance for later arrivals who may never have crossed, in highly dynamic situations.[101] Therefore, this decision appeared relevant given the operating context. An exception was South Sudan, where the most vulnerable were prioritized for mechanized transport to transit centres, due to their heightened vulnerability, allowing them access to services tailored to their specific needs. As protection activities took place at these centres, the most vulnerable also received priority, but only because they arrived first. In Egypt, SOPs were established for Child Protection[102] and GBV,[103] listing eligibility criteria, but lacking guidance on how to weigh these criteria, or to target for support any sub-groups of individuals who may meet the general eligibility criteria. Other protection support has been given on an individual basis, based on resource availability and refugee requests, without prioritization.

51. **In Egypt, the combination of the abrupt end of the Four Freedoms Agreement[104] by the Government of Egypt (GOE) in 2023 and UNHCR's strategy to prioritize assistance to refugees or asylum-seekers that only got registered by UNHCR has**

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[100] UNHCR, "CBI SOPs- Final June 2024- Signed by Rep," n.d.

[101] Multiple informants, particularly in Chad, emphasized that nearly everyone crossing the border was in acute need.

[102] UNHCR, "Egypt BEST INTEREST PROCEDURES SOPS," n.d.

[103] UNHCR, "Egypt Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Direct Implementation of the Safety Package (SP)," n.d.

[104] Signed bilaterally between Egypt and Sudan in 2004, 'the agreement guarantees mutual freedom of movement, residency without a permit, work, and property ownership. Citizens of the two countries do not need visas to enter and exit the respective countries' (Abdullahi Boru Halakhe. "Sudan in Crisis: Improving the Response for Sudanese Refugees in Egypt." Accessed November 30, 2024. https://www.refugeesinternational.org/reports-briefs/sudan-in-crisis-improving-the-response-for-sudanese-refugees-in-egypt/.)

left some vulnerable households without access to basic assistance due to delays in registration. While UNHCR Egypt had scaled up its overall registration capacity by over 420 per cent by increasing the number of registration days and staff as well as enhancing registration facilities,[105] assistance and access to services was more limited for unregistered persons, especially when UNHCR stopped ECA. This resulted in a delayed response given the backlog of registrations, as mentioned unanimously by FGD participants (see 3.3.1 Timeliness of the intervention).

52. **When UNHCR put in place targeting criteria in Egypt and Chad, forcibly displaced and stateless persons generally had little understanding of how these criteria were applied,** as it was expressed in the FGDs in Chad[106] and Egypt. In Chad, FGD participants asserted that there were no targeting criteria apart from the prioritization of households by date of arrival, and female participants highlighted what they felt to be a lack of consultation in the targeting process, despite their own expressed preference to be consulted on all aspects of implementation. In Egypt, although some FGD participants showed an awareness of the criteria for some groups and sectors (for instance, in response to vulnerabilities related to Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD), others stated that it was on a first-come, first-served basis. They drew this conclusion from families who were less in need but had arrived through regularized channels with passport stamps at the beginning of the crisis, before the Four Freedom Agreement was lifted. They also felt that those who advocated for their cases and paid frequent visits to partner offices to follow up on their situation eventually got assistance. This was perceived as unfair and dependent on individual efforts, or even that there were no selection criteria. Nonetheless, the criteria put in place were generally easy to understand,[107] and FGD participants were able to list some of them, although there were questions about their application and some criteria were deemed to have been insufficiently considered, e.g. disability.

> **Key Finding 3: The activities and modalities of assistance were overall relevant to the Sudan Situation, although some had to be de-prioritized due to lack of funding. There is evidence of adaptation, but programmatic adaptation has been constrained by the lack of sufficient monitoring.**

53. **The predominant interventions in the first months, i.e. life-saving services (registration, legal assistance, basic needs assistance and shelter), were relevant to provide basic-service support to the largest number of forcibly displaced and stateless persons,** to the extent allowed by the significant gaps in funding and resources. In Chad and South Sudan, some staff members continued to question the strategic decisions to put refugees and asylum seeks in camps. However, there was a consensus that the provision of emergency shelter kits, constructed emergency shelters and communal emergency WASH facilities was the best realistic option available to achieve basic shelter and emergency WASH objectives. The selection of materials for the shelters or shelter kits and the models for the constructed shelters were derived from UNHCR global technical guidance resources. The models selected had been previously used within the region (specifically in South Sudan), and so were generally acceptable to the recipients, in the first months (and before any significant deterioration in the quality of the shelter materials). The higher cost of UNHCR family tents meant that these were

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[105] UNHCR. "Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan Egypt Chapter July 2023 Progress Report," 2023.

[106] This is also corroborated by Ground Truth Solutions, "Aid Is Inadequate Because No One Consults Us."Perceptions of Humanitarian Aid in Chad," June 2023.
[107] Criteria mentioned in the FGDs include disability, pregnant and lactating women, women-headed households, and the very old.

unlikely to be considered as one of the alternatives for selection, given the level of funding available and due to the fact that the materials (apart from higher-quality plastic sheeting) were generally available on local, national and regional markets (although procured directly by UNHCR or partners, rather than accessed through CBI).[108]

54. **The modalities of assistance were initially tailored to the scale of the needs and the locations where refugees settled.** In the early stages of the response, in-kind assistance, such as the distribution of CRIs and shelter materials, was the most practical option, especially in Chad and South Sudan, where refugees were relocated to rural camps with limited access to markets. Conversely, in urban settings, such as in Egypt and for refugees in larger cities, cash-based interventions were a rational approach, given the accessibility of established markets, the ability of refugees to secure housing in permanent structures and UNHCR's experience with CBI at scale.

55. **As the response evolved, efforts in South Sudan and Sudan have focused on assessing the feasibility of CBI and gradually transitioning from in-kind assistance, where conditions allowed.** However, in Chad, some interviewees highlighted the potential for a greater transition to CBI, particularly in camps near urban centres or where markets have developed near newly established camps. However, this shift did not sufficiently translate into practice and did not match the preferences of refugees and asylum-seekers.[109] In Sudan, cash programming proved instrumental in facilitating access to communities. UNHCR and key sector informants indicated that cash programming was scaled up in conflict-prone areas such as Kordofan, where in-kind assistance could not be delivered to address critical needs due to security and logistical access (See 3.3.3 Addressing the access constraints and security of staff).

56. **Some relevant activities, particularly education, WASH and health, were reduced due to insufficient funding, as reported by UNHCR staff in Sudan and Chad in particular**. This concern was more frequently raised by staff in Sudan, who reported that, at various points in 2023, UNHCR had to scale back efforts in education, WASH and health. One staff member emphasized that, with the current funding shortfall for basic services, planning for durable solutions was not feasible. In Chad, while staff did not identify specific activities that had been reduced due to funding constraints, several members expressed hope that some initiatives could soon be transitioned to other agencies (e.g. UNICEF for WASH) or government ministries (such as the Ministry of Health). (See 3.2.1 Meeting objectives for information on the coverage of needs).

57. **Evidence of adaptations made to the current range of support and activities provided was observed.** Due to inflation and rising product prices in Egypt, UNHCR increased the transfer value and the number of cases within the budget available to respond to needs, with the transfer value having been revised twice by the Cash Working Group (CWG). In South Sudan and Sudan, UNHCR conducted a CBI feasibility analysis[110] and, where feasible, shifted to CBI to make the assistance more timely and more tailored to recipients' preferences. UNHCR Egypt modified its activities to match the emerging needs of refugees and asylum-seekers, who included newly identified groups or new needs. **However, the level of adaptation was sometimes criticized by**

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[108] UNHCR. "UNHCR Shelter Design Catalogue," n.d., with availability of materials on the local markets corroborated by interviews with UNHCR staff.

[109] 81 per cent of recipients preferred cash assistance over other modalities. UNHCR, "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023," 2023.; UNHCR

[110] Reported in the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) monthly reports for Sudan and South Sudan. As examples: CWG Sudan/REACH. "Sudan Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) Market Overview -- July 2024," 2024 and CWG South Sudan/REACH. "South Sudan | Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI) Market Overview -- 1-7 July 2024," 2024, as well as mentioned in interviews.

SSinterviewees. For instance, in Egypt, various informants criticized the lack of change in the design of MPCA (referring to the accuracy of the PMT/vulnerability assessment and to the duration of assistance).

58. **Programmatic adaptation has been somewhat hampered by the lack of clear mechanism for the regular monitoring and review of activities**. Except for CBI, the collection of proactive feedback from recipients, through PDM or consultations, is not mandatory and is left to the CO's initiative. The Egypt CBI SOP[111] states that PDMs will collect data on how the cash is used, whether it meets basic needs, and the presence or absence of negative coping mechanisms, which could be indicators of recipients' satisfaction. However, there was no description within the SOP itself of how the PDM data would be collected and used to inform any review and necessary revisions of the strategy. **Programmatic adaptation was also affected by the lack of funding of the response** (See 3.2.3.1 The level of funding).

3.1.3. Relevance of the design vis-à-vis the context of the response

Key Finding 4: UNHCR has undertaken a wide range of inclusion activities, with varying degrees of involvement, with forcibly displaced and stateless persons, local authorities and host communities, in order to influence the design of the response and increase the relevance to the local contexts.

59. **UNHCR has made significant efforts to engage with governments and local authorities**. At national, provincial or local level, UNHCR's engagement has covered targeting, registration, access, support for host communities, and natural resource use. In Chad, joint work with the governorates has been satisfactory. UNHCR has fruitful relations with its main field-level counterpart, the Commission Nationale pour l'Accueil et la Réinsertion des Réfugies et des Rapatriés (CNARR). However, CNARR is under-resourced and funded by UNHCR, which is itself underfunded. In some locations, CNARR has acted more as a dependent implementing partner than a strategic partner with an equal say in targeting strategies. In South Sudan, while the Government is consulted on the types of activities used to support refugees, discussions regarding the design of the targeting strategy were less clear. In Egypt, interviews reflected national authorities' involvement in designing targeting strategies and activities, and a shift in the strategy of UNHCR Egypt towards strong partnerships with national authorities to facilitate adequate operations. Much of this was done with specific line ministries of the Egyptian Government. In Sudan, the registration and documentation of refugees continued where accessible, in a joint and continuous manner by UNHCR and COR.

60. **In Chad and Egypt, UNHCR established mechanisms to promote social cohesion between newly arrived refugees and host communities, which were viewed as having a positive impact by interviewees.** UNHCR set up committees for peaceful coexistence and other "mixed" committees, involving representatives of the refugees, as well as representatives of the host communities,[112] traditional chiefs, and representatives from the government at the prefecture and sub-prefecture level. Many interviewees specifically described these forums as places where all participants could openly raise any issues, which would then be discussed by all. UNHCR field staff recounted instances where they were able to intervene to advocate for certain actions to be taken by one or more actors in these forums, to resolve disputes. UNHCR field

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[111] UNHCR. "CBI SOPs- Final June 2024- Signed by Rep," n.d.

[112] On the refugee side, participation includes block leaders from camps or sites, as well as leaders or representatives of various other refugee committees.

staff were also able to recount training, workshops or other sensitization activities that they had facilitated to support the committees. In Egypt, greater social cohesion has been achieved through improvements to public service infrastructure and to the capacity of Egyptian staff (medical and education) who run services originally predominantly intended for the host community, but now accessed by refugees, asylum-seekers and host communities. Additionally, initiatives were taken to include Egyptians in youth and livelihood programmes, albeit on a smaller scale.

61. **Despite the progress made, significant untapped potential remained to integrate market-based approaches into the design of emergency activities, which could further contribute to social cohesion**. Several interviews suggested that greater use of CBI or local procurement could positively impact local markets and counter the narrative that the response did not sufficiently benefit host communities. Market-based approaches, which have demonstrated their effectiveness in building social cohesion and contributing to local economies,[113] have not yet been implemented in the Sudan response, according to interviews conducted. While CBI and local procurement were reportedly feasible for some camps in Chad (see 3.3 Cost-efficiency of the intervention), the CO did not consider this option.[114] Some UNHCR interviewees pointed to the lack of a comprehensive market strategy[115] as a barrier. Further exploration could be undertaken to determine the feasibility of this approach in the event of an active and high emergency, taking into consideration remote responses.

62. Participants in FGDs were therefore more likely to recount incidents of social tension between newly arrived refugees and asylum-seekers, on the one hand, and host communities, on the other hand. In Egypt, social cohesion was generally seen as less of an issue by many of the UNHCR staff and partners interviewed. Nevertheless, several FGD participants questioned why UNHCR did not undertake activities to address the xenophobic comments made by members of the host communities. FGD participants in Chad stated that the massive arrival of refugees had put a strain on natural resources and basic social infrastructure, leading to perceptions of discrimination in the provision of assistance.

63. **Social cohesion considerations have predominantly focused on the relationships between newly arrived refugees and host communities, with less attention given to interactions between newly arrived Sudanese refugees and established refugee communities**. The same is true of relations between newly arrived Sudanese refugees and established communities of refugees from other countries. The only notable exception is in Egypt, where UNHCR Egypt aimed to adopt the "one-refugee" approach, particularly in the framework of its foreseen Egypt Refugee Plan. In Chad, various interviewees reported growing tensions and even fights taking place between newly arrived refugees and established refugee communities that were competing for assistance.

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[113] International Labour Office; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)., "Guide to Market-Based Livelihood Interventions for Refugees," 2017.

[114] For instance, documentation testified to the presence of both communities as vendors (and not just buyers) in other markets in refugee locations in the country such as Touloum camp, prior to the Sudan Situation.

[115] Such a strategy would identify the most effective areas of intervention across the entire market system—including supply chains, vendors of various scales, environmental considerations, and livelihood impacts—strengthening markets to enable their use for CBI and local procurement.

3.1.4. Humanitarian principles

Key Finding 5: UNHCR has broadly acted in accordance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality.[116] However, there was limited evidence of how discussions on these matters have affected operational decisions and specific cases for which they could have been improved.

64. **With regard to the principle of humanity, UNHCR responded to humanitarian needs where they were identified, to the extent that the limited funding and resources permitted** (see 3.2.1 Meeting objectives), focusing on providing basic services to address these needs with a strong "do no harm" approach. Generally speaking, the approach to responding to urgent humanitarian needs varied between countries, with a blanket approach for the new refugee caseload in Chad and South Sudan, and a more targeted approach in Egypt and Sudan (see 3.1.2 Response relevance). A criticism made by some interviewees was that the response was insufficiently tailored to the needs and sensitive to the dignity of some categories of refugees and asylum-seekers, such as refugees from urban areas that were relocated to camps.

65. **UNHCR demonstrated a strong commitment to impartiality**, ensuring support was generally based on needs, and using tools like data collection to identify high-risk individuals (see 3.1.1 Use of reliable data to inform the design of the response). Efforts such as Egypt's "one-refugee" approach showcased attempts to treat different refugee groups equitably, while collaboration with IOM in South Sudan ensured consistent support for refugees and returnees. UNHCR's advocacy and strategic planning, particularly in Chad, contributed to strengthening asylum laws and policies, ensuring open borders and safety measures for displaced populations, all of which contributed to the impartiality of the response.

66. **However, maintaining a full impartiality was somewhat challenging for UNHCR for various reasons.** Accountability mechanisms to collect feedback and share information, crucial for safeguarding impartiality, were not sufficiently robust (see 3.6.2 Accountability to Affected Populations) and the segmentation of services by nationality persisted due to funding constraints. In Chad for example, several UNHCR interviewees criticized the disproportionate focus on operations in the country's eastern regions, which overlooked the equally severe needs of other refugee populations in the country,[117] by using a crisis-based approach rather than systematically applying a needs-based approach.

67. **Humanitarian access, which is crucial for ensuring impartiality, varied significantly across countries, each facing distinct challenges.** Among these, Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan emerged as the most difficult contexts to secure access to affected populations.[118] In Chad, UNHCR staff generally felt access was manageable, despite severe logistical and physical challenges, the risk of theft (addressed by the use of armed escorts) and occasional social unrest in some areas. In Egypt, the region of Aswan remained restricted due to government restrictions on UNHCR's permanent presence[119;120] despite the organization's proactive advocacy, albeit unsuccessful.

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[116] UNEG, "UNEG Guidance on the Integration of Humanitarian Principles in the Evaluation of Humanitarian Action," 2024.

[117] OCHA, "Plan de Réponse Humanitaire Révisé - Tchad."

[118] ACAPS and Crisis In Sight, "Humanitarian Access Overiew," July 2024.

[119] It remained a de facto presence, but not a formally recognized one.

[120] UNHCR's border assistance is largely handled by the Egyptian Red Crescent.

In South Sudan, while security risks were considered manageable by both UNHCR and IP staff, UNHCR reported only partial access, especially in the north and areas like Raja in Western Bahr el Ghazal. In Sudan, access was a major issue, particularly in areas controlled by RSF, such as Darfur. In these regions, UNHCR relied on IPs with pre-existing local footprints to deliver assistance, particularly in non-government-controlled areas.[121] UNHCR also relied on cross-border routes to access and provide assistance in Darfur from neighbouring countries. Nevertheless, access constraints, particularly in Sudan, prevented UNHCR from reaching vulnerable populations, despite reasonably successful access strategies (see 3.3.3 Addressing the access constraints and security of staff), and some informants felt that UNHCR could have advocated more on this issue.

68. **In the region's complex contexts, UNHCR's adherence to neutrality has faced challenges and trade-offs**. In Chad, the use of armed escorts by local police and French army vehicles for refugee relocation raised potential concerns about perceived neutrality among interviewees. While these measures improved access and supported the achievement of humanitarian objectives, thus advancing the principle of humanity, they also created tensions over neutrality. Most interviewees acknowledged the necessity of these actions due to the "*imperative to move refugees from the borders*", but some criticized the fact that UNHCR and the HC had initially agreed unilaterally with the Chadian authorities to rely on the French army, although they latterly consulted the HCT to ensure this decision was approved with mitigating measures to address concerns about humanitarian principles (trade-off between the humanity and neutrality principles). In Sudan, some humanitarian actors questioned whether UNHCR could have further expanded its response in RSF-held areas despite UN security measures being a significant constraint.

> 🔆 **Lessons Learned — having timely access to a fleet of well-maintained trucks – whether through direct assets, or appropriate framework agreements with providers, is also a protection instrument.** In Chad, refugees were transported using external service providers that were contracted during the emergency phase, as the operation had previously fully dismantled its large fleet of trucks and did not have pre-existing framework agreements with service providers.

69. With regard to independence, UNHCR has actively sought to diversify its funding sources and to advocate for unearmarked contributions, enabling the prioritization of countries based on needs (see 3.2.3 Factors affecting the effectiveness of the UNHCR's interventions). However, according to two UNHCR interviewees, challenges arose when one donor funded a party to the conflict in Sudan, thus trying to impose restrictions on UNHCR's operations. UNHCR resisted these constraints, maintaining its commitment to operational independence.

70. **There was limited explicit discussion of the application of humanitarian principles.** The principles of humanity and impartiality, perhaps because they were so fundamental to UNHCR's mission that they were considered to be self-evident by staff, were rarely referenced in internal or response-related resources, except at the strategic level, such as in the first three of the four regional strategic objectives of the 2024 Sudan RRRP.[122] Notably, the principle of neutrality is absent from discussions in the RRRP text

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[121] Specifically where UN presence is not allowed: remote monitoring and management of operations continue through partners and UNHCR continues to undertake remote protection monitoring using community-based protection networks in lower access areas.

122 UNHCR. "Sudan Regional RRP 2024," 2024. The principles of humanity and impartiality are implied in similar proportions in the relevant country chapters in the same document. As a contrast, the words 'humanity', 'impartiality' and 'neutrality' do not appear in any of the four 2023 country reports for Chad, Egypt, South Sudan or Sudan.

(the term itself does not appear in it). While a minority of interviewees stated that they adhere to humanitarian principles, there was minimal operational dialogue on how these principles explicitly guided their work, except in Chad, where there was somewhat more discussion of the potential trade-offs between the principles, specifically neutrality and humanity.

3.2.   Effectiveness

71. The following section discusses the extent to which UNHCR interventions in Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan and Chad achieved their objectives, with a focus on registration and protection, CBI, shelter and CRI. To assess this, the ET calculated output achievement – referred to as coverage throughout the section – by measuring the percentage of reached outputs against targets (or needs, depending on data availability). It also identifies unintended effects of the interventions as well as factors that affected the effectiveness of interventions. Throughout the effectiveness section, the ET calculated the coverage of needs for each sector as the percentage of people whose needs were met out of the total population in need. As outlined in Sections 1 and 2 of the report, the ET focused on the following population groups by country: IDPs in Sudan and the new caseloads of Sudanese refugees in Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan. The period of analysis covers 1 May to 31 December 2023, and 1 January to 30 June 2024.

3.2.1. Meeting objectives

> **Key Finding 6: UNHCR's response focused on most sectors, with stronger coverage in life-saving activities. However, limited and incompatible monitoring frameworks restricted the ability to conduct a detailed comparative analysis across countries.**

72. As explained in the limitations, the results framework (targets, outputs and outcomes)[123] developed in 2023 by UNHCR did not allow the ET to evaluate UNHCR's contribution to the coverage of needs in Chad, Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan, which led the ET to use the RRRP M&E data for the effectiveness section. In 2024, the ET was able to do so, however, with incomplete data for Sudan and questionable figures in Egypt and South Sudan, as well as doubtful actual figures in Chad (the ET provided details on this in the limitations section).

73. **In 2024, UNHCR and its 82 partners[124] targeted Sudanese forcibly displaced and stateless persons across Chad, Egypt and South Sudan through the RRRP**.[125] Sector-wise, UNHCR and its partners engaged in CRI distribution, shelter, protection, health and nutrition, and basic needs activities. As the graph below shows, levels of attainment vary per sector, with protection (especially registration) and health and nutrition showing high levels. Despite such efforts, these fell short of meeting needs that were and remain significant.

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[123] The UNHCR frameworks in COMPASS did not differentiate the caseload from the Sudan Situation from the existing caseload in the countries.

[124] As a reminder, when the word "partners" is mentioned, it Includes both OPs and IPs.

[125] UNHCR. "Sudan Regional RRP 2024," 2024.

Figure 4: Coverage of needs per sector in South Sudan, Chad and Egypt in 2024 (until June)[126]
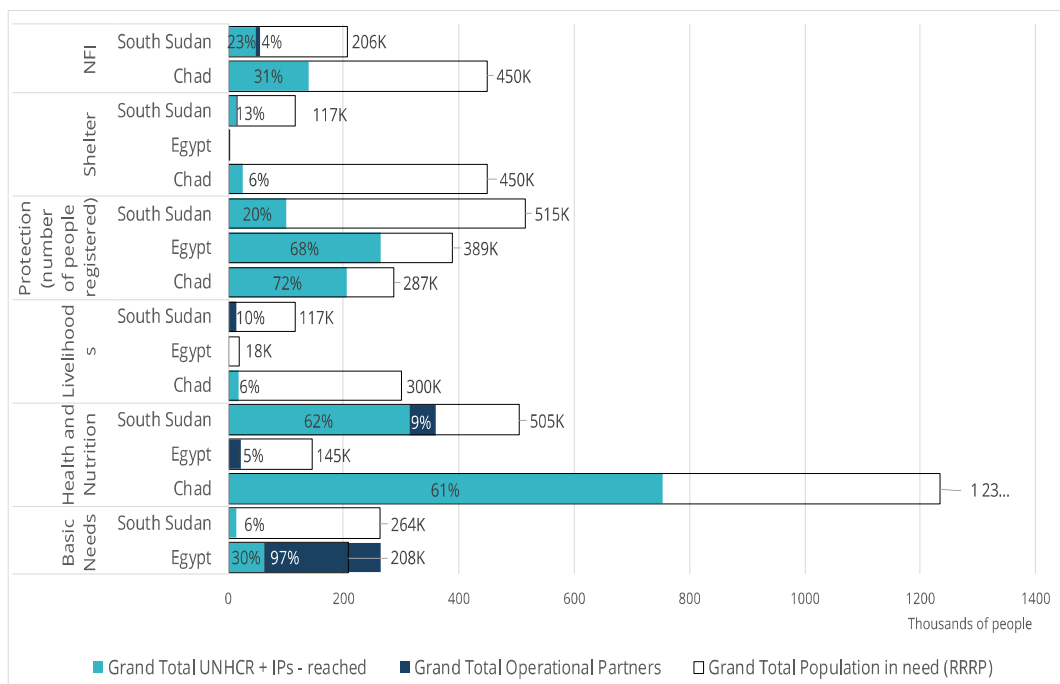
74. In Sudan, the evaluation focused exclusively on UNHCR's coverage of IDPs. In Sudan, the evaluation was specifically focused on UNHCR's coverage of IDPs to align with the evaluation's scope. The coverage of IDP needs per sector is presented below. However, it is important to note that UNHCR's responsibilities towards IDPs differ from those towards refugees in the three other countries: UNHCR is one of the operational partners that delivered assistance to IDPs in Sudan. Therefore, the coverage figures should be interpreted with caution. Additionally, it should be recognized that for 2024, UNHCR provided the ET with output indicator data for IDPs, including actual figures for protection, GBV, shelter, CRI and MPCA. Planned figures for IDPs were extracted by the ET from the 2024 HNRP. However, the ET was unable to obtain disaggregated planned data for MPCA in Sudan and therefore included only the reported coverage data for 2024 (see table below). Overall, the reported data highlighted very low coverage across all sectors, with protection showing the highest level.

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[126] "Grand Total Population in Need" data points were extracted from: UNHCR. "Sudan Regional RRP 2024," 2024. UNHCR + IPs reached and grand total Operational Partners figures were extracted from a UNHCR output indicator dataset shared by UNHCR for 2024.

Table 4: UNHCR coverage data per sector in Sudan (IDPs) in 2024 (until June)

	HNRP Planned[127]	UNHCR Actual	UNHCR Coverage[128]	HNRP Actual[129]
Protection (legal services and other)	6,062,749[130]	980	0%	205,226
GBV	2,887,178	842	0%	117,284
Shelter and CRI	4,081,968	31,517	1%	1,063,745
MPCA	Unknown	2,874	Unknown	

> 💡 **Lessons Learned – the need for early establishment of regional crisis output monitoring**: It is essential that systems are established, at the earliest opportunity in a response, with an adequate level of disaggregation between pre-existing and new caseloads in COMPASS, and between UNHCR, IPs and operational partners. The resource investments needed to set up monitoring systems during the first weeks of the response would justify the savings made on reporting on set targets and indicators, and on using the data for decision-making, while providing greater accountability on targets and output reached. These data could be integrated into a publicly accessible results dashboard on the UNHCR Operational Data Portal.

3.2.1.1. Registration and protection

> **Key Finding 7: UNHCR's role in registration and protection was pivotal during the emergency response. UNHCR managed to scale up these activities to address urgent needs in all four countries. However, significant challenges persist, including delays and low coverage in some areas, primarily due to the overwhelming caseloads and difficult access.**

75. **UNHCR's protection activities encompass a comprehensive range of services, including general protection, registration, GBV services and child protection**. Registration plays a particularly critical role in this context. Not only is UNHCR the main registration entity, but it also serves as the gateway to accessing additional forms of assistance, including other protection services. The detailed breakdown of protection services delivered across Egypt, Chad, Sudan and South Sudan is outlined below:[131]

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[127] As mentioned in the limitations and at the beginning of the report section, the planned figures for Sudan were extracted from the HNRP, meaning that these are the overall targets for all participating agencies.

[128] Corresponds to UNHCR Coverage/HNRP Planned.

[129] HNRP data. See https://humanitarianaction.info/plan/1188/population#page-title

[130] This figure refers to people in need for protection services overall. The UNHCR output indicator on protection is limited to the number of IDPs receiving legal aid, which explains the big difference and the coverage being 0 percent. This also stresses the need for aligned M&E frameworks.

[131] UNHCR. "Sudan Regional RRP 2024," 2024; UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency - Regional Refugee Response Plan - May-December 2023 - Revised August 2023," August 2023.

Table 5: Overview of protection services provided in the countries of focus (2023 and 2024-until June)

Protection	Registration (and pre-registration)
	People receiving legal services
	Access to safe feedback and response mechanisms
	Transportation from border crossings to receptions/ final destinations
Sub-sector: GBV	Support to GBV survivors

76. **According to the RRRP data, UNHCR's registration coverage averaged 74.6 per cent across Egypt, Chad and South Sudan over both years**. In 2023, the ET calculated the coverage of registration for new arrivals based on the available data.[132] For 2024, the ET assessed coverage using UNHCR's registration objectives and the targets achieved. This approach was necessary because the data were not providing the isolated figure corresponding to new arrivals for January–June 2024, and the actual figures included arrivals from 2023, which leads to double counting. The data highlight significant discrepancies between countries, with UNHCR South Sudan achieving substantially higher registration coverage compared with Egypt and Chad in 2023, and much higher registration coverage in 2024 (see table below).

Table 6: Registration coverage data in Chad, Egypt and South Sudan in 2023 and 2024 (until June)
(Sudan does not appear as UNHCR does not register IDPs there)

		Reached by UNHCR	Planned (new arrivals in 2023, and UNHCR set objectives in 2024)[133]	Coverage
2023 (May – December)	Chad	254,435	484,600	53%
	Egypt	207,833	400,000	52%
	South Sudan	75,833	77,200	98%
2024 (until June)	Chad	205,324	653,000	31%
	Egypt	264,658	300,194	88%
	South Sudan	100,801	80,000	126%

77. **Legal frameworks established have influenced UNHCR's role in registration activities.** In Egypt, under the framework of the 1954 MoU with the Government of Egypt, UNHCR was delegated the responsibility for refugee status determination, registration and documentation. This process is followed by the issuance of residency permits by the GoE. However, in November 2024, a new law was drafted to establish a designated inter-governmental committee responsible for conducting RSD in Egypt, thereby transferring the responsibility for issuing legal documentation from UNHCR to this new body.[134] In Chad, the adoption of new asylum legislation and Decree 0648 of 2023 has notably strengthened reception, registration and refugee status

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[132] Data extracted from the RRRP 2023 Plan and End of Year Report.

