

## UNHCR Sudan Operations

No. 88 - July 2008



*Students from Pomoju Secondary School in Kajo Keji County, South Sudan, perform a song about Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in their community.*

*Photo: UNHCR, M. Veenma.*

For further information please contact:  
UNHCR Sudan [SUDKH@UNHCR.ORG](mailto:SUDKH@UNHCR.ORG)  
Teresa Ongaro [ONGARO@UNHCR.ORG](mailto:ONGARO@UNHCR.ORG)  
Alexandra Fielden [FIELDEN@UNHCR.ORG](mailto:FIELDEN@UNHCR.ORG)

## General Developments

The major development affecting UNHCR operations in Sudan was the increase in the Security Phase (II to III in Khartoum, Blue Nile State and Eastern States, III to IV in Darfur). This led to the relocation of humanitarian personnel from Darfur and UN staff dependents from Khartoum. UNHCR was able to continue most of its work in Darfur with fewer staff by identifying and prioritising protection and assistance activities. In other parts of the country, operations continued without major disruption.

### Khartoum State

Refugee status determination interviews and counselling activities continued; 137 individuals received legal counselling and 57 refugees with specific needs received medical, financial and/or psycho-social assistance. In the refugee communities, Save the Children-UK continued the assessment on child protection issues in close collaboration with UNHCR and the government.

During monitoring visits, UNHCR was made aware of 369 individuals at various detention centres around Khartoum. With the intervention of UNHCR lawyers working with the Commission for Refugees (CoR), 248 individuals were assessed as persons of concern to UNHCR and were released.



*Heavy Snowfall at Al Waleed Camp on the Syria/Iraq border causes the collapse of refugee tents.  
Photo: UNHCR, S. Osman.*

A joint UNHCR/CoR mission to the Al Waleed camp at the Iraq/Syria border took place in the context of the government's offer to relocate this group to Sudan. The camp hosts almost two thousand Palestinian refugees who were forced to flee from Baghdad in 2006, and who currently live in tents in extreme weather conditions, with temperatures below freezing in winter and up to 60 degrees Celsius in summer. Consultations are continuing between UNHCR and the government to outline the terms and modalities for those refugees wishing to avail themselves of the option of relocation to Sudan.

The Khartoum Protection Working Group (KPWDG), chaired by UNHCR, completed a series of outreach sessions in several IDP sites. The UNICEF-supported Family and Children Police Unit addressed several community representatives and community-based organisations on mechanisms for the prevention and reporting of violence against children, particularly sexual and gender based violence (SGBV).

## Eastern States

A sharp increase in commodity prices in the local markets resulting from high fuel prices acutely affected the living conditions of many persons of concern to UNHCR in the East, especially those who are not beneficiaries of targeted food distribution.

New refugee arrivals from Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia continued to enter Sudan through various entry points in Gedaref, Kassala and Red Sea States, albeit in smaller numbers than in June. The most significant decrease was recorded among Somali refugees, whose number was less than half that of the previous month. The decline can partially be attributed to the effects of the rainy season. Statistics for July indicate 1,022 new refugee arrivals (736 male), including 898 Eritreans, 105 Somalis and 19 Ethiopians. Cumulative figures for 2008 indicate 9,397 new arrivals: 6,021 Eritreans, 3,047 Somalis, 325 Ethiopians and 4 others.

21 unaccompanied minors (UAMs) mainly from Eritrea and Ethiopia were amongst the newly arrived, and were registered at Shagarab Centre, where the total number of UAMs is now 60 (47 male, 13 female). July also saw the opening of the HAI transit centre, which currently accommodates 18 UAMs.

Secondary and unauthorized movements to Khartoum and elsewhere continued. Indeed, a physical census indicated that 967 individuals were present in the transit centre, far fewer than the 1,853 on the arrival records. Local authorities decided to address this situation by confiscating refugee IDs in order to prevent them from leaving the camp without authorisation. UNHCR and CoR are undertaking activities in transit centres to ensure that refugees are aware of their rights and obligations in Sudan.



*Geographical location of refugee camps in Eastern Sudan.  
Map: UNHCR, GIS Unit*

Four families (22 individuals) from the East travelled to Khartoum for resettlement to Canada and New Zealand in July.

398 Refugee status determination interviews took place, with a recognition rate of 100%. The cumulative RSD interview figure for 2008 is 3,659 cases. UNHCR continued to monitor the detention facilities and courts in Eastern Sudan for cases involving refugees and asylum seekers; seven refugees were released after having been held for 27 days on unfounded charges.

A social assessment mission was completed in Um Gargour camp to identify refugees with specific needs requiring support for hut construction. 45 cases have been considered, with the activity continuing in August. 1,877 pairs of Crocs shoes donated by the manufacturer were distributed to refugees with specific needs and students attending camp-based schools in Suki, Fau 5 and Abuda.

The distribution of seedlings began and 12.6 Ha of forest plantation was completed. 20 environmental awareness sessions were held for a total of 312 female and 50 male participants. 129 refugee farmers received

loans for crop production and started cultivation in Fau 5 camp, and 639 refugee farmers in six camps were selected to receive loans for crop production and livestock projects.

