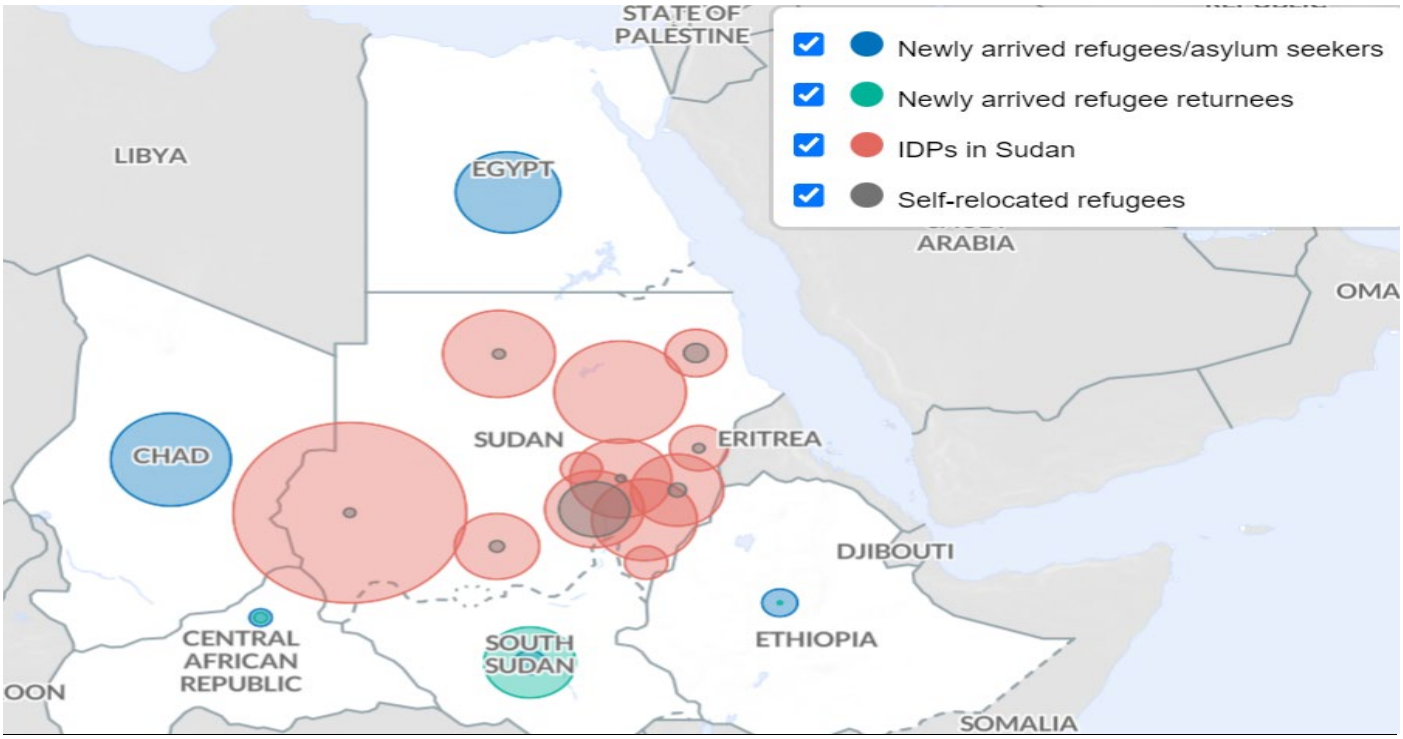
SUDAN
Solutions, Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion NOVEMBER 2023