[133] Planned figures for 2023 correspond to new arrivals in April – December 2023. Extracted from the RRRP 2023. Planned figures for 2024 correspond to UNHCR's registration targets, set in the monitoring framework of the RRRP 2024.

[134] State Information Service Egypt SIS. "Egypt's Parliament Gives Initial Approval to Draft Foreign Asylum Law Sunday ‹17 November 2024," November 17, 2024.

determination procedures. The majority of key informants highlighted the active participation of CNARR in protection activities – including support for relocations, responsibility for the security of refugees and staff, and assistance with registration – which has further contributed to the smooth implementation of these services. Beyond these points, the impact of these legal frameworks is not assessed in this evaluation, as they fall outside of its temporal scope.

78. **Registration efforts in Egypt and Chad were scaled up significantly between late 2023 and mid-2024.** In Egypt, as of December 2023, 167,301[135] pre-registration appointments were given to new arrivals and 113,890 individuals were already fully registered, representing 68 per cent of cases.[136] As of 6 June 2024, this figure had shifted to 585,145 people[137] given appointments and 301,076 fully registered, representing 51 per cent of cases. Meanwhile in 2023, UNHCR Chad registered 254,435 people. By 18 June 2024, 554,453 people were reported as having been pre-registered/registered in total.[138]

79. **Despite these scale-ups, UNHCR sometimes faced delays with registration, especially in Chad and Egypt. This translated into limited access to services and heightened protection risks in these countries**. For instance, in Egypt, registration backlogs caused processing times to rise from 25 to over 300 days due to resource and staffing shortages in light of the increased influx from Sudan.[139] This left many refugees and asylum-seekers without legal protection and exposed them to heightened protection risks, according to the documentation and FGDs.[140] In Chad, some FGD participants also reported delays in the refugee registration process, which appeared to be linked to the dependency of the registration process on relocation, which itself is contingent on the progress of camp construction. Moreover, in Chad, logistical challenges left remote areas underserved, resulting in inequitable access to protection services.[141] In South Sudan, this trend was not applicable. In fact, interviewees there noted that discussions with the government on transit centre locations resulted in improved service access in some areas, but highlighted continuing challenges in ensuring comprehensive coverage across all transit locations.

80. **In Chad and South Sudan, UNHCR also arranged transportation from border crossings to final destinations.** In Chad, the transportation coverage of UNHCR and its partners was 49 per cent in 2023, and 7 per cent in 2024. In South Sudan, the ET received data that were much higher, making coverage reach 177 per cent and 151 per cent in 2023 and 2024 respectively.[142]

81. **Under its protection umbrella, UNHCR reported having provided general protection services in 2023, and legal services to forcibly displaced and stateless persons in 2024**.[143] The average coverage across the four countries and across both

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[135] 81 percent of these were Sudanese nationals.

[136] UNHCR, "Egypt: Sudan Emergency Update #18," December 6, 2023, https://data.unhcr.org/fr/documents/details/105221.

[137] 94 per cent of these were Sudanese nationals.

[138] UNHCR, "Chad – Sudanese Emergency," June 18, 2024, https://data.unhcr.org/fr/documents/details/109419.

[139] UNHCR, "Annual Results Report Egypt 2023," 2023.

[140] Ibid.

[141] UNHCR, "Annual Results Report Chad 2023," 2023.

142 The ET extracted output indicator data (planned and actual) for 2023 from: UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response September 2023 Progress Report," 2023 and UNHCR. "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023," December 2023. The ET extracted planned figures for output indicators from: UNHCR. "Sudan Regional RRP 2024," 2024 and actual figures for output indicators from a dataset shared by the office of evaluation: UNHCR Results Data Portal 2024 Mid-Year Indicators.

[143] It is unclear whether the protection services include other things.

years is 54 per cent for these services. While coverage in Chad and Egypt remains low, indicators report very high achievement rates in South Sudan (188 per cent and 117 per cent). These figures are presented in the table below. The FGDs provided limited feedback on the quality of these services, with most comments focusing on the extended waiting times related to registration, especially in Egypt, which negatively impacted access to services that were contingent on being registered by UNHCR.

Table 7: Actual (UNHCR + partners) vs. Planned for Individuals receiving general protection services in 2023[144]

		Actual	Planned	Coverage
2023	Chad	254,435	442,250	58%
	Egypt	47,644	210,763	23%
	South Sudan	244,127	130,000	188%
	Sudan[145]	4,154	2,100,000	0%

Table 8: Actual (UNHCR only) vs. Planned for Individuals receiving legal services in 2024 (until June)[146]

		Actual	Planned	Coverage
2024 (until June)	Chad	24,290	653,000	4%
	Egypt	26,904	300,194	9%
	Sudan[147]	980	6,620	15%
	South Sudan	93,766	80,000	117%

82. **UNHCR and its partners have made significant efforts to target children in its protection activities.[148]** In 2023 in Egypt, UNHCR and its partners provided 5,558 children with child protection services, more than what was anticipated (4,200).[149] In 2024, CO data show that UNHCR Egypt, with its IP, provided child protection services to 1,490 children, achieving 99 per cent of its target of 1,500.[150] Other output data suggest that in 2024, UNHCR and its partners did not engage in child protection activities in Egypt, as no results were reported on that specific indicator. In Chad in 2023, UNHCR and its partners covered 41 per cent of child protection needs.

83. **UNHCR has also made significant efforts to target women and girls in its protection activities through the provision of support services** (including dignity kits, psychosocial support, case management, referral) **to GBV survivors.** In 2023, UNHCR and its partners covered 32 per cent and 42 per cent of the GBV RRRP targets

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[144] In 2023, the ET had to report the numbers for all RRRP partners using RRRP monitoring framework data.

[145] For Sudan, the planned figures are from the HNO: OCHA. "Humanitarian Needs Overview Sudan 2023" and: OCHA. "Humanitarian Needs Overview Sudan 2024." The Actual Figures refer to UNHCR coverage and are from output databases shared by UNHCR.

[146] For 2024, the coverage (actual figures) is only UNHCR as UNHCR output indicator dataset was available.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Child protection services include the identification of unaccompanied and separated children, case management for vulnerable children and referrals to specialized services, family tracing and reunifications and mental health and psychosocial support.

[149] For 2024, the coverage (actual figures) is only UNHCR as UNHCR output indicator dataset was available.

[150] "2023 END-YEAR INDICATOR REPORT (OUTPUT)," n.d.

in Chad and Egypt respectively.[151] In South Sudan, for both years, the data are less conclusive, or exceeding targets by very high amounts. In Sudan, UNHCR collaborated with UNICEF and UNFPA to provide GBV services to people in need, albeit it is clear if these were targeted directly at IDPs.[152]

3.2.1.2. Cash-based interventions

Key Finding 8: CBIs were a central element of UNHCR response in Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan. In some cases, they provided flexibility in responding to immediate needs. However, the effectiveness of interventions was limited mainly by UNHCR's relatively low coverage of needs, as well as by inflation and market dynamics, and by specific contextual blockages in Egypt. In Chad, the ET found that UNHCR could have made better use of CBI.

84. **CBI emerged as an essential component of UNHCR's response in Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan, and to a lesser extent in Chad. Yet, the coverage of needs remained low in both 2023 and 2024.** According to the RRRP, UNHCR and its partners provided bi-monthly MCPA and ECA to 49,144 Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers in Egypt in 2023.[153] In 2024, UNHCR Egypt alone covered 30 per cent of the CBI needs through both MCPA and ECA.[154] In Sudan, in 2023, UNHCR provided 13,877 individuals with cash assistance,[155] yet the planned figure was not available in the HNRP. For 2024, the reported figures were not reliable. According to the CWG, UNHCR's CBI (UNHCR only, excluding IPs) had reached 10,000 individuals as of October 2024 in Sudan.[156] However, According to UNHCR data, UNHCR provided cash assistance to 874 IDPs in Sudan in 2024.[157] Coverage was difficult to calculate, as the HNRP estimates that 1.7 million people are in need of cash assistance overall (not only MCPA).[158] For South Sudan, the ET could not extract reliable coverage data (percentage of needs covered) for 2023, but it estimated that RRRP partners provided cash assistance to 33,666 individuals that same year.[159] However, in 2024, UNHCR alone covered six per cent of the needs for CBI in South Sudan.[160] The table below summarizes this information.

Table 9: CBI Coverage Summary

Year	Country	Type of assistance	Average Coverage
2023	Egypt	MCPA and ECA	26 per cent
	Sudan	MCPA	Unknown (but 10k reached)
	South Sudan	MCPA	Unknown (but 33,666 reached)

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[151] UNHCR, "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023." For Actual Figures; UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency - Regional Refugee Response Plan - May-December 2023 - Revised August 2023," August 2023 for planned figures.

[152] UNFPA Sudan. "One Year of War in Sudan." 2024.

[153] UNHCR, "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023."

[154] Output dataset shared by UNHCR for 2024.

[155] Output dataset for Sudan shared by UNHCR 2023.

[156] It remains unclear, however, whether the 10K figure in Sudan refers to IDPs only.

[157] Output dataset for Sudan shared by UNHCR 2023 and 2024.

[158] OCHA - CWG Sudan. "Sudan MCPA Overview," n.d.

[159] UNHCR, "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023."

[160] Calculation by the authors. Planned figure extracted from: UNHCR. "Sudan Regional RRP 2024," 2024. Actual figure extracted from UNHCR output dataset for 2024.

2024 (until June)	Egypt	MCPA and ECA	30 per cent
	Sudan	MPCA	Unknown (but 10k reached)
	South Sudan	MCPA	6 per cent

85. By collaborating closely through the CWGs, **UNHCR and partners demonstrated a proactive and collaborative approach to increasing the quantity and quality of assistance**, such as harmonizing transfer values, monitoring aid distribution and preventing duplication. UNHCR also relied on its IPs in the countries of focus for CBI.[161] However, **despite efforts for strong coordination, the effectiveness of CBI was somewhat limited because the inflation and market dynamics outmatched the transfer value increases.** In Egypt, despite a 20 per cent increase in the transfer value in July 2023,[162] inflation significantly eroded purchasing power. This left some Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers unable to meet their basic needs, as highlighted in FGDs with men and women,[163] and corroborated through interviews with UNHCR, sector representatives and IPs. Despite this challenge, 96 per cent of recipients reported reduced financial burdens and improved living conditions, yet 79 per cent still resorted to negative coping strategies, such as reducing non-food expenses to prioritize food, highlighting the partial coverage of needs.[164] This issue was echoed in South Sudan and Sudan[165] where inflation further constrained the impact of cash assistance, according to interviewees.

86. **In Egypt, the increased caseload and the delays in registration and residency permits delivery affected access to CBI.** Key informants and FGD participants mentioned that the need for a residency permit to access cash through the national post office in Egypt was also an operational challenge. Moreover, **interviews and FGDs highlighted significant limitations in meeting the financial needs of vulnerable groups such as Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs), single-headed households and survivors of GBV**. For example, while the financial assistance provided to GBV survivors was deemed adequate in terms of its amount (EGP 8,000) for recovery, it was a one-off disbursement, and no ongoing support was offered. FGD participants consistently expressed concerns about the inadequacy or complete lack of cash assistance. In many FGDs, both male and female respondents reported not receiving any assistance, and those who did felt it was insufficient either in terms of the amount or the frequency (every other month), especially considering inflation in Egypt.

3.2.1.3. Shelter and Core Relief Items

Key Finding 9: The effectiveness of UNHCR's interventions in shelter and CRI distribution was limited, undermined by insufficient funding, poor infrastructure and substandard quality.

87. **Shelter interventions were pivotal in addressing forcibly displaced and stateless persons' immediate needs, although gaps in coverage persisted**. In Chad, in 2023, 422,250 Sudanese refugees required emergency shelter, but UNHCR and its partners

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[161] Such as the Egyptian Post Office in Egypt.

[162] UNHCR, "Annual Results Report Egypt 2023," 2023.

[163] In this regard, FGD participants in Egypt were particularly vocal about the decrease in purchasing power and in some cases, preferred in-kind support as local market options were not sufficient.

[164] UNHCR, "MPCA PDM - End Year 2023 - Final Report - 19 April 2024-UNHCR," n.d.

[165] UNHCR - Sudan, "PDM Summary, CBI –Al Qadarif," 2024.

only provided shelter to 169,130 individuals (coverage equalling 40 per cent).[166] In South Sudan and Sudan, UNHCR and its partners covered 21 per cent and 1 per cent of shelter needs respectively for each country (IDPs in Sudan and Sudanese refugees in South Sudan).[167] In 2024, UNHCR coverage for shelter interventions remained low in refugee-hosting countries (e.g. 6 per cent in Chad) except in South Sudan (46 per cent).[168] This low coverage points to the fact that many forcibly displaced and stateless Sudanese were without adequate shelter in those countries.[169] In Chad, this can be attributed to a decrease in the number of relocations to settlements compared with 2023, driven by various factors. UNHCR prioritized constructing semi-durable shelters within settlements rather than in spontaneous sites along the border. Yet, according to some key informants, this remained an issue, especially in transit centres.[170] In South Sudan, relocation efforts focused on emergency shelters in transit centres such as Renk, but also on newly built shelters in Wedweil and Maban. Yet, limited infrastructure restricted these centres' capacity to accommodate growing refugee populations.[171]

88. **The coverage for CRIs distributed by UNHCR and its partners in 2023 and in 2024 was limited.** In Chad in 2023, only 42 per cent of CRI needs were covered by UNHCR and its IPs.[172] In Egypt and South Sudan, coverage reached 10 and 80 per cent respectively.[173] In South Sudan, key informants mentioned that government restrictions made monitoring data collection difficult when it came to CRI distribution. In Sudan, UNHCR and its IPs covered only 5 per cent of IDPs' CRI needs, noting that UNHCR's responsibility under the IDP response covers protection, shelter and CCCM.[174] In 2024, coverage for Chad, Sudan and South Sudan was at 6 per cent, 2 per cent and 7 per cent respectively.

89. **The quality of CRIs/shelter varied across the four countries, which was reflected in the different levels of satisfaction among recipients**. In Chad, the majority of participants in FGDs expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of items such as the plastic sheeting used to build shelters. Participants frequently highlighted the rapid deterioration of shelters caused by harsh weather conditions and their inability to withstand extreme temperatures. This dissatisfaction was further linked to differences in the quality of plastic sheeting, some key informants highlighting that items sourced from local markets were of lower quality and deteriorated much more quickly compared to those obtained from international stockpiles. In Port Sudan, 92.8 per cent of recipients expressed satisfaction with the quality of CRIs, and in Kasala, 81.7 per cent of recipients were satisfied with the quality of the items distributed. [175] Despite positive perceptions of the quality of CRIs in Sudan, PDM respondents expressed the need for items to be more

[166] Planned figures: UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response September 2023 Progress Report," 2023; Actual figures from UNHCR. "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023," 2023.

[167] For South Sudan: Planned figures: UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response September 2023 Progress Report," 2023; Actual figures from UNHCR. "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023," 2023. For Sudan, planned figures: OCHA. "Humanitarian Needs Overview Sudan," 2023; and actual figures from UNHCR output dataset for Sudan.

[168] UNHCR Output Indicator Database for 2024.

[169] In Sudan, UNHCR is co-lead of the helter cluster, which makes it "provider of last resort" as per UNHCR Emergency Policy (https://emergency.unhcr.org/coordination-and-communication/cluster-system/cluster-approach).

[170] Adré saw approximately 200,000 individuals without adequate shelter, exacerbated by logistical challenges.

[171] Findings based on KIIs and secondary sources ("Annual Results Report South Sudan 2023.").

[172] UNHCR, "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023." For Actual Figures; UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency - Regional Refugee Response Plan - May-December 2023 - Revised August 2023," August 2023 for planned figures.

[173] Ibid.

[174] Planned figures from HNO Sudan. Actual figures from UNHCR dataset: UNHCR Results Data Portal 2024 Mid Year Indicators

[175] UNHCR - Sudan, "PDM Summary, CBI - Port Sudan," 2024.

tailored to their unique circumstances, such as dignity kits for women.[176] They also mentioned challenges in the distribution process (overcrowding and long waiting times). In Egypt, logistical constraints delayed the distribution of CRIs, particularly in underserved regions such as Aswan. Newly arrived asylum-seekers remained vulnerable due to critical gaps in basic supplies.[177]

90. **The quantity of CRIs posed challenges across all countries, with forcibly displaced and stateless persons often reporting insufficient supplies**. In Chad, the majority of FGD participants deemed the quantity of CRIs to be inadequate, especially for larger families. In the Port Sudan region of Sudan, while CRI quality was appreciated, only 43.5 per cent believed the quantity met their needs.[178] This was similarly reflected in Kasala where the satisfaction rate for quantity was 53.6 per cent.[179] Although this is slightly higher, it still reflects unmet demand. In Sudan, the quantity of CRIs seemed to have been affected by the looting of several key warehouses in Darfur and Khartoum. In Dongola and in the White Nile, dissatisfaction rates of 25 per cent and 45.5 per cent respectively were recorded due to inadequate access to populations in need, overcrowding at distribution sites and delays.[180] Across contexts, various interviewees explained how gaps in emergency preparedness, including insufficient prepositioned stocks and distribution mechanisms, further compounded these challenges.

3.2.1.4. Health and education

> **Key Finding 10: UNHCR improved access to health and education for displaced populations in Egypt, Chad, Sudan and South Sudan. Challenges included limited specialized care, resource shortages and overcrowding in health care and education services, despite efforts such as expanded consultations, vaccinations and school enrolment.**

91. **UNHCR delivered critical health services to forcibly displaced and stateless persons and vulnerable populations across Egypt, Chad, and South Sudan, improving access to health care**. In Egypt, UNHCR provides primary and secondary health care through IPs. In 2023, UNHCR and their partners collaborated with the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) to provide primary health care consultations to 78,199 Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers across the country, covering Cairo and Alexandria.[181] **This figure represents 37 per cent of the needs, with a total of 210,763 forcibly displaced and stateless Sudanese in need**.[182] In Chad, refugees faced important barriers in accessing basic services, exacerbated by the country's development constraints, and access to health care is poor despite strides made by the government. This is particularly true for refugees living outside the formal camps.[183] **Therefore, in Chad in 2023, UNHCR and its partners provided consultations to 288,639 Sudanese, covering more than 100 per cent of the targets**, including in

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[176] See for example: UNHCR. "NFI PDM White Nile Report," December 2023.

[177] Findings based on KIIs and secondary sources ("Annual Results Report Egypt 2023.")

[178] UNHCR - Sudan, "PDM Summary, CBI - Port Sudan."

[179] UNHCR, "PDM Summary, NFI - Kasala," 2024.

[180] UNHCR, "NFI PDM Dongola Report," December 2023.; UNHCR, "NFI PDM White Nile Report," December 2023.

[181] UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response September 2023 Progress Report," 2023; UNHCR. "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023," 2023.

[182] UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response September 2023 Progress Report," 2023; UNHCR. "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023," 2023.

[183] UNHCR, "Annual Results Report Chad 2023," 2023.

border areas and consolidated sites.[184] In South Sudan, access to health care for refugees and asylum-seekers remained a critical issue in 2023, with services extended as much as possible to 13 health facilities, six camps and two county hospitals, through coordination with the Ministry of Health and UNICEF. **Data indicated a coverage rate of 104 per cent of the target**.[185] **In 2024, coverage of health needs in Chad and South Sudan was 61 and 62 per cent of the target respectively.**[186] Additionally, sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, antenatal and postnatal care, and HIV treatment, were available in camps. Nutrition services included therapeutic and supplementary feeding programmes for children under five, as well as for pregnant and lactating women.[187] The ET did not look at the coverage of health and education needs in Sudan, as UNHCR tends not to provide this to IDPs, in line with the cluster division of responsibilities and competencies.

92. **In 2023, UNHCR enhanced educational opportunities for forcibly displaced children and youth across Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, ensuring access to primary, secondary and tertiary education**. In 2023, UNHCR and its partners' coverage of needs in Egypt and Chad was 50 and 11 per cent respectively. The ET could not calculate coverage for 2024, as education targets are presented as proportions (percentages), when actual figures are presented as values for Chad. For South Sudan and Egypt, no reached data were communicated to the ET.

93. **Despite UNHCR's efforts, challenges in health care and education quality persisted across the four countries, highlighting gaps in service consistency and capacity**. Despite the extensive services in Egypt, with regard to quality, FGDs with Refugee-Led Organisations (RLOs) revealed that service provision in health care and education remains inconsistent. Half of the FGDs revealed dissatisfaction with the availability and accessibility of health care and education services. Participants noted that, while health care services by UNHCR's IPs addressed some needs, gaps remained for conditions requiring specialized care. This may be due to UNHCR's limited ability to support certain costly specialized services because of funding constraints, despite its reported focus on ensuring access to specialized care.[188] Educational services faced challenges in absorbing the increasing number of refugee children and addressing legal documentation requirements for enrolment. In Sudan, health care activities were mainly implemented by other actors than UNHCR. UNHCR reported that the quality of health care was hampered due to overcrowding and that the shortage of qualified staff and midwives also lowered the quality of antenatal care and deliveries. In South Sudan, while services were extended, they remained partly available or used given the challenges in vaccine supply and irregular power for cold chain management, which hindered immunization efforts, resulting in vaccination rates below the World Health Organization's (WHO) 95 per cent herd immunity threshold.[189]

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[184] UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response September 2023 Progress Report," 2023; UNHCR. "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023," 2023. This included mobile clinics, temporary health centres and health posts.

[185] Calculation by the authors. Data extracted from: UNHCR. "Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response September 2023 Progress Report," 2023; UNHCR. "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023," 2023.

[186] Planned figures from UNHCR. "Sudan Regional RRP 2024," 2024. Actual figures from UNHCR output data. Data was not provided for Sudan and Egypt.

[187] UNHCR, "Annual Results Report Sudan 2023," 2023.

[188] One key informant.

[189] There were no output indicators.

3.2.2. Unintended effects

Key Finding 11: UNHCR's interventions had various unintended effects, simultaneously fostering social cohesion and empowering local actors, while occasionally contributing to social tensions and operational inefficiencies, which in turn affected forcibly displaced and stateless persons.

94. Both **FGD participants and interviewees identified several unintended effects resulting from the provision of UNHCR assistance**, encompassing both positive and negative outcomes.

95. **Some of UNHCR's activities had positive unintended effects, fostering trust and empowerment among local actors.** In Chad, FGDs and interviews highlighted that agricultural training and cohabitation programmes facilitated collaboration between refugees and host communities, reducing tensions and strengthening resilience. FGD participants and interviewees also noted the promising results towards social acceptance, with local leaders and host communities occasionally agreeing to open areas for camp expansion. This decision was often influenced by the recognition of the socioeconomic benefits brought by UNHCR and its IPs, such as improved access to water points and health care facilities that also serve host populations. Similarly, in Egypt, UNHCR's engagement with RLOs and community members empowered these groups, according to key informants. UNHCR and IP key informants noted that refugee-led initiatives, such as housing support by Sudanese women, demonstrated the potential of strengthening RLOs to address critical service gaps effectively.

96. **On the negative side, prolonged registration procedures created several challenges and unintended consequences**. In Egypt, prolonged registration procedures led to several unintended consequences, including increased vulnerability for refugees due to lengthy waiting times for residency permits and unmet registration needs. Some FGD participants reported queueing for hours, particularly at the Alexandria office, leading Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers to sleep outside the office. This situation caused stress and feelings of humiliation. The Alexandria office, traditionally less busy and understaffed, faced substantial pressure as many applicants sought alternative registration points. This increased influx also led to social tensions. In Chad, despite some positive effects of UNHCR activities on social cohesion, social tensions arose over perceived inequities in aid distribution, particularly between refugees who arrived before April 2023 and some who had arrived after.

97. **Operational inefficiencies sometimes delayed service delivery and impacted the well-being of forcibly displaced and stateless persons**. In Chad for example, fragmented coordination among UN agencies delayed some WASH services and food distribution activities. According to key informants, this appears to be due to a lack of timely information-sharing resulting from agencies working in operational silos, seemingly related to confusion about coordination models (see section 3.4 Coordination).

3.2.3. Factors affecting the effectiveness of UNHCR's interventions

Key Finding 12: Funding shortfalls significantly affected the scale and quality of services, as did logistical and access constraints that hampered the provision of equitable service delivery.

3.2.3.1.　The level of funding

98. **Insufficient funding emerged as a critical constraint across all four countries for all RRRP partners.** According to the Refugee Funding Tracker, as of November 2024, the Sudan Regional RRP received only 30 per cent of the required funding for 2024 and 38 per cent in 2023.[190] Data from UNHCR's Operational Data Portal highlight country-specific funding gaps: Egypt's RRRP was funded at just 33 per cent in 2024; Chad's at 30 per cent; and South Sudan's at only 25 per cent.[191] In contrast, Sudan's HNRP received comparatively higher funding, with 60 per cent of its financial requirements met in 2024 and 51.1 percent in 2023.[192]

Figure 5: Sudan Regional RRP and HNRP Requirements Vs. Funding 2023 and 2024 (until June)[193]
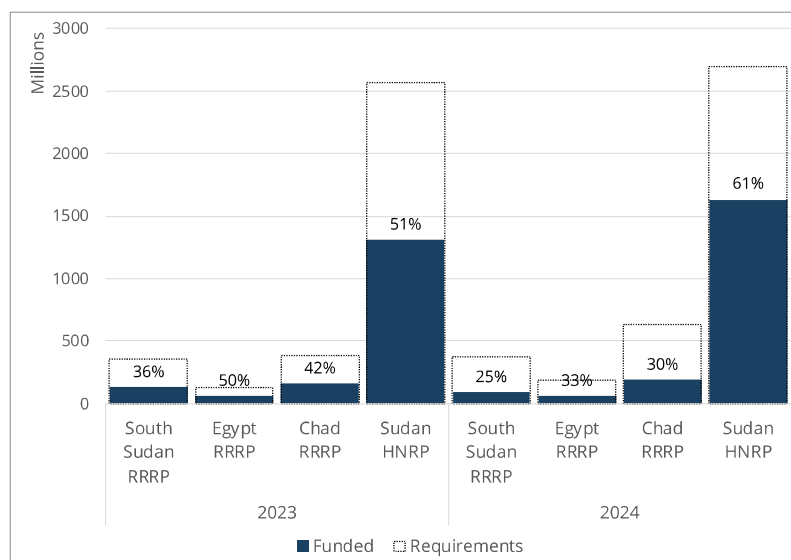
99. **This trend was similar for UNHCR.** In the four countries, UNHCR's requirements for the Sudan Situation, known internally as the needs based Operating Plan (OP in the figure below) amounted to $ 1.1 billion in 2023 and in 2024. Of these requirements, UNHCR's operating budget, based on actual resources available, known as Operating Level (OL),[194] amounted to $ 466 million[195] and $ 478 million in 2023 and 2024[196] respectively, hence 41 per cent of its yearly requirements. The total needs-based budgets and expenditure per country are summarized in the graph below.

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[190] "Refugee Funding Tracker Power Bi Report," accessed November 21, 2024.

[191] UNHCR. "Sudan Situation; Operational Data Portal," Accessed November 2024.

[192] OCHA Services. "Sudan 2023 - Financial Tracking Services," November 2024.

[193] Data for the RRRP extracted from "Refugee Funding Tracker Power Bi Report," accessed November 21, 2024. Data for the HNRP extracted from OCHA Services. "Sudan 2023 - Financial Tracking Services," November 2024.

[194] OL is for the Sudan Situation specifically. The numbers presented cover the whole year of 2023, and until June 2024.

[195] Out of this OL, UNHCR spent 83 per cent at the end of 2023.

[196] As of September 2024.

Figure 6: OL and OP targets and expenditure per country for 2023 and 2024 (until June)
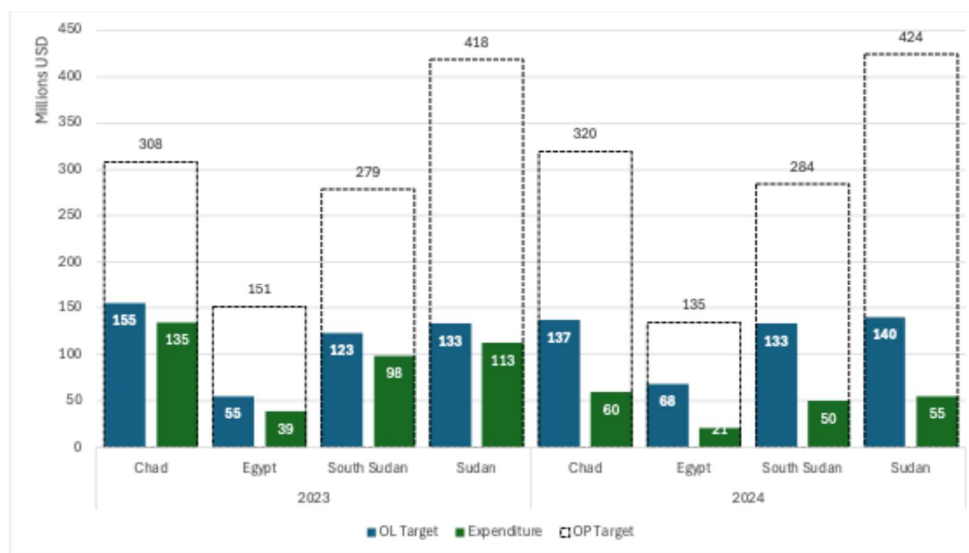
100. **Given the severe underfunding of the response, UNHCR has proactively sought additional funding for the Sudan Situation.** This effort is demonstrated through two complementary strategies implemented by UNHCR at both country and regional levels, as evidenced by the data collected during the evaluation. **The first strategy was extensive fundraising advocacy**, as shown by the numerous conferences, events and high-level visits[197] organized in the four countries by the COs, RBs and HQs, as well as the supporting information products and fundraising documents developed by UNHCR at HQ[198] and CO levels. Most external stakeholders interviewed as part of this evaluation recognized UNHCR's efforts to draw international attention to the Sudan Situation.[199] **The second strategy was donor diversification,** which took various forms. UNHCR, via the HQ and RBs, sought to capitalize on the new donors that the Ukraine Situation attracted, e.g. corporate foundations. The organization also expanded to include non-traditional donors such as the governments of Gulf countries. In the countries visited by the ET, UNHCR interviewees stressed how much effort had been put into fundraising and advocacy.

