

Sudan: Emergency Response to Internal Displacement

Over **4.2 million people** have been newly internally displaced in Sudan since the outbreak of the armed conflict in Khartoum on 15 April 2023 – on average nearly **30,000 people each day**. Their stories are stories of loss and trauma, but also of resiliency and solidarity among communities. UNHCR responds to this internal displacement emergency in partnership with others, while attending to the urgent needs of secondarily displaced and conflict-affected refugees.

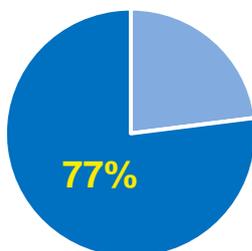
2023 Emergency Response Overview

In the five months since the onset of the war in Sudan's capital, **UNHCR has re-set its strategy for 2023 and pivoted its response to the new realities** by expanding the geographic scope of the IDP response in the East and to the North, with new offices set up in Wadi Halfa, Port Sudan and Wad Madani, while re-setting operations in the Kordofans and morphing the Darfur response in a remotely managed response with a cross-border component. UNHCR further set up and strengthened needed emergency coordination fora at sub-national levels, notably for protection and shelter/NFI sectors jointly with NGO counterparts, and re-activated the site management sector at national level.

- In 2023 so far, UNHCR's response to internal displacement has reached **over 400,000 people**. Of those, **77 per cent** were supported in the five months since the onset of the armed conflict on 15 April 2023.
- Prior to 15 April 2023, UNHCR's IDP response centred on the Darfur and Kordofan states, and the Blue Nile situation. Since, it has **reinforced and expanded its IDP response in the East and the North of the country**. UNHCR currently responds in 15 states with an expansion to 16 states envisaged by year-end.
- UNHCR provides a **multi-sectoral emergency response**, including core relief, cash to address basic needs, shelter assistance and protection support for individuals at risk or with specific needs, alongside protection monitoring and advocacy.

Response reach in 2023
Before and after 15 April 2023

- Response reach before 15 April 2023
- Response reach after 15 April 2023



UNHCR's **roadmap for the emergency response in 2023** foresees a stepped-up engagement on internal displacement with (1) a stronger operational footprint that considers the role and needs of internally displaced people (IDPs) and host communities, and (2) an enhanced tri-sector coordination role for protection, shelter and site management sectors, thereby **contributing to the system-wide scale up of the humanitarian response** by fast-tracking needed support and mobilizing operational and coordination capacities and resources to match the scale, complexity and urgency of the displacement emergency in Sudan.



UNHCR Damazine distributing core relief items to newly displaced people arriving in Blue Nile state, September 2023.
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Many fled with nothing more than the clothes they were wearing and find themselves without any personal belongings in displacement locations.

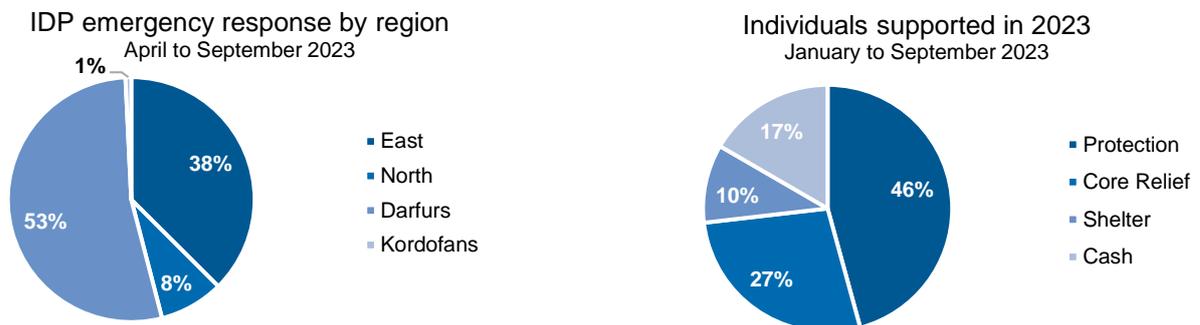
Core relief items enable IDPs to conduct their daily lives and maintain a minimum standard of living.

UNHCR has provided over 100,000 of the most vulnerable people with core relief since the armed conflict broke out in mid-April 2023, including through the cross-border response from Chad.

2023 Emergency Response Highlights

Prior to 15 April 2023, UNHCR's IDP response reached people in eleven states and centred on the Darfur and Kordofan states, with a smaller response in the states affected by the 2022 Blue Nile conflict. Since, **UNHCR has reinforced and expanded its IDP response in the East and the North of the country, and has reached people in 15 states**, including in the Darfur states, South and West Kordofan, Kassala, Gedaref, Al Jazeera, Sennar, Blue and White Nile states, as well as Red Sea and Northern state with an expansion to River Nile state envisaged before year-end.

