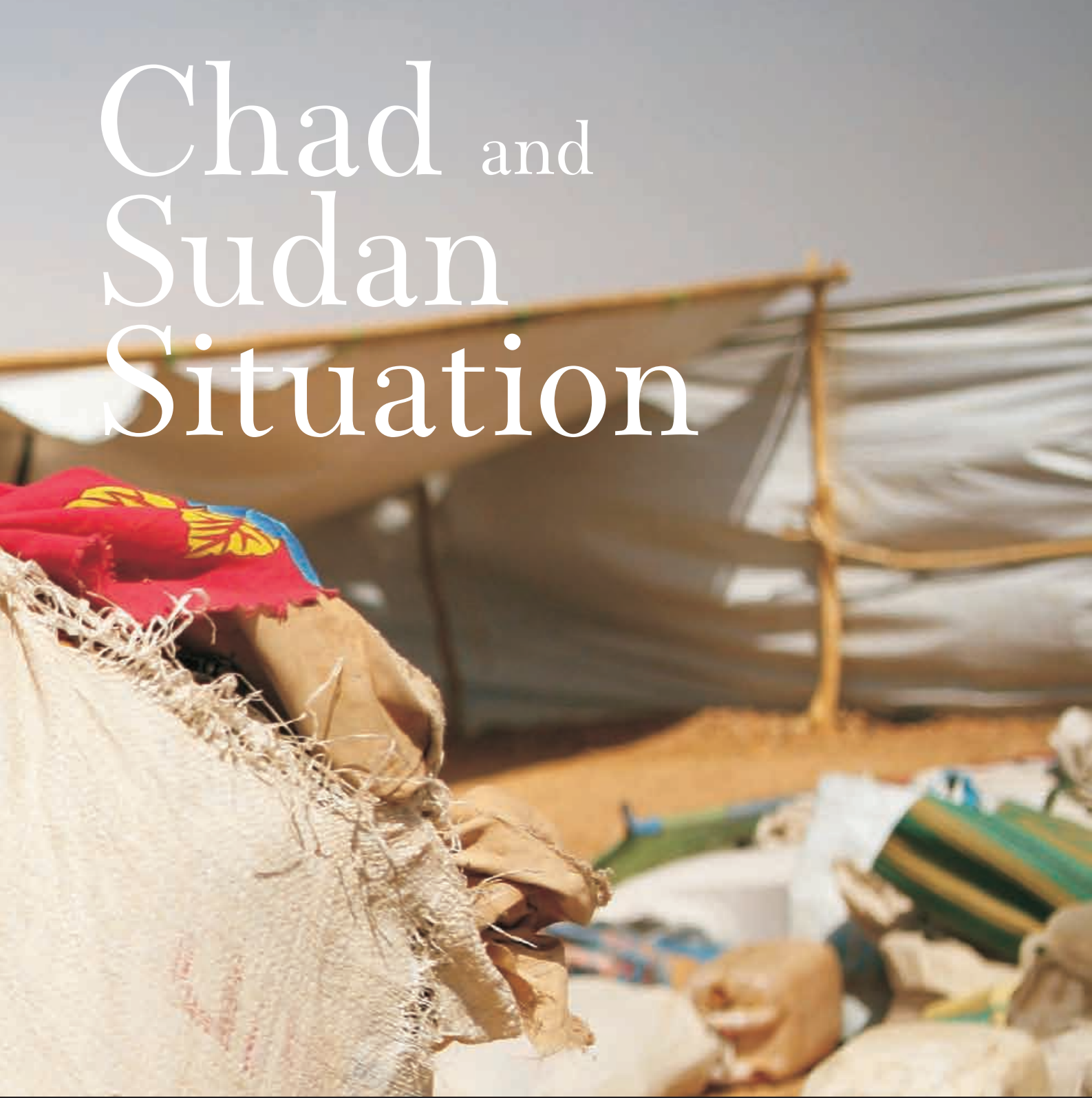


A newly arrived refugee transports her belongings from the transit center to the truck that will take her to Kounoungou camp, Chad