101. **Assessing the effectiveness of these efforts is challenging due to conflicting information.** On the one hand, the funding level for the Sudan Situation for the first year was comparatively lower than recent L3 emergencies.[200] The vast majority of interviewees highlighted the general lack of available funding. On the other hand, this shortfall occurred within the broader context of global funding constraints in the humanitarian sector since 2022[201;202] and UNHCR interviewees in the countries visited generally expressed satisfaction with their fundraising efforts, citing the OL increases granted in 2023 by their respective RBs as an indicator of success. Moreover, the operations successfully strengthened relationships with key financial partners and diversified their donor base. For example, Egypt diversified its pool from 18 to 35 donors

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[197] These visits included UNHCR representation, such the High Commissioner or Deputy High Commissioner, as well as visits from key financial partners of UNHCR.

[198] For instance: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/29391a6a1dc94ff1bb34fecf4e1b565e or https://dataviz.unhcr.org/product-gallery/2024/04/sudan-one-year-of-spiralling-conflict-and-displacement/

[199] As of 11 November 2024.

[200] For instance, the DRC RRRP reached 34% in its first year in 2018 and the Afghanistan RRRP reached 58%. In 2022, the Sudan RRRP was the third best RRRP out of six active RRRPs.

[201] Development Initiatives, "Falling Short? Humanitarian Funding and Reform," 2024.

[202] UNHCR, "Underfunded Report: The Implications of Underfunding UNHCR's Activities," 2024.

from 2023 to 2024, resulting in an increase of resources for Egypt for the Sudan situation. Efforts by the COs to promote the HDPN were also important steps towards diversifying and increasing funding for the Sudan Situation (see 3.5.2 Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus).

102. **The impact of underfunding on forcibly displaced and stateless persons in the four countries has created significant gaps in the response**. UNHCR staff generally concurred during interviews that sectors such as education or livelihoods were not prioritized and were therefore underfunded as part of this response. For example, in South Sudan, there were critical gaps in secondary and tertiary education, and in Egypt, urban refugees and asylum-seekers suffered disproportionately from the withdrawal of education grants for school-age children.[203] Furthermore, the large majority of Sudanese refugees in Egypt, both men and women, claimed that the assistance received was largely insufficient, sometimes provided temporarily as a one-time cash assistance or every other month, and did not cover the basic essentials even for the most vulnerable lacking shelter, or large families. Based on the interviews conducted with UNHCR staff and by looking at the RRRP data,[204] it is apparent that, in line with an emergency response, UNHCR prioritized its budget for live-saving interventions. Despite this prioritization, UNHCR struggled to meet all emergency basic needs, shelter needs and health needs as illustrated in the low coverage rates analysed in the section 3.2.1 Meeting objectives.[205] This was particularly apparent in camp settings in Chad or in South Sudan, compared with an urban context like Egypt, although the needs were just as critical there, according to interviewees and FGD participants.

103. **The level of funding also influenced the staffing of the response**. While interviewees generally expressed satisfaction with the timeliness of deployment, they noted that funding limitations for the Sudan Situation, compounded by UNHCR's financial challenges since 2022, caused delays in decision-making at the RB and HQ levels regarding recruitment authorizations. Several interviewees from field offices (FOs) in Sudan, Egypt and Chad explained that their staffing structures had been reduced prior to the Sudan Situation. The deployment of new staff through the L3 emergency scale-up protocols essentially restored staffing levels to pre-crisis conditions rather than enhancing capacity. This had a direct impact on staff well-being, with reports of overwork, as well as on certain aspects of the response. Specifically, various interviewees mentioned deprioritizing tasks related to AAP (see 3.6.2 Accountability to Affected Populations) and monitoring (see 3.1.1 Use of reliable data to inform the design of the response) due to insufficient staffing.

3.2.3.2.   Other factors

104. Other internal and external factors affected the effectiveness of UNHCR's interventions in the four focus countries. These are detailed below.

105. **First, UNHCR's pre-existing operational presence in the four counties was a key factor of effectiveness**, as it enabled the relatively rapid set-up of a presence at the border and to start off distributions. The support of emergency coordinators deployed to Chad and Egypt also contributed to structuring the emergency response, although it was affected by the insufficient level of preparedness, according to interviewees. While Chad

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[203] UNHCR.

[204] UNHCR, "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023."

[205] UNHCR, "Underfunded Report: The Implications of Underfunding UNHCR's Activities."

had preparedness plans with Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs) and scenarios,[206] various interviewees complained that the plan had not sufficiently materialized into contingency stocks. In Egypt, there was no contingency plan at the start of the Sudan situation.[207]

106. **Access difficulties were a key disabler of effectiveness, preventing timely access to population groups and access to assistance** (see 3.1.4 Humanitarian Principles and 3.3.1 Timeliness of the intervention). Poor infrastructure and security risks posed significant access challenges in Chad and Sudan and had an impact on UNHCR's ability to serve some affected populations on time. Key informants noted that heavy rainfall rendered some remote locations inaccessible in Chad, delaying the delivery of critical supplies (this point is also relevant to South Sudan, although the ET has limited data on this in this country). This is particularly significant given the well-documented challenges of seasonal access in such locations. In Sudan, the ongoing hostilities and insecurity are major barriers to humanitarian operations, particularly in conflict-affected areas such as the Darfur states and regions around Khartoum. Bureaucratic impediments, coupled with military checkpoints, armed group activity and explosive ordnance, further restricted movement to and within IDP camps.[208]

107. **UNHCR's advocacy at the country, regional and global levels combined public engagement, private dialogue and high-level diplomacy to address protection challenges and mobilize resources.** Efforts focused on the development of legal frameworks (including Asylum laws in Egypt and Chad) and fostering burden-sharing responsibility with the governments.[209] High-level visits by senior UNHCR officials including the High Commissioner and other senior leadership of UNHCR helped spotlight attention on the crisis and refugee priorities, showcasing UNHCR's commitment to expanding protection spaces and ensuring displaced persons' rights. Other initiatives such as the International Humanitarian Conference for Sudan and neighbouring countries held in France in April 2024 were seen as good examples of UNHCR international advocacy. Most external informants were positive about UNHCR's contribution to the advocacy efforts for the Sudan situation. However, some informants felt that UNHCR could have provided a stronger overall narrative on the regional dimension of the refugee crisis within its advocacy, communication and resource mobilization activities with different stakeholders. Some also felt UNHCR could be more proactive and strategic in addressing key priorities while engaging more with political actors regionally and internationally to resolve the crisis, albeit acknowledging the challenges involved in doing so.[210].

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[206] UNHCR, "Plan de Contingence Pour Des Afflux Des Réfugiés En Provenance Du Darfour (Soudan) Vers l'Est Du Tchad," 2022.

[207] The ET did not have access to the contingency plans for Sudan and South Sudan.

[208] OCHA. "Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan - Sudan" 2024.

[209] For example, UNHCR Egypt had an ongoing cooperation with the League of Arab States based in Egypt via a MoU signed in 2017, aimed at enhancing effective emergency responses to crisis through a global cooperation framework for refugees in the Arab region.

[210] For instance, the inter-regional nature of the crisis complicated advocacy: Sudan and Egypt are in the LAS (MENA region), while Egypt, Chad and South Sudan were in the African Union Commission.

> 📋 **Good Practice: Proactive Fundraising and Advocacy Strategies.** UNHCR has shown strong commitment to mobilize resources for the Sudan situation using a dual strategy of extensive advocacy efforts and donor diversification. Through high-level events, conferences and strategic communication (see example on the side), UNHCR attempted to draw more international attention to the crisis. UNHCR's advocacy combined public engagement, private dialogue and high-level diplomacy. At the same time, it sought to expand its donor base by engaging new and non-traditional donors.

3.3. Efficiency

108. This section evaluates the extent to which UNHCR has been able to respond to the Sudan crisis in a timely and a cost-efficient manner (focusing solely on Chad for the latter criterion as agreed during the inception phase and capture in the evaluation matrix). It looks at whether UNHCR was able to ensure the access and security of staff.

3.3.1. Timeliness of the intervention[211]

> **Key Finding 13: The UNHCR response was initially timely in Chad, Egypt and South Sudan, but growing caseloads led to delays.**

109. **There was a consensus among UNHCR staff, IPs and some sector members that the response in Chad, Egypt and South Sudan was timely**, especially during the first few weeks of the response. This was largely due to the organizational priority UNHCR put on the Sudan situation, with the subsequent L1, L2 and L3 declarations,[212] and the swift deployment and reallocation of personnel and contingency supplies. However, based on interviews, in Sudan, the initial response appeared understandably less timely than in the other countries, owing to the challenging operational environment and the need for evacuations and the closing of the Khartoum office.

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Apr 11, 2024 - Also available in: Français | Español

Heavy rains flood UNHCR's transit centre in Renk in South Sudan's Upper Nile State. The centre is hosting thousands of people who have fled the conflict in Sudan majority of them returning South Sudanese. ©UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

110. **However, after several weeks, concerns about the timeliness of certain activities started to emerge towards the end of September 2023, when the caseload increased significantly**. These perceptions, which came from some of the key informants – UNHCR, IPs and sectors members – are largely corroborated by the data from FGDs in Chad and Egypt.[213] In Egypt, these concerns were particularly related to registration, and in Chad, to relocation, shelter and WASH services. In the absence of FGDs in Sudan and South Sudan, and due to the

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[211] There were no implementation plans that allowed the evaluation team to assess the extent to which UNHCR's were timely and according to plans. Therefore, the evaluative judgment on timeliness comes from primary data collected during the evaluation.

[212] The L3 declaration for Chad, Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan occurred on 6 July 2024.

[213] Noteworthy, related to points about data availability made in the relevance and effectiveness sections, the ET had no secondary data from the COs to evaluate the timeliness of relocation and registrations.

limited secondary data from these operations, the ET only has anecdotal information about the timeliness of the interventions in these two countries.[214]

111. **In Egypt, both men and women in all focus groups expressed concerns about delays in accessing UNHCR services**, which were contingent on registration appointments or completion, depending on the activity.[215] The delays increased from a few weeks to seven months to get an appointment to be registered with UNHCR, after the end of the Four Freedoms Agreement in Egypt. This delay hindered access to essential services such as health care, education and cash assistance, thereby increasing protection risks and leading to the use of coping strategies, thus having negative effects on the effectiveness of the response (see 3.2.1.1 Registration and protection). Negative coping strategies reported by FGDs in Egypt included accepting very low-paid jobs with harsh conditions, postponing medical treatment, closing files and returning to Sudan despite challenges, giving up on enrolling children in school due to registration issues and staying home out of fear of arrest, thus hindering income-earning opportunities. During the first month of the response, the ECA[216] provided UNHCR with the flexibility to deliver basic needs assistance to the most vulnerable unregistered households. However, this support ceased when funding to UNHCR was discontinued at the end of 2023.[217]

112. **In Chad, while there were concerns regarding the timeliness of interventions, much of the reported concern was on food assistance**. Some refugees complained to UNHCR, as the entity responsible for overseeing the camps, for the lack of information on food assistance delays. Furthermore, **in approximately one third of FGDs, participants[218] expressed concerns about delays in relocation, shelter, WASH and CRI distributions** that were implemented by UNHCR and their IPs. Although the data suggested that these delays were primarily related to food distributions, in about half of these FGDs, participants reported resorting to negative coping strategies, due to general delays in the assistance provision, which included leaving the camps, engaging in begging, or sending children to work.

> **Key Finding 14: The timeliness of UNHCR's interventions was positively influenced by emergency protocols, emergency HR rosters, pre-existing partnerships and activity design choices that expedited activities, but negatively affected by external challenges such as logistical and security issues, limited donor support and internal delays in fast-track recruitment, as well as technical issues with new systems.**

113. **This evaluation unveiled various internal and external factors that influenced the timeliness of UNHCR interventions**. External factors, beyond UNHCR's control, included logistical and security access challenges in Chad, Sudan and South Sudan (see 3.3.3 Addressing the access constraints and security of staff), restrictions on access to specific locations in Egypt and Sudan, and insufficient donor support relative to the scale of needs (see 3.2.3 Factors affecting the effectiveness of the UNHCR's interventions).

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[214] Based on interviews and some documents, it appears that some non-food item (NFI) distributions were late in South Sudan and Sudan, though it was not sufficient to evaluate the timeliness.

[215] For instance, access to education support was contingent on a registration appointment, whereas registration for the MPCA was contingent on a finalized registration.

[216] It was provided to newly arrived households that had not been registered.

[217] UNHCR, "Post-Distribution Monitoring Report of UNHCR's Emergency Cash Assistance to Sudanese New Arrivals in Egypt," December 2023.

[218] This was particularly mentioned in camps like Aboutengue, Arkhoum, Zabout and in Adre.

114. **The first internal enabling factor is the set of protocols and processes at CO level, triggered by the emergency policy.**[219] UNHCR staff at CO, RB and HQ levels agreed that simplified protocols and processes at CO level, triggered by the emergency policy, contributed positively to the timeliness of the response. The most frequently cited processes included increased thresholds and waivers for procurement, enhanced decision-making authority at the field level[220] and dedicated emergency staffing mechanisms.

115. Most UNHCR staff interviewed who discussed procurement stressed how enhanced decision-making authority at field level and the increased procurement threshold reduced the administrative burden at UNHCR level, making internal processes timelier. For instance, the Chad CO was reportedly able to contract various trucks[221] very promptly to relocate Sudanese refugees from the borders. Nevertheless, some interviewees reported delays in procuring specific items, such as the purchase of trucks for the relocation of people in Chad,[222] containers for the Chad-Sudan cross-border operations, an additional Financial Service Provider (FSP) in Egypt[223] and some CRIs when UNHCR stock in Cameroon and Dubai were depleted. In these cases, the reasons for the delays were not attributed to policies, but rather to factors such as the complexity of the purchases and suppliers' reported lack of reactivity, among others. Weak preparedness, in terms of lack of active framework agreements with transport suppliers compounded response delays.

116. **The timeliness of emergency staffing mechanisms varied**. **The HQ/RB and Emergency Response Team (ERT) deployments in the four countries were timely**.[224] In Chad, Egypt and South Sudan, interviewees were particularly satisfied with the deployment of senior and experienced RB staff, who supported the COs with expertise in emergency response, inter-agency coordination and information management – three of the most critical capacity gaps reported at the onset of the response. The involvement of three RBs in this L3 response across focus countries was helpful in ensuring timely deployments and aligning the deployed profiles with the operational needs.

117. **There were complaints regarding the timeliness of the fast-track (FT) processes at both international and national level.** The timeliness of the international fast-track process,[225] especially when the number of hires was significant, had already been questioned in previous L3 evaluations,[226] suggesting a more systemic issue. Interviews conducted as part of this evaluation revealed a misalignment between expectations for the timeliness of the international FT process and what the HR department could realistically achieve. This misalignment stemmed from the scale of recruitment, the operational need to avoid initiating fast-track recruitment too early in the response and

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[219] UNHCR, "Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response 2023."

[220] For instance - for procurement-related or programme-design decisions.

[221] UNHCR chose trucks as the only available transportation option available locally and suited to Chad's challenging logistical environment, while special vans were provided for individuals with specific needs, such as disability.

[222] UNHCR relied on service providers to fill in the gaps, which were reported costlier, during the entire period evaluated.

[223] The CO wanted to contract another FSP with lower Know Your Customer Requirements.

[224] Based on the 204 records provided by UNHCR to the ET, the HR data show the following average duration between the request date and the initial start date: 24 days for the stand-by partner, 27 days for corporate deployment, 36 days for the ERT, 39 days for the Emergency Surge Team. These average durations demonstrate the timeliness of the deployments.

[225] The fast-track recruitment process streamlines hiring by simplifying procedures and accelerating timelines. For example, it eliminated the need for interviews, making the process more efficient.

[226] Veronique de Clerck et al., "Evaluation of UNHCR's Response to the L3 Emergency in Afghanistan 2021–2022," 2023. Helene Juillard et al., 'Evaluation of UNHCR's Level 3 Regional Refugee Response to the Crisis in Ukraine'.

the underutilization of temporary assignment and appointments as a bridge between the ERT and FT positions. Furthermore, two additional issues reportedly impacted the FT recruitment: 1) delays in obtaining visas from authorities in Sudan, Egypt and Chad; 2) increased scrutiny from the RBs to vet FT recruitment in the context of a general reduction in UNHCR staffing that began in 2022 due to global budget reduction.[227] For national FT recruitment, the issue of timeliness was also raised during interviews in Egypt and Chad; however, the ET could not determine the specific factors causing these delays. As shown in the figure below, different countries adopted markedly different deployment types for their response needs (e.g. South Sudan significantly resorting to ERT; Egypt to the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS); and Sudan to FTs).

Figure 7: Number of staff deployed by countries in 2023, by type of staffing mechanism
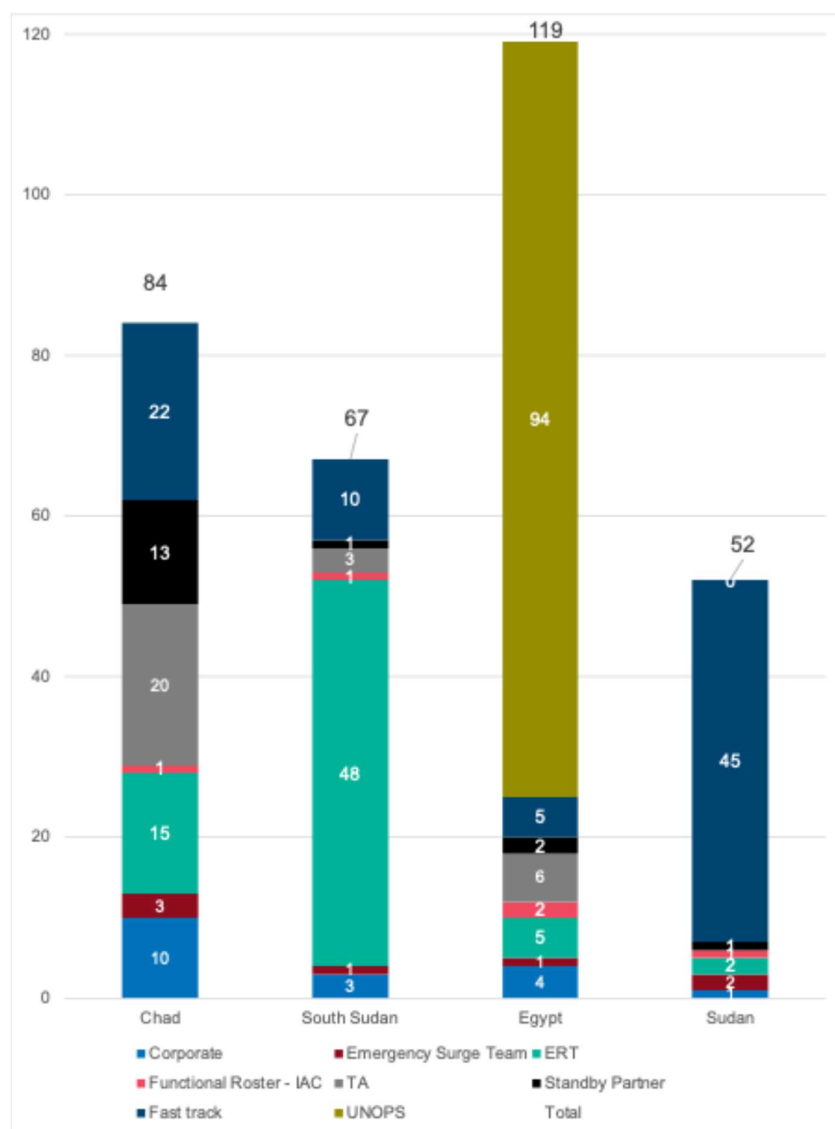
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118. **The second internal factor was the pre-existing partnership agreements with IPs.** In all four countries, UNHCR had numerous pre-existing partnership agreements with national and international NGOs, which were swiftly modified during the first week of the response. Most UNHCR and IP concurred that the pre-existing relationships and arrangements were a critical factor of timeliness, with examples shared by interviewees in all four countries. However, timeliness was somewhat hindered[228] by UNHCR's global transition to Project, Reporting, Oversight and Monitoring Solution (PROMS)[229] in September 2023, which affected the release of funds to partners due to interoperability issues among the various Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems underlying PROMS.

119. **The third internal factor was UNHCR's design choices for its activities to optimize the timeliness of the response.** Operations considered the timeliness of the response as a critical criterion when choosing the design of the activities. For example, in Chad, the design of the shelter contributed to the timeliness of the response, enabling the construction of 500 to 1,000 shelters in a single day, although this sometimes came at the expense of the quality and durability of the shelter (see 3.2.1.3 Shelter and Core Relief Items). However, there were occasions when design choices negatively affected the timeliness of the response, with some CRI distributions taking longer than anticipated in Chad, Sudan and South Sudan, as indicated by the documents reviewed and interviews conducted, due to delays related with international procurement among other things. CBI would have a timelier modality, as goods were available on local markets.

3.3.2. Cost-efficiency of the intervention

> **Key Finding 15: While UNHCR incorporated some cost-efficiency measures in its response in Chad, such as piloting alternative shelter designs, it lacked a systematic approach to incorporating cost-efficiency in its decision-making and programme design, leaving key decisions insufficiently supported by evidence or market analysis.**

120. **This section primarily focuses on the Chad Operation,**[230] although some findings related to the policy implications of this case study may be applicable to the UNHCR as a whole.

121. In Chad, UNHCR's expenditures for the Sudan crisis in 2023 totalled $79,967,228.[231] With 254,435 forcibly displaced people receiving protection at the end of 2023,[232] **the average cost per recipient was $314**.[233] While the available data suggest that the response was somewhat costly, including in comparison with other people receiving humanitarian assistance in Chad (cost per recipient of $129),[234] there is no internationally recognized benchmark for cost efficiency and data are lacking in the

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[228] This was mentioned by UNHCR interviewees in Chad, South Sudan and Sudan.

[229] UNHCR, "PROMS Project Scope," n.d.

[230] During the inception phase, following the evaluability assessment conducted by the ET, the team and the consultancy manager agreed to focus the data collection and analysis on just one country alone, due to the limited availability and usability of financial data.

[231] Expenditures recorded by UNHCR in 2023 coming from UNHCR financial systems.

[232] UNHCR, "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023."

[233] This figure was calculated by dividing the total expenditures ($79,967,228) by 254,435 refugees.

[234] The cost of doing business index reports in 2022 a cost per person in Chad of $129. Source: https://humanitarianfundingforecast.org/index-cost/

humanitarian sector to provide a general evaluation of UNHCR's cost-efficiency.[235] While the difference of cost is likely to have been driven up by the sudden emergency nature and preparedness, there were other contextual factors that, according to interviewees, affected the cost of operations, such as the requirement to relocate refugees from border areas to eight expanded pre-existing camps and five newly established camps, as well as technical decisions made by UNHCR with regard to the design of some activities. Notably, UNHCR opted for semi-durable shelters, each costing $750, which was challenged by some sector members in 2023, given the limited funding prospects in Chad and the anticipated volume of arrivals, as well as how costly these shelters were compared with other shelter options for local communities in Chad.

122. In response to requests from the humanitarian community to justify the unit cost per shelter, the CO reviewed the shelter design and delivery methods.[236] In 2023, UNHCR conducted a pilot project to test a more cost-efficient shelter option by replacing tarpaulins with bricks, sourced through community mobilization or local purchase. This reduced the cost per shelter from $750 to $400, thus representing a 47 per cent reduction in cost. However, from UNHCR's perspective, the project did not yield conclusive results due to protection concerns, including limited brick availability and difficulties in securing land tenure rights for more permanent construction. In addition, the feasibility challenges, arising from the limited replicability of the pilot and the additional construction time, were incompatible with the required timeliness of an emergency response. The CO also conducted a feasibility study on providing cash assistance for shelter, but staff did not find it conclusive due to associated protection risks and concerns about market functionality and price stability.[237] In 2024, WASH actors in the region agreed during a sector meeting to combine household showers and latrines into a shared infrastructure, reducing costs by approximately one third. However, when the ET was collecting data in country, this approach had only been implemented in Dougi camp and had not been replicated in other camps due to limited acceptance by refugees in these camps.

123. **Besides these two instances demonstrating that cost-efficiency was considered for some activities, the CO did not systematically assess the cost-efficiency of the response options or modalities, alongside other criteria,** such as timeliness, achieving the objectives of the response, protection risks, market functionality and sustainability.[238] Consequently, some decisions raised questions about whether they appropriately considered market functionality and the financial constraints of an underfunded situation, especially in the early stages of the response. For example, UNHCR purchased soap bars internationally from Cameroon, despite internal and external market studies indicating that local markets were functional enough to support cash-based interventions.[239;240] Even without necessarily implementing CBI, which was under discussion in the CWG in 2023 in new camps,[241] UNHCR could have considered local procurement. According to two interviewees from UNHCR, this approach would

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[235] UNHCR does not collect data on cost-efficiency to compare this cost per beneficiary with other emergency operations.

[236] Based on interviews with the UNHCR staff at the CO and FO levels, and the RB WCA.

[237] The ET could not triangulate staff's perceptions, as the pilot documents were not made avaialble to the ET. The ET did not have the resources to collect data on this one initiative given the regional nature of the evaluation.

[238] According to interviews with staff from the CO and RB.

[239] UNHCR, "Rapport de Suivi Des Marchés - Tchad Aout 2023," 2023.

[240] WFP, "Evaluation de La Fonctionnalité Des Marchés Au Tchad Données Collectées En Février-Mars 2023," 2023.

[241] UNHCR, "End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023."

have significantly reduced the unit cost of soap and improved timeliness, as it would have avoided customs delays associated with international procurement.

> 📋 **Promising Practice – The integration of cost-efficiency in the selection of response options.** The shelter pilot in Chad and the use of the newly Cost-Benefit Analysis for Choice of Implementation Modality Tool (after the temporal scope of the evaluation) in South Sudan and Egypt exemplify UNHCR's growing emphasis on incorporating cost-efficiency into its emergency responses. However, this emerging practice requires further strengthening through the development of a simpler tool, broader use of historical data, and systematic roll-out to ensure that cost-efficiency is consistently factored into response design.

124. **Within UNHCR, there is no formalized guidance or tool to systematically assess cost-efficiency during the design stage of the response.**[242] This gap made it challenging to simply and rapidly compare alternative modalities for a given response – such as cash versus in-kind shelter – or to evaluate the costs of different response options and activities. Such a tool would also help gather historical data on intervention costs. When reviewing the unit cost per shelter in Chad, three UNHCR staff noted the absence of historical data on shelter costs across modalities and operations, which made it difficult to assess whether the current unit costs aligned with those of previous emergencies.

125. **This challenge was compounded by UNHCR's modality-specific monitoring requirements**. PDM and market functionality assessments are only mandatory for cash-based interventions.[243] In Chad, where most activities involved in-kind assistance or service delivery, UNHCR chose not to systematically collect data on some important medium-term outcomes,[244] modality acceptance, market access and functionality – information that would have been valuable for building evidence to evaluate and decide on different response options and modalities.

126. **While the arguments raised by UNHCR and IP staff during interviews appeared valid and could support the chosen response options and modalities, they were not sufficiently substantiated by evidence**. For example, in-kind assistance was justified on the grounds that CBIs might pose protection risks if refugees needed to travel to markets. While this concern may be valid, FGDs indicated that some refugees were already travelling to markets to resell or receive goods.[245] Another justification concerned the cost-efficiency of shelter. UNHCR staff in Chad considered the investment in semi-durable shelter cost-effective, anticipating that these shelters would have a longer lifespan and reduce future replacement costs – yet this assumption was not backed by a detailed cost analysis and evidence. Finally, UNHCR staff, especially at the field level, believed that market functionality was not suitable for CBI or local procurement. While market functionality varied across locations and warranted a

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[242] While interviewing UNHCR staff in South Sudan and Egypt, the evaluation team was introduced to a tool developed by UNHCR in 2021, titled "Cost-Benefit Analysis for Choice of Implementation Modality." This tool is intended for comparing direct implementation (DI) and partnership agreements (PA) for the same project and, according to interviewees, began to be used in both operations in 2024. Although not explicitly designed to compare different modalities or response options, it has potential for such applications. However, the methodology—Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA)—is complex, requiring staff to analyse outcome data and assign monetary value to those outcomes, a process that two RB interviewees described as particularly challenging.

[243] UNHCR HQ, "UNHCR Policy on Cash-Based Interventions - 2022-2026.Pdf," 2022.

[244] For instance, households' reported ability to meet their basic needs, reduced negative coping strategy index.

[245] This phenomenon has been occurring since the beginning of the response, as demonstrated by Ground Truth Solutions, "Aid Is Inadequate Because No One Consults Us."Perceptions of Humanitarian Aid in Chad."

cautious approach to CBI and local procurement, UNHCR did not sufficiently monitor these conditions and that CBI would have been possible in certain locations. [246;247]

127. **All interviewed UNHCR staff agreed that it was extremely challenging to consider alternative response options and modalities** during an unprecedented emergency, especially given the limited prior CBI experience and preparedness in Chad. Although there had been some preliminary discussions, the CO's level of CBI preparedness significantly limited their ability to consider cash modalities.[248] While CBIs require careful feasibility and appropriateness assessments and should be carefully considered, they are generally more cost-efficient than in-kind alternatives; and clearly preferred in line with the "why not cash" approach.[249] Therefore, there was a missed opportunity to further consider CBI as a modality to maximize available funding, especially given UNHCR's organizational capacity to rapidly scale-up CBI, even in operations where there is no previous experience.[250]

3.3.3. Addressing the access constraints and security of staff

> **Key Finding 16: UNHCR's security and access measures were generally robust, tailored to country-specific challenges and supported by regional and HQ efforts, but some gaps in humanitarian access guidance, capacities, staff training for implementing partners and localized response strategies remained.**

128. In all countries, **each CO had their own security measures that complemented the UN Security Risk Management (SRM) set by United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).**[251] According to interviewees probed on security, measures were tailored to the specific security context of the CO and field offices. This meant that in South Sudan, Sudan and Chad, where security risks were notably higher, the measures were more robust compared with Egypt, where all staff interviewed agreed that there were no significant security concerns.

