

South Sudan Emergency

Sudan

5 January 2014

Highlights

- Violence in South Sudan has resulted in significant population displacement
- UNHCR supporting the Government of Sudan's preparedness efforts for possible population movements into Sudan
- Unconfirmed reports of new arrivals in Sudan
- Some 18,700 newly arrived South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda
- Government of Sudan, UNHCR and partners are carrying out assessments and increasing preparedness to provide protection and assistance

Population figures

Since the outbreak of violence in South Sudan on 15 December 2013, some two hundred thousand people have been forced to flee their homes, both within South Sudan and into neighbouring countries. The latest figures for newly arrived South Sudanese refugees are as follows:

- 5,286 in Ethiopia;
- 11,776 in Uganda; and
- 1,650 in Kenya.

In Sudan, there are unconfirmed reports of hundreds of people having crossed the border into South Kordofan State. Unverified information also indicates that up to 80,000 South Sudanese may have moved to areas closer to the border with Sudan in order to be able to seek refuge in Sudan should the situation further deteriorate.

While UNHCR has been participating in initial assessment missions with the Government of Sudan to states bordering South Sudan, verification of arrivals from South Sudan through registration by UNHCR or the Government has not yet been possible. It is anticipated that any population movement would mainly include South Sudanese, as well as a certain number of Sudanese refugees in South Sudan.

Assessment

The Government of Sudan has formed a high-level technical committee which is carrying out initial assessment missions to bordering States to assess the overall situation and for response planning purposes, including potentially the identification of relocation sites. Under its mandate, UNHCR is working closely with the Government of Sudan, and the Commission for Refugees (COR) in particular, as well as partners to ensure a coordinated response. State-level committees are also being set up to manage any potential refugee influx.

UNHCR has participated in a joint assessment mission with the Government in White Nile and Sennar States. The Office is also trying to join normal food distributions to take place in South Kordofan (Talodi) in order to assess reports of refugee arrivals.

Preparedness

In coordination with OCHA and other partners, a response plan is being prepared.

In the meantime, UNHCR and its sister agency WFP will preposition food rations and non-food items in Kosti for up to 40,000 people (8,000 households) as of next week. The Office is also considering dispatching emergency shelter and NFIs to the Eliri area (South Kordofan) depending on verification of the reported new arrivals. In addition, UNHCR Sudan has been liaising with its Headquarters to make emergency registration equipment available as soon as possible.

Staffing and equipment needs are currently under review to be able to respond quickly, in anticipation that UNHCR would be given access with its government counterpart to refugee arrival areas.

Protection

UNHCR will work closely with the authorities to ensure arriving refugees have access to protection in Sudan and returning refugees are able to access Sudanese territory and are treated in a non-discriminatory manner.

It is expected that meetings will take place in the coming days to determine the suitability of assessed sites for potential refugee relocation, also in order to facilitate the prepositioning of core relief items. Depending on the number of arrivals, it is anticipated that emergency registration (at household level) would take place as close to border crossing points as possible, with more detailed individual registration to follow at relocation sites.

UNHCR is in discussion with the relevant authorities to ensure that screening takes place at entry points, in order to determine protection concerns and identify those with specific needs, including unaccompanied minors and separated children.

Coordination

As the Agency mandated to provide protection and seek durable solutions for refugees, UNHCR is supporting the Government of Sudan's preparedness for a possible refugee response with relevant partners. The Office is working closely with its main government

counterpart, the Commission for Refugees (COR), which is responsible for refugee affairs in Sudan.

Utilizing the existing well developed humanitarian coordination system in Sudan, UNHCR is liaising closely with OCHA to develop an integrated response plan. Operational coordination is underway with WFP, UNICEF and IOM.

In Sudan, coordination meetings have taken place with relevant partners, including international and national NGOs, primarily at this stage to keep all stakeholders abreast of the latest developments, assess capacity and guarantee the appropriate level of preparedness.

At the regional level, UNHCR has adopted a situational approach to the crisis, including all affected countries.

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