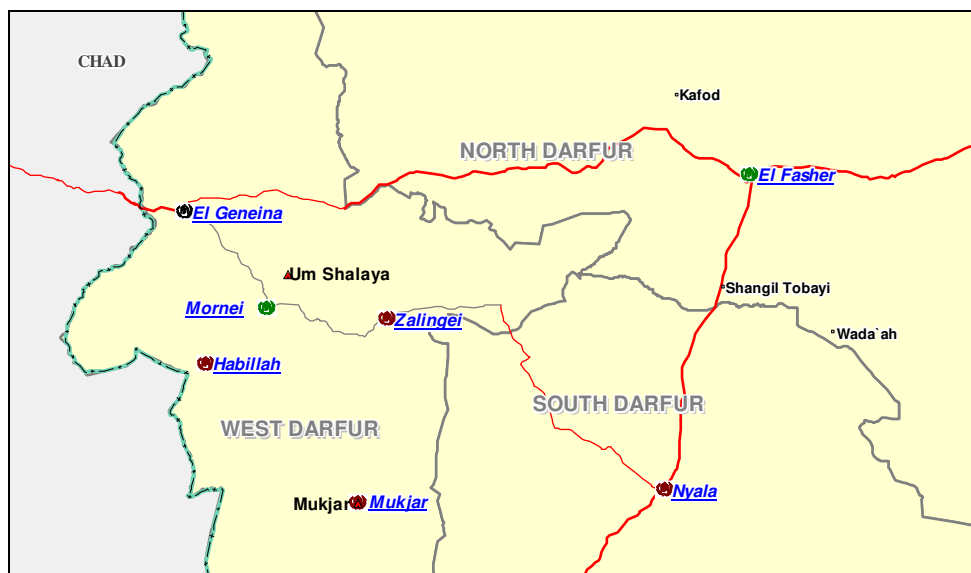
UNHCR signed a Bilateral Agreement with Gedaref State Government to rehabilitate two classrooms and an office in Gala el Nahal locality, which will benefit both the refugees and the local community. In addition, the provision has been made to rehabilitate the educational facilities at Abuda refugee camp, located near Es Showak.

## Darfur

On 31 July, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1828 to extend the mandate of the United Nations - African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) for a further 12 months. Insecurity remained a major concern in Darfur; UNAMID armed escorts were sometimes needed to access the population and deliver humanitarian assistance. An increase in the number of thefts from NGO compounds was reported and the frequency of carjacking incidents remained high. As the rainy season has started it is expected that such events will decline in frequency, but many towns and camps are still regarded as high-risk areas. Road conditions will also restrict the movement of humanitarian personnel and their ability to reach populations of concern.

Population movements in Darfur remained fluid, with direct attacks, insecurity, tribal tensions, lack of assistance, traditional seasonal movements, and environmental factors contributing to the already complex displacement dynamic in the region. The issue of access, particularly with the increased Security Phase, continued to pose obstacles in systematically tracking and assessing population movements, both in the context of new displacement and also for returns.

UNHCR registered 21 new refugee arrivals fleeing general insecurity in Eastern Chad and four newborn Chadian refugee infants at Mukjar Camp and Um Shalaya in West Darfur. UNHCR's operational partners confirmed that the refugee population in Arwa and Dohoush, South Darfur (1,000-3,000 people) left the area to return to Chad. Small numbers of refugees returned to Birgi, Um Kheir, and Deleij in the Habila area of West Darfur, and it was also reported that 71 IDP households returned to this area for seasonal cultivation.



*UNHCR in the three Darfurs.  
Map: UNHCR, GIS Unit*

UNMIS completed the hand-over to UNHCR for the leadership in protection in North and South Darfur following its expansion in the two states, which began earlier in the year. UNHCR now chairs weekly Protection Working Groups to facilitate cooperation and active engagement amongst all UN humanitarian actors, UNAMID and the NGO community for the region. The meetings are a useful mechanism for information sharing, discussion and design of jointly agreed strategies to assess and intervene in protection issues to best support our beneficiaries at the field level.

UNHCR facilitated the implementation of the Project Agreement on Child Friendly Spaces in Mukjar, signed with Sudanese Red Crescent and in collaboration with UNICEF. The rehabilitation of four child centres was initiated, with seven other centres pending re-assessment and rehabilitation. UNHCR in Mukjar provided urgent school maintenance for 14 schools and material support to WFP for the school feeding programme. With the support of UNJLC, 241 households in Dorti camp were provided with material assistance, as was the Refugee Youth Centre. 43 school-aged refugee children were enrolled at Alsalam School after UNHCR Mukjar submitted a list of their names to the Office of Basic Education.

The onset of the rainy season has led to an increase in malaria in Darfur. UNHCR's partners are responding through the distribution of mosquito nets and spraying and oiling stagnant water. An increase of Acute Jaundice Syndrome was also observed among Chadian refugee communities in Mukjar; UNHCR continues sensitisation of the community on prevention measures and increased attention to sanitation and hygiene.

### South Sudan and Blue Nile State

Organised voluntary repatriation activities had to be largely suspended since the rainy season rendered many roads impassable. Nonetheless, some corridors remained open and UNHCR managed to organise the return of 129 refugees from Uganda. In addition, 77 self-assisted returnees were assisted upon their repatriation; seven from Ethiopia, one from Egypt and 69 others from Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya.

The construction of five primary schools and two healthcare centres in the South was completed. UNHCR protection monitoring and village assessments, also in the context of inter-agency missions, continued in the areas that remained accessible. UNHCR in Kapoeta conducted a Community-based Protection Training at Lafon Payam, Eastern Equatoria, which identified and sensitised participants to a wide range of protection issues.



UNHCR Malakal co-facilitated a two-day workshop for senior government officials and ministers jointly with UNDP and UNMIS, designed to enhance partnership in promoting rule of law and human rights in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

*The effects of the rainy season on a UNHCR convoy from Kapoeta to Chukudum in South Sudan.  
Photo: UNHCR, Jacob Jok Annol*