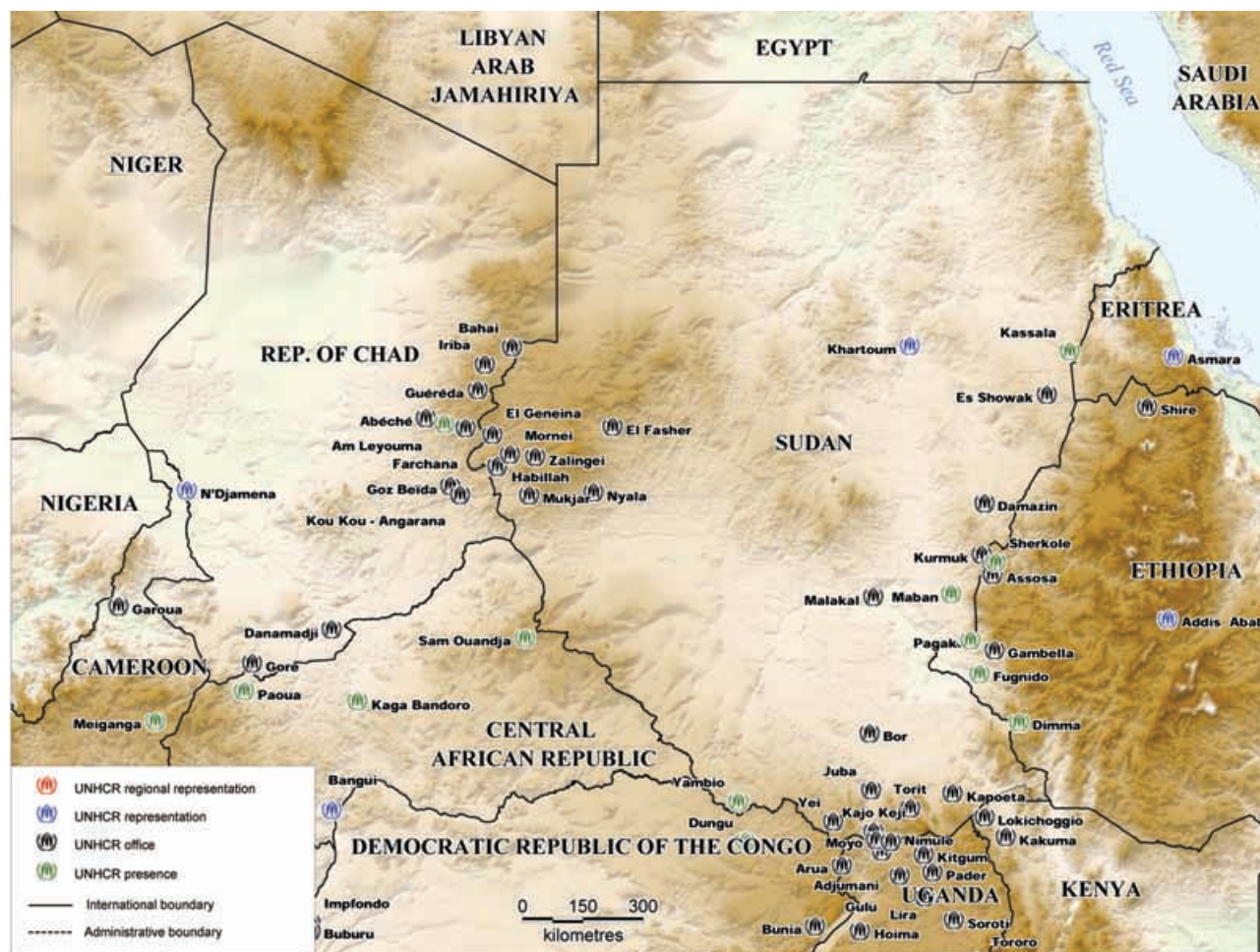


# Chad and Sudan Situation



## | OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- UNHCR helped reintegrate some 68,000 refugees who returned to Southern Sudan from countries of asylum.
- In Southern Sudan, UNHCR provided emergency assistance to 9,000 Congolese refugees who fled attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).
- UNHCR extended its presence to northern and southern Darfur to respond more effectively to the growing protection needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- A registration and verification exercise was completed successfully in the 12 camps for refugees in eastern Sudan, providing the basis for a comprehensive strategy to resolve this protracted refugee situation.
- Chad received new waves of refugees, including some 10,000 from northern areas of the Central African Republic (CAR) and 12,000 from west Darfur of whom some 6,000 were eventually transferred to existing refugee camps. In May, a new refugee site was established in Moula, southern Chad, for some 6,000 new arrivals.
- UNHCR supported economic self-reliance and provided integrated social services in 12 camps in eastern Chad hosting some 250,000 refugees from Darfur.



### Working environment

The overall environment in Chad and Sudan remained fluid and complex, requiring the constant monitoring and readjustment of operational priorities and activities. Cross-border hostilities between Chad and Sudan, as well as insecurity in CAR, prompted both internal displacement and new refugee flows.

In Darfur, security remained volatile. Following the July attack on a UNAMID convoy in which seven peacekeepers were killed, and in anticipation of possible destabilization due to the indictment of the President of Sudan by the International Criminal Court, the security phase in Darfur was raised. This had a direct impact on UNHCR's operations. These constraints notwithstanding, UNHCR extended its presence throughout Darfur, but access to many IDP camps in the region remained restricted.

While more than 68,000 refugees returned to Southern Sudan with UNHCR's support, their reintegration into communities of origin presented significant challenges given that few development actors had begun recovery efforts. For instance, much of the infrastructure in the region needs to be rebuilt. UNHCR gave priority to operations in areas with many returnees and those with the potential for high returns, as well as to places where protection problems could arise due to obstacles to reintegration.

While the overall political situation appeared to be improving, frequent tribal clashes pointed to the fragility of social structures. In Blue Nile State, for instance, it has been four years since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), but the political and civil service administration has yet to return to normal. Socioeconomic

