

Central African Republic (CAR) – UPDATE ON THE SUDAN SITUATION

26 December 2023 – 02 January 2024

Overview of the situation



Newly arrived Sudanese refugees from Am Dafock to Birao. © UNHCR/ Abdoulaye In-tessar

The security situation around Birao and along the border with Sudan in Am Dafock remains volatile and of concern to the local civilian population. This is mainly due to several factors: the porous nature of the borders, which are exploited by the warring factions (SAF and RSF) in Sudan; the ongoing clashes between the SAF and RSF in Sudan; the presence of unidentified armed groups in the Central African Republic (CAR); and the deteriorating road conditions.

There are almost daily reports of armed RSF members moving between Sudan and Am Dafock in CAR. These individuals typically enter CAR in the morning and return to Sudan in the evening, using motorcycles or vehicles for transportation. In addition, incidents of armed road ambushes, often linked to criminal activities, have been reported along the Am Dafock - Birao road axis.

To address these security challenges, security forces coordinated by the CNR are deployed in the Kosri site to preserve its civil character. In addition, MINUSCA actively ensures the security of Birao and the surrounding area, including the Korsi neighborhood expansion, through organized patrols and the establishment of a checkpoint at the site entrance. Local authorities have also implemented security measures that benefit both the refugees and the Central African population.

Thanks to several advocacies made by UNHCR and other partners, the UN Mission in the Central African Republic has agreed to reopen a temporary base for the Zambian battalion in Am Dafock. Evaluations are ongoing. This decision is aimed at preventing incursions into the Central African Republic and enhancing the security of the civilian population.

On Friday, 30 December 2023, while returning from Am Dafock after a security assessment mission for a possible re-deployment in the border area, MINUSCA force engaged in exchanges of fire with armed men alleged to be RSF elements, capturing some of them on motorcycles and with their weapons.

Situation and Operational Response

Highlights

As of 1st January 2024, the Korsi neighborhood expansion hosts 2,886 Sudanese refugees (1,484 households), 70% of whom are women and children. Of these, 2,017 individuals (1,135 households) arrived at the site on their own since the relocation was suspended in June. New arrivals at Korsi in Birao are documented daily due to the ongoing fighting in Sudan. Most Sudanese arriving in CAR are from Nyala.

So far, UNHCR and the Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés (CNR) have registered 10,614 Sudanese individuals (3,632 households) using biometrics. Most refugees live in small villages in various prefectures other than Vakaga. Since the beginning of the crisis, some 25,836 people have arrived in CAR from Sudan. This includes 21,135 Sudanese refugees and 4,701 Central African returnees, 88% of whom are women and children.

Protection

UNHCR, CNR, NOURRIR and INTERSOS teams continue to receive and register refugees at the Korsi neighborhood expansion. UNHCR and CNR continue to provide documentation through ongoing level 2 registration of new arrivals. Several Sudanese are reported in Am Dafock. However, they are unable to reach Korsi due to security incidents reported on the Am Dafock - Birao axis, while organized relocation has not yet resumed.

Last week, UNHCR's partner INTERSOS conducted 51 protection monitoring visits to Korsi and the host community. During these visits, 26 protection incidents were documented, mainly involving violations of the right to property, violations of the right to life/physical integrity and gender-based violence (GBV). Of these incidents, three new GBV cases involving refugees were recorded in Korsi and are being followed up.

As part of the GBV prevention efforts, INTERSOS conducted seven sensitization sessions at the Korsi neighborhood expansion and within the host community on topics related to education and social cohesion, reaching 210 people. In addition, INTERSOS made one medical referral to International Medical Corps (IMC) in response to a documented GBV case. In addition, 31 counseling sessions were conducted at the Ma Mbi Si listening center in Korsi for 13 pregnant women, two unaccompanied and separated children, one woman with a disability, seven lactating women and eight women identified as vulnerable among newly arrived refugees. Group discussions on violence prevention were also organized, reaching 170 people. Finally, three group counseling sessions were held at the Ma Mbi Si safe space, which included discussions on GBV prevention. This week, 152 women and girls visited the safe space.

