



Refugee
Consultation
Forum

MARCH 2023

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION BRIEFING KIT

SUDAN
REFUGEE RESPONSE

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

Um Rakuba camp, Gedaref State, was reopened in November 2020 to accommodate Ethiopian reugees fleeing the Tigray conflict.

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Further documents and information are available on UNHCR data-portal Sudan page, please click on the following link:

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/country/sdn>

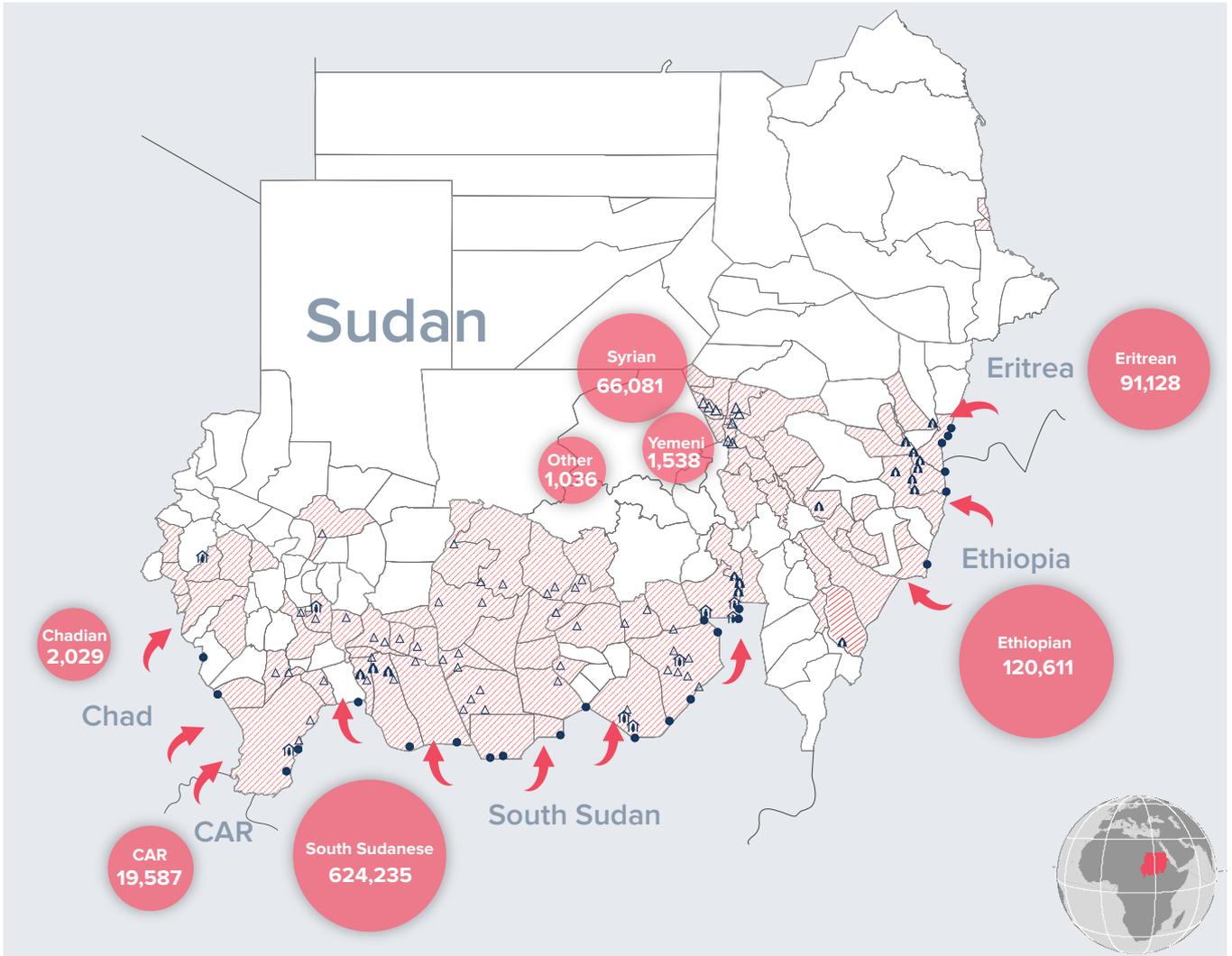
or scan the QR code.

