

RENK INTER-AGENCY TRANSITION ROADMAP



SUDAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

November 2024



16,035

Head Count
Refugees and Returnees ¹



1,000

Average daily arrivals 2024



1,500

Maximum daily onward transportation capacity

BACKGROUND

Over 701,000 people were displaced from Sudan to South Sudan through Wunthow/Joda border since the outbreak of the conflict in Sudan in April 2023. These are primarily South Sudanese nationals (around 77%), many of whom registered as refugees in Sudan before the conflict. Over 155,000 Sudanese nationals crossed the border along with some others, seeking asylum.

Since the beginning of the conflict, Renk has become the epicentre of humanitarian response in South Sudan, being the main point of entry for around 81% of arrivals from Sudan. Onward transportation has been the priority of the response, ensuring that returnees can go to the areas of origin or choice and refugees to the designated refugee-hosting areas.

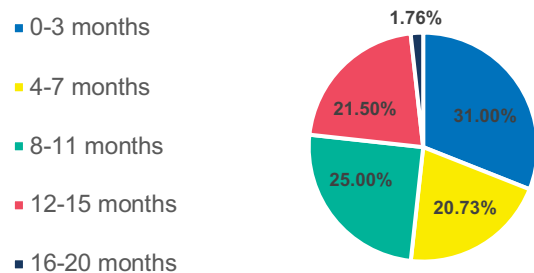
HCT-endorsed three-phase response.

1. Life-saving humanitarian assistance at points of entry and points of transit
2. Integration in ongoing life-saving humanitarian assistance in areas of destination based on needs.
3. Integrated (triple nexus) support to host communities, returnees, and IDPs to ensure that returnees and IDPs are on pathways to solutions.

The response in Renk is so far focusing mainly on phase one for provision of life-saving assistance at the reception and transit centres. The assistance designed based on the concept of transit center, entails minimum basic needs life-saving assistance with the plan that returnees will be transported by IOM to their areas of origin and refugees will be relocated by UNHCR to one of the established refugees' camps or settlements, and with a common agreement between government, humanitarian and donors that no camp or settlement will be established in Renk.

Starting from Jan 2024, when the relocation was resumed with the opening of the road to Maban, the refugees show gradually reluctant to move to Maban which is main camp prepared to accommodate the new arrivals, and at the same time the number of returnees who are not registered with IOM for onward transport is still considered high with thousands who are not showing any willingness to move out of the TCs, thus staying there for extended period. As of 21st November, the TCs headcount showed total of 16,035 individuals staying in transit centers with many are there for long period.

Period refugees & returnees stayed in TCs - Round (2)



¹ Results of headcount exercise on 21st November

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This roadmap is to outline different proposed approaches and options for refugees and returnees in Renk, focus mainly on 1) the ones who are staying in the transit center for more than the intended period of one to two weeks, 2) the new arrivals for the coming few months/year and 3) on the returnees and refugees who are staying at Renk city and unofficial settlements.

The roadmap will be implemented jointly by local authorities and humanitarian partners operating in Renk, with the support and in coordination with the national authorities, donors and organizations in Juba.

This roadmap is aligned with the Durable Solutions Roadmap for Upper Nile, that has been endorsed and adopted with by Government, humanitarian/development actors and donor community.