recovery has been slow and basic services are limited, particularly in water supply, education and health care.

In the east, 2008 saw a steady influx of asylum-seekers from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia. Nearly 20,000 asylum-seekers were registered in the Shagarab refugee status determination (RSD) centre. Some of these new arrivals moved with the help of smugglers to Khartoum and from there to Egypt and Libya with the goal of reaching Europe.

In Chad, peace agreements signed by the Government and some opposition groups in 2007 did not prevent the dramatic late-July attack on N'Djamena by opposition forces. The fighting prompted some 5,000 Chadians to seek refuge in neighbouring Cameroon and obliged UNHCR to evacuate its staff. Both Chad and Sudan accused each other of supporting rebel movements in their respective territories, and diplomatic relations between the two countries were severed for some time following an attack by the Sudanese JEM opposition forces on Omdurman in May.

The deployment of MINURCAT (*Mission Internationale des Nations Unies en République Centrafricaine et au Tchad*), charged with training police and reinforcing the judicial infrastructure, began in December 2007 but was proceeding at a slow pace. MINURCAT trained a Chadian police force to provide security in the refugee camps. A European peacekeeping force, EUFOR, began arriving at the end of January 2008 and was declared fully operational by mid-March. The UN Security Council extended MINURCAT's mandate by one year, and preparations were underway for the deployment of a new peacekeeping force (MINURCAT II) to replace EUFOR in March 2009.

Violations of the civilian and humanitarian character of the refugee camps in the east continued to be major concern in 2008, with armed Sudanese rebels entering the camps with impunity and even using some as rear bases. The recruitment of children continued despite repeated protests by UNHCR.

## | Achievements and impact |

In 2008, UNHCR's main objectives in Sudan were to improve safety in IDP settlements; strengthen protection and response mechanisms for vulnerable groups; and support the creation of an environment conducive to voluntary return while posing fewer risks of further displacement. The Office also sought to improve camp coordination and camp management and shift from care and maintenance programmes to the pursuit of more comprehensive durable solutions for long-staying refugees in eastern Sudan.

Furthermore, UNHCR aimed to protect IDPs in Khartoum and develop the capacity of Sudan's Commissioner for Refugees to register, determine refugee status, provide documentation and protect asylum-seekers and refugees in line with international standards.