Contents

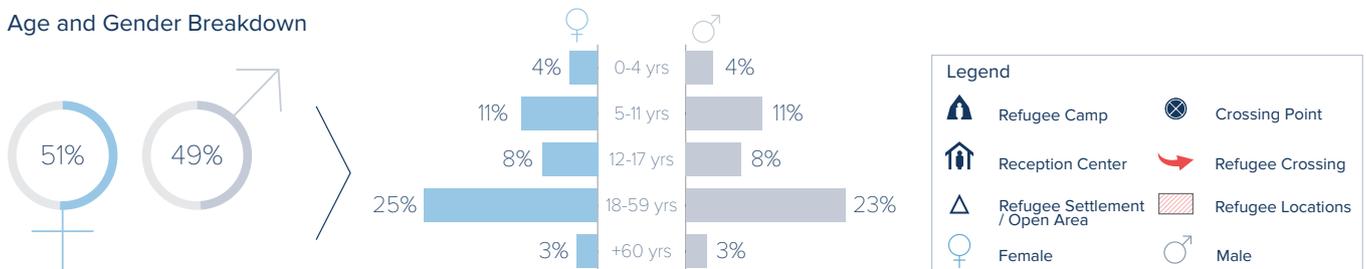
Sudan Overview Map	04
Introduction	05
Coordination Mechanism	06
Refugee Response Planning	09
Useful Tools and Data Resources Partners	11
Country Refugee Response Coordination	12

Sudan Overview Map

Estimated total refugees in Sudan by the end of 2023



Age and Gender Breakdown



This Briefing Kit is intended to provide basic information on coordination structures and processes for newly arriving partners and their staff. This Kit is limited in scope to inter-agency coordination within the refugee response and is complementary to annual briefings on the Refugee Coordination Model in Sudan that are given in national and subnational coordination meetings. It does not cover the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) procedures and structures that cover the coordination of IDPs and other affected populations.

To keep the Kit useful and relevant for its target audience, your comments and suggestions are appreciated and should be sent to Christopher Bender benderc@unhcr.org.

Introduction

At the outset of 2023, Sudan hosts over 1 million refugees that are living across the country with Khartoum and White Nile states hosting the largest refugee populations. While South Sudanese refugees form the largest group with over 796,000 as of December 2022, Sudan hosts sizeable groups of refugees and asylum seekers from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Syria, Chad, the Central African Republic and Yemen. It should be noted that due to ongoing UNHCR-led verification exercises, it is anticipated that the number of refugees in Sudan reduce to approximately 926,000 by end 2023.

UNHCR is implementing its Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) in Sudan. It provides the model for leading and coordinating refugee operations and is derived from UNHCR's mandate to provide international protection to refugees. It is applicable in all refugee situations and throughout a refugee response, whether the emergency is new or protracted, and whether refugees are living in camps, rural areas, urban settings or in mixed situations. The framework is predicated on the primary responsibility of States to protect refugees, and is determined, largely, by the capacities and approaches of the host Government. The Refugee Coordination Model ensures inclusiveness, predictability, and transparency, as well as clear lines of accountability. It is designed to adapt to situations where cluster structures exist, in order to harmonize approaches and reduce duplication.

