

SOUTH SUDAN COUNTRY REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

January - December 2026

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH: A refugee farmer stands in his sesame field in Maban, South Sudan. Awed Usman, 37, who fled Sudan with his wife and children, fears the flooding will destroy his crops.
Photo: © UNHCR/Tiksa Negeri

The digital version of this plan can be accessed using the link and QR code below:

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/120458>



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At a Glance

South Sudan Planned Response

January - December 2026



602K

Projected refugee population by end 2026¹



45K

Targeted host community members



USD

381.5M

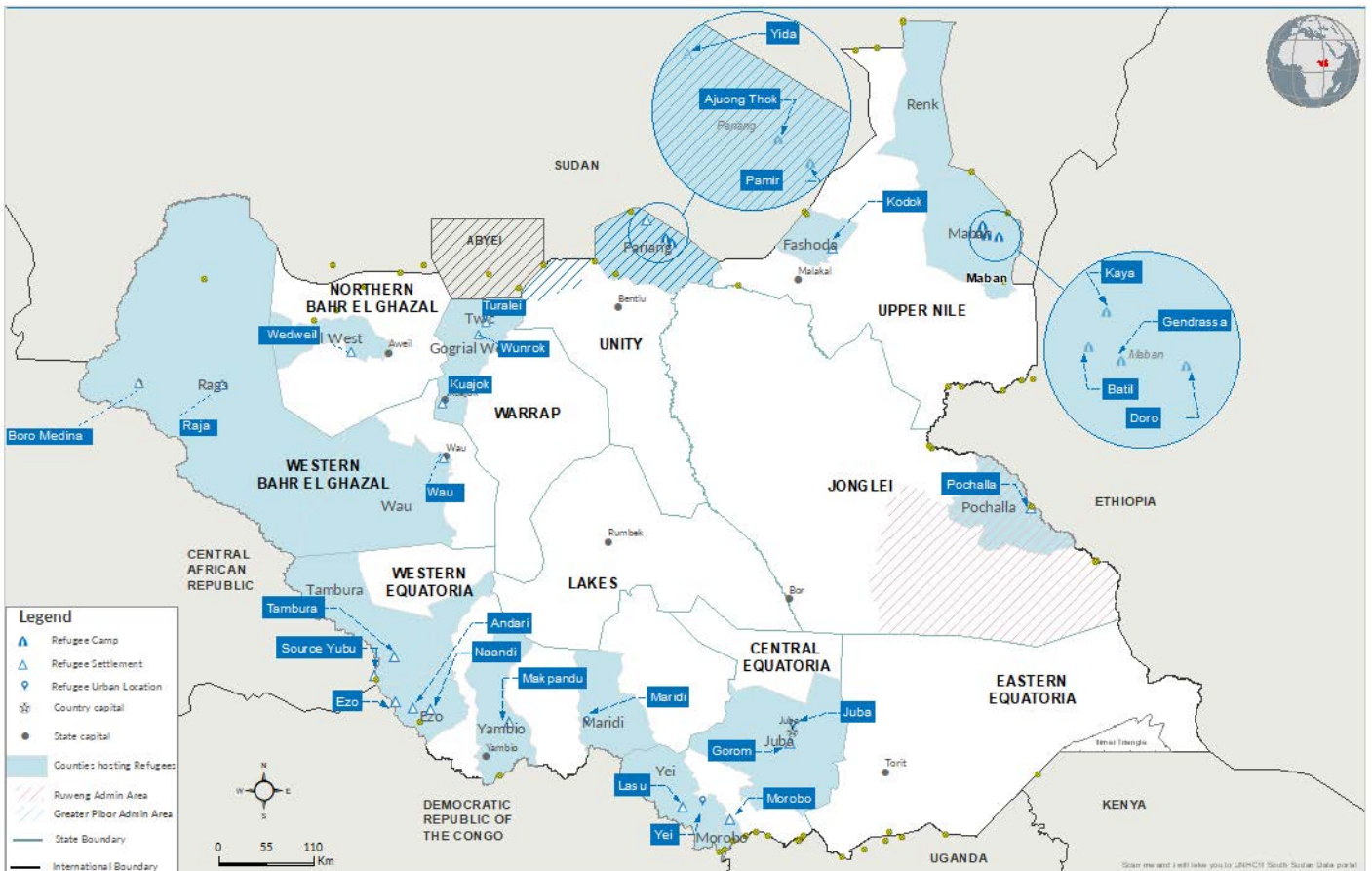
Total financial requirements



57

CRRP Partners²

Overview of South Sudan locations covered by the refugee response in 2026

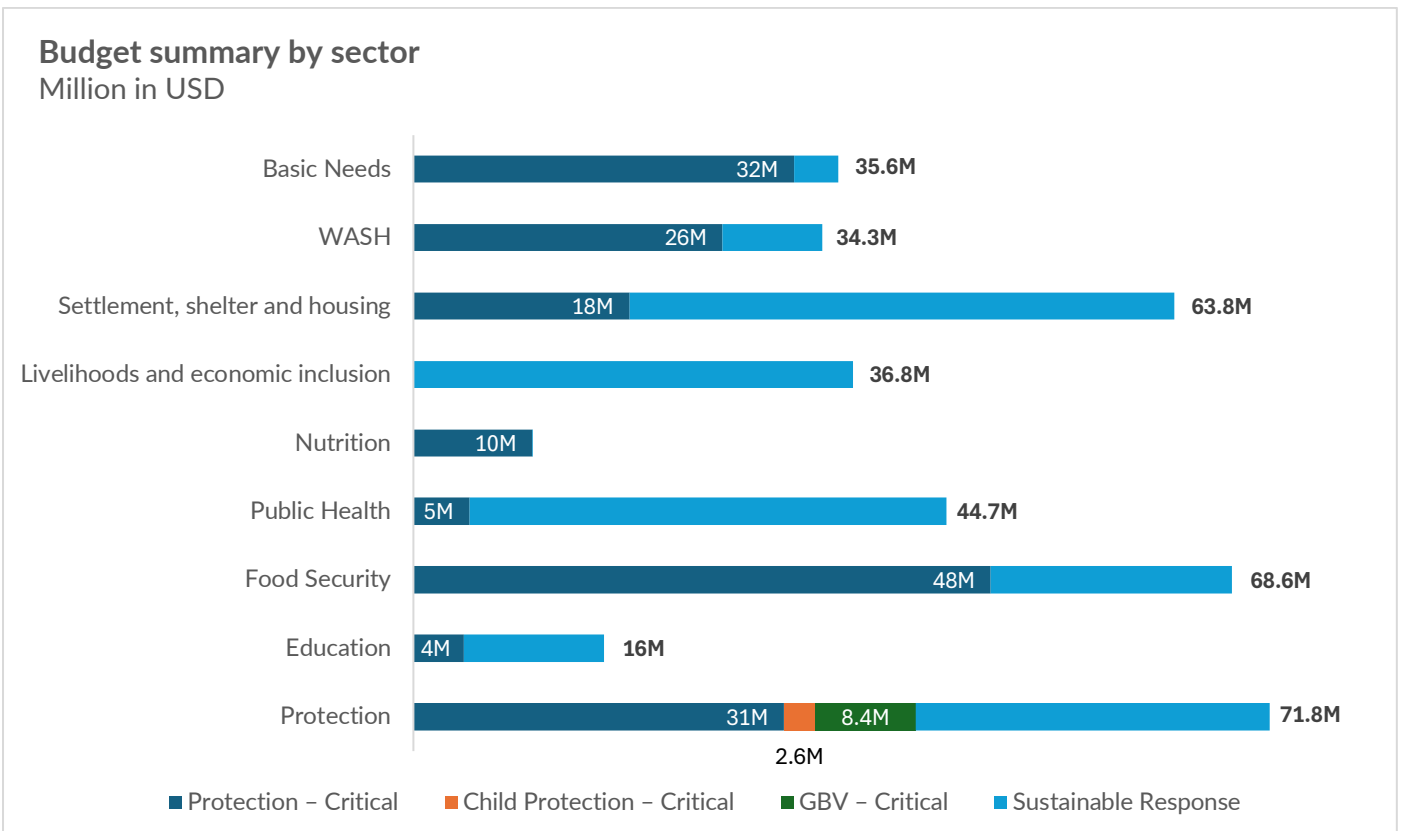


The boundaries and names shown and designations used on this map does not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations or UNHCR. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan and final status of Abyei area are not yet determined.

