

Sudan Emergency

Critical Life-saving Needs to Support Forcibly Displaced People in Darfur, Sudan and Relocate Refugees in Eastern Chad

July – December 2025



Newly arrived Sudanese refugees shelter outdoors in extreme heat at the Tine border in Chad. © UNHCR/Caitlin Kelly

Overview

The conflict that started in Sudan in April 2023 has triggered the world's largest forced displacement crisis, displacing over 12 million people within and outside the country. Inside Sudan, close to 8 million of these people remain internally displaced, while the country still hosts over 880,000 refugees and asylum-seekers from neighbouring countries, of whom an estimated 268,000 have been secondarily displaced within the country in search of safety.

The Darfur region, comprising five states in western Sudan, has experienced the most intense and long-running fighting. High levels of violence and other protection and human rights violations, including sexual violence and ethnically targeted killings have been reported since the start of the conflict. The capital of North Darfur, El Fasher, has been experiencing siege-like conditions for over a year, depriving the civilian population within the city of basic necessities. In April 2025, Zamzam IDP camp was attacked, leading to hundreds of civilian deaths, including humanitarian workers, and displacing an estimated 400,000 people within just a few days. It is estimated that 60,000 people fled to Chad in the immediate aftermath of the attack.

Despite limited resources, UNHCR in coordination with local authorities and partners are (i) working to meet essential needs, enhance resilience and strengthen access to services for displaced people, refugees and host communities; (ii) expanding protection services such as mental health support,

legal counselling, child protection and gender-based violence case management through targeted support, the deployment of mobile teams and multi-purpose community centres; and (iii) scaling up site mapping, and assessments for the provision of shelter and non-food items such as NFI kits and family tents to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable forcibly displaced people in Darfur.

Over 873,000 refugees have sought safety in eastern Chad since April 2023, and the number increases daily. From the beginning of the conflict, Chad has continued to grant access to asylum-seekers from Sudan, despite the official closure of its border.

UNHCR supports the Government's efforts and coordinates the emergency response integrating solutions from the start to (i) address the most urgent needs of the newly arrived refugees and returnees identified at the border in eastern Chad; (ii) relocate refugees and other arriving populations from insecure border areas and provide them with humanitarian assistance; and (iii) support livelihoods and economic inclusion.

So far, more than 822,000 refugees in Chad have received protection services, including registration, prevention and response to gender-based violence and child protection. More than 524,000 refugees have been relocated to settlements and provided with humanitarian assistance.

Key information

- ◆ The Darfur region is hosting 4 million newly displaced people forced to flee their homes since April 2023, in addition to 1.5 million IDPs in protracted displacement from earlier conflict periods and over 82,000 refugees, predominately from South Sudan.
- ◆ Over 873,000 Sudanese refugees have crossed the border into Chad since April 2023. Eighty-seven per cent of registered refugees are women and children. Another 239,000 refugees in border areas are awaiting urgent relocation.
- ◆ Forcibly displaced people are disproportionately affected by persistent insecurity, the breakdown of public institutions and service provision, and constraints on humanitarian access.
- ◆ Cholera and other infectious diseases are on the rise, food insecurity is deepening, and the protection-related drivers of the conflict remain intractable.

Key achievements



11 multi-purpose community centres are operating across Darfur, with a combined catchment area population estimated at over **1 million** forcibly displaced and host community members



8 new settlements

opened in Chad, extensions created in 11 existing settlements, and services scaled up in one village to accommodate new arrivals



Over **2,000 people** per month in Darfur are participating in group and individual **psychosocial support** activities provided by UNHCR's partners



Over **524,000 refugees** in Chad **relocated** to settlements and villages and provided with assistance to date, including more than 116,000 since the beginning of the year

Situation update

From the outset of the crisis, UNHCR and partners have led efforts to support the government response to address the most urgent needs of forcibly displaced people fleeing the conflict, providing immediate protection and life-saving assistance at the border – such as water, food, and emergency health services – while establishing extensions and new settlements equipped with essential services and infrastructure.

In **Sudan**, the persistent insecurity in the Darfur states has made aid delivery to vulnerable communities, IDPs and refugees extremely challenging. Supply routes are disrupted, infrastructure is damaged and the annual rainy season, starting in July, will make many roads impassable for months. Markets, although functioning, have limited goods on offer. Famine conditions have already been confirmed in some locations in the Darfur states with many more at risk. Communities in the Darfur states have been unable to engage safely in agricultural activities for several years, making it even more difficult for communities to be self-reliant. The nutritional and health status of forcibly displaced and hosting communities is deteriorating rapidly. The only functioning hospital in North Darfur has been

regularly attacked, and medical supplies, equipment and personnel are severely lacking. With the onset of the rainy season and insufficient basic service provision, it is likely that the incidence of cholera and other communicable diseases will rise while medical services will be unable to cope.