While the primary responsibility to protect refugees rests with the Government of Sudan, UNHCR provides support to the Government's Commission for Refugees (COR) to coordinate the refugee response in Sudan. UNHCR's Refugee Coordination Model provides a framework for the coordination of inter-agency refugee operations, which includes in 2023 the contributions of 41 operational partners participating in two primary levels of coordination across the refugee response. On federal level the Refugee Consultation Forum (RCF) co-chaired by COR and UNHCR leads the national refugee response by setting the country strategy. On subnational level the Refugee Working Groups (RWG) also co-chaired by COR and UNHCR leads the state level operational refugee response.

With approx. 3.7 million IDPs, 11.4 million vulnerable Sudanese and 0.9 million returnees¹ Sudan faces a complex humanitarian situation where the RCM is implemented to coordinate the refugee response. In tandem, the IASC cluster approach is activated in Sudan for the coordination of response to IDPs and other affected groups. The coordination of response to IDPs and other vulnerable populations falls under the Humanitarian Coordinator the coordination of the refugee response falls under the UNHCR Representative.

¹Sudan
HNO 2023

Coordination Mechanism

1. The Refugee Consultation Forum

UNHCR Sudan has established the Refugee Consultation Forum (RCF) in Khartoum, a national forum co-chaired by UNHCR and COR that brings together all humanitarian partners working on the refugee response in Sudan to ensure a coherent and complementary response. The RCF serves as a high-level, strategic and decision-making forum, with the primary objective of facilitating inclusive strategic planning of all phases of the inter-agency refugee responses led by UNHCR, including with development actors. The RCF also ensures the effective and timely planning and coordination of response activities for refugees, asylum seekers and other persons of concern in Sudan, embodied in the Country Refugee Response Plan (CRP) which covers the refugee multi-sectoral response for refugees.

At the federal level, the RCF enables deeper engagement between UNHCR and the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and UN Country Team (UNCT) on refugee issues (including both emergency and protracted refugee situations), in order to ensure that the refugee response plan is an integral part of the overall humanitarian response. UNHCR represents the RCF in the monthly ISCG meeting and updates the HCT and UNCT on refugee issues.

Technical coordination on sectoral refugee response is led through UNHCR technical focal points who work closely with inter-agency partners under the RCF.

2. The RCF Strategic Advisory Group (SAG)

In 2021 the RCF initiated the RCF SAG, composed of UNHCR and COR, 2 UN Agencies, 2 INGOs and 2 national NGOs. In 2022, one observer role was added to the group, with RCF SAG membership determined through an annual election process. The SAG is responsible for providing advice to the RCF coordination team on issues related to strategy, functioning and performance of the refugee response. Further, the SAG monitors the implementation of the refugee response's relevant strategic frameworks, provides advice to the coordination team on gaps, needs and priorities, and recommends measures for addressing them.

3. The Protection Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

The primary objective of the Protection TAG is to conduct strategic sectorial planning for all phases of the protection response with implementing and operational partners. The TAG reports to the RCF and facilitates inter-agency coordination and information sharing on protection issues from the field on timely and effective needs assessments, planning, prioritization, implementation, reporting and evaluation of the protection response, in order to ensure the effective delivery of a predictable and targeted sectorial response.

The TAG also aims to strengthen protection stakeholder capacity to provide adequate responses to and prevention of human rights violations, identify protection gaps and facilitate constructive engagement with all relevant actors, including government, UN agencies, I/NGOs and donors. It will also serve as a mechanism to mitigate future protection risks faced by refugees and asylum-seekers by developing an early warning system.

4. The Refugee Working Group

At state level, Refugee Working Groups (RWGs) are the primary state-level coordination forums for asylum-seekers and refugee situations. RWGs support the effective coordination and management of all refugee response operations with humanitarian partners on the ground within each state managing a refugee response. RWGs have been established for Khartoum, South, Central, East and North Darfur, West and South Kordofan, White Nile, Kassala, Blue Nile and Gedaref. In each state UNHCR chairs a Protection sector working group to ensure protection services are provided and coordinated.