¹ This figure also reflects anticipated refugee returns to their countries of origin, most notably Sudan as witnessed in 2025.

² As the South Sudan Refugee Response Plan applies an activity-based costing approach, references to CRRP partners reflect those currently implementing activities in refugee-hosting areas. Additional organisations are welcome to join the response, subject to adherence to humanitarian principles, government registration, and alignment with the agreed response strategy.

Financial Requirements



Partners by type

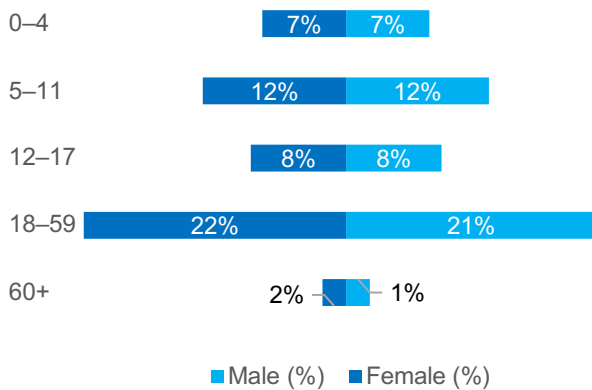
PARTNER	NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS
UN agencies	9
International NGOs	34
National NGOs	7
Refugee-led organizations	3
Community- based organizations	2
Women-led organizations	2
TOTAL	57

³ For 2026, the financial requirement encompasses both critical-needs interventions—prioritising immediate, life-saving assistance—and longer-term, resilience-focused activities that are integral to sustaining the refugee response and advancing solutions.

Population Planning Figures

Population	Projected population (end 2025 ⁴)	Planning figure for 2026 arrivals	Projected net population (end 2026)
Refugees			
Refugees from Sudan ⁵	563,533	117,581	571,864
- of which: projected returns (Sudanese)	-	-	109,250
Refugees from Other Countries	29,660	6,188	30,098
- of which: projected returns (other)	-	-	5,750
Sub-total refugees (net)	593,193	123,769	601,962⁶
Other population groups			
Third Country Nationals	1,500	1,000	1,000
Targeted Host Community ⁷	45,000	-	45,000
Returnees			
Returnees from Sudan	872,000 ⁸	154,000	468,000
Returnees from CAR, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda	45,000	57,000	57,000
Total Returnees	929,000	211,000	525,000⁹

Age & Gender Breakdown



16%¹⁰

Persons with disabilities



50%

Women and girls



50%

Men and boys



54%

Children

⁴ This figure includes actual arrivals as of Sept 2025 and projected arrivals Oct-Dec 2025. The term 'refugees' is inclusive of asylum-seekers.

⁵ Includes Sudanese nationals and refugees of other nationalities that arrived from Sudan. The needs of refugees from Sudan are also included in the 2026 Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan.

⁶ Planned end-2026 figures are net planning figures, reflecting projected inflows as well as anticipated outflows, including spontaneous returns, onward movement, and population adjustments following the planned 2026 verification exercise.

⁷ For planning purposes, the targeted host community population will correspond to 10% of the refugee population in camps and settlements.

⁸ This figure includes returnees since the start of the Sudan Response in 2023.

⁹ For 2026 planning purposes, the figures include returnees from Sudan over the past two years and projected returnees from other countries in 2026. Returnees who arrived prior to these periods are included within the resident population.

¹⁰ This figure is drawn from the World Health Organization (WHO) estimate that approximately 16 per cent of the global population lives with a disability based on the Washington Group disability definition.