BACKGROUND

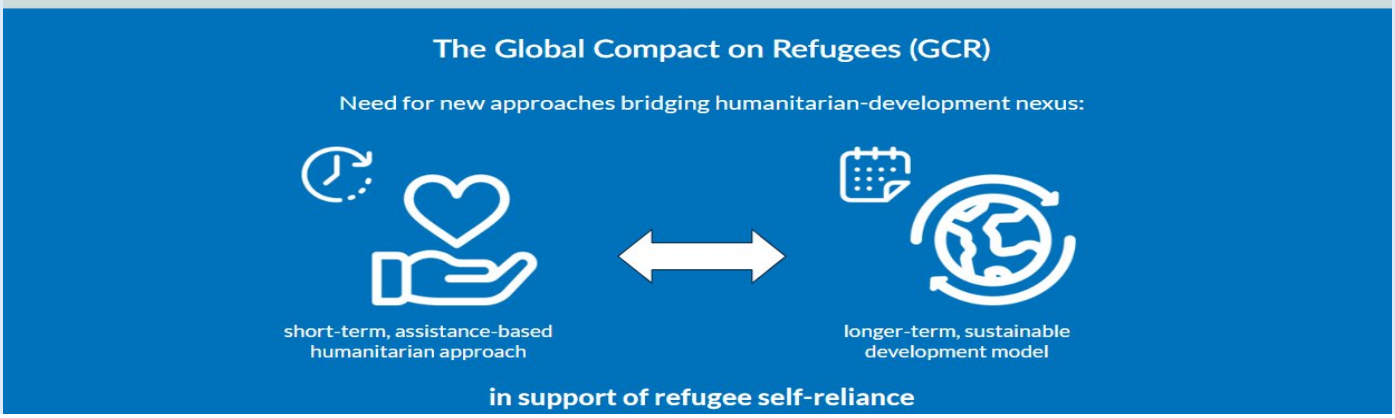
Sudan is the 3rd largest country in Africa. It occupies an area of 1.9 square kilometers and has total population of 33 million. On Saturday, 15th April 2023, residents of Khartoum in Sudan woke up to the sounds of heavy artillery shelling and gun fire throughout the city. This was the beginning of the war in Sudan which has currently reached a humanitarian crisis level in Khartoum and Darfur states with devastating spillover effects across the country. The war erupted due to disputes between the president, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, who is the Commander of the Sudanese Armed Forces and Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, also known as Hemedti, a Commander of the Rapid Support Forces. The war has torn the country into a crisis, forcibly displacing over 5million people, of which over 4millions of Sudanese are internally displaced in the states of Gazeira, Northern state, Darfur, Kordofac, White Nile-Kosti, Kassala, Gedaref, Medani, Port Sudan, Damazine among others while over 1.2million flee to neighboring countries such as Egypt, Chad, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, and South Sudan. This has exacerbated an already fragile situation where Sudan was struggling economically to survive with rising inflation due to sanctions, food crisis, and increased poverty levels among its citizens. There is urgent need to address basic needs such as shelter, water, sanitation, health, economic empowerment to respond to the needs of internally displaced, refugees, and host communities. The host communities are overstretched as government is failing to address basic needs due to involvement in war against the Rapid Support Forces. There is limited health, education, water, energy, and sanitation infrastructure in areas hosting refugees, IDPs including host communities.

KEY FACTS: REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS



SOLUTIONS, LIVELIHOODS & ECONOMIC INCLUSION FOR REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES

The Global compact on refugees and host communities calls for the humanitarian, peace, and development nexus at the onset of the emergency for sustainable solutions towards displacement. Solutions must adopt the whole of a society approach involving government, humanitarian, development, private sector actors and donors. Solutions must also include refugees, IDPs, returnees and the population that hosts them. To respond to this approach, UNHCR Sudan took a number of initiatives to develop short term, medium term, and long-term solutions to the current situation in Sudan to safeguard holistic approaches to displacement.



UNHCR-FAO JOINT COUNTRY FRAMEWORK RESPONSE

In response the current conflict, UNHCR and FAO developed a joint country framework to address short-term, medium term and long-term pressing needs of the affected populations in Sudan. Short term solutions include interventions that address immediate needs facing the displaced population as they move from high conflict zones such as Khartoum, Kordofan and Darfur states to safer locations. This includes humanitarian assistance such food distribution, access to health, shelter, water, sanitation, non-food items among others. Medium-term strategies involve interventions that prepare displaced population for more permanent solutions to short-term problems. Long term incorporates interventions that translate into long-term impact and sustainably to improve the livelihoods of displaced populations to become independent, and less dependent on humanitarian aid. The joint framework incorporates three key pillars namely: Pillar 1-Coordination for technically sound approaches to solutions; Pillar 2-Promoting Agricultural Pathways; and Pillar-3-Natural Resources Management/Energy.

