

Sudan Regional Refugee Response Sitrep #5, 1 - 30 September 2023



UNFPA has deployed 31 midwives to strengthen maternal health care for the estimated 15,000 pregnant women who have fled Sudan to Chad, including in Gaga Refugee camp. ©UNFPA Chad/Ndojissane Hervé.

Situation overview

Close to 6 million people have fled their homes in Sudan as the conflict nears the six-month mark. Over 1.2 million refugees, asylum seekers and returnees¹ have crossed borders in search of safety to the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, and South Sudan.

Sudan's neighbouring countries were already grappling with their own crises, including internal conflict, hunger and disease outbreaks, and there are severe funding gaps to respond to soaring humanitarian needs.

¹ All displacement figures are sourced from the [IOM Displacement Tracker](#). Accessed 10 October 2023.



Humanitarian context

Infrastructure is weak in remote border areas of neighbouring countries, and women and girls are struggling to access basic necessities such as food, water and health care. There are an estimated 43,000² pregnant women among the more than 1.2 million people who have crossed borders who need access to maternal health services. Around 15 percent of pregnant women will experience pregnancy and birth-related complications, which could be life-threatening without access to a functioning health facility, equipped and staffed to provide emergency obstetric care. Rates of malnutrition are also reported to be high among newly arrived pregnant and breastfeeding women.

Women fleeing across Sudan's borders have reported that they have been subjected to physical and sexual violence. At points of arrival their risks to violence, exploitation and abuse have increased exponentially due to a lack of adequate shelter, protection services and support. Recourse to negative coping mechanisms could also increase in the absence of livelihood opportunities and amid fierce competition for scarce resources.

There is an urgent need to bolster sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and protection systems and support including for the provision of maternal and child health care services, emergency obstetric care, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and gender-based violence (GBV) case management.

Central African Republic (CAR)

An estimated 19,748 individuals, including 15,047 refugees and 4,701 Central African returnees, have arrived in CAR since the beginning of the conflict in Sudan in mid-April. The majority are women and children. Only around 1,800 individuals have been relocated to Korsi, the newly established site for Sudanese refugees and returnees in Birao, located around 60 kms from the border.

Women and girls' access to SRH and GBV services is constrained by logistical and security challenges. Due to security issues – and as directed by the government – humanitarian assistance is currently only provided to individuals who have been relocated to Korsi, and not new arrivals in Am Dafok, near the border with Sudan. It is expected that this may change in the coming months after the end of the rainy season.

UNFPA is working closely with its local implementing partner, Homme De Galilile, to ensure vulnerable Sudanese and returnees relocated to Birao receive critical SRH and GBV services.

² UNFPA estimates are based on the [Minimum Initial Service Package \(MISP\) Calculators](#).



Chad

Chad is host to more than half of the 1.2 million refugees and returnees that have fled Sudan to neighbouring countries. Over 500,000 new refugees and new returnees have been registered by UNHCR and IOM, respectively. This number is projected to increase to 600,000 by the end of 2023, increasing pressure on already overstretched services.

Intense competition for livelihood opportunities between host communities and displaced populations is escalating exploitation risks, particularly for women. Disruptions in food and fuel supplies are destabilising the local economy and critically impacting food security. Healthcare is in crisis with severe shortages of essential medicines and supplies, health workers and facilities, limiting women and girls' access to critical reproductive health care. Deteriorating road conditions and insufficient transport are also exacerbating access issues to SRH services, potentially driving a spike in preventable maternal deaths.

Egypt

Over 323,000 people have fled to Egypt since 15 April. A major concern is that tens of thousands of Sudanese are stranded at borders due to lengthy security clearances and visa approvals, which is taking a toll on the mental health and well-being of people, especially women and children. Desperation is driving some people to seek illegal routes, putting women and girls at risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. Sudanese women who have arrived in Egypt without male family members are highly vulnerable due to a lack of economic resources. Limited access to SRH services is also a major concern among refugee women and girls.

Ethiopia

Over 84,000 people have arrived in Ethiopia, mainly through the two districts/woredas of Metema and Kurmuk entry points in Amhara and Benishangul Gumuz regions. A shortage of humanitarian supplies, limited partner presence and funding, as well as the volatile situation in Amhara Region, continues to impact on operations and obstruct the flow of supplies and personnel, including reproductive health medicines and health workers.

Access to SRH services is limited for women and girls and protection risks have increased due to the lack of adequate shelter and water. Case management for GBV requires urgent attention. Recourse to negative coping mechanisms has also soared as women and girls are forced to fend for themselves.

South Sudan

More than 304,000 people have arrived in South Sudan since the conflict began across the border in mid-April, most of whom are returnees. Food insecurity is high among new arrivals



and screening data from the border point reveals that more than a quarter of pregnant and breastfeeding women are malnourished. Returnees are coming back to a country already facing unprecedented humanitarian needs.

Protection is a major concern for returnees and refugees. According to testimonies, women and girls were separated from family members during their journey to South Sudan and subjected to physical and sexual violence. Overcrowding in transit centres is also increasing women and girls' risks of GBV. The ongoing rainy season is making conditions at crowded transit centres and border crossings even more dire as flooding worsens food insecurity and contributes to the spread of disease.