Where there are mixed IDP and refugee situations, the RWGs work in parallel with state Area-ISCG (A-ISCG) structures, mechanisms and sub-sectors to ensure that the needs of refugees and asylum seekers both inform and support overall humanitarian response in each state. In states where there are no IDPs, UNHCR leads technical working groups to coordinate sectoral responses to address refugee needs. For example, Eastern Sudan hosts sectoral inter-agency meetings with local authorities and partners to coordinate the response at the camp and reception centre level.

RWGs report to the RCF and facilitate inter-agency information sharing and information management among field partners and at the Khartoum level, in order to support the delivery of a targeted response that is informed by needs assessments and monitoring, addresses gaps and mitigates duplication.

5. Refugee Information Management Working Group (RIMWG)

The Refugee Information Management working group was created after the onset of the refugee crisis in East Sudan. It coordinates information management activities at the inter-agency level between partners in refugee operations within the context of the sector coordination groups in Sudan, including sharing information with partners, establishment and management of monitoring systems, analyse inter-sectoral data and promote harmonization of codes and standards on localities and other data sets.

The UNHCR Information Management unit is part of the UNOCHA led Information Management sector working group to ensure consistency with data management systems and linkages between the refugee appeal process through the CRP and the HPC process.

6. Camp Coordination

The mandate for camp coordination in Sudan lies with COR who is supported by UNHCR and other humanitarian partners. 24 official camps host an estimated 39% of refugees in Sudan, with 10 camps in East Sudan, 1 in Blue Nile State, 10 in White Nile State, 2 in East Darfur State and 1 in Central Darfur State. The remaining 61% of refugees live in settlements, urban areas and in host communities. Essential infrastructure is provided in refugees camps through the support of the Sudanese government, UNHCR and humanitarian partners of the refugee response. All new activities in camps must be coordinated with COR.

7. Linkages with the IASC Coordination Structure

The established coordination structure in Sudan has an appointed Humanitarian Coordinator and UNHCR is leading the refugee response together with COR. In this mixed situation the IASC cluster system as well as the Refugee Coordination model are implemented². In order to align technical discussions and strategic direction in this mixed situation while reducing meeting requirements for humanitarian partners, UNHCR, IASC sector leads and UNOCHA have agreed to increase coordination on sector level between the refugee response with the IASC sectors. This is achieved through a standing agenda point on refugees in each IASC sector and a UNHCR refugee specialist who leads the sectoral coordination of the refugee response.³

The sub-national coordination structures are regularly updated in consultation with partners in each Refugee Working Group. Depending on the situation in each state and the presence of refugees, IDPs and other affected populations refugee coordination structures and IASC coordination structures are both implemented. In states where both structures are established refugee issues are discussed within the IASC structures. UNHCR leads a protection working group under each RWG.

8. Linkages with IASC cross cutting working groups

There are several cross-cutting working groups in Sudan on national level that discuss specific topics such as the AAP working group, the Cash Working Group, the Access Working Group, the Information and Advocacy Working Group and the Durable Solutions Working Group. UNHCR is part of all the cross-cutting working groups and is mandated to advocate on behalf of refugees on all discussion points in those groups or address topics from actors of the refugee response. UNHCR ensures that RCF members and the SAG are updated on processes regarding refugees in the cross-cutting working groups and relays messages back to the group.

² UNHCR-OCHA Joint Note on Mixed Situations: coordination in practice (2014)

³ The sectoral integration is formalized in: Increased coordination between the IASC and RCF (refugees) technical sector and endorsed by the HCT.

Refugee Response Planning

1. The Country Refugee Response Plan

The CRP brings together the humanitarian actors responding to refugee needs in Sudan. The plan is prepared on annual basis and sets out the refugee response strategy in Sudan including sectoral needs analysis and response strategies. The CRP has three functions in a) defining the coordination structure for the refugee response, b) establishes the strategic direction of the refugee response and c) as a fundraising document.

