Overview of Spontaneous Refugee Returns

SOUTH SUDAN
AS OF FEBRUARY 2024

39,843

South Sudanese spontaneous refugee returnees have been reported in February 2024

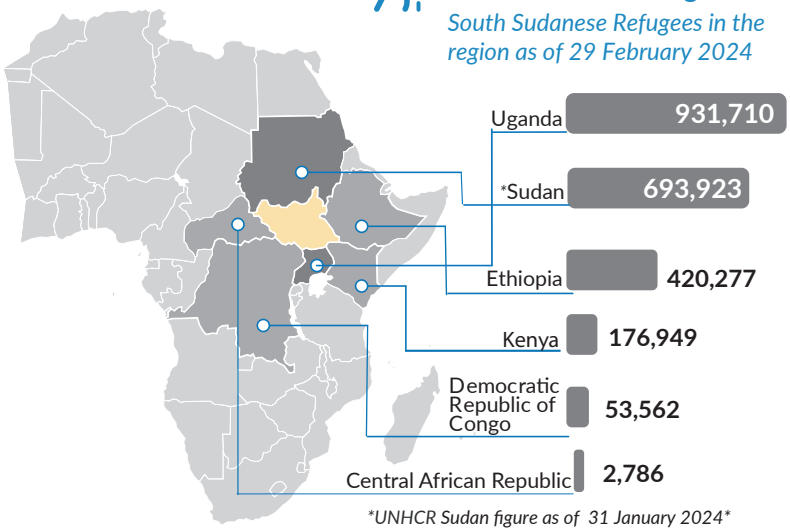
An accumulated number of **1,282,865** *spontaneous refugee returnees have been reported since the signing of the revitalized peace agreement in October 2018 to 29 February 2024*

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in South Sudan and the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) are hereby pleased to share the monthly update detailing the status of spontaneous refugee returns in South Sudan. This update specifically addresses the South Sudanese returning who have been adversely affected by the ongoing conflict in Sudan.

The dashboard highlights cross-border refugee movements of South Sudanese from neighboring countries during the month of February 2024

2.2 Million Refugees

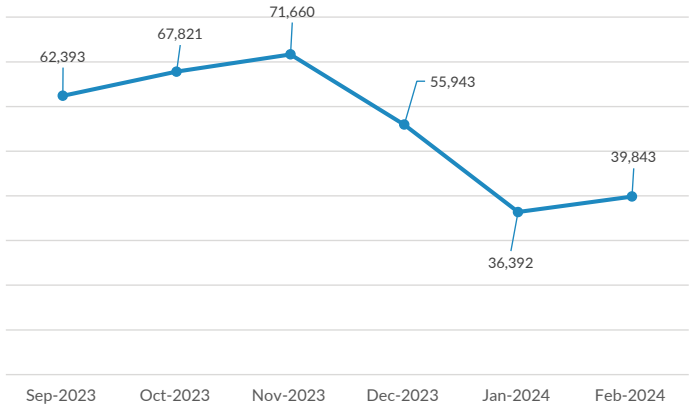
South Sudanese Refugees in the region as of 29 February 2024



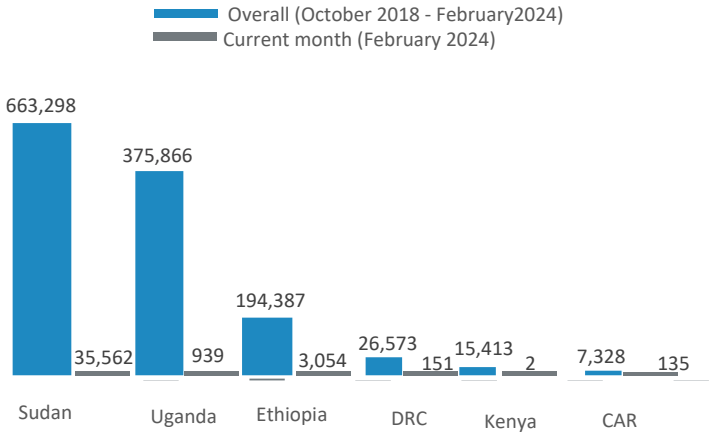
UNHCR Sudan figure as of 31 January 2024

Monthly arrival for the last 6 months

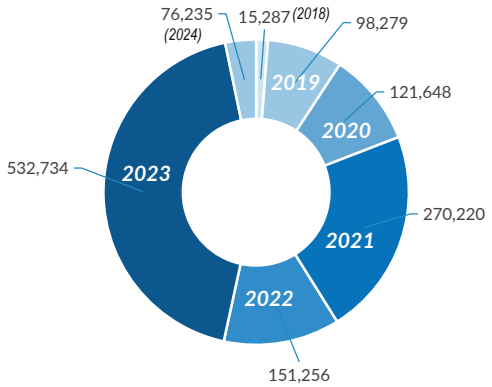
According to UNHCR, IOM and RRC Joint border monitoring data, a total of 35,562 South Sudanese have been reported from Sudan in February 2024