129. In South Sudan, Sudan and Chad, **all UNHCR staff interviewed on security measures felt they had received adequate security training,**[252] **and that their offices were well prepared and actively mitigating risks**. However, in Sudan particularly, one operational challenge was that the CO faced difficulties in implementing security plans due to logistical and legal problems encountered by UNHCR in delivering necessary materials to the various offices in the country .[253]

130. In the four countries, **the evaluation found that UNHCR had put in place an approach to address access constraints, with varied levels of engagement and concrete actions to maintain operations in hard-to-reach field locations**. However, key informants highlighted a distinction between logistical access issues, such as Wadis,[254]

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[246] WFP, "Evaluation de La Fonctionnalité Des Marchés Au Tchad Données Collectées En Février-Mars 2023."

[247] UNHCR, "Rapport de Suivi Des Marchés - Tchad Aout 2023."

[248] UNHCR, 'Mission CBI & supply chain - Est, Tchad – findings & recommendations, June 2023'.

[249] World Bank, 'Cash and In-Kind Transfers in Humanitarian Settings - A Review of Evidence and Knowledge Gaps', 2022.

[250] Helene Juillard et al., "Evaluation of UNHCR's Level 3 Regional Refugee Response to the Crisis in Ukraine," September 2023.

[251] UNHCR's security management primarily relies on the United Nations Security Management System. UNHCR, "Policy on Security Management," 2020.

[252] This was also confirmed by the UNHCR staff survey: 82 per cent of staff agreed that UNHCR had adequately managed the security of staff and access to hard-to-reach areas.

[253] According to three interviews with UNHCR. Materials required for the security plans were not available locally and could not be imported in countries, like Sudan.

[254] Water bodies appearing during the rainy season.

flooding and poor roads, and security challenges, such as armed attacks or robbery, which were more challenging. For instance, in Chad and parts of South Sudan, severe access issues during the rainy season often delayed the delivery of CRIs for weeks, while security concerns were mitigated through measures like vehicle escorts. Interestingly, in Chad, while strategies were developed and were effective for transporting supplies on time during rainy seasons, they were less developed for relocating Sudanese refugees, leading to interruptions in the relocation programme for several months in 2023 and 2024. In Egypt, UNHCR faced significant access challenges to its permanent presence in Aswan. It developed access strategies, but these were not approved by the government, despite great efforts. In Sudan, UNHCR[255] faced significant access constraints like other UN agencies, and lost access to Darfur and other locations. It was therefore reliant on inter-agency efforts to address constraints rather than being able to employ its own access strategies.

131. **There were reports from COs of adequate support from the RBs**, notably from emergency teams and security officers, and **from HQ**, particularly from the DESS, to support access and security. Interviewees highlighted two key examples: staff evacuations from Sudan to neighbouring countries at the beginning of the response, and the support for cross-border work between Sudan and neighbouring countries. However, based on some interviews, **HQ/RB support on access appeared to have been limited by the general shortage of dedicated human resources**, as well as **the absence of an overarching access guidance within UNHCR**. Such guidance would have contributed to clarifying expectations for COs, including the need for country-specific access plans.

132. **UNHCR's ability to reach field locations often relied on IPs and their capacity to access these areas,**[256] **as both UNHCR and IP staff confirmed**. While IPs were generally satisfied with the programme-related discussions and training provided by UNHCR (e.g. protection, AAP), two UNHCR security staff members and three IPs noted that UNHCR had not covered access and security topics with IP staff prior to and during the Sudan crisis. Additionally, 33 per cent of IP staff (n= 21)[257] reported that they had not received personal security training from their organizations or from UNHCR. **Although UNHCR's duty of care is limited to its own staff, its commitment to the localization of humanitarian assistance**[258] **suggests the need for UNHCR to systematically consider supporting IPs – especially local organizations.[259] This would cover both security and access matters,** as part of its ongoing efforts to provide IPs with programme-related training**,** as UNHCR has done in some field offices, according to interviews with UNHCR and IP staff.

3.4.   Coordination

133. The following section discusses the UNHCR co-led RCM and the internal coordination that took place between the HQ, RBs and COs.

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[255] Like many agencies, UNHCR ran its operations from Port Sudan.

[256] Three IPs noted that UNHCR is generally seen as collaborative on access issues and did not report feeling any pressure to operate in hard-to-reach locations.

[257] IP staff survey conducted for this evaluation.

[258] The Grand Bargain, "The Grand Bargain - Intermediaries Caucus: Towards Co-Ownership: The Role of Intermediaries in Supporting Locally-Led Humanitarian Action," 2023.

[259] In 2023, the share of total expenditure for national NGOs for the Sudan Situation was 46 percent (highest amongst partner types).

3.4.1. Appropriateness and effectiveness of the coordination

134. This section focuses exclusively on Chad, Egypt and South Sudan, as the RCM active in Sudan falls outside the scope of this evaluation.[260]

   ▪ In Chad, in the east of the country, UNHCR led the refugee response via the RCM,[261] which operates alongside IASC coordination architecture led by the Humanitarian Coordinator and supported by the Humanitarian Country Team.

   ▪ In Egypt, the RCM initially established during the Syrian crisis was extended to also coordinate the Sudan refugee response.

   ▪ In South Sudan, UNHCR established the RCM in Renk, co-lead with IOM in 2023, for phase 1 of the return plans, while phases 2 and 3 in areas of return were coordinated through the IASC clusters. In 2024, Renk remained under the RCM, with UNHCR leading the coordination there and reporting both to the Humanitarian Coordinator and UNHCR Representative.

3.4.1.1. The Refugee Coordination Model

> **Key Finding 17: UNHCR's leadership role in coordinating the refugee response through the RCM was considered relevant given its mandate, but the appropriateness of the RCM's roll-out was occasionally questioned due to its coexistence with other coordination structures.**

135. **All actors interviewed agreed that it was relevant for UNHCR to take a leadership role in coordinating the refugee response through the RCM given its mandate**. It is worth noting that there was limited awareness of the RCM.[262] In all three countries, humanitarian actors reported being unfamiliar with the RCM at the outset of the Sudan situation. Despite successful efforts by UNHCR to make the RCM more widely known, there was still a small number of actors interviewed by the evaluation team that remained unclear about the concepts associated with it as a coordination model, even 18 months into the response.[263]

136. **The coexistence of the RCM with other coordination structures in some contexts led to inter-agency tensions.** In Chad, challenges emerged regarding the cohabitation of the IASC coordination mechanisms system in the east of the country and the RCM, stemming from differing views between UNHCR and OCHA on the nature of the crisis and the division of responsibilities decided by the Resident Coordinator (RC)/ Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). These remained unresolved with the results of the peer-to-peer mission in 2024, initiated while the arrival of the new RC/HC was still being discussed at the time of the data collection in September 2024. In South Sudan, UNHCR/IOM coordination was launched rapidly and was well-received overall, but it was met with some concerns as the clusters were not immediately involved. They nonetheless coordinated the response in return areas later on. The Joint OCHA-UNHCR

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[260] Refugees in Sudan are not included in the evaluation's scope.

[261] OCHA, "Plan de Réponse Humanitaire Révisé - Tchad."

[262] This finding is coherent with: Helene Juillard et al., "Evaluation of UNHCR's Level 3 Regional Refugee Response to the Crisis in Ukraine."

[263] The ET could not determine the causes of this lack of awareness: staff turnover, limited interest to engage, not having participated in the awareness sessions.

note on mixed settings,[264] as illustrated by the interviews in Chad, added to the tensions, as it led to confusion on expected coordination arrangements in the east of Chad.[265]

137. **The nature of the crisis characterized by the** mixed movement of refugees and asylum-seekers, and migrant returnees fleeing the Sudan conflict to Chad and South Sudan **also raised questions about global coordination arrangements between UNHCR and IOM among interviewees. In Chad and Egypt,** sector members, as well as some UNHCR staff, reported that coordination was too siloed between different coordination mechanisms tackling different target groups such as refugees, host communities, IDPs and migrants. This led to duplication of meetings and to a lack of discussion on prioritizing needs across different target groups based on vulnerability.

138. **Some of the reservations about the RCM shared with the ET during the interviews stemmed from the perception that it is overly UNHCR-centric, with UNHCR not only serving as the inter-agency coordinator of the refugee response, but also being the main humanitarian agency actively seeking funding for the refugee response, and acting as an entity that contracts and manages IPs.** While UNHCR's mitigation measures such as deploying dedicated inter-agency coordination staff and using separate information management (IM) products for fundraising and response coordination were appreciated, some sector members found these insufficient to fully resolve the issue. Concerns included a lack of transparency around financial and operational information, excessive data demands from UNHCR without reciprocal data-sharing, and UNHCR's tendency to showcase its own work more prominently than that of other implementing and operational partners.

139. **There were mixed opinions within UNHCR interviewees about the level of flexibility provided by UNHCR with the 2019 RCM guidance.**[266] While for some, it provided welcome flexibility to UNHCR in setting up the RCM, it did not provide clear guidance on what the model could look like, nor was sufficiently clear how specific actors, such as donors or the authorities, should be included in the model or how co-leadership arrangements for sectors would be decided.

> **Key Finding 18: The RCM was regarded as effective due to UNHCR's timely efforts in establishing coordination structures, sharing information and deploying resources. It faced challenges including limited strategic discussions and inconsistent participation by local NGOs and government actors.**

140. **Sector members regarded the coordination as effective**. They highlighted UNHCR's prompt establishment or revitalization of the RCM, provision of regular operational updates and the organization of forums for discussion. From their perspective, the quality of information-sharing was commendable, with regular meetings and detailed and regular updates.

141. **This achievement was driven by an organizational commitment to prioritizing resources for effective coordination**. Key efforts included deploying senior inter-agency and IM capacities, ensuring the rapid availability of CORE information products,[267] and swiftly establishing the ODP with support from HQ Global Data Service

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[264] UNHCR and OCHA, "Joint UNHCR - OCHA Note on Mixed Situations Coordination in Practice," 2014.

[265] This sentence specifically *"Where a Humanitarian Coordinator has been appointed to lead and coordinate humanitarian action and where refugees are present in the same geographic area as IDPs and other affected populations "* was cited by both UNHCR and OCHA to justify their differing perspectives on the crisis in the East, with UNHCR framing it as a refugee response and OCHA as a mixed-setting response.

[266] UNHCR, "Updated Refugee Coordination Guidance Note," 2019.

[267] https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/core/location?secret=unrestricted

(GDS). However, these successes were somewhat tempered by challenges stemming from limited IM staffing capacity, largely due to funding constraints. This may explain why the ODP contained less programmatic information, e.g. no results data dashboard, for the Sudan situation than it did for the Ukraine Situation.[268]

142. **Although the meetings occasionally addressed issues such as duplication, gaps, and operational design, some sector members[269] reported that insufficient time was spent on these strategic discussions**. According to these interviewees, the main issue was that sector meetings did not serve as forums for operational and technical discussions. Furthermore, the Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) reported a lack of effective coordination in the use of inputs from different sectors, particularly when differing viewpoints arose, as reported in Egypt and Chad, and to a lesser extent in South Sudan.

Figure 8: Perceptions of the suitability of UNHCR's guidance to avoid gaps and duplications (sector survey n=51)
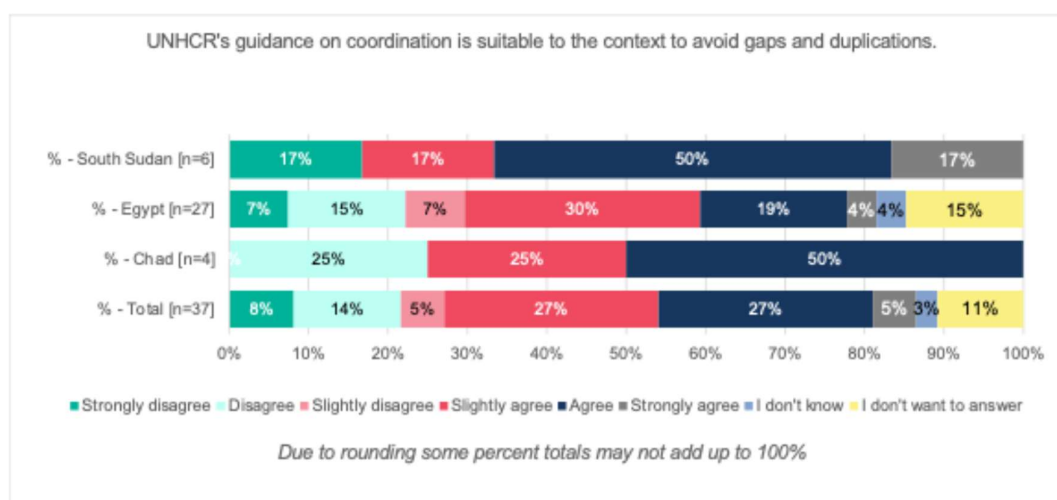
143. **The RCM faced several participation challenges, particularly in 2023, as the voluntary nature of co-leading sectors made it difficult for UNHCR staff to secure commitments from other organizations**. This resulted in over-reliance on UNHCR staff for coordination roles, some of whom lacked coordination experience, which further contributed to perceptions of a UNHCR-centric model. This also meant that some sectors were not as active as intended, with meetings not taking place as frequently as planned. Limited funding for coordination positions exacerbated these issues. However, in 2024, the inclusion of other actors improved, with a greater number of external stakeholders co-chairing meetings, clearer guidance on stakeholder roles, with the development of additional coordination guidance documents such as Terms of References for sector leads and co-leads and coordination diagrams.

144. **The level of participation of local implementers (local and national NGOs and RLOs) in the RCM varied across the visited countries and over time**, with mixed opinions on their involvement. While meetings in some countries, such as Chad and Egypt, included local organizations like NGOs, there were concerns about their limited participation, especially at the beginning of the response. Local actors interviewed, including IPs, often felt excluded from strategic discussions. They perceived their

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[268] For a similar temporal and geographical scope (number of countries), 2,405 documents were accessible on the ODP for the Ukraine Situation, compared with only 444 documents for the Sudan Situation.

[269] During interviews and as part of the sector survey.

contributions as undervalued, although they noticed a positive change over time as UNHCR and other international actors proactively tried to include them further. According to some interviews and qualitative data collected as part of the IP survey, some local actors were not aware of the coordination structure or were unwilling to engage with it.

145. **Government involvement in the RCM varied as well across countries**, based on contextual needs. In Egypt, the humanitarian community initially excluded the government from participating in the RCM, which led to operational challenges. In Chad, the government was involved at all levels, working closely with UNHCR and local ministries, though concerns about limited resources, particularly within CNARR, were raised. In South Sudan, government involvement was minimal and varied among actors.

146. Although the RCM roll-out followed UNHCR's 2019 RCM guidance, the organization was in the process of revising it in 2024, with the updated version released in November 2024. **As detailed in the annex 6, this new guidance has the potential to fill the gaps identified as part of this evaluation.**

3.4.1.2. The Regional Refugee Response Plan

> **Key Finding 19: The Regional Refugee Response Plan was a useful tool for mobilizing resources, although it struggled with inadequate funding and overlapped with other humanitarian plans. The RRRP was less useful for planning, as it lacked operational details.**

147. **Sector members generally considered the RRRP a valuable tool for mobilizing resources**, particularly during the early stages of a crisis. Some agencies reported that, although they contributed to the RRRP, they would still rely on their own appeal documents, while others indicated that being cited as a partner on the RRRP was a requirement of some donors to get funding. The RRRP provided an estimate of the financial needs and tracked the rate of funding achieved. However, the RRRP received limited funding, with only 38 per cent of the plan's funding secured in its first year in 2023, which is lower than the funding levels in the first year of previous situations.[270] Such a figure is also explained by the overall decline in humanitarian funding in 2023 and the increase in unmet needs overall, from 40 to 55 per cent from 2022 to 2023.[271]

148. **Opinions on stakeholder participation in the RRRP pointed out to insufficient involvement and participation, especially in 2023**. While stakeholders noted that the process was more inclusive in 2024 than in 2023, which was likely due to the urgency of issuing the plan in 2023, some participants still expressed that they would have liked more meaningful involvement for the 2024 RRRP. Two frequently cited areas for improvement across the three countries were the need to better anticipate requests and to make the process less top-down, emphasizing more programmatic discussions across agencies rather than just requesting information on funding needs.[272]

149. **The RRRP was not widely viewed by external stakeholders as an effective planning tool due to its lack of detailed needs analysis and operational details on**

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[270] The Afghanistan RRRP was funded at 58 per cent in 2021. The Ukraine RRRP was funded at 72 per cent in 2022. Source: Refugee Funding Tracker.

[271] Development Initiatives, "Falling Short? Humanitarian Funding and Reform."

[272] Although outside the temporal scope of the evaluation, the RRRP workshop held in Nairobi in September 2024, which included UN agencies, INGOs, LNGOs and government representatives, was seen as a positive step towards a more participatory process.

programmatic strategies. According to sector members,[273] its insufficient granularity made it difficult to contribute meaningfully to operational planning, and the data on needs and activities were often incomplete and therefore insufficient to inform strategic and operational decisions. In the absence of a joint multisectoral needs assessment or joint costing conducted in the four countries, there were concerns among interviewees about the reliability of the data to accurately quantify the scale and severity of needs. While it is understandable that such a high-level document did not include this level of detail at the outset of the crisis, only limited programmatic strategies were developed at the country level for the 2024 version, which could have provided information on operational contexts and programmatic strategies to sector members.

150. **There were mixed opinions on the coexistence of the RRRP with other standard documents, such as the HNRP.** This overlap created competing workloads in the production of the documents and fostered competition between plans for prioritizing needs and addressing gaps and, most importantly, for raising funds. In South Sudan, some interviewees, including those from UNHCR and the government, advocated for using a single document to quantity all humanitarian needs in the country.[274] In Chad, the process of including the Chad RRRP information into the HRNP took longer than expected due to disagreements over the caseload and the budget for the refugee response versus the IDP and host community response.

3.4.2. Internal coordination

> **Key Finding 20: UNHCR's emergency response in Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan benefited significantly from RB and HQ support, particularly in the initial stages, although operational coordination faced challenges, including incomplete cross-functional processes and issues with cross-border operations.**

151. **There was a consensus among interviewees in Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan that the support of the RB and HQ was critical to the delivery, particularly at the beginning of the response**. This support was especially significant in certain programmatic functions, such as emergency response, CBI and registration, as well as support functions, including inter-agency coordination, information management and supply.

152. **The support provided by the RBs was especially critical** given the scale of the response and limited availability of funding, which impacted staffing levels in the four countries. Despite this welcome support, several UNHCR staff felt that it was insufficient to compensate for the high workload and the poor living conditions of staff, especially in Chad. The various high-level visits from the UNHCR's High Commissioner, Deputy High Commissioner and Assistant High Commissioners to Chad, Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan, which played an important role in advocacy and fundraising (see 3.2.3 Factors affecting the effectiveness of the UNHCR's interventions), also had a positive effect on staff morale and motivation at COs and FOs.[275]

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[273] Primarily, operational partners, and to a lesser degree some donors. Indeed, there were diverging opinions among donors on whether the level of operational details in the RRRP was tailored to their needs.

[274] The 2024 South Sudan HRNP includes one page, "Part 4: Refugee Response Plan" as an annex of the HRNP, summarizing key highlights of the RRRP for South Sudan. While the RRRP and HRNP feed into each other, some stakeholders questioned the value of maintaining two separate documents. They pointed out the significant overlap between the two and expressed concerns about the competition for funding that arises from having both.

[275] This was spontaneously reported in Chad, Sudan and South Sudan.

153. **Overall, UNHCR staff**[276] **considered the coordination between the COs, RBs and HQ to be effective**. During the first two months, UNHCR's HQ managed all coordination efforts, which were later handed to the Director of the RB EHAGL, who was appointed as Regional Refugee Coordinator (RRC). While some staff in Chad and Egypt initially reported confusion due to competing requests from their respective RBs and the RB EHAGL, they acknowledged that these requests were quickly streamlined.

Figure 9: Perception of the effectiveness of internal coordination (staff survey n=65)
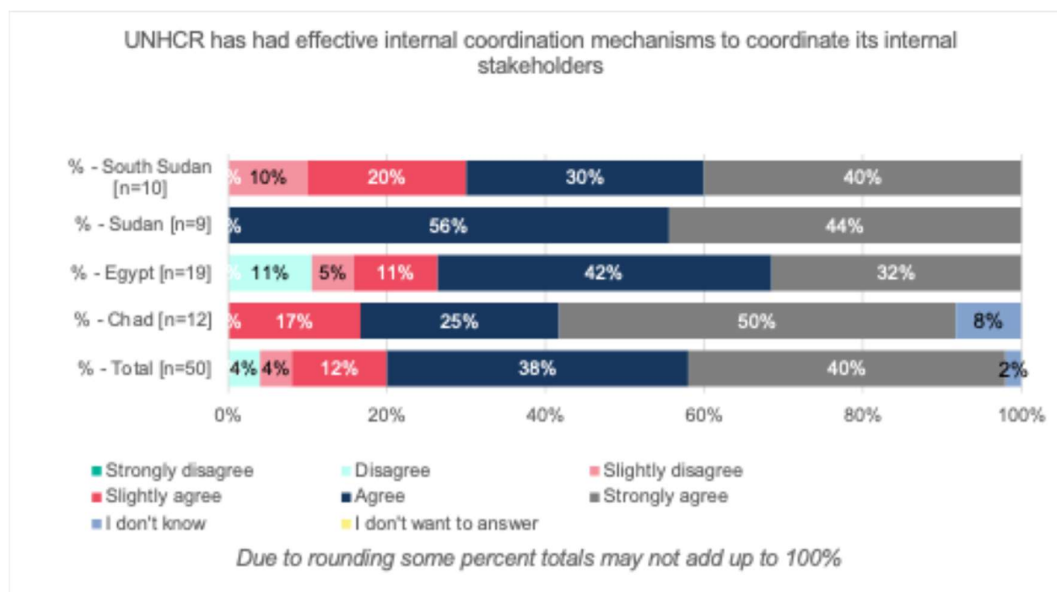
154. **The coordination between the three RBs and the COs operated at a strategic level, with significant involvement from senior management within the offices. However, the establishment of cross-functional team meetings and processes** – particularly between external relations and information management – **took time** and was identified as a gap by some interviewees at the RB and HQ level, particularly in 2023. For example, the review of the 2023 outcomes and indicators used by the four countries shows a lack of consistency in the indicators used for the RRRP across countries.

> 📋 **Promising Practice – Inter RB coordination.** The involvement of three RBs under the leadership of the Regional Situation Coordination at the RB EHAGL was overall successful. Lessons learned and practices, such as the establishment of cross-functional teams (e.g. information management, fundraising), should be documented and analysed as a case study to inform and potentially replicate effective coordination in future emergencies involving multiple RBs.

155. **There was extensive collaboration between COs as part of this emergency response,** including activities such as information-sharing, discussing data and analysis, contingency planning for Sudanese people fleeing (e.g. transporting food from South Sudan to Sudan), coordinating security evacuations for staff, resettlement activities and cross-border operations between Chad and Sudan for Eastern Darfur. Cross-border operations in the emergency response involved staff from Chad, Sudan, RB WCA, and RB EHAGL, with successful collaboration driven by the initiative and commitment of staff. To avoid bottlenecks at the Sudan CO level, cross-border

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[276] Data from interviews and the surveys.

discussions with Chad were decentralized to the FO level, which was seen by interviewees as something both relevant and effective.

156. **However, cross-border operations which are inherently challenging due to contextual challenges, were further hindered by the lack of internal documentation on the topic and limited interoperability between countries.** Current procedures and systems were deemed not fully contextualized for cross-border operations involving operational delivery, like in Eastern Darfur, between the Sudan and Chad COs. This resulted in challenges around operations, field advances, lack of materials, prolonged delays in procurement, and raised questions about the roles and responsibilities within UNHCR in relation to external engagement with the authorities and other external stakeholders.

> 💡 **Lessons Learned – the need to enhance interoperability between COs**. Previous cross-border operations by UNHCR (e.g. in Turkey) were not adequately documented, which prevented lessons learned from being applied to the Sudan situation. As a result, COs had to address administrative and logistical challenges through a trial-and-error approach, placing significant strain on operations. Without it being too prescriptive to tailor operations to their context, the absence of a cross-border operation checklist to enhance interoperability between COs and RBs was identified as a critical gap.

3.5. Sustainability

3.5.1. Durable solutions

> **Key Finding 21: Supporting durable solutions has not been a realistic intervention in the current Sudan crisis context, but UNHCR has nevertheless taken steps to include consideration of them in its strategic approach.**

157. **There have been limited prospects for durable solutions for refugees and IDPs in the Sudan situation.** With ongoing outflows of refugees from Sudan because of the continued conflict and massive internal displacement within the country, it has not been possible for displaced people to return to their places of origin. In May 2023, UNHCR published a non-return advisory to Sudan that outlined that it was not safe for people to return to the country and called on countries to not forcibly return refugees and asylum-seekers to Sudan.[277] Neither the Chadian, Egyptian nor South Sudanese authorities have supported the idea of local integration according to key informants from UNHCR. The only context in which durable solutions for refugees were relevant is South Sudan, given the number of South Sudanese refugees returning from Sudan to their homes. However, these refugees did not return as part of a voluntary repatriation process, but instead were forced to flee Sudan because of the conflict.[278] Despite the circumstances of their return, many of the refugees have been able to return home or settle elsewhere in South Sudan and have been supported to do so as part of phase three of the inter-agency return plan. While durable solutions for IDPs in Sudan prior to the crisis had

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[277] UNHCR, "UNHCR Position on Returns to Sudan," May 2023.

[278] The presence of South Sudanese refugees in Sudan spans over three decades, with many integrating into northern Sudanese society during this period. This integration has been shaped by historical conflicts, including the civil wars in South Sudan between 2013 and 2020, which led many to seek refuge in Sudan. However, the outbreak of violence in Sudan in April 2023 resulted in the displacement of many of these long-term refugees, forcing them to return to South Sudan.

been a priority for UNHCR and its partners, this has no longer been possible because of the prevailing security situation in the country.

158. **Resettlement has been the only realistic durable solution option for Sudanese refugees, albeit at a very small scale**. At the start of the crisis, the UNHCR Egypt country office shifted its resettlement programme planning to include Sudanese refugees: 400 third-country nationals from Sudan who had already been identified for resettlement but had not yet left Sudan before the crisis and were forced to leave the country to go to Egypt were included. In addition, 261 Sudanese refugees who were assessed with acute vulnerabilities were also added to the resettlement programme. However, these numbers represent a small fraction of the 33,000 refugees estimated to be in need of resettlement in Egypt in 2024.[279] In Chad, the new Sudanese refugees from the crisis had not yet been resettled although they have been in case management and the country offices successfully advocated to increase their quotas in view of the Sudan emergency. In South Sudan, a resettlement programme was only started by UNHCR in 2023 and, to date, no new Sudanese refugees have left Sudan because of the current crisis.

> 📋 **Good Practice – ensuring that durable solutions are included in national legal, policy and strategic frameworks.** In each of the county contexts evaluated, UNHCR ensured that a commitment to durable solutions (including voluntary repatriation, resettlement and local integration) were included in asylum laws (Egypt and Chad) and relevant displacement strategies (South Sudan).

159. **UNHCR has adopted a "solutions from the start" mindset across all countries,[280] including examples within its planning, coordination and engagement with authorities.** While durable solutions for refugees and IDPs are a distant possibility, UNHCR has taken a long-term perspective and ensured strategic thinking on the issue from the start of the crisis. In Chad, the Government adopted a decree in the Council of Minister in April 2023 that brought into effect the national Asylum Law of 2020. The decree includes provisions for durable solutions, including voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement. In Egypt, the Government committed to an Asylum Law in 2019 that could include provisions for durable solutions, but it had not yet been adopted. However, reference is made to a protection and solutions strategy in Egypt's Refugee and Resilience Response Plan,[281] albeit only in relation to resettlement, for which the UNHCR country office held a High-Level Workshop with the Government of Egypt and partners in 2023. The commitments of Egypt for the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) and Global Refugees Forum also reference durable solutions while supporting refugees.[282] In October 2023, with UNHCR's support, South Sudan's Commissioner of Refugees Affairs (CRA) and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission presented the National Durable Solutions Strategy and Action Plan to the Council of Ministers, which approved it.[283;284] In Sudan, UNHCR chaired the Durable Solutions Working Group with UNDP and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) prior to the crisis

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[279] Data provided from UNHCR Egypt country office resettlement unit.

[280] The need for durable solutions for refugees and IDPs is acknowledged in the Strategy Reports for Egypt, Sudan, Chad and South Sudan. The 2024 RRRP provides brief mention of durable solutions under the section on the HDP nexus.

[281] Egypt Refugee and Resilience Response Plan – January to December 2024

[282] UNHCR and Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Information Note - ERP," 2023.

[283] UNHCR, 'Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response Plan - January-December 2024'.

[284] It also continues to engage with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-supported Sudan-South Sudan Solutions Initiative. UNHCR has also been able to integrate returning South Sudanese refugees in its "Pockets of Hope". UNHCR, "The Pockets of Hope Initiative: Realizing Solutions in South Sudan," 2022.

and it stopped meeting after the start of the conflict.[285] The ET saw these initiatives as concrete evidence of UNHCR adopting a "solutions from the start" posture in its response to the Sudan crisis. Many informants mentioned how UNHCR had engaged with development actors since the early stages of the crisis, through the application of the nexus approach (see next section) as an investment in solutions, once the conditions may become more conducive.

> 📋 **Good Practice – Including development actors as an integral part of refugee response coordination mechanisms.** In Egypt, UNHCR made the strategic choice of inviting UNDP to chair the inter-agency and intersectoral working groups, which increased the ownership and responsibility of development actors for the refugee response. Development actors have played an increasing role in the RCM while UNHCR coordinated extensively with the World Bank.