In Southern Sudan and Blue Nile State the Office planned to organize voluntary repatriation, monitor the return process in host communities and provide international protection and assistance to returning refugees and IDPs. It also aimed to strengthen cooperation with development actors as the Southern Sudan programme moved into the early recovery phase and to build the capacities of stakeholders and communities to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups.

To sustain returns to the south, UNHCR implemented community based reintegration projects (CBRP) to address the most important needs of Sudanese refugee and IDP returnees, particularly in the sectors of education, health care, water, sanitation and livelihoods. Other CBRPs included the rehabilitation and expansion of hospitals, construction of teacher training institutes at the national level, construction and renovation of classrooms, the drilling of boreholes and maintenance of water-supply systems.

A small number of income-generating activities were also successfully introduced by the end of 2008. Protection monitoring capacities were reinforced, as were mechanisms to address issues raised during participatory assessments in areas of displacement and of return.

UNHCR's strategic framework for the protracted refugee situation in eastern Sudan focused on improving the livelihoods of refugees and the provision of basic services. The Office also advocated for the Government to enact laws to meet international refugee-protection standards. The registration exercise that was conducted in the 12 camps in eastern Sudan will clarify the status of nearly 70,000 Eritreans who lost their refugee status with the application of the cessation clause in 2002 – 2004. These people now lack legal documents and have limited access to basic services and rights.

Participatory assessments were conducted in all UNHCR's operations in Sudan, either on an *ad hoc* basis or as routine aspects of programme delivery.

UNHCR's objectives in Chad in 2008 were to provide international protection and assistance to refugees in camps in eastern and southern Chad and in urban areas; maintain the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps; and ensure the physical security of refugees in and around the camps. The Office also supported host communities through

community-based programmes and promoted the self-reliance of CAR and Sudanese refugees by helping them to farm or engage in other income-generating activities.

Under the supplementary programme, UNHCR sought to reinforce the capacity of the Chadian authorities to protect and assist IDPs. It also advocated for the humanitarian space needed to deliver protection and assistance effectively.

## | Constraints |

As was the case in prior years, the lack of security continued to be a major operational challenge in both Chad and Sudan. In addition to rebel and military activities, banditry, including robberies and hijacking, has increased markedly in both operations. Humanitarian workers are increasingly the target, and several incidents involved firearms.

While security measures such as armed escorts are in place, they also reduce access to refugee and IDP populations. Despite the presence of MINURCAT and EUFOR in Chad, and UNAMID in Darfur, it was often impossible to maintain the civilian character of refugee and IDP camps. The lack of security led to the temporary suspension of humanitarian activities in some camps.

In order to overcome operational challenges in Chad, a more sustainable approach to vital sectors like water, sanitation, the environment, education and shelter is required. Registration and verification of refugee populations, including the delivery of identity cards and birth and death certificates to Sudanese refugees, needs to be improved. Furthermore, efforts to ensure respect for the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and IDP sites must continue.

The major protection challenge in Darfur remained the ongoing conflict, which drastically curtailed security and gave rise to more problems, such as sexual and gender-based violence.

Protection concerns faced by host populations and returnees in Southern Sudan included ongoing ethnic clashes, cattle raids, the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance, land disputes, a paucity of basic services, limited livelihood opportunities, a shortage of documentation, sexual and gender-based violence and a disregard for the rights of women and children.

## | Operations |

Details of the operations in **Chad** and **Sudan** are described in separate chapters.

## | Financial information |

Over the past five years, UNHCR activities in Chad have received adequate funding, both under the annual programme and the supplementary budget for IDPs. The appeal for the supplementary programme for Darfur was increased in early 2008 from USD 27 million to USD 40 million, following the agreement to extend UNHCR's presence to north and south Darfur. Although the supplementary budget for the return and reintegration of refugees in Southern Sudan was almost fully funded in 2008, the operation was adversely affected by the late receipt of contributions which limited UNHCR's ability to reallocate funding in a flexible manner between the return of refugees and support towards their reintegration.