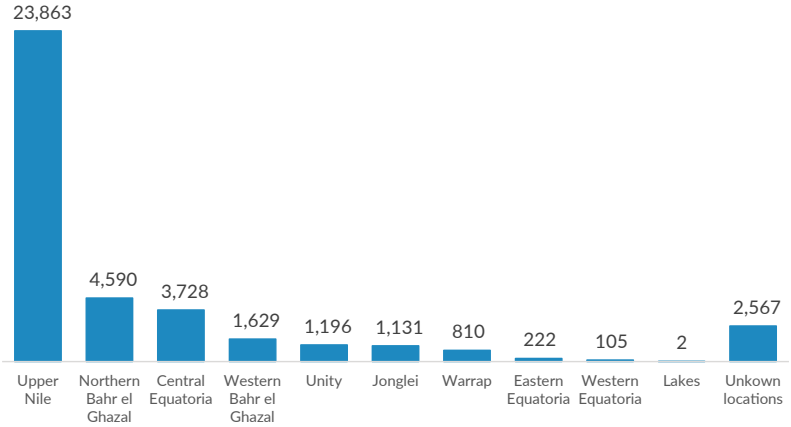
Spontaneous Refugee Returns by Country of Asylum



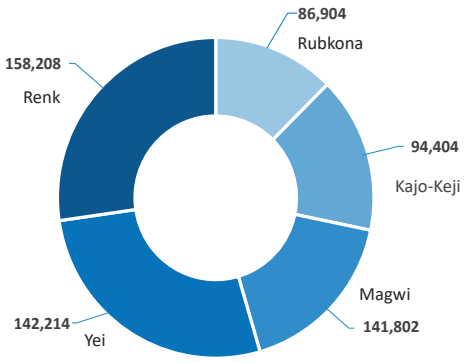
Returns from October 2018 - February 2024



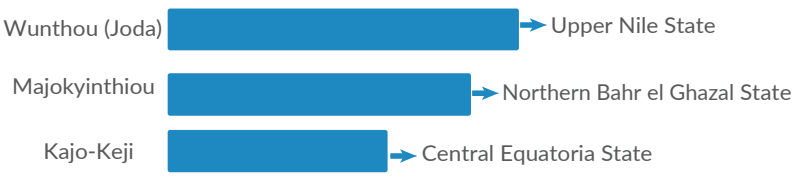
Returns per State for the month of February 2024



Top 5 cumulative counties of return from October 2018 to February 2024



Top 3 border entry point - February 2024



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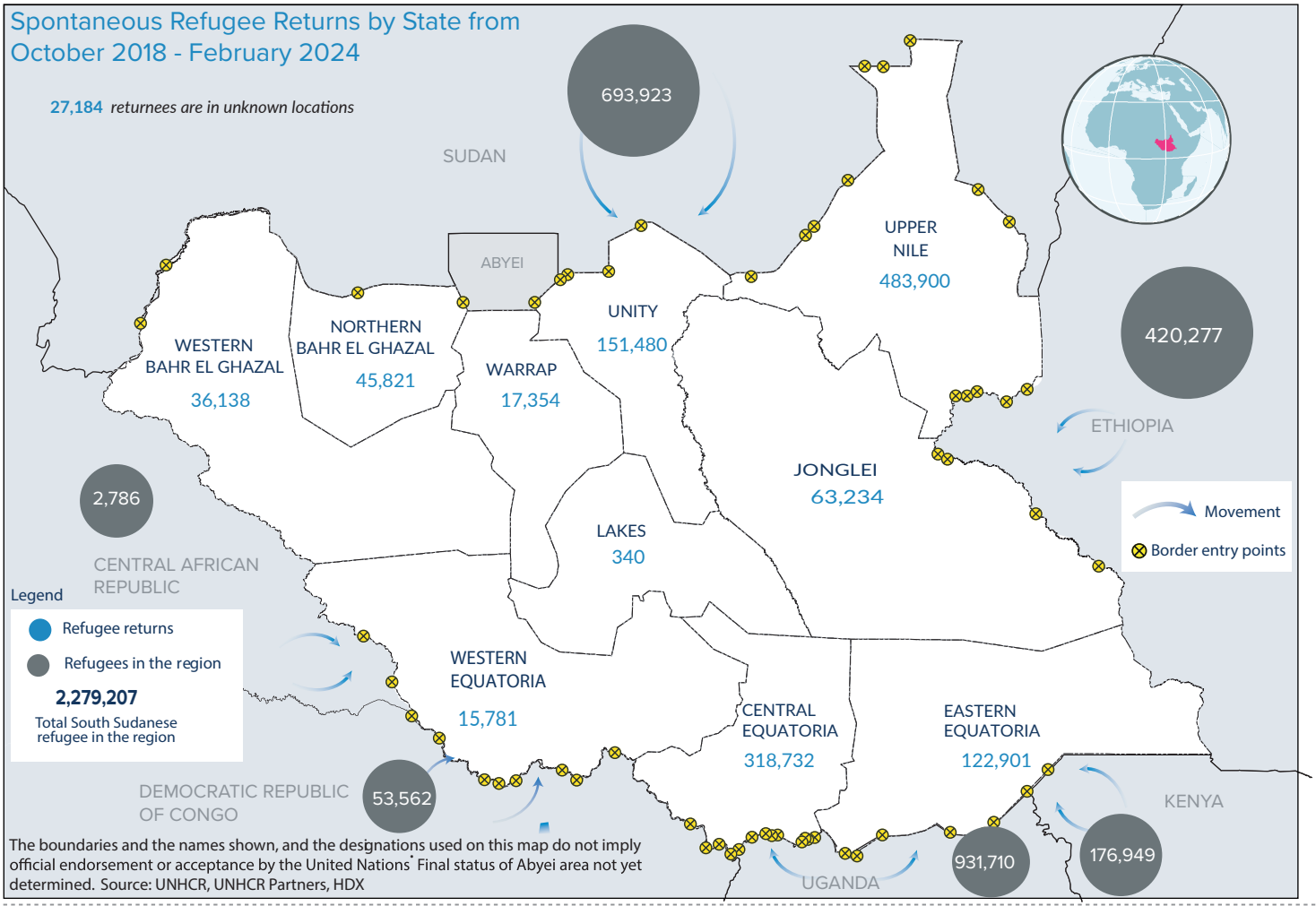
SOUTH SUDAN
AS OF FEBRUARY 2024