3.5.2.Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDPN)

> **Key Finding 22: UNHCR has shown that the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus approach[286] is equally applicable in a rapid-onset emergency and has taken steps to adopt such an approach through the engagement of development actors, albeit with several challenges.**

160. **While it is imperative to scale up the immediate humanitarian response, UNHCR has taken steps to implement the nexus approach through engagement with development actors.** The application of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach is a key corporate priority for UNHCR.[287] The ET found that the Sudan L3 response provides an example of how such an approach can be applied in a rapid-onset crisis, as well as protracted displacement crises, with which it is normally associated. In Chad, specific emphasis was placed on the nexus approach, given the impact of the refugee crisis on local host communities that were also facing development challenges.[288] In September 2023, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, conducted a joint visit to Chad with the World Bank's Managing Director of Operations, Anna Bjerde, to underline the developmental impact of the crisis.[289] The World Bank subsequently announced $ 340 million of funding for Chad.[290] Some UNHCR staff and external stakeholders in the east of the country felt that limited consideration had been given to long-term planning, including resilience and development activities, as the focus was on the emergency phase of the operation and the imperative to relocate refugees into existing and new camps and provision of life-saving assistance. However, by 2024, UNHCR had established a nexus working group with UNDP and partners in eastern Chad and in N'Djamena. UNHCR had engaged with the World Bank, the EU and African Development Bank to mobilize resources for refugees and host communities. In Egypt, UNHCR invited UNDP to co-chair the Inter-

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[285] In October 2024, it was reactivated and is currently in the process of establishing a Durable Solutions Unit, comprised of both UN and INGO personnel, to be situated within the RCO.

[286] For a definition of the nexus approach, see UN-IASC Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes, 20 June 2020 available at https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standing-committee/un-iasc-light-guidance-collective-outcomes-0

[287] UNHCR, "UNHCR's Focus Area Strategic Plan on Engaging Development Actors," n.d.

[288] For more details of how the nexus approach was applied, see for example, Damian Lilly, 'Yes the Nexus is Real, but it Needs a Radical Overhaul', the New Humanitarian, 18 July 2024 available at https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2024/07/18/nexus-is-real-it-needs-radical-overhaul

[289] World Bank, "The World Bank and UNHCR Join Forces to Support Sudanese Refugees and Host Communities in Chad," n.d., accessed September 6, 2023.

[290] Reuters, "World Bank Announces $340 Million Support for Chad over Refugees, Other Crises," n.d.

Agency Working Group and the Inter-Sector Working Group, which was a strategic step to include development actors in the coordination of the response from the outset.[291] UNHCR Egypt also developed an engagement plan with UNDP to approach development actors, which is now being implemented.[292] Refugees have also been included in the scope of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework in both countries.

161. **UNHCR has prioritized resilience and long-term development programmes**. In Chad, UNHCR has supported some livelihood and resilience programmes as part of its annual plan and through the RRRP.[293] UNHCR is involved in several nexus projects in eastern Chad that are funded by the EU, World Bank and other donors including DIZA, RESITCHAD (Agriculture), RESPECT, etc. In Egypt, UNHCR has supported income generating and livelihood programmes coordinated with UNDP through the Livelihood and Economic Inclusion Working Group.[294] It has also implemented the Dutch Government-funded PROSPECTS project,[295] which is a multi-agency initiative of $ 15.5 million over four years, aimed at providing refugees with livelihoods, education grants and socioeconomic inclusion.[296] The project is intended to improve the access of host communities and forcibly displaced persons to education, social protection and decent work. The UNHCR Egypt country office also undertook a "Sensemaking process" with the ISWG on how to better mainstream resilience-based development in the refugee response in 2023. UNHCR Egypt developed a Five-Year Road Map for Livelihood and Economic Inclusion, linking the sector to Social Protection and aiming to achieve better socioeconomic data. In South Sudan, UNHCR has supported the "Pockets of Hope" initiative as part of phase 3 of this area of return.[297]

162. **Several challenges to the implementation of the nexus approach remain**. Despite these positive examples of efforts to apply the nexus approach and the development of resilience and long-term development programming, several key informants spoke of the challenge for UNHCR to bring them to scale, given the lack of development funding and the priority to focus on the humanitarian response instead. Some informants felt that UNHCR's engagement of development actors was mainly motivated by the need to mobilize more funding for the underfunded response, rather than a genuine shift in strategic approach. It was still unclear how resilience programming should be addressed in the RRRP planning process and budgeted for such activities. The involvement of development actors into the RCM was viewed as another gap by interviewees in Chad, Egypt and South Sudan. However, it was also noted that they often do not have a field presence (especially South Sudan) to engage in such coordination, with many working at a regional level. More specifically in Egypt, the current legal framework for refugees formally prohibits refugees' employment opportunities, hindering their inclusion in economic activities and the setting up of their own businesses. Although UNHCR worked with national service providers and line ministries in each of the contexts evaluated, it proved challenging to make them responsible and build their capacity for support to refugees. As a result, UNHCR unavoidably created parallel services in many

[291] See UNDP and UNHCR MoU, December 2023

[292] Joint UNDP-UNHCR External Engagement Strategy with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and Development Partners (DPs)

[293] UNHCR, "Annual Results Report Chad 2023," 2023.

[294] UNHCR, "Annual Results Report Egypt 2023," 2023.

[295] International Labour Organisation, International Finance Corporation, IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR.

[296] UNHCR, "PROSPECTS Fact Sheet Improving the Prospects of Refugees, Vulnerable Migrants and Host Communities," September 2024.

[297] The Pockets of Hope Initiative: Realizing Solutions in South Sudan, UNHCR South Sudan, 2022

instances of assistance. Nevertheless, the ET considered that UNHCR had made every effort to adopt the nexus approach, although this was certainly still a "work in progress". It was noted that there is a lack of UNHCR corporate guidance on nexus, which is only addressed in the sustainable programming[298] approach, but in this and other guidance, it is not explained how this differentiates from resilience, nexus programming, inclusion and other related topics.

3.6.   Cross-cutting themes

163. This section addresses how UNHCR incorporated cross-cutting themes into its response, specifically the closely related issues of AGD and AAP. While section 3.1 discussed how the response is targeted at the specific needs of vulnerable groups in an inclusive way, this section addresses more broadly how UNHCR ensures an inclusive approach to its programming cycle.

3.6.1. Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD)

Key Finding 23: UNHCR managed to operationalize the age, gender and diversity approach across most aspects of its response, although mostly with respect to sex and age-disaggregated data and inclusive programming, with other elements not covered as much.

164. **UNHCR had a strong commitment to operationalizing the AGD approach across most aspects of its response.** UNHCR took steps to ensure that it adopted an inclusive approach to its programming, respecting the rights of all individuals through the implementation of its 2018 Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity.[299] Based on interviews with UNHCR and IP staff, the ET found that this policy is well known among UNHCR staff and its partners, and there have been important efforts to implement it as part of the Sudan response. In Egypt, this included ensuring such consideration within UNHCR programme design but also facilitating trainings on the subject for partners including RLOs.[300] There were gaps, however, in the implementation of the six pillars of the policy on AGD, particularly with respect to feedback and the participation of forcibly displaced Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers (see section below).

165. **UNHCR has been able to produce sex and age-disaggregated data for the most part as required under the AGD Policy.** The ET noted that all UNHCR country offices, as part of the Sudan response, have been able to collect sex and age-disaggregated data. This included the planning figures contained in the RRRP, although the calculation of the proportion of persons with disabilities sometimes had been taken from WHO estimates rather than from collected primary data.[301] UNHCR registration systems in Chad and Egypt for newly arrived refugees also generated sex and age-disaggregated data, which then can be used for making operational and programme decisions. Participatory and rapid assessments included AGD-disaggregated data and an analysis of needs. Where necessary, the results were presented broken down by different groups as well.[302]

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[298] UNHCR, "Sustainble Programming: What Is Sustainble Programming and Why Is It Needed?," (UNHCR, No date).

[299] UNHCR, "Policy on Age Gender and Diversity," 2018.

[300] UNHCR. "Annual Results Report Egypt 2023," 2023.

[301] UNHCR, "Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response Plan - January-December 2024," 2024.

[302] See for example the Community Dialogue Dashboard.

166. **UNHCR has ensured AGD-inclusive programming, although not systematically.**
The majority of informants among UNHCR staff and its partners considered that AGD
had been sufficiently operationalized as part of the response.[303] AGD-related
vulnerabilities had been included in the targeting criteria for individual and household
assistance such as CBI[304] and CRI. They were similarly included in SOPs on case
management for GBV and child protection in Egypt.[305] Based on the comments of some
key informants, AGD had been considered in the design of specific forms of assistance,
such as accommodation for persons with disabilities in shelter design and gender-
sensitive latrine construction. Despite these positive examples, several informants felt
that UNHCR could have done more to implement its policy on AGD within its
programmes and that some vulnerable groups were overlooked in the response. For
example, some informants considered that gender analysis and assistance tailored to
the specific needs of women and girls were insufficient. Another gap identified was the
lack of assistive devices and assistance specifically tailored to the needs of persons with
disabilities such as shelters adapted to their needs, although it was noted that this is
also the responsibility of health partners.

3.6.2. Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

**Key Finding 24: UNHCR did not ensure sufficient feedback to forcibly displaced
and stateless persons and their participation in the design and delivery of
assistance was limited.**

167. **UNHCR adopted a mixed strategy for communicating with, and seeking feedback
from, refugees and asylum-seekers.** As part of its policy on AGD[306] and Operational
Guidance on AAP, UNHCR is committed to providing feedback and response systems
to its recipients as part of the assistance provided so that remedial action can be taken
about any noted concerns. In Egypt and Chad, UNHCR had established various
channels to provide information about the response and expected assistance, including
SMS, Infolines, What'sApp groups, information booklets and flyers, as well as through
community leaders. In Egypt, UNHCR partners also conducted counselling phone calls
to new recipients of multi-purpose cash assistance to provide them with essential
information about the assistance.[307]

168. **There were context-specific challenges in ensuring effective communication with
refugees.** In Egypt, the urban context and dispersed caseload of refugees that were
integrated into host communities presented several communication challenges. The
overwhelming feedback from the FGDs was that forcibly displaced persons were
unsatisfied with the format, level and content of the information received from UNHCR
and its IPs. Refugees complained about the slow response times on the refugee
hotlines, incomplete and imprecise information provided about the assistance and
procedures to access it, and about the lack of conducive communication approach by

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[303] 52 per cent of respondents to the online survey, answered 'strongly agree', and 38 per cent answered 'agree' to the
statement, "Recipients targeted and served by UNHCR correspond to the most vulnerable groups, with heightened
needs of protection and with specific AGD needs, as identified by UNHCR assessments according to the principle of
impartiality".

[304] UNHCR, "CBI SOPs- Final June 2024- Signed by Rep."

[305] UNHCR, "Egypt BEST INTEREST PROCEDURES SOPS," .and UNHCR, "Egypt Standard Operating Procedures
(SOP) for Direct Implementation of the Safety Package (SP)," n.d.

[306] See Area of Engagement 4 of the Policy on Age, Gender and Policy, UNHCR, 8 March 2018.

[307] When asked if they felt well-informed about the cash assistance provided, 75 per cent of survey respondents stated
feeling well-informed, 20 per cent did not feel well-informed, while 5 per cent did not provide an answer.

Infoline staff.[308] There was an over-reliance on the internet and social media, which are not available to everyone compared with community channels of communication. RLOs did not provide an effective intermediary for providing information, although this improved when they were brought into the RCM coordination meetings. The appointment system improved but faced significant delays and only improved once digital registration was adopted. In Chad, the containment of refugees in camps made communication with them easier. In general, the feedback from FGDs was that refugees, returnees and host communities were satisfied with the communication systems set up by UNHCR and its implementing partners. However, technical problems and unreliable mobile network coverage were barriers to effective communication with refugees.

> 📋 **Good Practice – RLOs in the RCM.** To collect additional information about the needs and priorities of refugees and asylum-seekers, UNHCR Egypt included some RLOs in the RCM (specially around AAP) in 2024.

169. **It was unclear whether feedback mechanisms were used effectively to translate concerns into actions that lead to adjustments to programming and strategic planning**. In addition to ensuring effective communication with forcibly displaced and stateless persons, UNHCR also ensured that safe and accessible Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms (CFM) were in place for the collection, documentation, analysis and response to feedback and complaints. According to informants, UNHCR put in place complaints and feedback mechanisms in camps, registration centres and other locations with direct contact with refugees. In Egypt,[309] among the interviewed recipients in PDMs, 80 per cent could identify at least one local channel for reporting complaints or feedback on UNHCR cash assistance.[310] Only a small number of interviewees confirmed that the complaints mechanisms were working effectively and led to adjustments in the interventions. Some PDM reports for cash assistance in Sudan showed that aid recipients received limited information about the date, time and place of distributions, and they were poorly informed about the selection and prioritization criteria for the assistance. The lack of adaptation from feedback and complaints mechanisms affects the targeting of assistance and programmatic course corrections as noted in 3.1.2. Relevance with regard to needs.

> 💡 **Lessons Learned – no one-size-fits-all approach to ensuring effective interaction with refugees and asylum-seekers,** enabling them to understand the available services and to participate in the design, development, and delivery of assistance. In Egypt, a reliance on digital communication methods proved insufficient, underscoring the importance of RLOs. Similarly, challenges were encountered in eastern Chad, where poor network coverage limited digital communication. However, these challenges could be mitigated through direct engagement with refugees in camps.

170. **The degree of participation of the refugees, IDPs and host communities in the design and implementation of the response has varied, depending upon whether decisions were taken at the national or local level**. During the first months of the response, the rapidity and overwhelming scale of the response were the greatest

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[308] These findings are aligned with a recent UNHCR evaluation: Teresa Hanley and Ima Bishop, "Data Systems in MENA: Multi-Country Evaluation of Phone-Based Contact Centre," 2024.

[309] Proactive feedback was obtained routinely for individual- and household-level assistance, such as cash assistance, which provided another opportunity for feedback. However, the use of PDM was not consistent across countries, with Chad for instance not having collected any PDM data during the evaluation period. In Sudan and Egypt, PDMs were used more systematically.

[310] Post-Distribution Monitoring Report of UNHCR's Emergency Cash Assistance to Sudanese New Arrivals in Egypt.

inhibiting factors for the inclusion of refugees in the design and implementation. For both refugees and host communities, any consultations on design and implementation necessarily took place with government counterparts (national or local), or other leaders and representatives, and these would then act as the primary representatives in interface with UNHCR. Decisions on many "bigger picture" policy questions (such as whether or not to have camps, or whether to relocate all refugees away from the border), were taken at a national level, in negotiation with national government counterparts, rather than at the local levels, where communities would be consulted. There is little evidence that refugees or host communities have had a meaningful say in the design of the implementation methodologies, or the design or selection of specific items. Local authorities are more likely to be consulted on questions such as the exact location of a planned camp or site. However, this led to delays in the agreements on land use in Chad, and to reported inconsistencies in policies between different local authorities, in South Sudan. In Egypt, in February and again in October-November 2023, UNHCR undertook a variety of participatory assessment activities (FGDs and individual discussions) with individuals from eight different nationalities, including Sudanese, in order to inform future programming.[311]

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1: UNHCR demonstrated some capacity to scale up, deliver and steer a timely and relevant regional response in a very challenging context, although these challenges are expected to persist.

171. The Sudan situation is one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world causing immense human suffering and has presented an extremely difficult operational environment for UNHCR, characterized by its massive caseload, lack of international attention and underfunding. These challenges were compounded by logistical, security and access constraints, as well as complexities arising from gaps in legal frameworks, and sometimes complex relationship with host governments.

172. In spite of these challenges, UNHCR established itself as a humanitarian organization with a capacity to promptly collect and share data on arrivals, provide emergency relief and services through appropriate interventions, and steer a large-scale and complex response with 80 to 90 operational partners across the region.

173. This success was made possible by a "whole-of-organization" response, thanks to UNHCR's emergency policy, combined with its pre-existing presence in the four countries, which aided the scale-up. Protocols and systems in place to increase decision-making at field level and to deploy additional staff from the HQ, RBs and emergency rosters were effective. At country-level, pre-existing partnerships with IPs and relationships with governments also played a significant role, although with certain preparedness gaps.

174. The scale of needs has increased even after the initial end of the L3 scale-up in June 2024, which was extended until November 2024. The scale of the crisis is expected to persist throughout 2025, which UNHCR will have to contend with and find innovative ways to address the arising challenges. At the time of the finalization of this

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[311] UNHCR. "2023 UNHCR Egypt PA Report (February 2023) - Internal.," 2023. And UNHCR. "2023 UNHCR Egypt PA Report (November 2023) - Internal," 2023. and corroborated in interviews with IP staff.

report, new funding challenges are emerging with a number of important donors reducing their donations.

Conclusion 2: UNHCR delivered contextually relevant emergency interventions based on the needs of forcibly displaced and stateless persons and simultaneously rapidly incorporated the HDP nexus to ensure a long-term strategic approach, although the results of this have not yet materialized.

175. UNHCR extensively engaged with all stakeholders and collected information on the needs of forcibly displaced persons to appropriately define its programmatic approach, albeit with certain data gaps.

176. The breadth of its emergency response – including registration, legal assistance, basic needs assistance and shelter – was relevant for providing basic-service and life-saving support in coordination with other operational partners.

177. Considering the magnitude of the needs and funding available, UNHCR prioritized specific areas in the focus countries, such as registration, shelter and WASH, based on caseloads and on the urgency of life-saving needs, although longer-term interventions such as livelihoods, health and education did not receive sufficient attention.

178. UNHCR commendably adopted a "solutions from the start" mindset. Through its engagement with development actors, it has demonstrated that the HDP nexus approach is equally applicable in a quick-onset crisis as it is in protracted displacement situations, although bringing resilience and long-term development programmes to scale has been challenging given the lack of funding. As the Sudan situation continues, applying a nexus approach will remain an imperative to address underlying vulnerabilities and the root cause of the crisis.

Conclusion 3: The scale of the UNHCR response was hindered by insufficient funding, which highlighted the challenges of how best to prioritize programmatic interventions in a resource-scarce environment.

179. This emergency response was constrained by significant funding challenges, which meant that UNHCR could not act as the provider of last resort and deliver at the intended scale for basic needs services, including registration, CBI, CRI and other sectoral activities.

180. Challenges in scaling up registration and targeting assistance emerged as significant issues in all the contexts, albeit in different ways. Appropriate targeting and prioritization were constrained by inadequate funding and further hindered by an inadequate approach to AAP, including insufficient communication about targeting criteria and approaches to aid recipients, and feedback mechanisms that did not lead to programme adaptation. Additionally, backlogs and delays in the registration and relocation of refugees from borders severely impacted the timeliness and effectiveness of assistance.

181. As provider of last resort and coordinator of the response, UNHCR's prioritization of sectors, activities, modalities, and vulnerable populations was neither sufficient nor systematic enough to effectively address underfunding, though COs did attempt to grapple with this reality.

182. UNHCR actively advocated for increased funding and protection for forcibly displaced persons, proactively working to strengthen and expand its donor base and raise awareness of the funding shortfall for the Sudan situation, although only achieving moderate success, in a context of declining humanitarian response resources globally.

183. Limited funding negatively impacted the implementation of some scale-up procedures such as fast-track recruitment, and the evaluation also confirmed structural issues related to fast-track recruitment timeliness, as highlighted in previous evaluations.[312]

184. The funding outlook is unlikely to improve, while needs are increasing, and therefore, UNHCR will need to find new ways beyond its existing planning procedures to prioritize its limited resources better in order to maximize the relevance and the effectiveness of its response.

> **Conclusion 4: Investment in the RCM rendered coordination generally effective, although inconsistent participation and its coexistence with other coordination mechanisms raised questions about the appropriateness of its roll-out in some countries. The newly released 2024 RCM guidance is expected to address some of these gaps.**

185. UNHCR's organizational commitment to prioritizing resources for effective coordination successfully facilitated regular operational updates and the organization of coordination meetings with partners for discussions on advocacy, strategy and operations. A point of improvement was noted on the insufficient time spent on these strategic discussions.

186. Despite efforts by UNHCR to raise the profile of the RCM, it continued to suffer from a lack of awareness among some operational partners. Improvements over time were achieved in participation levels, particularly in relation to the development of the RRRP. However, the perception of the RCM as a UNHCR-centric coordination model that benefits the UNHCR more than its partners persisted, and this, combined with the overall limited inclusion of local NGOs and government actors, has negatively impacted its effectiveness.

187. The coexistence of the RCM with other coordination structures, e.g. the IASC cluster system, and the overlap between the RRRP and the HNRP led to inter-agency tensions in some contexts and exposed a broader and unresolved challenge within the humanitarian system of coordination responsibilities in "mixed settings" of refugees, migrants and IDPs. UNHCR also faced challenges in mobilizing sector members to assume co-leadership positions in various sectors under the RCM.

188. The evaluation highlighted insufficient clarity regarding the structure, roles, responsibilities and participation within the RCM. Several issues have been either fully or partially addressed in the new RCM 2024 guidance published in November 2024, although its practical effectiveness remains to be tested, and issues identified in this evaluation still need to be addressed during implementation of the guidance.

> **Conclusion 5: Some data gaps and insufficient analysis by UNHCR hindered strategic, programmatic and operational decisions-making related to the design of interventions, the prioritization of the response and accountability to aid recipients, donors and partners.**

189. Compared with recent UNHCR L3 responses and despite successes in producing data on arrivals and intentions and in other areas, country operations lacked a joint multisectoral needs assessment and a harmonized monitoring and reporting framework. This contributed to challenges in prioritizing needs and interventions, and accurately reporting the total number of refugees, IDPs and asylum-seekers assisted.

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[312] Helene Juillard et al., "Evaluation of UNHCR's Level 3 Regional Refugee Response to the Crisis in Ukraine."
Veronique de Clerck et al., "Evaluation of UNHCR's Response to the L3 Emergency in Afghanistan 2021–2022."

190. The evaluation unveiled five key data-related issues that require attention: 1. Absence of a standardized and comprehensive multisectoral needs assessment and costing tool for the RRRP; 2. Insufficient implementation of minimum programme monitoring requirements to collect feedback for all material interventions (currently limited to CBI); 3. Insufficiently accessible CFM channels and analysed CFM data to collect feedback and ensure their participation in programme design and implementation; 4. Gap in the implementation of the AGD policy, especially when collecting data on disabilities and designing appropriate forms of assistance; 5. Lack of a basic cost-efficiency tool and related data to easily incorporate cost-efficiency considerations in programme design.

191. In turn, these data gaps led to the suboptimal use of CBI versus in-kind assistance, insufficient prioritization of interventions relative to one another, and inadequately tailored targeting criteria that did not sufficiently align with the available funding.

Conclusion 6: UNHCR worked well regionally across three regional bureaux providing technical resources and expertise to the COs, albeit raising some interoperability issues.

192. Coordination between the three RBs and the COs functioned at a strategic level, with significant involvement from senior management. However, the establishment of cross-functional team meetings and processes – particularly between external relations and information management – required time to become operational.

193. Critical support was provided by HQ and RBs to the COs in areas such as strategy development, resource mobilization, emergency response, IM and access. This support proved valuable in a context where funding impacted staffing levels.

194. Extensive collaboration occurred between COs during this emergency response, particularly in sharing information, discussing strategy and managing cross-border operations.

195. Cross-border operations were hindered by insufficient guidance on the topic and limited interoperability arrangement between COs. These challenges present opportunities for UNHCR to enhance cross-border operations through improved documentation and streamlined processes.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

196. The following section includes recommendations have been developed in collaboration with UNHCR country-level stakeholders, UNHCR regional-level stakeholders and external partners of the Evaluation Reference Group during the finalization phase of the evaluation. While a formal response is only required to the 5 recommendations, the Evaluation Team hopes that the suggested actions will be useful in helping management define an appropriate action plan towards tackling them.

#	Recommendations	Corresponding conclusions and key findings	Responsible lead entity	Anticipated timeframe
Recommendation 1	**UNHCR should expand minimum requirements for monitoring to ensure that they are the same across all forms of material assistance provided by UNHCR to ensure inclusive and results-driven responses, with a focus on regular data collection, real-time analysis and effective communication with affected populations.**	**Conclusion 5**	**Division of Resilience and Solutions (DRS)**	12 months
Suggested Action 1.1	UNHCR should consider making regular post-distribution monitoring an internal requirement for all forms of material assistance implemented by UNHCR and its IPs (e.g. shelter, WASH, Health, Education, livelihoods, CRI) and use the consolidated data from this for improved accountability to affected populations, performance review, and programmatic and operational decision-making.	Paragraphs 45, 46, 59, 128	DRS, in consultation with the Division of Strategic Planning and Results (DSPR), Global Data Service (GDS)	12 months
Suggested action 1.2	UNHCR should further invest in community-based approaches (such as RLOs and community-based organizations) in order to disseminate better information to and collect feedback from aid recipients from the start of the response to strengthen its approach to AAP.	Paragraphs, 97, 105, 147, 166, 171, 172	DIP in consultation with DESS	6 months
Suggested action 1.3	UNHCR should systematically include a code in its corporate results framework to be able to isolate the caseload to specific L3 situations. This will enable the CO to effectively utilize output data for reporting, monitoring	Paragraphs, 40, 46, 55, 73, 74, 75,	DSPR	3 months

	and informed decision-making. This could also feed into the RRRP reporting framework and make regional reporting easier and more cohesive.			
Recommendation 2	**UNHCR should strengthen its approach to prioritization by establishing, within its planning and programme development procedures, clear criteria and procedures to prioritize sectors, activities, modalities and vulnerable populations to justify the allocation of resources and inform operations for the Sudan situation as well as future L3 emergencies. This applies to UNHCR as coordinator of the response as well as UNHCR as last-resort provider in emergency and non-emergency settings.**	**Conclusion 3**	**Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS)**	**6 months**
Suggested Action 2.1	UNHCR should conduct internal and external capacity-building sessions at country and regional levels about the use of joint needs-assessment tools (e.g. the Needs Assessment for Refugee Emergencies (NARE) so that needs assessments are better known and used to quantify the breadth and severity of needs, as part of the RRRP process in order to have the necessary data to contribute to prioritization.	Paragraphs 144, 150, 151	DESS, DSPR, Division of External Relations (DER)	6 months
Suggested action 2.2	UNHCR should develop a simple standardized cost-efficiency calculation tool in order to help the COs inform programmatic decisions about different response options and activities, and to use this criterion alongside other design criteria such as protection risks, acceptance, timeliness, etc. This cost-efficiency tool could also contribute to the larger prioritization of the response as part of the RRRP process.	Paragraphs 124, 127, 129, 130	DSPR, in consultation with RBs, CO	6 months
Suggested action 2.3	As implementer and coordinator of the response, UNHCR should systematically document the rationale for prioritizing specific sectors, activities and vulnerability criteria, and build it into its emergency planning processes in order to enhance accountability, particularly in underfunded responses, and to adapt its response analysis, as critical assumptions related to the context and the response evolve.	Paragraphs 45, 57, 100, 104, 105	DESS, DER	6 months
Recommendation 3	**UNHCR should invest in the roll-out and implementation of the new RCM Guidance to improve aspects related to the participation in the RCM, the RRRP process, and the interactions with other coordination mechanisms in mixed settings.**	**Conclusion 4**	**Division of External Relations (DER)**	9 months

Suggested Action 3.1	UNHCR should implement an awareness raising and socialization plan for the new RCM guidance specifically for its staff and partners as part of the Sudan L3 response; and as preparedness for future emergency responses.	Paragraphs 138, 139, 142, 150	DER	3 months
Suggested action 3.2	UNHCR should develop operational guidance with other relevant agencies including OCHA (e.g. mixed note) and IOM (e.g. framework agreement) to provide greater clarity on arrangements between different coordination mechanisms at country level in mixed settings. The guidance should provide additional practical details on potential set-up and roles and responsibilities, with examples and case studies. UNHCR should advocate for an inter-agency mechanism and technical support to decide which coordination mechanisms should apply and leadership responsibilities when there is a lack of clarity and agreement at country levels about which coordination mechanisms should apply at the outset of a scale-up in a mixed setting.	Paragraphs 139, 140, 142, 146	DER with other UN agencies	9 months
Suggested action 3.3	For the Sudan situation and future L3 regional refugee responses, UNHCR should harmonize its monitoring framework for the RRRP across countries so that similar activities are reported on consistently with common indicators, targets and results to measure effectiveness (outputs and outcomes) from the start of the response for more accurate response reporting. For instance, the RRRP could systematically include a core set of indicators similar across countries.	Paragraphs, 40, 46, 55, 73, 75, 128, 129, 151	DESS, DER, DSPR	6 months
Recommendation 4	**UNHCR should further integrate resilience and sustainable responses in the design of L3 scaled-up response, notably via the selection of response modalities at area level, to better address the long-term needs from the outset of acute crises through the nexus approach.**	**Conclusions 1 and 2**	**Office of the Regional Refugee Coordinator (RRC) at RB EHAGL**	9 months
Suggested action 4.1	UNHCR should capitalize on how the nexus and "solutions from the start" were successfully considered at the beginning of the Sudan situation to generate lessons learned and good practices so this approach is systematically included in future L3 responses.	Paragraphs 159 to 164	Office of RCC at RB EHAGL, DRS, DESS	6 months
Suggested action 4.2	As the emergency phase continues, UNHCR should adopt an area-based approach, implementing CBI whenever feasible and appropriate in line with	Paragraphs 56, 62, 129, 130	CO, RBs	3 months

	the "why not cash" approach;[313] and when it is not, rely on local procurement to inject cash in the local economy and thus contribute to social cohesion.			
Suggested action 4.3	UNHCR should further explore market-based programming[314] activities for the local populations (including support for markets, supply chains, vendors) to facilitate the use of CBI and local procurement.	Paragraphs 56, 62, 129, 130	COs, RB, DRS	12 months
Recommendation 5	**UNHCR should capitalize on the cross-regional ways of working put in place for the Sudan situation (contingency planning, cross-border operations and regional communication plans) so that good practices and lessons learned can be adopted in future L3 responses.**	**Conclusions 1, 2 and 6**	**Office of the Regional Refugee Coordinator at RB EHAGL**	6 months
Suggested action 5.1	UNHCR should consider a regional contingency and emergency preparedness plan to complement existing plans at CO level, taking into account the instability of the region and ongoing political/conflict analyses, and identifying areas for cross-border work.	Paragraphs 69, 107, 108, 130	Office of the RRC at RB EHAGL in consultation with DESS	6 months
Suggested action 5.2	Building on the examples of the Sudan situation, UNHCR should develop a cross-border operations checklist outlining all the aspects to consider to be addressed when establishing the working arrangements between two or more COs.[315] The purpose of this checklist is to provide a comprehensive guide for operations, helping them consider all aspects that should be addressed during the preparedness and response phases. It should be designed to be exhaustive rather than prescriptive, ensuring that no critical elements are overlooked by operations.	Paragraphs 68, 157, 158	DESS, Office of the RRC at RB EHAGL in consultation with relevant COs	3 months
Suggested action 5.3	UNHCR should strengthen its regional strategic communication plan to provide a regional narrative to the Sudan crisis. It should cover key messages on common issues that need to be addressed that can inform advocacy and resource mobilization efforts.	Paragraphs. 102, 110	RB EHAGL	3 months

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[313] UNHCR "why not cash" policy requires operations to document why and where cash is (not) feasible.