PROFILING EXERCISE

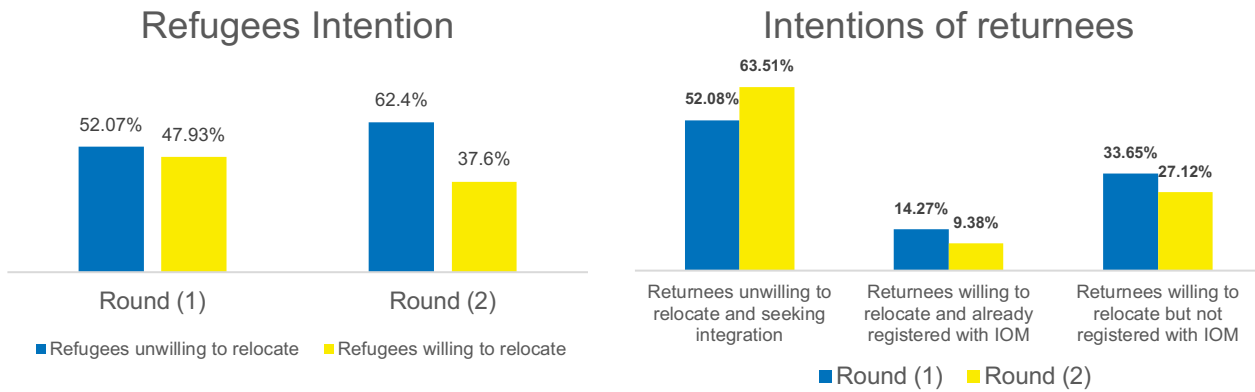
In order to identify concrete options and develop the roadmap², the team in Renk conducted comprehensive Inter-Agency profiling exercise for refugees and returnees, a total of 5,440 Household were interviewed to obtain the required information, a second profiling exercise was conducted in September 2024 to ensure that the proposed course of action in the road map remains relevant and responsive to the needs of the population with total of 8,115 Households interviewed. This document presents the findings of the two exercises, detailed report on the profiling exercises is attached (annex a).

PROPOSED IMMEDIATE AND MID TERM APPROCHES FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE IN RENK

Given the current situation, and the increased number of refugees and returnees in Renk (in transit centers and the city) who are unwilling to move to other destinations, and the continuation of daily new arrivals, different proposed options are identified in order to facilitate immediate, medium-term and long-term solutions.

The prolonged stay of refugees and returnees in the transit centres puts immense pressure on the already minimal available services. The partners in Renk are facing several challenges, with increased humanitarian and development needs, leading to frustration and tensions, refugees and returnees are struggling due to the limited assistance, limited partner capacity to provide more assistance based on the current situation, coupled with constraints in the social-protection services related to health care, psychosocial support needs, child protection and gender based violence services and the shift in the government's approach toward moving the transit centers out of Renk.

² All the statistics/chart in this report as based on the finding of the two profiling exercises.



All above leads to the need to come up with alternate options with the objectives of 1) Identify different options for the returnees who are not willing to move out of Renk 2) Provide additional options/destinations for the refugees who are willing to move from Renk 3) provide different options to the refugees who are not willing to move out of Renk.

The proposed approaches for returnees and refugees are to be implemented in tandem, as none of the options could be consider as the only one, so the mix of the options identified will be way forward and the recommendations out of this roadmap.

Proposed approaches for returnees

Based on the outcome of the profiling exercise, second round there is 36.49% of returnees who would like to be transported to their areas of origins, while 63.51% want to stay in Renk as their final destination, that in addition to numbers of returnees who are staying in different unofficial settlements and who we should be also consider.

1. Continue with the onward transport by IOM as first priority for the returnees who are willing to return to the areas of origin.
2. Support returnees in local Integration: considering Renk is the final destination for them that will be done through two different approaches:
 - o Allocate a specific land within Renk County for returnees’ integration that will mainly include:
 - Approach the government to allocate land for the returnees who would like to integrate in Renk or are originally from Renk but lack initial means to ensure dignified integration.
 - Provision of one-time start-up shelter kits, support in wash facilities, NFI kit...etc, to help the returnees integrate and start to rely on themselves.
 - Providing one-time start-up kits to support livelihoods, along with life skills training in areas such as business skills, and agricultural techniques, as measures to ensure sustainability.
 - Advocate for ensure they have access to social protection services related to civil documentation, health, educations and other essential services provided by the government.
 - o Support different public services within the host community prioritising health, education, wash to be able to respond to increased needs Investing in and improving different services will also help to reduce the risk of potential conflict between returnees who are integrating and host community as there will be a competition over limited resources.
 - o Work on different initiatives and projects to enhance coexistence and peaceful cohesion between host community and returnees who integrated or will integrated in Renk as their final destination.