UNFPA's response

Central African Republic

UNFPA has deployed midwives to Birao Hospital and established a Women and Girls' Safe Space (WGSS) at the Korsi site, where refugees and returnees are being relocated. During the reporting period:

- More than 310 individuals, mainly women and girls, received SRH services through the support of UNFPA partners in Birao.
- Around 360 individuals received GBV services, including 24 GBV survivors who benefited from GBV case management and PSS services.
- 72 adolescents and girls received SRH services.
- 18 women received assistance for safe delivery.
- 280 pregnant women benefited from antenatal (ANC) care services.

Chad

- In Ouaddaï province, where 80% of new refugees are located, UNFPA has deployed 28 humanitarian midwives to provide integrated SRH services through both static and mobile health facilities.
 - Medical supplies and equipment to strengthen the delivery of maternal health care, and hygiene items and supplies for new mothers and newborns, have been distributed.
 - Midwives are also providing GBV response services for women and girls in need, including the clinical management of rape. Three humanitarian midwives have also been deployed to Sila province.
- 18 psychosocial support workers have been deployed to the eastern region – 6 in Ouaddaï, 6 in Wadi Fira and 6 in Sila – to provide psychological care for GBV survivors and make referrals to health services as needed.



- UNFPA has established safe spaces in tents in Adré (1), Ourang (2), Arkoum (2), Metche (1), Tangori (2) and Ambelia (1) where women and girls can access protection services. The tents are also serving as temporary maternity facilities, including for deliveries.
- More than 700 safe births have been supported by UNFPA midwives in Ouaddaï, Wadi Fira and Sila provinces since May 2023.
- Almost 10,400 pregnant and breastfeeding women have accessed SRH services at UNFPA-supported facilities in Ouaddaï, Wadi Fira and Sila provinces.
- UNFPA is coordinating with UN agencies, the government, national and international NGOS to improve the quality of SRH service delivery and reduce duplication of efforts.

Egypt

- UNFPA Egypt CO continues to operate 12 WGSSs, providing integrated GBV and RH services for refugees and host communities.
 - By the end of September, the 6 WGSSs targeted for the Sudan response had provided services and support to around 4,200 Sudanese women and girls.
 - More than 2,030 women and girls have initiated the GBV case management process for case assessments.
 - Over 2,000 individuals have received MHPSS services through group therapy and counselling.
 - Awareness-raising sessions on GBV and RH have reached more than 1,430 women and girls.
 - 20,000 Dignity Kits have been distributed to refugee women and girls through WGSSs.
- 55 GBV case workers received refresher training on the cash assistance programme, the WGSS programme and GBV case management.
- UNFPA hosted a self-care training, integrating basic MHPSS skills, for first responders.
- UNFPA and UNHCR conducted a community engagement session with a focus on child marriage for 48 newly arrived Sudanese community members.
- UNFPA continues to advocate with the government and partners for the inclusion of GBV and RH integrated services in the country's refugee response plan.

Ethiopia

- Three post-rape treatment kits, sufficient to meet the priority reproductive health needs of 150 women and 30 children, were distributed to Metema general hospital, Metema Yohanis health centre and Gendewuha health centre
- 50 Dignity Kits were distributed to women and girls in the refugee transit camp.
- A rapid assessment was conducted, and a programme designed, to respond to the reproductive health and protection needs of refugees, returnees and surrounding host communities in Amhara and Benishangul Gumuz entry areas.



- UNFPA is providing technical support to stakeholders on SRH and GBV service provision for new arrivals from Sudan.

South Sudan

- UNFPA has deployed additional service providers to strengthen services at health facilities and GBV service delivery points in Renk, Malakal, Wau, Bentiu, and Rotriak.
- 257 Inter-Agency Reproductive Health Kits, including supplies and medicines for safe delivery and the management of miscarriages and sexually transmitted infections, were distributed to 58 health facilities in the Greater Upper Nile, Greater Equatoria and Greater Bahr el Ghazal regions.
- 1,920 Dignity Kits, including essential hygiene items, were provided to women and girls in the Greater Upper Nile, Greater Equatoria and Greater Bahr el Ghazal regions.
- More than 6,340 women and girls received awareness raising messages on GBV and SRH and available services in Renk, Malakal, Bentiu, and Wau.
- 5 additional service providers were deployed to Bulukat, Bentiu and Wau to scale up GBV prevention and response services.
- 2,565 women and children in Malakal, Renk, Wau, and Bentiu received integrated SRH and GBV prevention and response services.
- 1,734 women, men, boys, and girl returnees in Wau and Malakal received awareness raising messages on HIV and information on available GBV and SRH services.
- 2,774 women, men, boys, and girls in Malakal and Bentiu received awareness raising on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) through community-based complaint mechanism networks.
- 3,372 women and girls in Wau, Malakal, Bentiu, and Rotriak received integrated primary health care, reproductive health and GBV services.
- The RH technical working group coordination capacity was strengthened in Bentiu and Malakal through surge capacity.

Financial requirements in response to the Sudan Emergency: Regional Refugee Response Plan, May – December 2023

Central African Republic	Chad	Egypt	Ethiopia	South Sudan	TOTAL
\$ 1,836,291	\$ 6,070,442	\$ 6,645,000	\$ 3,200,085	\$ 1,148,800	\$ 18,900, 618



As part of the revised [Sudan Emergency: Regional Refugee Response Plan \(May - December 2023\)](#), UNFPA is appealing for **\$ 18,900,618** to provide life-saving reproductive health and protection services to women and girls.

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