Despite ongoing heavy fighting and persistent insecurity across the Darfur region, there is also ongoing new displacement into Darfur. This includes people fleeing Khartoum, Al Jazira and Sennar following changes of control in those states, as well as an influx of South Sudanese refugees escaping rising tensions across the border. The response to newly arriving IDPs and refugees in Darfur has coincided with increased population movement out of North Darfur to other Darfur states, overwhelming humanitarian responders across the region.

This continued and dynamic population movement to, from and within the Darfur region has resulted in a proliferation of new IDP sites that must be mapped, assessed and included in humanitarian response plans. Within these sites, there are many newly

displaced IDPs who have faced severe protection violations en route to their displacement location, like sexual violence, looting, physical assault, forced family separation and arbitrary arrest and detention. Protection risks continue once IDPs reach displacement locations, such as those resulting from a dearth of livelihood options, high prices for basic commodities, and ongoing recruitment and mobilization initiatives by parties to the conflict. Refugees have been disproportionately affected by protection violations and typically have the fewest options for avoiding or mitigating protection risks. Further scale up of mental health and psychosocial service provision is vital to supporting forcibly displaced people to cope in the aftermath of the trauma that many have experienced and targeted cash or in-kind protection assistance is urgently needed to help forcibly displaced people who have experienced severe protection incidents to recover.

Many of the IDPs living at new sites lack basic materials for shelter, cooking, sleeping and ensuring some degree of privacy. Considering the shelter and non-food items responses already delivered and those in the pipeline, there remains close to 400,000

households (approximately 2 million people) in dire conditions for whom no assistance has been provided. The biggest gaps are in North Darfur (El Fasher, Dar Es Salam, Melit and Tawila localities) and South Darfur (Beleil and Nyala Shmal localities), while displaced people in Ed Daein in East Darfur and El Geneina in West Darfur are also experiencing significant shortfalls in assistance. These gaps force IDPs to remain in overcrowded 'gathering sites', often in disused public buildings such as schools which are not designed for long-term occupation and typically have insufficient water and sanitation infrastructure. Conditions in refugee camps and settlements have experienced a marked deterioration since the onset of the conflict, requiring not only shelter repairs and provision of basic non-food items but also rehabilitation of water and sanitation infrastructure and health clinics to guard against the growing risk of communicable diseases.

Chad now hosts the largest number of registered Sudanese refugees fleeing escalating violence and instability in their home country, with one in 3 people in eastern Chad now a refugee. Despite significant needs, critical funding shortfalls hinder the response efforts in Chad. One in two families lacks adequate

A UNHCR staff member checks the identities of Sudanese refugees who are waiting to be relocated away from the Tiné border crossing in Chad.
 © UNHCR/Caitlin Kelly



shelter. Refugees receive an average of 10 litres of water per person per day, far below the emergency standard of 15 litres per person per day. Just 2 out of every 10 school-aged children are enrolled in school. There is only one doctor for 52,000 people – more than five times the standard of one doctor for 10,000 people recommended by WHO. The situation is even more dire in provinces like Wadi Fira and Ennedi Est, where new arrivals have access to less than 5 litres of water per person per day and only 14 per cent of families have a decent shelter. Relocating refugees to secure settlements and villages is a critical component of the protection response, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, children and people with heightened vulnerabilities.

Over a third of new arrivals remain at the border in overcrowded, spontaneous settlements, with limited

access to water, food, and healthcare, placing an unbearable burden on the communities that have generously welcomed them. These conditions are compounded by severe trauma, family separation, and gender-based violence.

In this context, relocating refugees to secure settlements and villages is, therefore, a critical component of the protection response, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, children and people with heightened vulnerabilities.

The Government has called on the humanitarian community to urgently scale up capacities to accelerate relocating all refugees away from the border.

Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan 2025

As the ongoing conflict propels ever-larger outflows to neighbouring countries, the [2025 Regional Refugee Response Plan \(RRP\)](#) for the Sudan situation focuses on life-saving WASH, protection and health interventions that shield the most at-risk while laying foundations for localization and self-reliance in seven host countries, including Chad.