Proposed approaches for refugees

Based on the outcome of the profiling exercise, there is 37.6% of refugees would like to be relocated to different camps or settlements while 62.4% want to stay in Renk. Below explain the different approaches identified for the group of refugees who are not willing to be relocated:

- Relocation of refugees will be available to the four refugees' camps Maban, Ajoung Thok, Wedweil and Yambio³. Refugees will be able to choose which camp to be relocated to.
- Support and invest in existing public/ basic services in Renk and advocate for access for refugees, by supporting the basic services of the government, parallel systems are avoided and the risk of conflict between refugees and host community will be reduced.
- Refugees who are aiming to stay in Renk to be supported with a specific one-off assistance to help them to transition from living in the TCs to be integrated in the city, as indicated around 82.2% of the refugees who are not willing to be relocated indicate in the second profiling exercise that they are interested to receive a cash grant to help them integrate within Renk. The one-off assistance will be decided based on the context on ground.
- Facilitate community integration initiatives to help refugees "who do not want to leave Renk" build relationships and connections with the host community, to help them find job opportunities and support themselves and the community.
- The above will be a settlement approach, where refugees, returnees and local community reside side by side and access public services equally. No separate camp is envisaged.
- Work on different initiatives and projects to enhance coexistence and peaceful cohesion between host community, refugees and returnees who integrated in Renk.

Common Outcomes

Finally, with the implementation of the agreed approaches for refugees and returnees, it's expected that:

- Numbers of refugees and returnees who are staying in transit center for extended period will be decreased significantly.
- Period of staying in the TCs will be aligned with that nature of the transit center and with the assistance provided.
- With the support of the government, there should be a mechanism developed to ensure refugees and returnees who are provided with different options are not staying for long period in the TC.
- After the decrease of the number of refugees and returnees in TCs and with the approaching the dry season, plan to be developed for phasing out from TC1 and handed over to Upper Nile University and maintain TC2 as the only transit center.
- Risk mitigation measures concerning the psychosocial and well-being of refugees and returnees are taken into consideration.
- Each sector will develop strategy/concept note on how the road map will be implemented and local integration is supported.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND CHALLENGES

- Refugees and/or returnees refuse all the proposed approaches and opt to stay in TCs.
- Limited government and partners capacity to invest in host community in support of the integration.
- Challenge with funds required for onward transport and relocation due to the high cost.
- Pushback from local communities to additional people residing in Renk area.

³ For now, Yambio put on hold

- Investment and Development action takes considerable time and basic services will continue to be overstretched in interim

Some Mitigation Actions:

- Set up a mechanism in coordination with the authority to ensure that refugees and returnees who are provided with different options are not staying in the TCs.
- Advocate for additional funds for onward transport, relocation and the advocate for development support for basic services.
- Some initial investments could start through the existing resources or with advocacy to allocate more resources for the partners who have the capacity to support, while for bigger and long terms investment development actors should be involved and taking the lead.
- Regular review of the plan to adopt to the faced challenges and to agree on different priorities and way forward.

COMMUNICATION

In coordination with CFM, communication plan will be developed to ensure that refugees and returnees are well informed about the roadmap and proposed options, messages and information will be disseminated in all the applicable locations starting from reception center at the border, transit centers...etc.

In addition to share more detailed information to them on the plans, information about camps, possibility of integration and other required information for them to make an informed decision.

Stakeholders, especially donors and development actors will need to be informed of the increased number of people residing in Renk and those moving to other destination so investments can be made in public basic services.

TIME FRAME FOR THE ROADMAP

The implementation of this roadmap will start on immediate effect after approval, part already started with the available resources, while for the rest there is needs to advocate for more resources, in particular on the integration part.

The roadmap has no bounding timeline as the implementation will be continue as far as new arrivals are arriving to Renk.

The roadmap will be reviewed periodically (every 3 months) to ensure it measures progress, benefits from lessons learned and remain relevant to any change in the context. In addition, an ad-hoc review will be done in case of major change in circumstance, context or needs.

CONTACT

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