Part 1: Current Situation

Situation Overview

South Sudan enters 2026 confronting an increasingly complex protection and humanitarian landscape shaped by overlapping internal and regional crises. Prior to the outbreak of conflict in Sudan in April 2023, the country had already grappled with mass displacement, chronic food insecurity, subnational violence, recurrent flooding, and a fragile economic environment. Against this backdrop of protracted internal displacement and systemic fragility, South Sudan continues to uphold asylum space while hosting an expanding refugee population. Nearly 2 million people are internally displaced, 2.4 million South Sudanese refugees are hosted in neighbouring countries, and in 2026, over 10 million people across South Sudan are expected to require humanitarian assistance, reflecting both longstanding vulnerabilities and new shocks.

The ongoing conflict in Sudan has significantly reshaped refugee displacement patterns in South Sudan. Between April 2023 and October 2025, 1.3 million individuals - including 416,269 refugees and asylum-seekers - crossed into South Sudan. With border insecurity, widespread fighting and deepening economic deterioration in Sudan, arrivals are projected to continue into 2026, with around 124,000 additional refugees expected. Recent months have seen an uptick in arrivals through both official and unofficial routes, a trend that is likely to persist well into 2026.

More than half (54 per cent) of the refugee population in South Sudan are children under 17, and over 95 per cent originate from Sudan. At the same time, settlement patterns are shifting, with 58 per cent of recent arrivals residing in out-of-camp and peri-urban settings, particularly in Renk town, Malakal, and parts of Aweil and Wau. This trend is expected to accelerate in 2026 as new arrivals seek proximity to markets, health services, and family networks. Such demographic and spatial shifts will also require adapted assistance modalities and increased investment in area-based approaches.

Economic fragility remains, as South Sudan's GDP continues to contract amid prolonged disruptions to oil transit infrastructure in Sudan, recurrent pipeline shutdowns, and fluctuating global oil prices. The rapid depreciation of the South Sudanese pound has accelerated inflation, dramatically increasing the cost of basic commodities. Data from the Cash Working Group (CWG) and REACH's [Joint Market Monitoring Initiative \(JMMI\)](#) show that the cost of a household minimum expenditure basket rose by 58 per cent between January and October 2025. Disrupted trade routes through Sudan and insecurity along the eastern and northern corridors have further constrained imports, driving high market prices in refugee-hosting areas and impeding both humanitarian delivery and self-reliance opportunities. Chronic food insecurity now affects 5.97 million people nationwide, a figure likely to rise as climate shocks intensify in 2026.¹¹

Climate-related shocks—particularly flooding, which has affected more than 1.3 million people across 39 counties in recent years—are now a structural driver of displacement. Seasonal flooding in Upper Nile, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, and Unity is expected to continue disrupting access, damaging infrastructure, and undermining both humanitarian operations and agricultural livelihoods. With 2026 projections indicating another above-average flood season driven by regional rainfall anomalies, refugee and host communities—especially those in low-lying areas such as Renk, Maban, and Jamjang—will face heightened protection risks, increased risk of waterborne diseases, and further strain on overstretched services.

Humanitarian response actors continue to scale up alongside development partners as local systems come under growing pressure. In transit locations like Renk, efforts are shifting from emergency response toward more sustainable infrastructure expansion, including rehabilitation of reception sites, improvements to water and sanitation systems, and expansion of border monitoring capacity. However, intercommunal tensions linked to land use, environmental degradation, and competition over services remain a recurrent challenge. These dynamics require careful programming, strengthened community-based protection, and increased engagement with local authorities and local administration.

The Government of South Sudan, through the Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA), continues to lead preparedness, registration, and refugee management in line with the Refugee Act (2012). Looking ahead, 2026 will require sustained

¹¹ [South Sudan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation for September - November 2025 and Projections for December 2025 - March 2026 and for April - July 2026 | IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification.](#)

political engagement and resource mobilization to maintain asylum space, support for border management, and to reinforce local absorption capacity in hosting areas.