[314] Building, for example, on International Labour Office; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)., "Guide to Market-Based Livelihood Interventions for Refugees."

[315] This includes, among other things, role and responsibilities in terms of communication with the authorities and other partners and procurement and HR, administrative and financial processes (payment, currency exchange, field advances),

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Key Information at a glance about the evaluation	
Title of the Evaluation:	Evaluation of UNHCR's Multi-country L3 Emergency Response to the Sudan situation (Sudan, Chad, Egypt and South Sudan)
Timeframe Covered:	July 2023- April 2024
Type of Evaluation:	L3 Emergency Response Evaluation
Evaluation commissioned by:	UNHCR Evaluation Office
Evaluation Manager contact:	Debora Di Dio, Senior Evaluation Officer didio@unhcr.org
Date:	May 2024

INTRODUCTION

UNHCR is mandated to provide international protection and humanitarian assistance and to seek permanent solutions for persons within its core mandate responsibilities. In the countries where it operates, UNHCR aims to work effectively to pursue protection and solutions, and to support the inclusion of internally displaced, returnees, stateless persons, and refugees.

In line with UNHCR's Emergency Preparedness and Response and Evaluation policies, an evaluation of all Level 3 (L3) emergency operations is to be conducted within 15 months of the L3 emergency declaration.[316] Evaluations in UNHCR are conducted for learning and accountability purposes. They enable Senior Management and other stakeholders to make informed decisions, demonstrate results to stakeholders, and improve strategies, plans, programs, and policies. Furthermore, evaluations provide UNHCR with a structured approach to obtain an impartial reflection on, and analysis of, its performance and results.

These Terms of Reference relate to UNHCR's L3/institutional emergency response in the four countries impacted by the Sudan conflict (Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, and Sudan).[317] This document presents the background context for the evaluation, as well as the evaluation's overall objectives, purpose and scope, its users, the intended methodological

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[316] See UNHCR Evaluation policy 2022–2027 https://www.unhcr.org/us/media/unhcrs-evaluation-policy-2022-2027 ; see UNHCR Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response 2023 https://emergency.unhcr.org/emergency-preparedness/emergency-policy/unhcr-policy-emergency-preparedness-andhttps://emergency.unhcr.org/emergency-preparedness/emergency-policy/unhcr-policy-emergency-preparedness-and-responseresponse

[317] UNHCR declared a Level 1 emergency on 26 April 2023, followed by a Level 2 emergency on 17 May, for the Sudan situation. Four countries – Chad, Egypt, South Sudan and Sudan – were upgraded to Level 3 on 6 July 2023.

approach, and the evaluation questions. It outlines roles and responsibilities throughout the evaluation process as well as key engagement and communication activities.

The evaluation is commissioned by the Evaluation Office and is intended to analyse the extent to which UNHCR is providing a timely and effective response to the Sudan situation,[3] taking into consideration the complex enabling and constraining factors since the beginning of the conflict in April 2023. This evaluation offers an opportunity for learning from the organizational adaptations and innovations that may be relevant for future regional emergency responses of such a scale, complexity, and length. The evaluation will document achievements, challenges, lessons learned, and future positions and adaptations required to further strengthen UNHCR's programming, response, and advocacy in Sudan and the neighbouring refugee-hosting countries. The period under review will be 12 months, from July 2023 to June 2024 (nine months of the L3 activation period (July 2023 to April 2024) plus the 3 months post-activation).[318]

The intended users of the evaluation include the Country Operations of Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, and Sudan, UNHCR Regional Bureau for the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes, UNHCR Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa, UNHCR Regional Bureau for Middle East and North Africa, UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator and Coordination team for the Sudan situation, the Representatives and Senior Management Teams, several Divisions in HQ (e.g. the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply, DESS; the Division of International Protection, DIP), donors, Governments, implementing partners, NGOs and other UN entities.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

On 15 April 2023, fighting erupted in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which has led to hundreds of reported deaths and thousands injured. As of March 2024 (Figure 10 below), there are 8,492,140 forcibly displaced people with 6,505,486 IDPs in Sudan, 1,768,883 being newly arrived refugees, asylum seekers, and returnees, 217,771 self-relocated refugees in Sudan.[319]

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[318] UNHCR declared the extension of the UNHCR Level 3 Emergency for Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, and Sudan (Sudan situation) in December 2023.

[319] UNHCR Operational Data Portal

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

OVERVIEW: There are now 8.8 million forcibly displaced due to the outbreak of conflict in Sudan since April 2023, including 6.8 million internally and 1.8 million in neighbouring countries. Sudan and neighbouring countries were already hosting large refugee populations before this new emergency and require additional support to provide protection and critical life-saving assistance, including for those who have been secondarily displaced within Sudan. Urgent needs include water, food, shelter, health, and core relief items. The current priority activities are the registration of new arrivals, relocation away from border areas, identification of especially vulnerable families and persons with specific needs, and putting mechanisms in place to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and ensure alternative care services for unaccompanied refugee children.

8,836,532 Forcibly Displaced

→ 6,786,816 New IDPs in Sudan

1,830,213 Newly arrived refugees, asylum seekers and returnees

219,503 Self-relocated Refugees in Sudan

Arrivals by population and estimated gender type

Refugee Returnees 534K
Refugees - other nationalities - 14k
Sudanese Refugees - 1.3M

Female 52% 48% Male

An estimated 55% of new arrivals are children. *This estimation is based on data from South Sudan, CAR, Ethiopia, and those pre-registered in Chad.*

New arrivals from Sudan

Total
South Sudan
Chad
Egypt
Ethiopia
CAR

1,296,127 Newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers

534,086 Newly arrived refugee returnees

EGYPT — Total New Arrivals: **500,000**

LIBYA

NORTHERN

RED SEA — Red Sea

CHAD — **588,825**
Sudanese Refugees: 588,825

SUDAN — RIVER NILE — KHARTOUM — KASSALA — ERITREA

NORTH DARFUR — NORTH KORDOFAN — AJ JAZIRAH — GEDAREF

WEST DARFUR — CENTRAL DARFUR — WEST KORDOFAN — WHITE NILE — SENNAR — ETHIOPIA

Sudanese Refugees: 23,286 — Refugee Returnees: 6,158

29,444 — CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

EAST DARFUR — ABYEI PCA — SOUTH DARFUR — SOUTH KORDOFAN — BLUE NILE — SOUTH SUDAN

658,021 — Sudanese Refugees: 136,356 — Refugees - other nationalities: 3,317 — Refugee Returnees: 518,348

Sudanese Refugees: 33,852 — Refugees - other nationalities: 10,491 — Refugee Returnees: 9,580 — **53,923**

Clash/attacks
xx Estimated new arrivals
Crossing point

The figures do not include those Third Country Nationals who are not seeking asylum. Refugee Returnees, this figure may include returnees previously registered as refugees in Sudan and those that may not have been registered. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

UNHCR EHAGL DIMA | dimaehagl@unhcr.org — Published 06 May 2024
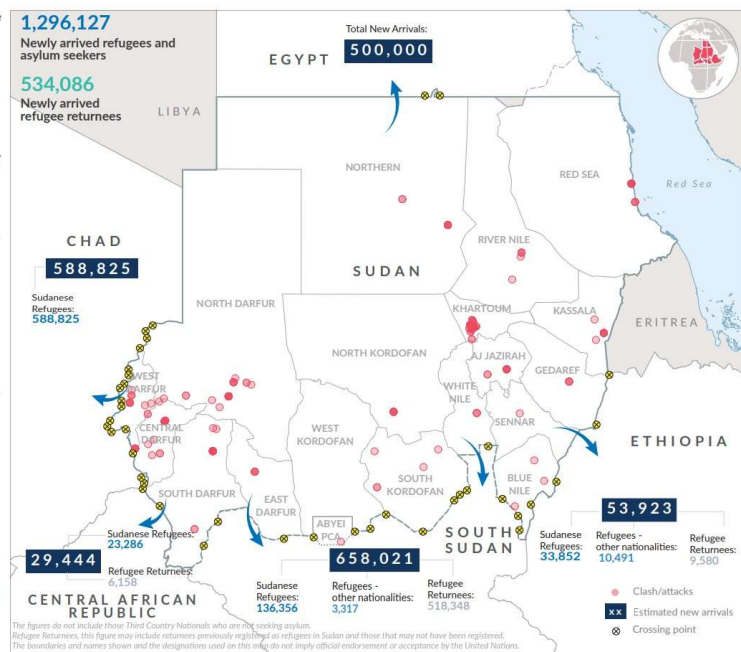
The security situation in the country remains tense and volatile. With no end to the violence in sight, people are desperately seeking safety and protection, both inside Sudan and in bordering countries such as Chad, South Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Central African Republic (CAR). The fighting and subsequent escalation further aggravated the already precarious humanitarian situation in the country.

Data from UNHCR, IOM, and Governments show that women and girls have been disproportionately affected by the Sudan situation with at least 50% or more of the new arrivals in all countries being women and girls as shown in Figure 11 below. Most significantly, girls contributed the highest percentage of new arrivals – as much as 33% in CAR and 32% in Chad while South Sudan had 26% respectively. Alarming conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls has been reported both inside Sudan and among people seeking refuge in other countries.[320] Men had the lowest percentage of arrivals in three of the five countries (CAR, Chad, and South Sudan) however, reports received by UNHCR indicate that boys and men have also been subjected to human rights violations, including mass killings, arbitrary detention, disappearances, torture, forced labour and/or recruited for fighting.

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[320] UNHCR Protection Brief- Gender-based Violence, December 2023 https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105508

Demographic breakdown of new arrivals

Girls and Boys refers to ages 0-17. Women and Men are 18+

CAR	33%	31%	23%	13%
Chad*	32%	30%	26%	12%
Egypt*	19%	20%	34%	27%
Ethiopia	36%	22%	7%	35%
South Sudan	25%	26%	25%	24%
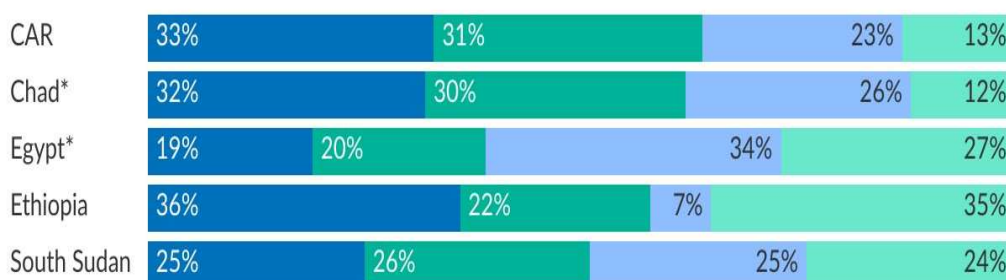
*age/sex breakdown only available for those registered by UNHCR.

Source: UNHCR, IOM & Governments (as of 31 December, 2023)

Key moments in the timeline of the Emergency Response
- On 17 May 2023, UNHCR declared a Level 2 emergency for the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Sudan in the context of the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation within Sudan.
- On 6 July 2023, UNHCR upgraded the Level 2 emergency for Sudan, as well as for the refugee and returnee situation in Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan to a Level 3 emergency.
- The emergency declaration for the Central African Republic and Ethiopia remained at Level 2 and, on 21 November 2023, was extended for a maximum of three months after which it expired automatically, on 16 February 2024.
- The Level 3 emergency for Chad, Egypt, South Sudan, and Sudan was extended on 21 December 2023, automatically expiring on 5 April 2024 with no possibility for further extension.

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

The humanitarian crisis in Sudan is severely underfunded. In fact, the humanitarian response funding for Sudan provided through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is among the smallest in recent years for the world's least financed crisis.

Humanitarian Funding for 2023

Despite requiring $ 2.57 billion for the 2023 Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan, only 42.3% of the funding has been received, leaving 56.9% unmet. This resulted in a severe lack of funding for clusters integral to UNHCR's mandate, such as Refugee Response and Protection, which were only funded at 23.9% and 37.5%, respectively OCHA FTS.

Humanitarian Funding for 2024

The Regional Refugee Response Plan and the 2024 Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan require a combined $ 4.1 billion to meet the needs of 17.4 million internally displaced persons, refugees, and asylum-seekers in Sudan and neighbouring countries.

On 7 February, UNHCR and 81 organizations launched the [Regional Refugee Response Plan](#), with an appeal for $ 1.4 billion to provide essential aid and protection to 2.7 million people expected to arrive in five neighbouring countries by the end of 2024, fleeing the ongoing conflict in Sudan. As of 3 April, the total funding for the RRP reached some $ 84 million or 6% of the requirements.

The 2024 Sudan [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan](#) launched on 7 February 2024, requires $ 2.7 billion to provide life-saving multi-cluster and protection assistance to a targeted 14.7 million people, but as of 3 April 2024, the appeal is only 5.4% funded, with $ 145.2 million received. According to OCHA, key areas of UNHCR's mandate remain highly underfunded with Refugee Response only being funded for 0.5%, while Protection is at 6.7%.[321]

UNHCR's total financial requirement for 2024 [Supplementary Appeal 2024 for the Sudan Emergency Situation](#), to assist over 5.5 million people in Sudan and neighbouring countries in 2024 – amounts to $ 998.1 million. As of 31 March 2024, the total available funding for the appeal is only 12% of the funding requirements, making it one of the least funded emergencies today.[322]

UNHCR-SPECIFIC FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

The financial requirements of the Sudan situation include requirements in the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Sudan. The percentage funded as of 31 March 2024 is 12% of the total requirements for 2024 which amounts to $ 988.1 million. There is a huge gap between the needs versus available funds reflected in Table 11.[323]

Table 10: Some key figures on costs for 2024 (source: UNHCR. Data as of 09 May 2024)

Sudan Situation	OP Budget[9]	OL budget	Funds available	OP gap	OL gap
Central African Republic	$35'065'006.36	$5'309'025.54	$1'595'080.27	-$33'469'926.09	-$3'713'945.27
Chad	$244'679'819.20	$58'346'785.30	$8'502'943.25	-$236'176'875.95	-$49'843'842.05
Egypt	$87'503'893.79	$26'745'089.66	$3'188'165.65	-$84'315'728.14	-$23'556'924.01
Ethiopia	$108'853'156.24	$33'787'203.64	$134'400.00	-$108'718'756.24	-$33'652'803.64

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[321] [Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan 2024 | Financial Tracking Service (unocha.org)](#)

[322] The UNHCR's budget is broken down into two categories: Operation Plan (OP) and Operating Level (OL). The OP is a needs-based budget, and the OL is the budget that is approved. Both budgets are respected, and actual spending is based on the approved OL.

[323] [UNHCR Funding Update 31 March 2024](#)

South Sudan	$175'539'105.99	$64'736'084.60	$4'875'455.08	-$170'663'650.91	-$59'860'629.52
Sudan	$423'964'226.00	$112'863'261.00	$19'772'544.05	-$404'191'681.95	-$93'090'716.95
Total	**$1'075'605'207.58**	**$301'787'449.74**	**$38'068'588.30**	**-$1'037'536'619.28**	**-$263'718'861.44**

STAKEHOLDER IN THE SUDAN RESPONSE

Stakeholder Group	Role(s) in the Response	Assumed interest in/Benefits from the Evaluation
International humanitarian agencies and their local partners operating in the Sudan situation	Implementers and supporters of UNHCR's efforts in Sudan and neighboring countries	As the primary stakeholders, they are assumed to be interested in emerging lessons at both the strategic and operational levels, as well as mutual accountability and AAP.
UNHCR Headquarters **UNHCR's Regional Bureaux and Operations involved in the response**	Source of policy guidance, administrative and regulatory frameworks, guidance and support, surge/standby capacity, accountability frameworks and oversight	As another primary stakeholder group, this group is assumed to be interested in learning to inform future policy and guidance development and to better implement its role in this response, future responses, and accountability.
Donors	Financial and in-kind support to the response itself, and to the UNHCR's humanitarian functions at the country, regional and HQ levels	Donor interest in ensuring that UNHCR has exercised fiduciary responsibility over funds received, achieved results, and critically self-reflected on its performance through this evaluation and other exercises.
National and local government authorities	Lesson learned in coordination of national and international actors, impact of aid delivery on refugees and host communities, among other areas	Dissemination of lessons learned that could potentially be used to coordinate and oversee current and future emergency responses, and develop future plans such as HRP and RRP
UN Agencies, NGOs, INGOs and CSOs, affected communities	Lesson learned in delivery, partnerships, coordination, among other areas	Dissemination of lessons learned that could potentially be used to better establish its own contributions to the response, and for other evaluations (ongoing or planned)

UNHCR's Response

Since the start of the crisis, UNHCR emergency teams have been working around the clock with authorities and partners to support new arrivals and set up transit centres in countries neighbouring Sudan. UNHCR emergency response has centred on protection needs and based on coordination structures -either newly established or upgraded, including through linkages with development actors. Furthermore, UNHCR provides life-saving support such as food, water, and access to health services, and relocates newly arrived refugees to existing and new camps away from borders. UNHCR is working closely with local authorities to set up transit centres near the border and to help returnees travel onwards to their home areas.

Inside **Sudan**, the operational environment has been challenging, especially from a security perspective. Since the commencement of the conflict in 2023, there have been a total of 6,786,816[10] IDPs in Sudan. Nevertheless, UNHCR teams assist refugees and internally displaced persons with shelter, Core reliefs Items (CRIs), essential services

on Population movements and Registration, Protection (including those targeted towards prevention and response against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), as well as Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). UNHCR is actively engaged in Sudan as part of the RC/HC-led humanitarian response including coordination of clusters, as well as its ongoing efforts to protect 219,503[324] numbers of self-relocated refugees (post-crisis) in Sudan.

In the **neighbouring countries**, UNHCR is working with host governments, UN agencies, national and international NGOs, civil society groups and affected communities, to assist refugees, returnees, and third-country nationals. The High Commissioner designated a Regional Refugee Coordinator in June 2023,[325] and UNHCR coordinates the refugee response in Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan. In neighbouring countries, the response has been as follows:[326]

Chad - According to the Government of Chad, there have been 585,201 individuals (165,861 households) who have been forcibly displaced since the start of the emergency. In addition, a total of 261,013 refugees (71,105 households) have been relocated since the start of the emergency.[327] With the support of other UN agencies and 40 non-governmental organizations, UNHCR leads and coordinates the refugee response in support of the Government of Chad, providing emergency shelter, core relief items, and humanitarian assistance.

Egypt - According to the latest figures received by UNHCR from the Government of Egypt, 500,479 people have crossed into Egypt since the onset of the Sudan crisis. Most of the newly registered population arriving from Sudan are Sudanese nationals (94%), followed by South Sudanese (3%), and Eritrean (2%)[328]. UNHCR Egypt had provided pre-registration appointments to the 500,479 people who were forced to flee Sudan since the conflict began in April 2023. Out of those, 247,408 individuals have already been fully registered, which makes up 49% of the total number[329]. Since the start of the conflict to date, 340,000 new arrivals from Sudan, comprising 128,000 cases, have received appointments via the Infoline. Additionally, 47,647 individuals, which amounts to 16,868 families, have received one-off emergency cash assistance[330].

South Sudan[331] - The situation in South Sudan is particularly dire. In addition to over 2 million IDPs due to conflict, insecurity and the impact of climate change, South Sudan hosts 646,507 individuals (mainly refugees and asylum-seekers) who arrived in South Sudan since April 2023. Every day, more people fleeing the vicious conflict in Sudan are crossing into neighbouring South Sudan at the Joda border point in Upper Nile State.

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[324] UNHCR Operational Data Portal – data on Self-relocated Refugees in Sudan last updated on 31 March 2024 also see the UNHCR Overview of Refugees and Asylum Seekers Distribution and Internal Movement in Sudan (as of 19 March 2024)

[325] UNHCR Broadcast, 14 June 2023

[326] Updates are issued regularly. The figures for the countries have been taken from Sudan Situation Update 59 For the latest update, please see Sudan Situation from the Operational Data Portal

[327] Relocation is currently a key protection feature of the response with the objective to move refugees away from the border areas for their safety, as well as to access adequate housing and other basic services

[328] Egypt: Sudan Emergency Update #28 Published on 1 May 2024

[329] Updates are issued regularly. The figures for the countries have been taken from Sudan Situation Update 59 For the latest update, please see Sudan Situation from the Operational Data Portal

[330] Egypt: Sudan Emergency Update #28 Published on 1 May 2024

[331] Updates are issued regularly. The figures for the countries have been taken from Sudan Situation Update 57 For the latest update, please see Sudan Situation from the Operational Data Portal

The rainy season and a lack of donor funding have hampered efforts to help people move away from the border, worsening the

Central African Republic (CAR) - Since April 2023, CAR has hosted 29,444 Sudanese refugees, including 23,286 Sudanese refugees and 6,158 Central African returnees (former CAR refugees in Sudan).[332] The security situation in the Vakaga Prefecture, which hosts the greatest number of Sudanese refugees in CAR, continues to face considerable security problems with various non-state armed groups active in the area. This has disrupted civilians' lives and affected the region's humanitarian efforts. Despite these challenges, UNHCR provided much need assistance in areas, providing protection services to 25,836 people with 1,584 of these being children. A total of 9,700 refugees were also provided with food assistance while 11,438 individuals received primary health care consultations.[333]

Ethiopia[334] - Since the outbreak of conflict in Sudan, 53,572 individuals belonging to 23,543 households have crossed the border from Sudan to Ethiopia, seeking international protection. Out of these, 21,552 individuals have crossed through the Metema entry point in Gondar, while 23,047 individuals have crossed through the Kurmuk entry point in Benishangul Gumuz. Additionally, 700 individuals have crossed at different entry points in Gambella (Pagak, Burbiey), and there are 8,273 Ethiopian returnees in the Tigray region.

PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the appropriateness and results of UNHCR emergency response and overall approach, and advise UNHCR's future positioning and response to the Sudan situation. The evaluation should contribute to real-time reflection, course-correction and have recommendations that speak to UNHCR's future priorities in a dynamic and continuously evolving context.

The evaluation covers the **UNHCR Emergency L3 response** and aims to assess **UNHCR's whole-of-organization response**. Due to access constraints and security constraints, the evaluation team will focus on Chad and Egypt through in-depth country case studies, and Sudan and South Sudan using a light-touch remote approach. The specific **geographic scope** will be identified following the inception phase using criteria such as: 1) UNHCR presence and operational footprint, inclusive of refugees in and out of camps, including in urban areas; 2) coverage of areas with both refugee and IDPs populations;[22] 3) accessibility and security constraints.

The objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

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[332] Updates are issued regularly. The figures for the countries have been taken from Sudan Situation Update 59 For the latest update, please see Sudan Situation from the Operational Data Portal

[333] Updates are issued regularly. The figures for the countries have been taken from Sudan Situation Update 59 For the latest update, please see Sudan Situation from the Operational Data Portal

[334] Updates are issued regularly. The figures for the countries have been taken from Sudan Situation Update 59 For the latest update, please see Sudan Situation from the Operational Data Portal

1. **Strengthen the design of UNHCR's operations in Chad, Egypt, Sudan, and South Sudan.**
2. **Improve the results achieved for refugees and IDPs – through an analysis of the engagement, partnerships, and results, of UNHCR's activities as part of a broad, inter-agency effort.**
3. **3. Help UNHCR plan for and support the transition toward medium- and longer-term solutions for refugees, with particular attention to the engagement of stabilization and development actors in the three regions.[335]**

Scope

Geographical Coverage: As noted above, the geographical coverage will be Chad and Egypt (in-depth approach), Sudan and South Sudan (light-touch approach). The evaluation will not cover UNHCR's regular programs unless they are purposefully linked to the respective L3 emergency response.

Timeframe: While the evaluation should consider the full length of UNHCR's response to the Sudan situation, the focus of the analysis should be July 2023 - June 2024 (the first year, including the immediate post L3 deactivation period).

EVALUATION CRITERIA- PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

In general, humanitarian performance can and should be judged based on both normative frameworks and standards of good practice – and by what the organization promised to do (as reflected in its commitments and programmatic documents). In this regard, the following may be relevant and useful for the evaluation team to consider:

- ALNAP guidelines on evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria
- ALNAP Evaluation of Protection in Humanitarian action
- ALNAP's Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide
- UNHCR's funding appeals
- UNHCR's emergency handbook and policy
- IASC Humanitarian System-wide Scale-up Activation (relevant to Sudan only)

The assessment will also align with UN Norms and Standards for Evaluations and UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (See Annexes 5–8) and UNHCR Operational Guidance on AAP.

The evaluation should refer to the following OECD DAC Evaluation criteria but remain forward-looking: **relevance** (analysis of UNHCR's strategic priorities, operation design, and implementation concerning needs and context); **effectiveness and coverage** (analysis of results and achievements – including drivers and constraints); **efficiency** (measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- vs the inputs); **coordination/partnerships** (analysis of internal coordination and programmatic synergies, external coordination, complementarity, and harmonization) and **connectedness/sustainability** (analysis of institutional capacities, the environmental

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[335] The three regions are intended as UNHCR regions of operation: RB of West and Central Africa (WCA), RB of Middle East and North Africa (MENA), RB of Eastern and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (EHAGL).

impact of results, exit strategies and the likelihood of benefits and solutions continuing over the medium and longer-term).

EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND KEY AREAS OF INQUIRY

These **indicative** areas of inquiry will be further developed during the inception phase to produce key questions and sub-questions **that reflect the different realities, challenges, and achievements. [336]**

Relevance[337]
- Did UNHCR response align with the needs of refugees, IDPs and host communities, reaching the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?
- How well informed have UNHCR decisions been? What has been the quality of assessment, surveillance, monitoring, and other data, especially from remote and hard-to-reach areas – and how have they been used? To what extent security management decisions, programme criticality and acceptable risks determined the level of activities carried out?

Effectiveness
- To what extent has UNHCR responded effectively to the regional L3 emergency triggered by the Sudan conflict? What results were achieved in terms of access to services, policy influence and leveraging the work of other actors to respond?
- To what extent did UNHCR key corporate policies, guidance, tools, processes and systems (especially related to L3 protocols and mechanisms and the Refugee Coordination Model) support the delivery of the emergency response? What contribution did the RBs and HQ make in support of country level operational delivery?

Efficiency
- Has UNHCR assistance been delivered in a timely and efficient manner, adapting and scaling up activities, avoiding duplication and filling gaps, and with a focus on obtaining the best value for money?
- To what extent has UNHCR taken appropriate steps to promote, address, and ensure security and welfare concerns for the workforce, particularly given the high-risk and hardship duty stations?

Coordination/ Partnership
- To what extent has UNHCR's approach to partnership, particularly under the Refugee Coordination Model, been effective and avoided gaps and duplications?
- What lessons can be learned from the internal coordination mechanism (considering that this response involves four countries, three Regional Bureaux, and Headquarters), the potential impact of scarce funding conditions and visibility of this crisis? What lessons can be learned from coordination with external actors, such as other UN Bodies (Secretariat, Panel of Experts, human rights), donors and development actors?

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[336] These questions are only indicative at this stage, and will be formulated and finalised during the inception stage. They were developed in consultation with selected stakeholders in the three regions, and based on lessons learned from previous evaluations of UNHCR's L3 Emergency Responses.

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Connectedness/ Sustainability

- To what extent has the pursuit of "durable solutions from the start" been embedded in the emergency response, especially in contexts of transitioning from a protracted situation to emergency response and vice versa?
- To what extent has UNHCR response addressed both the immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development goals, including the humanitarian-development nexus?

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This is a forward-looking strategic evaluation aiming to assess the appropriateness of UNHCR emergency response, overall approach, positioning for the evolving responses, and needs and lessons learned for future L3 emergency responses. The evaluation should address necessary changes and strategic and operational shifts required to ensure UNHCR remains relevant to future emerging needs and to ensure an effective and protection-centred transition to a medium-longer term response. As a whole-of-organization response, the participation of UNHCR staff (national and international) at HQ, regional, country, and field levels alongside relevant government authorities, partners and refugees is a requirement throughout the evaluation process to foster real-time learning and ownership of findings and recommendations.

The evaluation will adopt a non-experimental design conducive for the review and analysis of strategy documents and contribution analyses.[338] Furthermore, the evaluation will involve some elements of a Real-Time Humanitarian Evaluation approach and where possible, consider all possible options to optimizing footprint,[339] especially in the two countries considered for in-depth analysis.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

UNHCR applies quality assurance (QA) measures for all evaluations based on a set of criteria to provide qualitative feedback to evaluation managers and evaluation teams to strengthen the overall quality of the processes and products. These measures are applied at ToR, Inception Report, and Draft Final report stages and are based on UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation. The Evaluation Manager will share and provide an orientation to the EQA at the start of the evaluation – including standards for the format and structure of key deliverables. Quality assurance will be provided both by the Evaluation Manager and by an external QA service provider contracted by UNHCR. In addition, the Evaluation Firm is expected to ensure a **high level of internal quality assurance**, prior to submission of deliverables.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS, GENDER, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Evaluation Team will be required to sign the UNHCR Code of Conduct, complete UNHCR's introductory protection training module, and respect UNHCR's confidentiality requirements. This includes protecting sources and data, informed consent, respect for dignity and diversity and the minimization of risk, harm and burden upon those who are the subject of or participating in the evaluations, while at the same time not compromising the integrity of the evaluations.