Despite the significant conflict impact in the Darfur region, UNHCR has been able to re-establish a sizeable response in parts of the region where humanitarian space and access permitted. Given the remote management of the operation, the response is largely community-based, including support to multi-purpose community centers, professionalization of community-based protection structures as well as protection monitoring, core relief and protection assistance. In the Kordofan states, the operations have remained very limited to the provision of core relief and are currently being re-set. The most notable increase and expansion of UNHCR's response took place across all the Eastern states as well as in the North, where UNHCR's IDP response is predominantly new.



With geographic variations, **UNHCR's multi-sectoral emergency response has thus far reached over 400,000 people, of whom far over 300,000 after the conflict escalation in April.** The response has centred on the provision of core relief items and emergency shelter, cash-based assistance, and critical protection interventions for individuals at risk or with specific needs through direct protection assistance, service provision – notably legal aid for civil documentation and psycho-social support, as well as referrals. UNHCR's response is based on protection monitoring and identification of persons with specific needs so that support is reaching those most in need.

Some 66,000 people received multi-purpose cash assistance from UNHCR in 2023. The majority, however, prior to mid-April in Darfur. Following a conflict-related hiatus, **UNHCR has re-started its cash-based interventions in July** with initial distributions completed in Gedaref and Wadi Halfa, and interventions planned or ongoing in Red Sea, Kassala and White Nile state. It is envisaged to further scale up cash-based interventions.

As the majority of new IDPs live in host communities who have similar needs, UNHCR has adopted a **community-based approach to its response with the aim of placing the role of the communities at its center.** Building on earlier investments in community-based protection networks (CBPNs) and protection desks, UNHCR is expanding this network and continues to professionalize it across the country. CBPNs and protection desks are involved in protection monitoring, community-level early warning and peaceful co-existence, identification of persons with specific needs, referrals, awareness raising, or dispute resolution. In addition, UNHCR is preparing for the roll out of other components of its community-based response, notably in parts of Darfur, Wadi Halfa, Kassala, Gedaref, Al Jazeera and White Nile, including the establishment and support to multi-purpose community centers, support to community-led organizations and first-line responders, and community support activities.

Capacity development and institutional support are integral to UNHCR's response. In Gedaref, UNHCR provided in-depth trainings on IDP response management to Executive Directors and other local authorities. Similar trainings were delivered in all other response locations in the East and the North. In Wad Madani and Kosti, UNHCR is providing institutional support to Government counterparts, such as to the Ministry of Social Development for the ongoing enrolment of IDPs in White Nile state. In Darfur, UNHCR coordinates closely with authorities on humanitarian access, and supported health centres with generators to help sustain the limited health service capacities.

UNHCR has reinforced the coordination of the protection, shelter/NFI sectors at sub-national levels, and in concert with the HCT, also re-activated the site management sector at national level. **The sectors maximize available emergency response capacity through coordination, have undertaken extensive capacity building of humanitarian partners and authorities across the country, and played a critical advocacy role,** notably on the protection of civilians and the situation of IDPs staying in gathering sites. For example, the Darfur Protection Sector has issued 11 advocacy briefs. UNHCR, through the Protection Sector, has further led the development of the HCT Protection Strategy, endorsed by the HCT in September.

What's ahead in 2023

In the remainder of 2023, UNHCR will be gradually rolling out and strengthening the community-based response notably in the East and the North as well as parts of the Darfurs, increasing protection service delivery and referral capacity, and diversifying cash in the response through pilot approaches. So far, UNHCR's cash support centred on covering basic needs, while moving forward, UNHCR envisages a three-tiered cash approach to also include cash for protection and for economic empowerment.

UNHCR's response to Sudan's internal displacement situation is designed to contribute through an inter-agency approach toward durable solutions from the start, investing in the agency and capacities of people and mitigating risks of protracted displacement and humanitarian dependency.

UNHCR's 2023 IDP response as part of the system-wide scale up in Sudan will set the needed foundations to build on in 2024.

UNHCR's community-based response...

- Is suitable for a displacement situation in which the majority of IDPs live in host communities with similar needs.
- Enables a more equal access to available services.
- Strengthens community capacity and resilience as well as community structures that act as first-line responder.
- Contributes toward peaceful co-existence and social cohesion in and between communities.
- Catalyzes durable solutions early on in the response.
- Helps mitigate the proliferation of IDP sites.

Implemented in an area-based way, this offers early opportunities for nexus and durable solutions-oriented programming.



UNHCR's cross-border response from Chad reaching Kulbus in August 2023. © UNHCR Sudan

UNHCR is grateful for the collaboration with its partners in the scale up and adjustment of the response to the new realities.

Special thanks to our donors: Canada | Czechia | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Italy | Japan | Kuwait | Netherlands | Norway | Poland | Switzerland | USA | Peacebuilding Fund | Central Emergency Response Fund | Sudan Humanitarian Fund | IGAD

- View UNHCR Sudan's IDP Response Factsheet for 2022: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99300>
- For further information on UNHCR's engagement on internal displacement globally, visit: <https://www.unhcr.org/internally-displaced-people.html>
- For further information about UNHCR operation in Sudan, visit: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/sdn>