The CRP defines the monitoring framework of the refugee response and is monitored by the RCF on quarterly basis. The CRP identifies the annual financial requirements of all its partners for the refugee response.

2. Humanitarian Programme Cycle

The RCF cooperates with UNOCHA and the IASC sectors on the development of the HNO and the HRP.

A) HNO:

The RCF leads the inclusion of refugees in the HNO and participates in the annual Multisectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) led by UNOCHA to include refugees in the Needs Analysis. The RCF coordinates with IASC sector leads to include refugee needs in the sectoral needs analysis chapters in the HNO. Further, the RCF calculates the People in Need (PiN) number for refugees and the severity of needs on locality level according the JIAF structure.

B) HRP:

The RCF leads the drafting of the refugee chapter in the HRP. The refugee chapter reflects the strategy and financial requirements of the CRP and ensures that both have the same information. The RCF coordinates with UNOCHA to include refugees in the HRP.

3. Regional Refugee Response Plans

Sudan is part of the South Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan, represented through a distinct Sudan chapter. The financial needs for the response to South Sudanese and Ethiopian refugees in Sudan are separately reflected in the CRP and are consistent with the financial needs reflected in the South Sudan RRRP. The South Sudan RRRP has a separate monitoring framework with is monitored through the RCF.

4. Emergency Refugee Response Plans

In case of emergencies the RCF will draft separate emergency refugee response plans to establish the coordination structure, set out the response strategy, identify planning figures and scenarios and budget the anticipated refugee response. In 2020 the RCF drafted an emergency refugee response plan for the influx of Ethiopian refugees in East Sudan.

5. Contingency Plans

The RCF drafts contingency plans for anticipated mass arrivals of refugees from neighbouring countries. The contingency plans establish planning figures and risk scenarios, define the coordination structure, identify preparedness actions and calculate financial requirements for the first 3 months of the emergency response. The RCF has drafted contingency plans for potential influxes from the Central African Republic, Chad and Ethiopia.



Refugees, from Ethiopia, sit under a shade near the WFP food distribution centre to protect themselves from the scorching sun after receiving their food rations from the World Food Programme (WFP), Um Rakuba camp, Gedaref / Sudan.

Useful Tools and Data Resources

- A collection of useful information tools can be found at the UNHCR Sudan data portal: [UNHCR Sudan Data Portal](#)
- Reference document on the UNHCR Refugee Coordination Model: please click [here](#)
- UNHCR-OCHA Joint Note on Mixed Situations: coordination in practice (2014): please click [here](#)

1. Activity Info

ActivityInfo is the main online tool for recording activities and achievements for the refugee response. The platform allows partners to record their own activities, check other agencies' activities and generate maps and analysis.

For more information and support, please contact Information Management team (SUDKHIM@unhcr.org), and address your queries to the focal point (Abdelrahman Jaber "Snr. IM Officer" & Mohamed Habib Ouederni "IM Officer") Information Management Support, Mohamed Habib Ouederni

2. Financial Tracking System

Every quarter, financial tracking by partner is conducted. Inter-Agency appealing partners will be contacted by UNHCR and requested to report on the funds received against their appeal by sector. The Financial Tracking focal point is Josephine Karlsson (karlssok@unhcr.org).

- Guidance on the financial reporting on refugee response can be accessed: [here](#)
- Financial reporting on refugee response can be conducted: [here](#)

