

SITUATION OVERVIEW

As of 1 December, 2024



12,020,475
forcibly displaced



2,453,532
new arrivals



683,780
total Refugee Returnees



264,109
self-relocated inside Sudan

Due to conflict and the outbreak of violence in Sudan beginning in April 2023, over 12 million individuals have been forcibly displaced from their homes, including people who were already internally displaced and refugees from other countries who had sought safety in Sudan. This surge in violence not only intensified the humanitarian crisis in Sudan but also led to search for safety in neighbouring countries, such as Chad, South Sudan, Egypt, and Ethiopia.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency has been actively responding to this emergency since its onset.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Information Technology (IT) and access to connectivity are vital in humanitarian aid. They ensure timely exchange of updated information for an effective communication among humanitarian workers, and facilitates the delivery of life-saving assistance and protection to displaced individuals. The role of IT in facilitating coordination and promoting the safety of staff is crucial in environments with limited infrastructure.

Over the past six months, in response to the Sudan Situation, the IT Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) team of the Division of Information Systems and Telecommunications (DIST) expanded its support across Sudan, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, and South Sudan, coordinating the global IT response in close collaboration with Country IT Leads and Regional IT Coordinators.



5 emergency deployments



\$565K worth of critical equipment shipped



5 countries supported

FOCUS AREAS



COORDINATION: EPR worked closely with Regional Bureaux and Country Operations to ensure a harmonized response, holding **38 IT emergency coordination calls**. This resulted in upgraded IT infrastructure and faster and more efficient communication lines.



RESOURCE MOBILIZATION: EPR deployed **\$565,323 worth of critical equipment** from the Global IT Stockpiles. EPR's rapid procurement and distribution of IT equipment broadened infrastructure capabilities and connectivity.



DEPLOYMENT: Over six months, **5 IT specialists** dedicated over **156 mission days** to enhancing connectivity in remote and challenging areas.

OPERATION HIGHLIGHTS

UNHCR's IT colleagues at the local level work to ensure that technology supports and enhances our humanitarian efforts. Their dedication and innovation are crucial in providing reliable communications infrastructure, improving safety, and enabling access to essential services for those affected by the Sudan emergency.

Enhancing Connectivity and Digital Access



In Chad, the IT team improved internet access by setting up satellite connections and Wi-Fi networks in remote camps, ensuring reliable communication and online services. Initiatives like the Cybercafé and Digital Learning Centres, set to launch in February 2025 as part of the [Connectivity for Refugees](#) initiative, will provide forcibly displaced populations and host communities with internet access and learning tools, promoting education and sustainability. This initiative is also active in other countries responding to the crisis, with Connectivity Coordinators being recruited in Chad, Ethiopia and South Sudan to push it forward.



Strengthening Safety and Communication

The deployment of security communication equipment, including radios and satellite phones, has enhanced communication and safety in all the operations responding to the crisis. This equipment ensures that colleagues can maintain contact in challenging environments, improving coordination and security.

Supporting Protection Efforts



Information technology is crucial for protection activities like registration, Refugee Status Determination (RSD), and resettlement. Amid a surge in registration due to the Sudan situation, the IT team in Egypt ensured staff had the necessary technology tools to deliver humanitarian services effectively and efficiently. They improved infrastructure, expanded network coverage, and increased capacity to support a growing workforce and meet the rising demand for IT services. This enabled the registration team to register more cases and the RSD unit to process cases affected by the Sudan situation, with some referred cases also processed by resettlement. The IT upkeep ensured staff could respond to the emergency with the necessary technology tools.



Improving Assistance to Forcibly Displaced Populations

In Egypt, the IT team has transformed the Infoline call center into a 24/7 service, making it easier for forcibly displaced people to access assistance from UNHCR and partners. This upgrade has increased colleague capacity, ensuring that people forced to flee receive support and that their needs are heard around the clock.

RETS: Expanding IT to the wider humanitarian community

Connectivity is essential for humanitarian work and needs to be shared to maximize its impact.

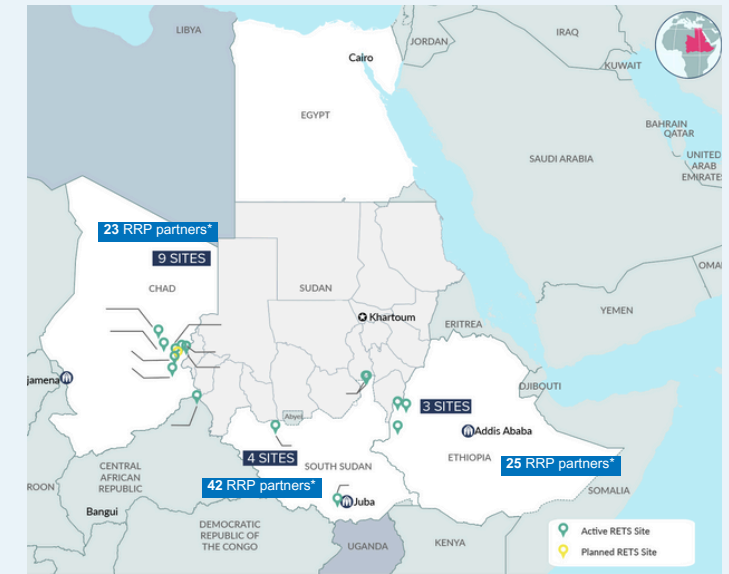
The Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector (RETS), under the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) of UNHCR, provides critical services, including internet access and security communications, to the humanitarian response community, supporting their life-saving work through technology.



Partner Contributions: RETS secured support from the Government of Luxembourg in Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia and South Sudan, and received local support from ECHO in Chad to provide connectivity for humanitarians.



Operational Sites: RETS has enabled internet access across **16 sites**, including areas of transit, registration, accommodation, and other critical operational centers.



*All Refugee Response Plan (RRP) partners can access connectivity services at RETS active sites.



Device Connectivity: Each month, approximately **8,700 devices** were connected to the internet, provided by RETS, in these locations, significantly enhancing communication capabilities.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INTERVENTION

- **Coordination:** IT has played a critical role in UNHCR's operations, facilitating collaboration, efficient information exchange, and rapid deployment of IT resources and personnel.
- **IT Infrastructure:** UNHCR's IT specialists have overcome challenges like unstable power and limited connectivity to establish vital communication services.
- **Safety:** IT specialists ensure the availability of security communication tools which are essential for the safety of staff and secure delivery of assistance across remote and vast distances.
- **Sector Support:** IT underpins the work of the sectors, including Protection, Health, and WASH. It enables the registration processes, provision of targeted support to the most vulnerable, and relocation of forcibly displaced individuals away from border areas to camps or sites with life-saving services such as shelter, food, water, and medical care.
- **Collaborations:** Meaningful collaborations between IT colleagues in operations, EPR and UNHCR's Innovation Service enables IT services to reach even more people, specifically people forced to flee, thanks to the Connectivity for Refugees initiative.

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