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[338] The possibility of a retroactive construction of a Theory of Change will be discussed during the Inception Phase

[339] These should include where possible, environmental considerations

In line with established standards for evaluation in the UN system, and the UN Ethical Guidelines for evaluations, evaluation in UNHCR is founded on the interconnected principles of independence, impartiality, credibility, transparency and utility, which in practice, call for protecting sources and data; systematically seeking informed consent; respecting dignity and diversity; minimizing risk, harm and burden upon those who are the subject of, or participating in the evaluation, while at the same time not compromising the integrity of the exercise.

UNHCR's Evaluation Office supports the inclusion of refugees and displaced persons in the evaluation, in line with UNHCR's participatory approach, Age, Gender and Diversity policy and Framework for Accountability to Affected Persons. Therefore, the Evaluation Team will be required to have a clear policy on the participation of refugees and displaced persons, outlining the measures to protect those who participate in the evaluation.[27]

The evaluation team will also take a rigorous approach to maximize the quality, credibility, and use of the evaluation. The evaluation is expected to be conducted in full respect of UNHCR's participatory, gender-sensitive and diversity approaches to ensure that all groups and identities within the people assisted have equitable opportunities to be consulted, and to contribute to the evaluation, irrespective of age, gender, disability, ethnic-, political-, or religious affiliation, or sexual identity. Furthermore, the evaluation process should support and respect the ethical participation of refugees and meet the standards and ethics of UNHCR and the UN Evaluation Group. The methodology will feature participatory components, with a focus on the inclusion of refugees throughout the evaluation process and include strong qualitative data collection methods to inform some of the evaluation questions. Impartiality and lack of bias will be assured by relying on a cross-section of information sources, including refugees, and using a mixed-methods approach to ensure triangulation of information obtained through a variety of sources and from a range of perspectives.

Gender and human rights considerations must be integrated into UNHCR evaluations in accordance with the Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation, and the CEB-endorsed Evaluation Performance Indicator (EPI) of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP). Further information, guidance, and good practices can be found on the UNEG site **here**.

The Evaluation Team is expected to include an analysis of the actual, or potential exclusion of certain groups from existing representative structures, either within the displaced populations, or as a result of the habitual norms, customary beliefs, and traditions of the population in the receiving country, or area. As discussed above given the nature of the response and demographics of refugee flows and populations, the Evaluation Team is asked to **be especially aware of** issues concerning women and girls, female-headed households and persons with disabilities.

TIMELINE, WORKPLAN AND DELIVERABLES

The evaluation should be carried out between **June 2024 and January 2025**, with a management response in the 3 months following the evaluation completion.

UNHCR expects the following key deliverables:

1. Inception report (20– 30 pages) and desk review (10–15 pages)- confirming the scope of the evaluation, the evaluation questions, methods to be used, a field plan, data gathering tools, as well as the analytical framework – and summarizing findings derived from a review of existing documentation;
2. Debriefs with UNHCR Evaluation Office after each phase (e.g. Inception, Field Mission) including a PowerPoint Presentation;
3. Workshops with relevant staff in HQ, Regional Bureaux, and Country Offices, to validate the findings and co-create recommendations;
4. Draft and Final evaluation reports (30–50 pages), providing a regional overview of the Sudan situation.
5. A 4-6-page stand-alone executive summary; final report annexes; a dedicated report section on lessons learned and good practices.
6. A translation in French and Arabic of the executive summary;
7. An internal report (10–20 pages) for each of the in-depth countries (Chad and Egypt);
8. A series of 2–3 presentations (to senior management in the four countries, three Regional Bureaux, and Headquarters) at the different stages of the Evaluation, including a PowerPoint Presentation;
9. A set of key messages (up to 5) to be used for external and internal audiences to reflect on the key findings of the evaluation;
10. Participation in the Evaluation Reference Group Meetings (2-3 meetings throughout the evaluation process);
11. Bi-weekly/weekly meetings with UNHCR; other ad hoc meetings as required.
12. Any training material used during the data collection phase;
13. Any photo/video material collected during the data collection phase;
14. Use of innovative ways to present information, such as infographics, is highly encouraged.

Deliverable	Description* see below	Deadline
Inception Phase		
Inception phase interviews (remotely)	Team Leader (TL): 7 days Protection Expert (PE): 5 days Thematic Expert (TE): 5 days National Expert 1, Chad (NE 1): 2 days National Expert 2, Egypt (NE 2): 3 days National Expert 3, Sudan & South Sudan (NE 3): 3 days Research Assistant (RE): 7 days	June 2024
Inception mission (in person) in Chad	TL: 5 days (7 including travel) RE *for preparation only: 3 days	June 2024

	NE 1: 5 days	
Inception and desk review including evidence and data mapping (preparation, submission, finalization, debrief and presentation)	TL: 7 days PE: 3 days TE: 3 days NE 1: 3 days NE 2: 3 days NE 3: 3 days RE: 5 days	July 2024
Total days Inception Phase 68 days		
Data-gathering Phase		
Preparation, document review	TL: 5 days PE: 3 days TE: 5 days NE 1: 2 days NE 2: 2 days NE 3: 2 days RE: 4 days	August 2024
Field missions (preparation, document review, surveys, mission reports) and Remote country case studies	TL: 14 days PE: 12 days TE: 12 days NE 1: 10 days NE 2: 10 days NE 3: 6 days RE: 3 days	September- October 2024

Data coding, preliminary analysis and analytical workshops	TL: 2 days PE: 4 days TE: 2 days NE 1: 2 days NE 2: 2 days NE 3: 2 days RE: 16 days	October 2024

Total days Data-gathering Phase 120 Days

Reporting Phase

Analysis and Additional data collection Validation workshop of whole team Preparation, Submission and Finalization of Draft Report Presentation to UNHCR (ERG, co-creation workshops etc)	TL: 18 days PE: 13 days TE: 13 days NE 1: 10 days NE 2: 10 days NE 3: 7 days RE: 16 days	November-December 2024

Total days Reporting Phase 87 days

Finalization and Dissemination Phase

EQA Review Preparation and Submission final report +ppt and executive summary Translation and EQA of executive summary	TL: 8 days PE: 4 days TE: 4 days NE 1: 2 days NE 2: 2 days NE 3: 2 days	December 2024- January 2025

Circulation of final report for comments	RE: 6 days	
Preparation of communication products		
Presentation of final report		
Total days Finalization and Dissemination Phase 28 days		

MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Management: The Head of Evaluation appoints an Evaluation Manager for, who will be responsible for managing the day-to-day aspects of the evaluation process. This includes: leading the preparation of the ToR; managing the selection of the evaluation team; budget and personnel involved in the Evaluation; arranging field visits in coordination with the relevant UNHCR offices (interview schedule, logistics/transport arrangements) providing support to and coordination with the Evaluation Reference Group; providing the evaluators with required data; facilitating communication with relevant stakeholders; reviewing the draft reports and final reports to ensure quality.

The Manager is accountable for the overall quality and timeliness of the evaluation, and therefore has the remit to shape and influence the evaluation process and product, safeguarding the independence of the evaluation at all stages. The Evaluation Manager may participate in data gathering and analysis activities, contributing in particular to the evaluation team's understanding of UNHCR policies, procedures and operations.

An **Evaluation Reference Group**, which will comprise a representative panel of primary users of the evaluation, will be established and serve in an advisory capacity. Key user groups include the Senior Executive Team, Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS) and other relevant divisions (e.g. Division of International Protection, Division of Human Resources, etc.) as well as the Regional Bureaux senior management and country Representatives. Selected external partners will be invited based on their knowledge of and interest in the Sudan situation and expertise in evaluation. The Group is expected to assess the quality of the evaluation work and provide feedback, notably during specific meetings and workshops organized during the evaluation process. The collaborative framework of the Evaluation Team and Evaluation Reference Group will be specified during the early stage of the Inception phase.

The UNHCR offices[340] involved in the L3 emergency response will each appoint an evaluation Focal Point. The UNHCR offices are required to fully support all phases of the evaluation and requests for documentation and information from the evaluation team. All travel (international and domestic) will be organized and paid for by the evaluation team.

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[340] Country Offices and Regional Bureaux

Communication: The evaluation and its findings will be communicated to a range of internal audiences and, in the spirit of transparency, to interested external parties. Evidence will be made available in formats and styles appropriate for each of the priority stakeholders. A mix of analogue and digital products will be generated e.g. printed evaluation reports and separate executive summaries; hosted webinars and attendance at web conferences; (potentially face-to-face) validation workshops; brown-bag lunches, etc.

Communication opportunities will be identified throughout the life of the evaluation. There will be the engagement of key audiences around emerging findings to help with ownership of the recommendations. In particular, there may be opportunities to present and discuss the UNHCR evaluation in the broader context of emergency response evaluations conducted by other UN partners towards system-wide learning.

CONTENT OF BID AND TEAM COMPOSITION

The Framework Agreement Holder should provide the composition of the evaluation team, including full CVs and the financial proposal.

The evaluation firm should propose the following positions:

1) One Evaluation Team Leader 2) One Protection Expert 3) One Subject Matter Expert (in the field of Refugee Issues, Shelter & NFI/ Humanitarian coordination/Cash) 4) One national context expert for Chad 5) One national context expert for Egypt 6) One national context expert covering Sudan and South Sudan 7) One research assistant, supporting the evaluation team

All team members should demonstrate a **general evaluation expertise** with a strong understanding of regional and country dynamics.[341] Additionally, the following areas of expertise must be represented in the team: humanitarian development Cooperation, gender-based violence, data and information management, partnership management and localization). Details on the team members' skills and qualifications are available in **Annex 4.**

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL PROPOSALS-SUBMISSION

Please refer to **Annex 9** for further information

Annexes

Annex 1. An Overview of the people assisted by UNHCR in the Sudan situation

Annex 2. Funding Overview

Annex 3. Key Country Features

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[341] Previous experience in at least one of the four countries is a requirement. Furthermore, applications for these positions from women and refugees are particularly encouraged.

ANNEX 2: EVALUATION MATRIX

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
RELEVANCE I. To what extent are UNHCR's interventions relevant and appropriate, considering the different operational contexts and the nature of needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of the refugees, IDPs and host communities?	I.1 To what extent UNHCR response has been designed and implemented based on quality and reliable data throughout the duration of the L3?	UNHCR direct services have been designed based on formalized need assessments, regular surveillance and monitoring.	I.1.a	Desk review: needs assessment (External - HNOs, UNHCR & IP needs assessments), Protection Monitoring Dashboards, Assessments surveys, Gap Analysis, situation updates)	Qualitative comparison of secondary data
		Extent to which UNHCR has collected and compiled complete, updated and accurate information and data on the needs and preferences of refugees, IDPs and host communities, with the required level of geographical and AGD disaggregation.	I.1.b	Desk review: needs assessment (External - HNOs, IP needs assessments), PDM, Protection Monitoring Dashboards, Assessments surveys, Gap Analysis KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, IP, Sector, Government & Hum organizations) and per country
		Evidence of the use of the data (including primary and secondary sources) to inform the selection of target areas and target groups, based on the level and severity of needs, the design of activities and targeting strategies, during the L3 period.	I.1.c	Desk review: Protection Monitoring Dashboards, Gap Analysis, CO strategies, Proposals, RRP progress reports and plans, Mission reports, protection briefs KII with UNHCR staff	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per country
		Evidence of a protection strategy to address and mitigate protection risks.	I.1.d	Desk review: Protection Strategies, Country Strategies KII with UNHCR staff	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
	I.2 Did UNHCR response align with the needs of refugees, IDPs and host communities, reaching the most vulnerable, according to the principles of humanity and impartiality?	Targeting criteria are relevant and appropriate to target the refugees who are the most in needs of assistance and those with heightened needs of protection.	I.2.a	Desk review: Needs assessments, lessons learned papers, annual results reports	Qualitative comparison of secondary data
		Degree to which recipients targeted and served by UNHCR corresponds to the most vulnerable groups, with heightened needs of protection and with specific AGD needs as identified by UNHCR assessments according to the principle of impartiality.	I.2.b	Desk review: log-frame, M&E reports, protection briefs, PDM KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders FGD with target population Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff, IP & Sector	Qualitative comparison of secondary data: Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, IP, Sector, Government & Hum organizations) and per country Qualitative analysis of FGD per country and gender Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
		Direct services design and chosen modalities are appropriate towards refugees, IDPs and host communities priority needs and preferences, according to the principle of humanity.	I.2.c	Desk review: PDM reports, protection monitoring dashboards, activity surveys (e.g. WASH in Chad) KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders FGD with target population Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff & IP	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, IP, Sector, Government & Hum organizations) and per country Qualitative analysis of FGD per country and gender Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
		Extent to which UNHCR modified its intervention objectives and activities made during the period and their rationale.	I.2.d	Desk review: Annual results reports; lessons learned papers, RRP progress reports, log-frame, M&E reports, mission reports KII with UNHCR staff & IP staff FGD with target population	Qualitative comparison of secondary data: Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, IP) and per country
		Perceptions from UNHCR, IP and external stakeholders and from recipients that UNHCR's responses are based on the humanitarian principles, especially humanity and impartiality.	I.2.e	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders FGD with target population	Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, IP, Sector, Government & Hum organizations) and per country Qualitative analysis of FGD per country and gender

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
		Extent to which UNHCR has collaborated with the government and the local authorities to design the targeting strategies and activities targeting refugees, IDPs and host communities.	I.3.a	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, IP, Sector, Government & Hum organizations) and per country
	I.3 How has UNHCR taken into account the political and security context to design its response?	Degree of participation of the refugees, IDPs and host communities in the design and implementation of the response by UNHCR and its implementing partners.	I.3.b	Desk review: PDM reports, Protection monitoring dashboards, assessment and survey data FGD with target population KII with UNHCR staff	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country Qualitative analysis of FGD per country and gender
		Extent to which UNHCR has considered social cohesion and conflict sensitivity in the design of the response between newly arrived refugees and refugees who were already in the countries and host communities [Specific to Chad & Egypt].	I.3.c	Desk review: Strategic reports, RRP plans, Need Assessments, CO strategies FGD with target population KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country Qualitative analysis of FGD per country and gender

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
		Degree of adoption and use of an access strategy tailored to the context to allow the delivery in hard-to-reach and high-risk areas.	I.3.d	Desk review: access strategy, preparedness documents, policy on security management, security management responsibilities documents KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Qualitative analysis of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country
		Perception of UNHCR and external stakeholders about UNHCR's access to high-risk locations.	I.3.e	Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff, IP & Sector KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country
EFFECTIVENESS II. To what extent has UNHCR responded effectively to the regional L3 emergency triggered by the Sudan conflict?	II.1 To what extent are UNHCR's interventions achieving their objectives and intended outcomes, including contribution to protection objectives?	Level of attainment of expected results reached over the period by interventions and disaggregated by country, target groups and AGD (depending on data secondary availability).	II.1.a	Desk review: Results framework per country data, annual results reports, outcome/output data, project documents between UNHCR and donors	Qualitative and quantitative analysis of secondary data
		Extent to which the scale of UNHCR direct services corresponds to the scale of needs in the RRRP given the funding limitations of the L3 Sudan situation.	II.1.b	Desk review: Need assessment (HNO, IP need assessment) and UNHCR project documents and funding allocation provided to the different countries from UNHCR appeal KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
		Degree to which targeted recipients (refugees, IDPs, host communities), UNHCR, IP staff and external stakeholders consider the outputs (CBI and in-kind –standard CRI and non-standard CRI) received to be of the right quality and quantity to meet the needs of recipients, per type of activities.	II.1.c	Desk review: PDM, assessments and survey data, M&E reports, log frames KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders FGD with target population	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country Qualitative analysis of FGD per country and gender
		Perceptions of the contribution of UNHCR's advocacy on governments and donors' policies affecting the delivery of services to refugees, IDPs and host communities in the focus countries.	II.1.d	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country
		Type and magnitude of the unintended positive or negative effects of UNHCR interventions.	II.1.e	Desk review: PDM, Protection Monitoring, AAP/CFM data KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders FGD with target population	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country Qualitative analysis of FGD per country and gender

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
	II.2. What factors have impacted the level of activities and effectiveness of the response?	Coverage of UNHCR financial needs for the Sudan L3 compared to the RRRP and prior L3 responses and strategies to mobilize funding.	II.2.a	Desk review: financial & partnership data, RRRP reports KII with UNHCR staff (partnership)	Quantitative analysis of financial data
		Extent to which UNHCR adapted its operations and activities to the level of funding for the Sudan situation and prioritized its assistance to where needs have been greatest.	II.2.b	Desk review: financial & partnership data (Funding Updates Sudan situation reports, Sudan situation Financial and Budget Data, supplementary appeal data, global appeals and HRPs reports on the RRR) KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Quantitative analysis of financial data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country
		Extent to which UNHCR was able to negotiate its access and mitigate security risks that may have impacted UNHCR's ability to access and serve the most vulnerable refugees, IDPs and host communities.	II.2.c	Desk review: Situation updates, contingency plans, mission reports, annual results reports, strategy reports KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff & IP	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
		Extent to which UNHCR key relevant emergency corporate policies, guidance, tools, processes and systems (especially related to the new L3 protocols) supported the delivery of the interventions to refugees, host communities and IDPs.	II.2.d	Desk review: Emergency organization documents (preparedness package for IDP emergencies, Guide UNHCR emergency to partners, emergency management, 2023 emergency policy, SOPs on emergency declarations, Emergency Handbook on Cluster Coordination) KII with UNHCR staff & IP staff Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff & IP	Qualitative analysis of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
		Pre-existing level of emergency preparedness of UNHCR in the countries of focus and its impact on UNHCR's ability to deliver during the first weeks of the emergency.	II.2.e	Desk review: country strategies, UNHCR policy on emergency preparedness and response 2023, preparedness package for IDP emergencies, SOP on emergency declarations, UNHCR guidance on emergency preparedness, RAAs in Emergency, Emergency Policy KII with UNHCR staff	Qualitative analysis of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR) and per country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
		Identification of the internal and external factors that contributed or inhibited UNHCR to achieve its intended outcomes.	II.2.f	Desk review: annual results reports, M&E reports, donor reporting documents KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff & IP	Qualitative analysis of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
EFFICIENCY III. To what extent are UNHCR interventions delivered in an efficient manner and promote access while ensuring security and welfare of staff?	III.1 Has UNHCR assistance been delivered in a timely manner, adapting and scaling up activities, avoiding duplication and filling gaps?	Adherence to implementation plans and financial execution levels by UNHCR and IPs.	III.1.a	Desk review: Operation plans, annual reports, analysis of financial data for the Sudan situation, showing expenditure vs. budget overall and per outcome area (using budget detailed OL, expenditures, implementation rates, Budget OP by Outcome area)	Quantitative analysis of funds expenditures by country by sector compared to the allocated budget
		Time between surge (ERT and Fast Track) and staffing requests and deployments of staff with skill set matching job description/technical requirements, and effects on the timeliness of the response.	III.1.b	Desk review: Operation plans and annual reports, partnership agreements, mission reports, staffing organograms KII with UNHCR staff	Quantitative analysis of secondary data disaggregated per country Qualitative analysis of KII per country
		Perceived timeliness of UNHCR interventions and reason why/why not	III.1.c	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff, IP	Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country Quantitative analysis of survey data

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
					disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
		Effects of UNHCR's timeliness (or lack thereof) on refugees' ability to access services, meet their needs.	III.1.d	Desk review: PDM, Protection Monitoring, AAP data, M&E Reports FGD with target population	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of FGD per country and gender
	III.2 Has UNHCR assistance been delivered in a cost-efficient manner, with a focus on value for money? **(Focus on Chad only)**	Cost per recipient (expenditure) per activity (focus on Chad)	III.2.a	Desk review: Financial data & Progress data, Cost efficiency analysis conducted by the CO	Calculation of the cost per beneficiary and cost-to-transfer ratio per country and disaggregated per activity (when possible)
		Existence of a comparative analysis/discussion of potential alternative response options to address the needs of refugees, IDPs, and host communities, considering unit cost, quality, coverage, timeliness, and access.	III.2.b	Desk review: Cost efficiency analysis conducted by the CO	Qualitative comparison of secondary data
		Perceptions from UNHCR and external stakeholders the same activities could have been implemented with cheaper costs, and the reasons why.	III.2.c	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
		Main internal and external factors contributing to or inhibiting the cost-efficiency of UNHCR response.	III.2.d	Desk review: Internal Situation updates KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per type of organizations (UNHCR, Government, IP) and per country
	IIII.3 To what extent has UNHCR taken appropriate steps to promote, address, and ensure security and welfare concerns for the workforce, particularly given the high-risk and hardship duty stations?	Extent to which security plans have been devised and implemented in the countries of focus and reported challenges doing so.	III.3.a	Desk review: Security plans KII with UNHCR staff	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per country
		Level of support received by the COs from the Regional Bureaux and HQ to develop access strategy and security plans.	III.3.b	Desk review: Security plans KII with UNHCR staff	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per country
		Perception of UNHCR's staff about UNHCR's access and ability to ensure the security of staff and IPs.	III.3.c	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff & IP	Qualitative analysis of KII per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
		UNHCR and IP staff have been trained on personal security.	III.3.d	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff & IP	Qualitative analysis of KII per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
COORDINATION & PARTNERSHIP IV. How does UNHCR co-led effective cross-sectoral coordination and broker successful partnerships?	IV.1 To what extent has UNHCR's approach to partnership, particularly under the Refugee Coordination Model, been effective and avoided gaps and duplications?	Extent to which sector members who consider UNHCR coordination role with the RCM (including during the roll out of coordination structure) to be appropriate and effective and rationale as to why.	IV.1.a	KII with IP staff and external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to Sector	Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the different stakeholders' perceptions of UNHCR's coordination role Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by country
		Extent to which humanitarian actors consider that the RCM model and IASC coordination system coordinated and collaborated effectively and rationale as to why.	IV.1.b	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to Sector	Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the different stakeholders' perceptions of UNHCR's coordination role Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by country
		Proportion of UNHCR sector members who deem UNHCR's guidance on coordination suitable to the context to avoid gaps and duplications and rationale as to why.	IV.1.c	KII with UNHCR staff & external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to Sector	Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the different stakeholders' perceptions of UNHCR's coordination role Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by country
		Extent to which UNHCR staff and sector members who contributed to the RRRP consider that it is a useful planning and resource mobilization tool.	IV.1.d	KII with external stakeholders Online survey disseminated to Sector	Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the different stakeholders' perceptions of UNHCR's coordination role Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by country
		Diversity and number of partnerships with local actors (local and national NGOs) in the countries of focus.	IV.1.e	Desk review: Review of RRRP documentation (Sudan RRP 2024, Revised Sudan Emergency RRP), RCM sector meeting minutes, partnership data	Quantitative analysis of the number and diversity of local actors in the countries of focus

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
	IV.2 What lessons can be learned from the internal coordination mechanism (considering that this response involves four countries, three Regional Bureaux, and Headquarters)?	Degree to which UNHCR has had effective internal coordination mechanism to coordinate its internal stakeholders (4 COs, 3 RBs, HQ).	IV.2.a	KII with UNHCR staff Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff	Qualitative analysis of KII per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
		Extent to which the role and responsibilities were clear between the COs, RBs and the HQ on key programmatic and support functions.	IV.2.b	KII with UNHCR staff Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff	Qualitative analysis of KII per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
		Other internal factors that impacted the internal coordination and reason why.	IV.2.c	KII with UNHCR staff Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff	Qualitative analysis of KII per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
		Extent of the contribution did the RBs and HQ make in support of country level operational delivery	IV2.d	Desk review: Review of internal documentation (Sitrep) KII with UNHCR staff	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
CONNECTED NESS/SUSTAI NABILITY V. To what extent is UNHCR's emergency response connected to longer-term development and durable solutions?	V.1 To what extent has the pursuit of durable solutions been embedded in the emergency response, especially in contexts of transitioning from a protracted situation to emergency response and vice versa?	Degree to which planning for durable solutions (local integration, voluntary return, or resettlement) have been considered in UNHCR's strategies for refugees given the legal framework of the focus countries and rationale as to why.	V.1.a	Desk review: RRP reports, annual results reports, country strategies, durable solutions documents per country KII with UNHCR staff Solutions Workshop	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per country
		Evidence of dialogue between UNHCR with hosting governments on the topic of durable solutions.	V.1.b	Desk review: durable solutions documents per country KII with UNHCR staff and governments	Qualitative analysis of secondary data Qualitative analysis of KII per country and per type of stakeholder
	V.2 To what extent has UNHCR response addressed both the immediate	Examples of resilience and longer-term assistance implemented by UNHCR and its IPs or in partnership with others.	V.2.a	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Solutions Workshop Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff, IP & Sector	Qualitative analysis of KII and workshop per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
	humanitarian needs and resilience and development goals, including the humanitarian-development nexus?	Perceptions from UNHCR and external stakeholders about the relevance and potential for sustainability of UNHCR's resilience and development activities.	V.2.b	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Solutions Workshop Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff, IP & Sector	Qualitative analysis of KII and workshop per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
		Enabling and hindering internal and external factors for UNHCR to link humanitarian activities with development activities.	V.2.c	KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders Solutions Workshop Online survey disseminated to UNHCR staff, IP & Sector	Qualitative analysis of KII and workshop per country Quantitative analysis of survey data disaggregated by type of survey, type of actors, country
CROSS-CUTTING THEMES VI. To what extent do UNHCR interventions mainstreamed gender, AAP and protection?	VI. To what extent do UNHCR interventions mainstreamed gender, AAP and protection?	Degree to which UNHCR interventions operationalize the age, gender and diversity (AGD) approach across all steps of its response.	VI.a	Desk review: AGD strategy and guidance: AGD accountability reports, AGD policy 2018, Disability Action Plan 2020-2024 KII with UNHCR staff, IP staff and external stakeholders FGD with target population	Comparison of the intervention's AGD approach used in the response with UNHCR corporate strategy Qualitative and quantitative analysis of refugees' satisfaction with the operationalization of the AGD approach by UNHCR Qualitative and quantitative analysis of refugees' satisfaction with information sharing about the intervention.

Area of inquiry	Evaluation questions	Indicators/how judgment will be formed	Number	Data Sources	Data Analysis
		Crisis affected refugees, IDPs and host communities are satisfied with the format, level and content of the information received from UNHCR and its implementing partners.	VI.b	Desk review: CFM and AAP data & reports, PDM FGD with target population	Qualitative comparison of secondary data Qualitative and quantitative analysis of refugees' satisfaction with information sharing about the intervention.
		Accountability mechanisms (communication, feedback, participation, complaints mechanism) are used effectively and translate into actions that lead to adjustments to programming and strategic planning.	VI.c	Desk review: CFM data, strategy documents KII with UNHCR staff & IP staff FGD with target population	Quantitative analysis of secondary AAP data Qualitative analysis of UNHCR, IP and refugees' feedback about accountability mechanisms

ANNEX 3: DETAILED METHODOLOGY

197. The following section includes an overview of the evaluation methodology that was adopted and a detailed description of its key characteristics.

Inception phase

198. To gain a more in-depth understanding of UNHCR's response to the Sudan situation and expectations vis-à-vis the evaluation, the evaluation team conducted a total of 35 interviews with UNHCR staff during the inception phase: eight preliminary key informant interviews (KIIs) with UNHCR's headquarters (HQ, 16 KIIs with the RBs, 11 KIIs with UNHCR staff in the three countries (Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan).

199. On 24-28 June 2024, the evaluation team leader and the context expert for Chad participated in **a five-day inception visit to Chad**. The evaluation team conducted 10 preliminary KIIs with external stakeholders (government, donors and UN agencies), one interview with a UNHCR staff, a round table with 11 representatives of Implementing Partners (IPs),[342] and three briefings with UNHCR staff.[343] During this visit, the evaluation team presented a draft evaluation matrix and timeline, which were discussed with representatives of the ET, the Chad Operation and the RB WCA.

200. These interviews and inception visit informed **this inception report and the development of the evaluation matrix** (see Annex 1: Evaluation Matrix) and the data collection tools. The breakdown of key informants per stakeholder and location is summarized in the table below:

Table 11: Preliminary KIIs conducted per stakeholder type

Agency	# of KII
UNHCR	36
Donor	4
UN Agency	3
IPs	1
Government	2
TOTAL	46 [345]

Country	# of KII
HQ	8
RB EWGAL	4
RB WCA	4
RB MENA	8
Chad	11
Egypt	3[344]
Sudan	6
South Sudan	2
TOTAL	46

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[342] Counting as one KII in the tables below for IPs and Chad respectively.

[343] First, the CO organized a briefing on UNHCR L3 operations with 10 representatives from various departments of the CO. Second, there was a briefing with all the heads of offices based in the East. Third, the ET had a meeting with the two staff members responsible for intersector coordination.

[344] One of these interviews was a group interview with various staff of the Egypt CO.

[345] The total number of informants (36 men, 16 women) is superior to the number of KIIs as some interviews were conducted with more than one informant.

201. The evaluation team produced an inception report, whose main purpose was to identify the evaluation scope, and to design and steer the evaluative process. The first draft inception report was submitted to UNHCR on **15 July 2024.** The final inception report was submitted at the end of the inception phase, on **14 August 2024,** integrating comments and feedback received on the draft inception report.

Secondary Data Collection

202. The ET used any relevant and reliable data and documents that had already been produced by UNHCR and other actors throughout the response. This included documentation but also quantitative data (e.g. on forcibly displaced and stateless persons, financial data, outcomes/outputs and partnerships).[346] It also reviewed pre-existing data for their relevance to the evaluation questions (population surveys, protection monitoring and post-distribution monitoring (PDM) exercises, intention surveys, evaluations, audits, etc.). The following key documents had been identified in this evaluation and used in the desk review and were used to frame the evaluation questions and design the evaluation matrix.