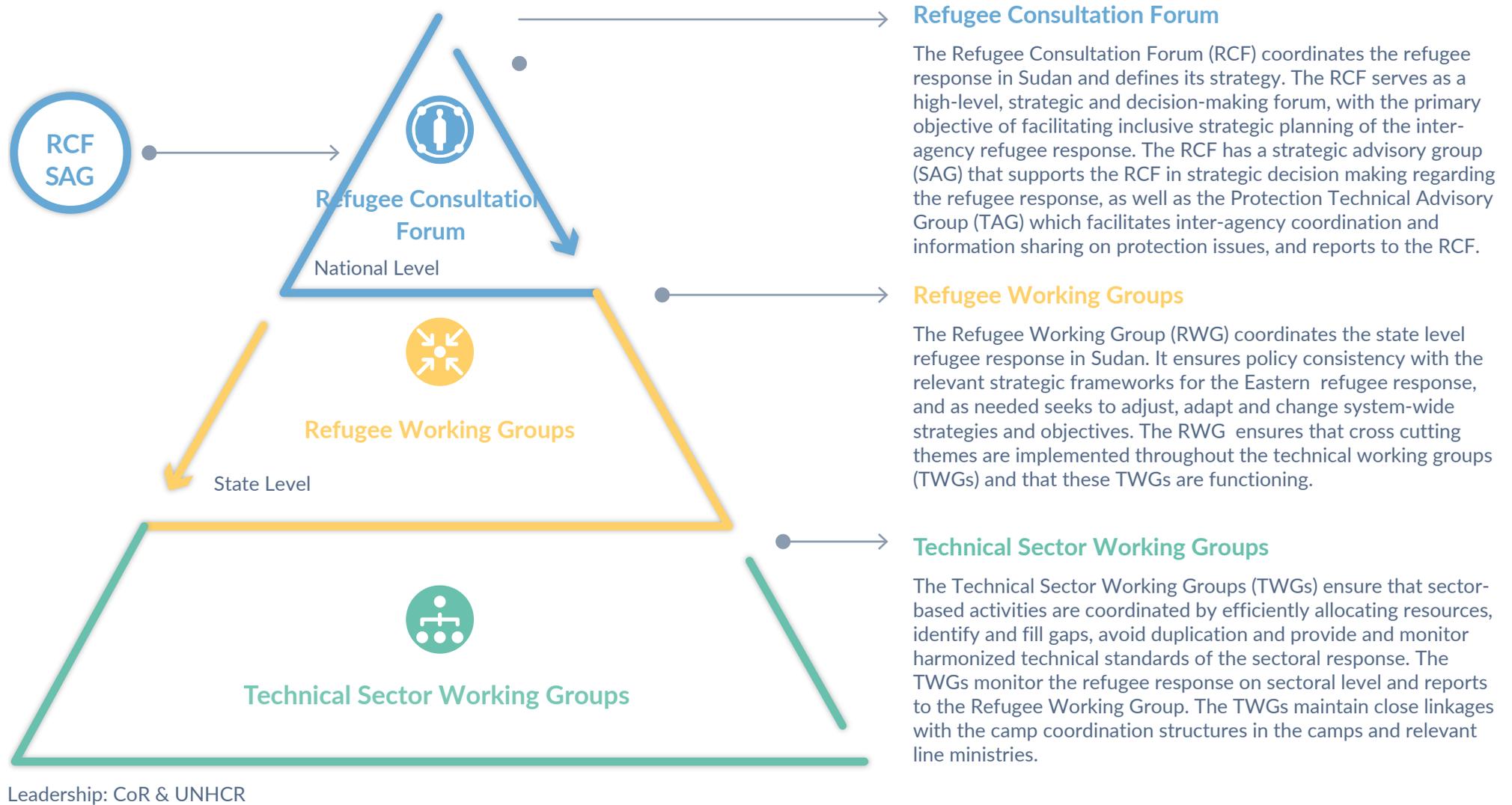
Partners

There are 41 organizations appealing in the CRP⁴, and many more implementing activities across the country.

Partners' own websites are complemented by a series of information management tools that allow donors to find out more about the activities, achievements and appeals of the different UN agencies, international and national NGOs who participate in coordination.

⁴ Sudan
Country
Refugee
Response
Plan 2023

Country Refugee Response Coordination





For Feedback Please Contact:

Refugee Consultation Forum (RCF): SUDKHRCF@unhcr.org

UNHCR Information Management Unit: SUDKHIM@unhcr.org



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