KEY HIGHLIGHTS ON REFUGEE RETURNS

The return of **39,843** South Sudanese was verified and reported in February 2024. There is a slight increase **(35%)** as compared to the returns recorded in the month of January 2024.

The slight increase is due to insecurity in Country of Asylum especially in Sudan, food security (Including reduction of a food ration) and Lack of employment and livelihoods opportunities where cited as the main points which impacted the spontaneous refugee returns to South Sudan during the reporting month.
Most of the returns in February 2024 were from Sudan through Wunthou (Joda) in Upper Nile and Majokyinthiou in Northern Bahr el Ghazal while returns from Uganda through Kajo-Keji in Central Equatoria State.

This information on returnees was validated through UNHCR - IOM, RRC joint border monitoring on Sudan, Ethiopian and UNHCR Spotaneous Refugee border monitoring interviews for Uganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Central Africa Republic during month of February 2024 in areas of return in the following **10** states; Upper Nile, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Central Equatoria, Western Bahr El Ghazal, Unity, Jonglei, Warrap, Eastern Equatoria, Western Equatoria and Lakes. Most of the verified returnees to the beforementioned States were mostly from Sudan **(89%)** and less than **10%** from Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central Africa Republic.

PUSH FACTORS

The most cited reasons for leaving Country of Asylum include:-

I- Insecurity in country of asylum **(60%)**

II- Food security (including reduction of a food ratio) in Refugee camps **(19%)**

III- Lack of employment, livelihood and economic opportunities **(15%).**

PULL FACTORS

The most cited reasons for returning to South Sudan from Country of Asylum include:-

I- Improvement of security situation in South Sudan (17%)

II- Assess land/property/ housing (10%)

III- Reunite with family members **(9%)**

KEY PROTECTION CONCERNS AT BORDER POINTS AND IN AREAS OF RETURN ARE:

The most cited protection concerns at boder points and in areas of returns include:-

I- Physical violence **(10%)**

II- Psychological / Emotional Abuse**(8%)**

III- Exploitation (Corruption, Extortion) **(7%)**

IV- Medical emergency **(5%)**

METHODOLOGY

UNHCR in collaboration with Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) and partners monitors cross-border movements in areas of high return and at 42 border entry points with Sudan recording the highest border entry points. Information is collected regularly at border points and in areas of high returns through KII and FGD. The information was then triangulated with data collected during physical observations, and meetings with local authorities, faith-based leaders, law enforcement agents, and immigration officers at border entry points and areas of returns.

Disclaimer: *The number recorded is only indicative, and it covers the borders where UNHCR and partners currently have presence.*
It is most likely that more returnees are arriving to South Sudan than recorded due to using unofficial border points and/or travelling at night.

Contributing partners

ACTED, ADRA, DRC Danish Refugee Council, IRC, MASS, CARDO, Humanitarian Development Consortium, World Vision, Hold the Child, ALIGHT, INTERSOS