Figure 10: Key documents for the evaluation
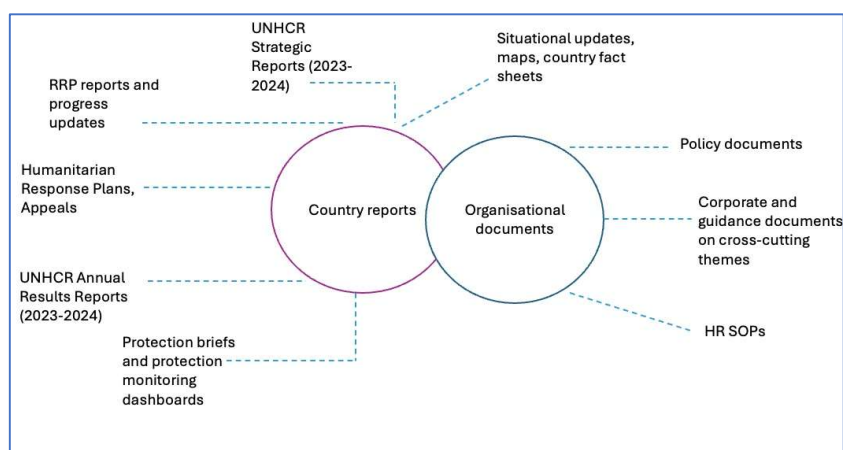
203. During the inception phase, the evaluation team produced **a desk review summary report**[347] and made progress with documentation coding, which resulted in a database of coded desk review data on MS Excel.

204. Relevant documentation identified in a desk review summary was therefore coded against the indicators in the evaluation matrix on Excel and systematically added to Zotero.[348] The quantitative data was analysed and visualized on Excel throughout the evaluation. Given the number of indicators in the evaluation matrix, to the extent

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[346] Relevant documents identified so far for the evaluation questions include RRP reports, Annual Results Reports, Strategic reports per country, mission reports per country and situational update reports.

[347] The objective of the desk review summary was to inform an evaluability assessment about the proposed evaluation questions, and related sub-evaluation questions and indicators. This process was done in parallel to the coding in the excel matrix.

[348] Zotero is a research management software to save and organize references and bibliographies https://www.zotero.org/

possible, some aspects of the evaluation relied on currently available secondary data. These data were carefully analysed, triangulated and complemented by using a well-thought-out selection of primary sources.

205. The desk review process, which began during the inception phase, continued throughout the evaluation. The desk review used an iterative data collection method, wherein new documents were added and reviewed throughout the evaluation cycle.

Primary Data Collection

206. Primary data was collected through a variety of complementary methods, which included KIIs with key stakeholders (UNHCR staff, implementing partners, sector members and operational partners, UN agencies and INGOs, local institutions, government representatives, donors, etc.), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with refugees (and host communities in Chad) according to relevant Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) categorization, and three online surveys targeting UNHCR staff, UNHCR partners and sector members.

207. The sampling strategy allowed a diversity of stakeholders to contribute and hence reach data saturation. Having a variety of sources to inform the matrix indicators allowed triangulation and ensured the findings were rigorous. The distribution of KIIs and FGDs was based on discussions during the inception phase on field visit sites, accessibility, availability of key stakeholders, number of activities, caseload, etc. The evaluators conducted four KIIs per full day of data collection and from two to three FGDs per full day of data collection.

208. **Primary data collection occurred in person in Egypt and Chad**, **while data collection in Sudan and South Sudan occurred remotely**. The below table presents a summary of the data collection method per CO and per location. It is based on discussions conducted during the inception visit with the different COs:

Table 12: Primary data collection summary

Data collection methods	Total	Egypt	Chad	Sudan	South Sudan	HQ/RB
Desk Review	270 documents coded and more than 1,000 reviewed[349]					
Key Informant Interviews	**214** (146 men and 68 women) [350]	70	70	24	26	24
Focus Group Discussions	**55**	20	35	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
UNHCR Staff Survey	**65**[351]	22	15	17	10	*N/A*

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[349] When the ET "coded documents", it did so in an excel matrix, coding each paragraph segment according to evaluation indicators. When it reviewed documents, it assessed whether the document should be coded.

[350] The total number of informants is superior to the number of KIIs as some interviews were conducted with more than one informant.

[351] Note that out of this total number, some of the respondents were not qualified to continue the survey if they were not part of the L3 response.

IP Survey	**37**	1	11	14	11	*N/A*
Sector Members Survey	**51**	28	16	*N/A*	7	*N/A*

209. The evaluation team **piloted and validated the in-country qualitative data collection tools** during the first day of the data collection to review the consistency of the responses and their appropriateness against the evaluation matrix. As the data collection started a week earlier in Chad, the ET piloted the data collection tools in Chad and adjusted the tools, when needed, for the other three countries. For the quantitative tools, when relevant, the evaluation team conducted a translation and back translation of the tool from English to Arabic/French and piloted the tools before their deployment.

Key Informant Interviews

210. For the **in-depth focus countries**, the evaluation team conducted **70 KIIs** per country. The interviews took place in person during the in-country visits. The ET also conducted online interviews with previous UNHCR staff who may now be based in other COs, RB or HQ Divisions.

211. For the **light-touch focus countries**, the evaluation team conducted **24 and 26 KIIs** for each country, Sudan and South Sudan respectively. Interviews took place remotely. Key stakeholders included country-level UNHCR staff members, implementing partners, government institutions, sector representatives and other humanitarian actors (operational partners and donors) involved in the response.

212. Furthermore, the evaluation team **conducted 24 remote interviews** with global and regional level key stakeholders, including UNHCR staff (HQ and RBS) and key inter-agency stakeholders (e.g. OCHA, UNICEF, etc.).

213. In total, the ET team conducted approximately **214 interviews,** conducted in English, French or Arabic that lasted approximately one hour. The ET developed interview guides specific to each key informant type, cross referencing the indicator matrix each interview question was meant to inform.

214. The ET selected key informants using **purposive sampling**, targeting stakeholders best positioned to respond to the evaluation questions. The number and diversity of the positions of the interviewees vis-à-vis the response (internal and external to the organization, with varying influence on the interventions) allowed the ET to reach data saturation.

Focus Group Discussions

215. For the in-depth focus countries, the evaluation team **conducted 25 and 35 FGDs** in Egypt and Chad respectively, with refugees and host communities.[352] FGDs were

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[352] According to ALNAP guidelines, saturation of information is reached when 2 to 3 FGDs are organized for each category of recipients.

conducted by the evaluation team's context experts in Arabic or French, with the support of locally hired consultants when necessary, and lasted approximately 1.5 hours. 420 refugees and asylum-seekers that fled Sudan participated in the FGDs using availability sampling. The final sample consisted of 48 per cent men and 52 per cent women. In terms of age distribution, 28 per cent were between 18 and 25 years old, 46 per cent were between 26 and 60 years old, and 10 per cent were above 60 years old.

216. When possible and relevant, interviews or paired interviews[353] took place with refugee-led organizations or representatives using the FGD guide. Facilitation of the FGD included Participatory Learning for Action (PLA) tools such as mobility maps and preference ranking. FGDs were conducted in accordance with humanitarian standards to ensure the safety and security of participants. Space was created to enable women, men, people living with disabilities,[354] youth and older people to provide their input, and separately if appropriate. The evaluation team piloted the tools in Chad and adjusted them, when necessary, for the rest of the data collection.

217. The selection of locations for FGDs followed a combination of the three following approaches:

- **Best-worst case approach**: Locations where forcibly displaced and stateless persons exhibit either high or low satisfaction with UNHCR/IP's response, which were determined in close collaboration with UNHCR prior to the data collection. Since this evaluation is formative, this approach helped the evaluation team capture both positive feedback (to generate lessons learned) and negative feedback (to make recommendations).

- **Unique setting identifier approach**: Locations that exhibit unique features. This is particularly relevant for camp settings and will consider aspects such as pre-existing refugee camps that were extended, newly created camps, etc.

- **Typical case approach**: Selecting a few locations that represent an average, not markedly better or worse than others, according to the characteristics of interest, where forcibly displaced and stateless persons exhibit high or low uptake rates.

218. The locations were selected by the evaluation team based on the suggestions from UNHCR and IP in each of the CO. The selection of location was completed in Chad during the inception visit and was ongoing with the Egypt CO when the first draft of the inception report was submitted.

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353 Agreed with the Egypt CO.
354 The approach on how to engage with persons with disabilities that does not increase stigma towards this group, was discussed with the respective country offices. Such engagement could include ad hoc engagement or transect walks.

219. The technique for the selection of participants was discussed and chosen with the COs, balancing considerations of feasibility with methodological rigour. The ET used random and availability sampling in Chad and Egypt specifically:

- **Random sampling:** The selection of participants was done randomly by the Chad CO based on the refugee list available in UNHCR for each of the camps selected jointly by UNHCR and the ET. For each group (8-10 participants), the CO randomly selected 20 participants based on the characteristics provided by the ET.

- **Availability sampling:** In Egypt, UNHCR, the IP and the evaluation team included participants in FGDs that were available on the day of the data collection in the centres managed by UNHCR. This approach was mixed with quota sampling to ensure that FGDs included different age groups and persons with disabilities.

220. The team ensured an **ethical approach to the data collection process**, following UNEG's ethical guidelines and Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) methods. This ethical approach includes, but is not limited to, the respect for dignity and diversity of the participants, a commitment to avoid harm to participants, awareness of data protection sensitivity and participation-oriented approaches.[355] FGD participants were segregated by gender to employ a **gender-sensitive approach**. Children below 18 years old were not included as FGD participants. The evaluation team tried as much as possible to ensure that persons with disabilities were included in the FGDs. When this was the case, the ET ensured that the FGD venues were adequate.

Online perception survey for UNHCR, IP staff and sector members

221. An online perception survey targeted UNHCR staff, implementing partners and sector members. The objective of the survey was to increase the reach of the data collection in each of the COs, as the evaluation team was not able to interview all staff, partners and sector members, and potentially to reach staff that left the operations as well. The survey complemented, and was triangulated with, other information streams (document review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions) and thus was also used to inform evaluation results. The survey included skip logic based on the type of respondents, as the survey was composed of different questions depending on whether the respondent was from UNHCR, an IP or a sector member.

222. The perception survey was deployed on ODK Collect, using a Key Aid dedicated server, in English and translated in Arabic and French. It allowed for responses via phone, tablet or computer. The survey contained closed questions but also a few open-ended questions to collect qualitative data and took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey was commented/piloted by the evaluation

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[355] UNEG. "UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation," n.d; Participiedia. "Participatory Reflection and Action." N.d.

focal points[356] who provided feedback on the questions. The ET monitored response rates and sent reminders to targeted participants.

223. The ET collected 153 responses across the three surveys (see table above).

224. The ET, in collaboration with UNHCR, used **purposive sampling** to select survey recipients to target relevant stakeholders within UNHCR, IP staff and sector members.

Solutions Workshop

225. To discuss durable solutions, resilience and linkages with longer-term development programming, the evaluation team organized on a 3-hour "solutions from the start" workshop in both Egypt and Chad (with a maximum of 15 participants, internal and external to UNHCR). This allowed the ET and UNHCR to discuss the extent to which durable solutions, resilience and nexus approaches with development actors were considered as part of the design of the responses, their enablers and disablers, and a potential way forward in both countries.[357] The workshop contributed significantly to the forward-looking strategic approach of this evaluation.

226. The workshop took place at the UNHCR offices in N'Djamena and Cairo towards the end of the data collection phase. It was facilitated by two team members of the ET using participatory workshop facilitation methods. Participants to these workshops were selected by the operation in each country.

Field visit debriefs

227. At the end of each field visit, the visiting evaluation team members conducted a 2-hour debrief with in-country UNHCR representatives and other stakeholders to present the activities conducted during the field visit and emerging findings.

Synthesis phase

Data triangulation and analysis

228. To respond to the evaluation areas of interest and their sub-questions, the evaluation team followed an iterative analytical approach, allowing for revision and adjustment of the data collection tools throughout the data collection phase. Qualitative disaggregated data were coded in Excel to analyse emerging trends against the evaluation matrix indicators. Primary and secondary quantitative data were also analysed using Excel.

229. A coding guide was developed that indicated each evaluation question, sub-question, indicator and code. A separate coding sheet was developed for each data source (i.e.

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[356] Note that the respondents were allowed to take the survey afterwards.

[357] To contribute to answering, "•To what extent has the pursuit of ''durable solutions from the start'' been embedded in the emergency response?"

desk review, KII, FGD, online survey). Each sheet included relevant disaggregation columns. The evaluation team coded the KII and FGD transcripts directly after each interview, to ensure that the ET could rapidly refer to the coding matrix and identify trends to probe or information gaps during the data collection phase. See example below, from a previous evaluation carried by UNHCR.

Code	Transcript name	Country	Organisation	Stakeholder group	Data
I.1.a	20220214_KII_Niger _UNHCR Shelter Officer	Niger	UNHCR	Shelter Officer	*Relevant data pasted directly from the interview transcript.*

230. Next, once all data were collected and coded in the coding matrix for all countries, the ET thoroughly analysed each indicator in the form of an analysis narrative. For each indicator, the evidence that supports and/or contradicts the indicator was summarized. For each summary, the narrative indicated the number of stakeholders that corroborated the statement (e.g. 24/28 KIIs) to evaluate the weight of the statement and ensure a thorough triangulation of data sources.

231. When relevant and feasible, the data sources were **disaggregated by country, stakeholder, position and/or gender** as well as **according to age and disabilities.**

232. Midway through the detailed analysis of the coding matrix, the evaluation team facilitated an internal review and response workshop online to discuss the evidence for each code in the matrix, the triangulation of the evidence and identify emerging trends and information gaps. This was an opportunity as well to challenge each other's findings and identify any similitudes and differences between COs.

Regional Evaluation report

233. The evaluation team produced a draft evaluation report, which included a detailed evaluation methodology and limitations, findings and conclusions to the key evaluation questions, good practices and lessons learned, and specific examples from field visit countries. The report took a regional stance to the analysis and did not present country-level case studies (see County Reports below) or a detailed examination of individual COs' performance. The draft integrated report was submitted to UNHCR Evaluation Manager and UNHCR Evaluation Focal Points in the four countries, UNHCR HQ, the three RBs, and the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) for feedback. Prior to submission to UNHCR, the draft underwent internal quality assurance.

234. Once the zero draft had been submitted to the EvO and the comments received, and prior to drafting the second version of the report, the evaluation team facilitated a validation workshop involving relevant internal UNHCR stakeholders at country, regional and global level. The purpose of the workshop was to present and seek validation of the key analytical outcomes.

235. The evaluation produced a first version of the report, which served as a basis to prepare the recommendations co-construction workshop. This version of the report

included suggested recommendations. The draft report including all elements underwent written feedback by UNHCR ERG, HQ, RB and COs.

236. The ET incorporated feedback received as appropriate. The evaluation team then facilitated a recommendations co-creation workshop with UNHCR stakeholders to collaboratively revise and finalize recommendations, to ensure they were owned and actionable to the maximum extent possible, with a view to: i) feeding into future UNHCR interventions implemented in the four countries, regional bureaux and headquarters and ii) contributing to inform the regional refugee response in the future. This workshop saw the participation of selected stakeholders at country, regional and global level.

237. The ET then produced a second draft of the regional report, which included an executive summary.

238. In total, the evaluation team made provision for three rounds of comments and revisions of the final evaluation report:

- Draft 0 shared with the UNHCR before the findings validation workshop. Comments were integrated by the evaluation team.

- Draft 1, incorporating feedback from the findings validation workshop and including a draft executive summary and tentative recommendations. This version received written feedback by UNHCR through the comments matrix. Feedback was integrated by the evaluation team. The ET organized a co-creation of recommendations workshop.

- Draft 2. The ET incorporated final recommendations and the report underwent a last round of editing/proofreading. This version will be the final report.

239. Furthermore, the ET organized a presentation of the findings and recommendations of the final report to the ERG to collect their feedback.

240. Once finalized, the evaluation team will present, through a one to two-hour webinar, the evaluation approach, findings and key recommendations to UNHCR and external stakeholders as part of the dissemination of the evaluation findings.

Country Reports

241. At the end of each field visit, the evaluation team held a 2-hour presentation during which they presented the key preliminary findings from each of the visited countries. Their objective was to discuss the findings with the COs, RBs and HQ prior to the submission of the country reports. This suggestion stemmed from the inception visit in Chad wherein the CO requested the country reports by the end of October, which was not feasible within the overall evaluation timeframe. Thus, these presentations offered a valuable compromise, enabling the CO to receive critical findings as they developed/adjusted their strategy for 2025.

242. A 30-page country report was produced for each in-depth country (Egypt[358] and Chad[359]). These reports presented findings specific to each country based on the evaluation matrix indicators. While the final report consolidated findings from all four countries and highlighted relevant national differences, the country reports focused solely on the unique aspects of each country. The country reports were not shared with the ERG.

243. The ET notes that the choice of light touch vs. deep dive countries was made by UNHCR and expressed clearly in the evaluation's terms of references, see Annex 1.

Quality assurance

244. The evaluation was steered by an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG). The aim of this group is to strengthen the credibility, utility and impartiality of the evaluative process and evaluation outputs. The ERG is composed of external (UN, NGO and Government Representatives) and internal UNHCR representatives from the HQ and RBs. The ERG reviewed the outputs of Key Aid Consulting at critical steps (i.e. inception report, draft evaluation report, etc.). It is managed and coordinated by UNHCR Evaluation Office.

245. Designated country and regional focal points ensured the quality of the data sources and analysis at the country level by supporting the evaluation team with relevant contextual insights and sources. They also contributed to the review of the consultancy outputs: inception report, country reports and regional report.

246. UNHCR has a Senior Evaluation Officer and an external consultancy firm (IOD Parc) that has been contracted to undertake additional quality assurance, both from a methodological and content perspective. Internal QA was conducted by Helene Juillard of Key Aid Consulting on all the evaluation outputs.

Ethics and Safeguarding Considerations

247. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with ALNAP's recommendations as set in its "Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide", the UNEG Guidelines for Evaluation and the Code of Conduct for Evaluations in the UN system and the UNHCR Age, Gender, Diversity policy.

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[358] Report in English.

[359] Report in French.

Table 13: Ethical considerations and propositions on how to address them

Ethical considerations	How the ET addressed them
Respect for dignity, diversity, and cultural norms	▪ The evaluation team respected and ensured access to the evaluation process of all concerned parties, considering the differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs, gender, disability, age and ethnicity. ▪ The evaluation team minimized any risk of disruption to the respondents, provided ample notice and respected their privacy. ▪ The data collection tools were shared with country team members to assess the contextual sensitivity of the questions.
Rights	▪ The evaluation team systematically explained the purpose of the evaluation and interview. The team systematically obtained consent from interviewees and participants.
Transparency	▪ The evaluation team ensured that participants were given the time and information to decide whether they wished to participate.
Confidentiality	▪ All non-UNHCR staff interviews were conducted without a UNHCR staff member present. ▪ The evaluation team respected respondents' right to provide information in confidence and made them aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality. ▪ No refugee names were used in the report. Quotes were not used.
Avoidance of harm	▪ The research team aimed to mitigate the impact on the livelihood of respondents/participants and adjusted the duration and timing of the data collection to their livelihood obligations.
Independence and impartiality	▪ All team members are independent from UNHCR and are free from any potential conflict of interest. They ensured an independent data collection, including that no UNHCR staff was present during the interviews and clearly explaining the purpose (and independent nature) of the evaluation to participants.
Credibility	▪ The evaluation report is evidence-based thanks to reliable data and observations, it shows evidence of consistency in data, findings and judgments, and clearly identifies limitations early.

248. The ET endeavoured, when relevant, to include gender, disability, age and environmental considerations into the evaluation process. As mentioned in the data analysis section, the ET disaggregated data sources by gender, age and disability, when relevant to the findings. The ET ensured that FGD venues were accessible to all. Finally,

while the environmental impact of UNHCR's interventions was not part of the evaluation's scope, the ET considered it in the findings when relevant (e.g. environmental impact of shelter quality).

Data protection

249. Key Aid Consulting (KAC), as an EU-based company, complies with the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).[360] As holder of a framework agreement with UNHCR, KAC complies with UNHCR's General Policy on Personal Data Protection and Policy. While both policies lay out the same general principles and guidelines, KAC systematically abides by the most restrictive principles of each policy, meaning that KAC, and therefore the evaluation team, respected both policies throughout the evaluation.

250. The evaluation team implemented the following data protection measures to ensure that the confidentiality and anonymity of participants are guaranteed. For qualitative and quantitative data collected from refugees, the evaluation team:

- Presented the objective of the project to potential interviewees and explained how to exert their rights to amend and delete their data.

- Did not share any raw data collected (audio recordings, transcripts, interview database) from interviewees with the UNHCR.

- Adopted a privacy-by-design approach such that personal identifying information was not collected, but only demographic characteristics for disaggregation (i.e. gender, age group). This specifically applied to the survey and FGD tools.

- The evaluation outputs did not quote individuals or refer to the interviewees by name, position or organization in the final report. Individuals were referred to by their stakeholder group (e.g. partner, local institution, etc.).

251. The data collected as part of this evaluation are only accessible to the evaluation team, as well as to KAC, which was involved in data cleaning or processing. The data will not be shared with any other third party. All consultants external to KAC working on this evaluation received a data responsibility refresher training prior to the start of the data collection.

252. The data collected by, and shared with, the evaluation team are administered and stored on a secure server managed by KAC. These servers are hosted in Europe (Germany and France) and the service providers are respectively French- and German-based companies and, as such, abide by the GDPR. The servers are encrypted by design. All the data related to this evaluation will be moved to a secure folder right after the validation of the consultancy outputs by KAC's Data Protection Officer (DPO). The data will only be accessible to the DPO in this folder. This includes project documents, primary data transcripts, data coding matrix or databases

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360 This directive sets out individuals' rights regarding the processing, handling, treatment and storage of their personal data.

(including emails with any documents or database attached). One year after the completion of the project, all data will be permanently deleted.

Rationale to any adjustments to the ToR

253. During the inception phase, the ET and UNHCR reviewed potential changes to the ToR. Although the geographic and temporal scope of the evaluation remained unchanged, the ET proposed revisions to the evaluation questions in the ToR to enhance clarity and evaluability. The table below presents these changes per evaluation criterion, all reflected in the Evaluation Matrix.

Table 14: Summary of ToR modifications

Criterion	Evaluation question from the ToRs	Proposed adjustments
Relevance	How well informed have UNHCR decisions been? What has been the quality of assessment, surveillance, monitoring and other data, especially from remote and hard-to-reach areas – and how have they been used? To what extent security management decisions, programme criticality and acceptable risks determined the level of activities carried out?	This EQ was broken down into two questions: • I.1 To what extent UNHCR's response has been designed and implemented based on quality and reliable data throughout the duration of the L3? • I.3 How has UNHCR taken into account the political and security context to design its response? The "level of activity" touches on notions of "coverage" that traditionally falls under the criterion of effectiveness. This line of enquiry was moved under "effectiveness" in the evaluation matrix.
Effectiveness	What results were achieved in terms of access to services, policy influence and leveraging of the work of other actors to respond?	"Access to services" and "policy influence" are now captured in specific indicators under the question II.1 "To what extent has UNHCR responded effectively to the regional L3 emergency triggered by the Sudan conflict?" "Leveraging the work of other actors" overlaps with the question in Coordination/Partnership "To what extent has UNHCR's approach to partnership, particularly under the Refugee Coordination Model, been effective and avoided gaps and duplications?" Therefore, the elements of this question were broken down into specific indicators and this latter aspect was removed from this criterion and is covered under the Coordination criterion.
Effectiveness	To what extent did UNHCR key corporate policies, guidance, tools, processes and systems (especially related to L3 protocols and mechanisms, and the Refugee Coordination Model) support the delivery of the emergency response?	The question phrasing has been expanded to "II. 2 What factors such as programmatic risks and security have impacted the level of activities and effectiveness of the response?" where all the points raised in the phrasing are specific indicators. For example, "Extent to which UNHCR key corporate policies, guidance, tools, processes and systems (especially related to L3 protocols) supported the delivery of the interventions to refugees, host communities and IDPs."

	What contribution did the RBs and HQ make in support of country-level operational delivery?	
Efficiency	Has UNHCR's assistance been delivered in a timely and efficient manner, adapting and scaling up activities, avoiding duplication and filling gaps, and with a focus on obtaining the best value for money?	The ET has broken down the question into two questions. One question focuses on timeliness and one on cost efficiency, as follows: • III.1: Has UNHCR's assistance been delivered in a timely manner, adapting and scaling up activities, avoiding duplication and filling gaps? • III.2 Has UNHCR's assistance been delivered in a cost-efficient manner, with a focus on value for money?
Cross-Cutting Themes		Addition of an evaluation question: VI. To what extent do UNHCR interventions mainstream gender, AAP and protection?

254. The preliminary interviews conducted during the inception phase to identify stakeholders' expectations with the evaluation confirmed that the lines of enquiry in the ToRs were all relevant; especially the focus on relevance and effectiveness of UNHCR's intervention, internal and external coordination, and on resilience and durable solutions. Therefore, while useful from a participation and utility standpoint, the interviews did not lead to any structural modifications of the evaluation matrix, except for the decision to maintain the cost-efficiency line of enquiries, and the decision to add one indicator to consider the emergency preparedness level of each of the countries prior to the L3 emergency.

ANNEX 4: EVALUATION TEAM

This annexe provides a short summary of the responsibilities of the ET members which comprised of eight people from Key Aid Consulting.

Team member	Responsibility
Clement Charlot	**Team leader**, oversaw project management, conducted remote data collection and primary data collection in Chad, data analysis, report writing, and facilitated presentation workshops. Clement reviewed deliverables and ensured the overall quality control of the evaluation methodology and outputs. Clement oversaw the whole data collection process and analysis for Chad. Clement wrote EQ3 and 4 in the regional report and oversaw the production of regional and country reports.
Damian Lily	**Subject-matter specialist protection,** provided his protection expertise on all components of the evaluation. He conducted primary data collection in Egypt, data analysis, report writing, and facilitated presentation workshops. Damian wrote EQ5 and 6 in the regional report.
Jim Kennedy	**Subject-matter specialist Shelter/CRI** provided his shelter/CRI expertise on all components of the evaluation. He conducted primary data collection in Chad, data analysis, report writing, and facilitated presentation workshops. Jim wrote EQ1 in the regional report.
Beatrice Noun	**Research assistant and evaluator** conducted remote data collection and primary data collection in Chad, data analysis, report writing, and facilitated presentation workshops. Beatrice also managed the online survey, the desk review summary and quantitative data analysis. Beatrice oversaw the whole data collection process and analysis for Chad. She was the lead writer of the Chad country report. Beatrice co-wrote EQ2 in the regional report.
Sara Sadek	**Egypt context expert** conducted remote and primary data collection in Egypt, participated in report writing, and facilitated presentation workshops. She was the lead writer of the Egypt country report.
Eman Abdalla	**Sudan context expert** conducted remote and primary data collection in Sudan and South Sudan, as well as primary data collection in Egypt, participated in report writing, and facilitated presentation workshops. She

	contributed to the regional report, particularly the introduction and other contextual elements.
Younous Abdoulaye	**Chad context expert**, conducted remote and primary data collection in Chad, participated in report writing, and facilitated presentation workshops. Younous contributed to the Chad Country Report.
Rediet Kabeta	**Research assistant,** supported with secondary data analysis and the write-up of EQ2.

ANNEX 5: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ANNEX 6: ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS-RCM

Table 15: How the new RCM guidance addresses the gaps identified as part of this evaluation

Issues with the RCM	Extent to which the new RCM guidance tackles the issue	
Lack of clear directions regarding the roll-out of the RCM	☑ Addressed	While the flexibility in setting up the RCM was appreciated by some UNHCR staff, the previous guidance was criticized for being vague, relying heavily on individual personalities to shape the coordination model. The new additions to the RCM guidance (especially Chapter 4) are likely to be well received, as they offer greater clarity for both UNHCR and its external partners on the potential structure, roles and responsibilities, complemented by a detailed toolbox.
Interlinkages of the RCM with other coordination mechanisms	⚠ Partially Addressed	The new RCM guidance provides additional information on the coordination arrangements in mixed refugee and IDP situations. It does not outline a specific process or mechanism for determining the type of crisis or the most appropriate coordination arrangement. Instead, it states that such decisions should be made "*through consultation and mutual agreement by the High Commissioner for Refugees and the Emergency Relief Coordinator*". In the same vein, the Refugee Coordinator's responsibilities do not deal with the inter-agency mandate of the Refugee Coordinator and their responsibilities vis-à-vis other agencies.
Inclusion and role of the government, donors and civil society organizations	☑ Addressed	The new guidance offers the necessary level of detail on how various actors can be involved in the RCM, and at which levels specifically (for instance, the participation of donors addressing a gap that was present in the previous RCM guidance).
Commitments from other organizations to co-lead the RCM (IAWG, IASG)	⚠ Partially Addressed	While the guidance clarifies that coordination is a shared responsibility, it may not be sufficiently specific about the expected roles of other agencies in leading or co-leading sectors – an understandable limitation given its organizational focus. The guidance could include annexes showcasing examples of the RCM structure in various countries. These examples would illustrate how different actors have been engaged, providing concrete insights into the types of organizations involved and the roles they can play. Furthermore, the guidance could be more prescriptive on the sector coordination obligations, which are not spelled out in the guidance.
Development process of the RRP was not sufficiently participatory	☑ Addressed	The latest version of the RCM includes an RRP template and provides additional guidance on the expected content of the RRP and the process to develop it in a consultative manner.

Integration of the RRP and the HNRP in mixed settings	⚠ Partially Addressed	The guidance does not specify the process or expectations with how the RRP and the HNRP should be integrated. It does not provide a process on the phase out of the RRP.
Integration of the Nexus and solutions from the start in the RCM	☑ Addressed	The new guidance now emphasizes the need to integrate the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDPN) into planning and programming. The RCM website provides practical details and actions on how to integrate the HDNP as part of the RCM, notably with a dedicated tool, the "RCM Practical HDPN Checklist"
Lack of a process to produce the RRRP figures	⚠ Partially Addressed	The new guidance introduces a tool (which existed for several years) and process for conducting inter-agency needs assessments, known as the **Needs Assessment for Refugee Emergencies (NARE)** There is no information in the RCM about the costing of the RRP.