As South Sudan braces for another year shaped by regional instability, economic uncertainty, and climate impacts, collaboration across humanitarian and development partners will be critical. Besides planning for humanitarian and lifesaving assistance, the 2026 South Sudan Country Refugee Response Plan (CRRP) aims to stabilise services, strengthen protection systems, invest in resilience and local solutions, and support the inclusion of refugees and affected host communities, laying the groundwork for longer-term recovery amid a protracted and evolving crisis. As a result, the CRRP includes both critical and sustainable responses, with a split budget. The critical needs budget is included in the Refugee Chapter of the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP).



Feirus Deng, a Sudanese refugee at Renk Transit Centre holding a cherished photograph of her family © UNHCR/Reason Moses Runyanga

Country Risks and Needs

South Sudan faces a highly volatile operational environment marked by overlapping crises, fragile infrastructure, and constrained resources. While the conflict in Sudan remains the primary external driver of new displacement, the sustainability of the refugee response increasingly depends on stable funding, continuity of services in refugee-hosting areas, and a secure operational environment.

The first major risk concerns the sustainability of services in refugee-hosting areas. Health, education, WASH, and protection services across camps and settlements remain heavily reliant on humanitarian financing. Reduced or unpredictable funding threatens the ability to maintain essential services, risking a deterioration in health and nutrition outcomes and weakening social cohesion with host communities. Local service delivery systems are already overstretched, and gaps in essential drugs, qualified teachers, and water infrastructure continue to grow.

A second key risk lies in the limited flexibility to respond to new shocks. The refugee response currently operates with minimal contingency resources, leaving little capacity to absorb sudden influxes, disease outbreaks, or localized emergencies such as flooding or violence in refugee-hosting areas. With daily arrivals, particularly along the northern border, partners may be unable to expand reception, shelter, and transport services quickly enough to meet life-saving needs. A lack of emergency reserves could also hinder rapid adjustments to inflation, supply chain disruptions, or market shocks, undermining the impact of cash-based interventions and food assistance.

A third emerging risk relates to security and access. The progressive reduction of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) field presence in some refugee-hosting areas has diminished deterrence and monitoring capacity, increasing the likelihood of insecurity around humanitarian sites and along supply routes. This could compromise the safety of refugees, humanitarian staff, and assets, and restrict access to populations in need. Any escalation of subnational violence or local tensions between communities could further impede mobility, delay delivery of assistance, and heighten gender-based violence (GBV) risks for women and girls. This situation is compounded by the growing risk of breakdown of the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement, driven by rising political tensions and delays in implementing key provisions: including power-sharing arrangements and preparations for national elections. A collapse of the agreement would significantly exacerbate security volatility, potentially triggering renewed armed conflict, large-scale displacement, and severe disruption to humanitarian operations.

The situation in Sudan remains unpredictable. Shifts in the conflict's geography and intensity continue to drive cross-border movements in both directions, including spontaneous returns to Sudan from areas such as Renk and Maban.

Broader economic fragility compounds these challenges. South Sudan's heavy dependence on oil revenues, combined with continued disruption of exports through Sudan, has contributed to a weakened currency, soaring inflation, and higher transport and import costs. A projected 7.5 million people are expected to face food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+) between April and May 2026, with refugees among the most vulnerable. The cost of essential commodities has increased sharply, driving harmful coping mechanisms such as child marriage, school dropout, and child labour.

Recurrent flooding remains another major risk, disrupting access to services, damaging shelters, and reducing agricultural productivity. Floods also heighten health and nutrition vulnerabilities by increasing the risk of cholera and other waterborne diseases, worsening malnutrition, contaminating water sources, and repeatedly displacing already vulnerable households - often causing significant psychological distress.

Funding shortfalls remain a critical cross-cutting concern. In 2025, ration reductions, delayed non-food item (NFI) replenishment, and limited livelihood support already affected refugee well-being. Without renewed donor support in 2026, the humanitarian community risks being unable to sustain even basic levels of assistance. This could erode the trust of refugee communities, undermine protection gains, and exacerbate tensions with host communities.