In response to the joint framework and to cushion the disrupted food supply chain system in Sudan, the Minister of Agriculture Production and Economic Resources **in White Nile State** committed to offer more than 25,000 fedans of land in Goda irrigation scheme *should UNHCR and FAO rehabilitate the canal running across the scheme.* Investments in Goda irrigation scheme can support the cushioning of the disrupted crop production in Khartoum, Darfur and Kordofan states. The scheme will also facilitate the participation of refugees alongside host communities in agricultural production. *Out of the 25, 000 fedans, the Minister committed to provide access to 3000 fedans* of land to refugees to engage in agricultural production, address their basic needs, improve their food security and income.

Minister of Agriculture & economic resources (in a jacket)

Goda Irrigation scheme and host community leaders discussing their commitment to work with refugees.

LIVELIHOODS INTERVENTIONS IN GEDAREF STATE

In the midst of war in Sudan, refugees and host communities are engaged in agricultural production in Gedaref state to cushion the disrupted food supply system, improve food security and incomes to households. This is a UNHCR supported project implemented by ZOA and to promote the localization agenda, ZENAB for Women Development is supporting the initiatives at community level.

COORDINATION AND SOLUTIONS IN WHITE NILE STATE

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Coordination is key for impactful solutions to displacement through joint assessments, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of successes and challenges during emergencies. Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods partners are jointly and actively engaged in developing solutions to addressing the food supply chain deficit, employment and business challenges facing the displaced population and hosts affected by the crisis in White Nile state. The solutions working group was also activated not only to respond to the current crisis but also explore long-term strategies spelled out in the White Nile state strategy 2023-2027. The Minister of Finance chairs the solutions working group with UNDP and UNHCR as co-chairs.

The Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods Actors

The Minister of Finance with UNDP and UNHCR teams in White Nile State-Kosti

ABU DOLOU SETTLEMENT IN WHITE NILE STATE

As part of the long-term solution to displacement, host communities in Abu Dolou offered land (approx 3.4square km) in response to the increasing number of forcibly displaced populations in White Nile state. Thanks to government (Governor, Commissioner for Refugees, HAC and key Ministries for their immense commitment and support). The support from host communities is unimaginable and peaceful coexistence at this time cannot be overemphasized.

The ground breaking ceremony of Abu Dolou settlement comprising UNHCR staff, partners and community leaders

PROSPECTS PROJECT

This is a partnership project funded by the Government of Netherlands, World Bank, IFC and implemented by UNHCR, UNICEF and ILO. The theory of change is self-reliance of displaced and host communities improved through the strengthening of their livelihoods, reduction of their vulnerability, and reduction of their long-term reliance on external assistance. The PROSPECTS Theory of Change centers around the ultimate goals of **self-reliance**, **resilience**, and **inclusion.**

CONSTRAINTS/ISSUES

- The conflict and economic decline have driven about 20.3 million people across Sudan (over 42 percent of the country's population) into high levels of acute food insecurity.
- The price of food and essential commodities has soared, limiting access to the market for the population and making it increasingly difficult for residents to afford basic necessities.
- The host community is under significant stress due to the increasing number of refugees and IDPs, which has intensified competition for resources such as water, food, healthcare, shelter, and livelihood opportunities.

- Funding remains a key barrier to implement sustainable solutions that promote self-reliance for refugees and host communities.
- Both the host communities and the refugee populations are severely affected by the gradual breakdown of financial institutions and supply chains, leading to a high demand for livelihood and income-generating activities to meet the short, medium, and long-term needs of both groups.
- The lack of income-generating activities undermines the household security of both refugees and the host community, with many individuals reporting their inability to cover the increasing costs of basic services and food.
- The competition for resources threatens the long-term peaceful coexistence between the host community and displaced populations.
- The scarcity of resources, services, and environmental impacts has become evident, and the host communities express a sustained high level of frustration.
- There is immediate rise in negative coping mechanisms and social instability, disproportionately affecting women, children, and vulnerable groups such as extremely poor households, people with disabilities, and the elderly, particularly those who are critically ill.

OPPORTUNITIES

1) Flexibility and Willingness by the government to collaborate with agencies willing to support displaced populations.
2) High demand for solutions related interventions that promote empowerment by both refugees and host communities due to dwindling purchasing power.
3) Availability of markets and increased demand for consumable goods
4) Availability of various actors for collaboration/coordination (humanitarian, development, NGOs, financial service providers) among others.
5) Commitment by government to provide land for agricultural production that engages displaced populations and their hosts.

These opportunities are essential to all the affected populations to increase their purchasing power, reduce dependence on humanitarian aid, and promote self-reliance.

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