In the light of 2025 funding cuts, the RRP has gone through a [hyper-prioritization process](#) to identify people in the most urgent need of assistance and the most critical response to be mobilized. While overall needs remain staggering across the region – 4.8 million people targeted across seven countries, with total requirements of \$1.8 billion – the hyper-prioritization process puts an immediate focus on 4.1 million people, with corresponding financial needs of \$1 billion across 111 RRP partners.

Financial needs

At this critical juncture, UNHCR is urgently seeking \$130 million in flexible funding to provide life-saving aid to an estimated 800,000 people in the Darfur states, to relocate 239,000 Sudanese refugees from the Chad-Sudan border and to address key gaps in service provision by the end of the year.

Sudan - \$30M

◆ Shelter and Non-Food Items - \$22.5M

An urgent scale up of site mapping and assessments, and provision of shelter and non-food items assistance is required to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable forcibly displaced people in Darfur, initially targeting 150,000 households experiencing the worst conditions and often facing heightened protection risks. These interventions will mitigate protection and health risks by ensuring that households have access to shelter that meets minimum standards, and basic items for cooking and sleeping. To achieve this, UNHCR must procure additional NFI kits and family tents, and ensure appropriate logistics capacity for their safe storage and efficient transport cross-line and cross-border to reach those most in need.

◆ Protection - \$5.5M

The severe protection violations experienced by forcibly displaced people as result of the ongoing fighting and prevailing insecurity across Darfur requires the prioritization of expanded protection service provision. This assistance will expand access to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services, enable scaled up provision of targeted support, increase access to child protection and gender-based violence case management, and

strengthen the community-based protection structures that deepen and broaden outreach to those most in need. To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision, establishment of new multi-purpose community centres in areas with the most intense needs will be prioritized and complemented by mobile service provision in other areas.

◆ Rehabilitation and expansion of WASH and health infrastructure - \$2M

Refugee camps and settlements in Darfur require dedicated support for the rehabilitation and expansion of WASH and health infrastructure to mitigate risks of cholera and other communicable diseases spreading. While UNHCR seeks to ensure the integration of refugees into national service provision systems wherever possible, the prevailing insecurity in Darfur coupled with disproportionate targeting of refugee populations in some areas makes it imperative that services accessible to refugees receive dedicated support. In a number of cases, clinics and water points inside refugee camps and settlements also serve the surrounding host community and ensuring their continued operation helps to maintain positive intercommunal relationships and contribute to the protection of refugees from violence and other protection violations.

Chad - \$100M

◆ Relocation - \$20.2M

Urgent action is needed to support the relocation of refugees in Chad currently at the border into settlements and villages. To achieve this, UNHCR must urgently scale up its logistics capacities to organize the safe transport of 2,000 people per day, ensure the most vulnerable people receive adequate

protection services, including assistance and adapted transport, the convoys are backed with medical escorts, and people receive food and water during the relocation process.

◆ Protection - \$10.6M

In Chad, mental health and psychosocial support, and specialized services for children and survivors of violence and trauma must be scaled up to ensure refugees receive adequate support to recover and heal.

This is essential given the high proportion of women and children among the new arrivals and reports of human rights violations including physical assault and gender-based violence.

◆ Essential services in settlements and villages of relocation - \$68.8M

Settlements and villages in Chad must be equipped with essential services to ensure that refugees have access to adequate shelter, safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, and healthcare, including mental health and psychosocial support. Ensuring that children whose education has been disrupted can quickly return to school is also a priority. Out-of-school children are highly vulnerable to protection risks, including early marriage, child trafficking, forced labour, recruitment by armed groups, survival sex and dangerous onward movements.

Flexible funding: a lifeline in emergencies

At this critical moment – while UNHCR is faced with a global crisis of underfunding – flexible funding is a lifeline. It is not only efficient – it is strategic, enabling UNHCR to deliver protection and assistance where it is needed most.

Flexible funding enables UNHCR to respond across the full spectrum of needs – not just those in the spotlight. Every dollar of flexible funding spent is weighed against needs, gaps, and urgency to maximize its impact. Because it is not tied to a specific country or sector, it allows us to:

- ◆ Respond rapidly to new and unforeseen emergencies
- ◆ Sustain essential services in underfunded and forgotten crises
- ◆ Redirect resources dynamically to where needs are greatest, including preparedness measures in anticipation of larger crises

This ability to act before needs escalate and reach the most vulnerable is only possible through flexible funding from public and private donors.