UNHCR, together with its government partner PARET (Ministry of Humanitarian Action), continues to register Central African returnees in the Vakaga region while awaiting cash assistance to enable them to leave Korsi and return to their areas of origin in CAR. A total of 613 households out of 2,016 returnees have been registered in the PARET database.

Shelter, Core Relief Items and Food Distribution

During the week, UNHCR's partner NOURRIR completed the framing of 120 shelters on the Korsi neighborhood expansion, covered 69 shelters with tarpaulins and allocated them to newly arrived refugees. This brings to 641 the total number of shelters built and handed over to refugees in Am Dafock and Korsi since the start of the operation.

NOURRIR also served 2,788 hot meals to 350 newly arrived refugees during the week, for a cumulative total of 20,901 hot meals served since August 13.

Finally, 59 households of 103 newly arrived refugees in Korsi benefited from the distribution of non-food item kits consisting of mats, blankets, mosquito nets, buckets, kitchen sets, jerry cans, soap and solar lamps.

Health & Nutrition

NOURRIR, International Medical Corps, Olivier l'Homme de Galillé (OHG) and the Birao Health District received a total of 354 patients for medical consultations during the week, of which 92.10% were refugee patients from Korsi. Since July 2023, a total of 12,284 consultations have been provided at Korsi, benefiting refugees and 1,500 Central African host populations. In addition, a cumulative total of 76 women have benefited from gynecological follow-up since October and 559 assisted deliveries since July. In addition, 127 medical referrals have been made to the Birao Hospital since July 2023.

During the week, six refugee children suffering from moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) were treated at the site, bringing the total number of children treated and monitored in the nutritional rehabilitation program to 559, including 279 for MAM, 48 for severe acute malnutrition (SAM), and 232 who benefited from nutritional support in Korsi.

WASH

Hygiene and sanitation awareness activities continue in Korsi camp, carried out by the hygiene promoters of UNHCR's partner NOURRIR. This week, 517 people were reached through awareness sessions on various related topics. In addition, NOURRIR has dug 34 latrine pits at the site, including 14 with structures to be covered with tarpaulins. Fourteen shower structures are being completed. A total of 105 emergency latrines and 104 emergency showers have been constructed at Am-Dafock and Korsi in Birao.

All 1,135 households of the 2,866 Sudanese refugees living at Korsi neighborhood expansion benefited from potable water supply at a rate of 16.21 liters of water per person per day, for a total supply of 40 m3 of water per day. The ratio per person per day remains below SPHERE standards and the main challenge for the refugees on site remains the remoteness of the water points. It is necessary to multiply the sources of water supply on the site in order to avoid any protection risk that this remoteness might create.

Coordination

UNHCR supports the CNR to lead and coordinate the Sudanese refugee response. In Birao, whereby regular meetings with all relevant actors intervening in the area can exchange on the opportunities, challenges, and solutions vis a vis refugees present on site and the areas nearby.

This week, a coordination meeting was held at Korsi with refugees to assess the situation before the start of agricultural activities on the 50 hectares provided by the authorities. Agricultural production will contribute to the food security of the refugees and their host communities. There was also a discussion about listening to the refugees regarding the type of support needed to initiate the construction of sustainable shelters at the site.

Refugee Response Plan (RRP) – May-December 2023

On 4 September, UNHCR and 64 partner organisations published a revised inter-agency [Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response Plan – May to December 2023](#), which is appealing for **USD 42,649,652 for the Central African Republic** to provide essential aid and protection to 26,000 people expected to arrive in the country by the end of 2023, fleeing ongoing conflict in Sudan. As of 1st January 2024, total funding of over USD 16 million has been recorded or **39%** of the funding requirements ([Refugee Funding Tracker](#)).

Resources

- UNHCR's [Operational Data Portal \(ODP\) for the Sudan Situation](#) provides daily updates on the refugee and returnee arrivals in Sudan's neighbouring countries.
- [UNHCR Global Focus Sudan Operation page](#)
- [UNHCR Sudan Emergency website](#)

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