Part 2: Country Response, Resilience and Solutions Strategy

Role of the Government

The Government of the Republic of South Sudan plays a central role in leading and coordinating the refugee response. The Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA), under the Ministry of Interior, remains the primary institution responsible for preparedness and refugee policy, and the regulation of reception mechanisms. In 2026, CRA leadership will be particularly vital as population movements continue to fluctuate along the northern border and as reception, documentation, and service-delivery needs evolve across Maban, Renk, Jamjang, and other refugee-hosting areas.

Since the start of the emergency response, South Sudan has strengthened the legal and policy environment for refugee protection, aligning national frameworks with international standards to ensure access to services and legal safeguards. On 15 April 2025, the Acting Minister of Interior (Deputy Minister) issued a [Ministerial Order No. 003/2025](#) for the Prohibition of harassment and arbitrary detention and arrest of asylum-seekers and refugees in South Sudan. The Order instructs all concerned to treat asylum-seekers and refugees in accordance with the Refugee Act (2012) of the Republic of South Sudan and desist from subjecting them to the Nationality Act, 2011 and the Immigration and Passport Act 2011. Furthermore, on 17 April, the Acting Minister of Interior (Deputy Minister) issued another [Ministerial Order No. 004/2025](#) on the Issuance of Biometric Refugee Identity Cards & MRCTDs. This order aims to operationalise the issuance of national biometric Refugee Identity Cards and Machine-Readable Convention Travel Documents (MRCTDs) for refugees.

As South Sudan enters a new national planning period, the refugee response will continue to align with the [Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework \(UNSDCF\) for the 2023-25](#) and will adjust to the next cooperation framework once agreed between the Government and the UN. The CRRP will also reflect emerging national priorities outlined in the South Sudan National Development Plan 2026-2036. Sustained collaboration between humanitarian and development actors will be essential to reinforce national systems, social cohesion, and service delivery in hosting areas.

The South Sudan Country Refugee Response Plan complements and reinforces government leadership by providing technical expertise, operational support, and coordination mechanisms. Through joint planning forums, inter-agency coordination structures, and direct capacity-building, the CRRP bolsters the Government's ability to effectively lead the refugee response and address challenges of displacement.

As South Sudan navigates an evolving political and economic landscape, strategic partnerships with the Government, international organizations, NGOs, and donors will remain essential. These partnerships contribute to strengthening national systems, mobilising resources, and improving protection and basic services for both refugees and host communities. Key government counterparts engaged in the refugee response include, but are not limited to:

- National and State Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare;
- National and State Ministry of General Education and Instruction;
- National and State Ministry of Health;
- Ministry of Health-County Health Department;
- Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management;
- Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs;
- Relief and Rehabilitation Commission;
- Directorate of Civil Registry, Nationality, Passport & Immigration;
- Commission for Refugee Affairs;
- Ministry of Interior;
- Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources;
- Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development;
- Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development;
- Judiciary of South Sudan;
- Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Country Strategic Objectives

1: Support the Government of South Sudan in ensuring safe access to territory and asylum for all those in need of international protection, in full respect of international principles, including non-refoulement and the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum

CRRP partners will continue to support the Government of the Republic of South Sudan in ensuring safe and unhindered access to territory and asylum for all individuals in need of international protection, particularly those fleeing the conflict in Sudan. The Government will grant access to territory and determine refugee status in line with national legislation and international standards, including the principle of non-refoulement.

Reinforced joint border monitoring with the Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA), Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), and partners will remain essential to track new arrivals, identify vulnerabilities, and trigger an appropriate and timely humanitarian response.

Partners will also strengthen the capacity-building of border and protection actors, ensuring that border management respects the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum and safeguards against refoulement, exploitation, and human rights violations.

1 Access to territory and international protection

2 Life-saving protection and assistance

3 Resilience of refugees and asylum-seekers

2: Ensure timely, life-saving protection and humanitarian assistance for refugees and asylum-seekers, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable and at-risk groups

With continued arrivals from Sudan, CRRP partners will sustain and expand reception and transit capacities in key border areas and refugee-hosting locations to deliver life-saving protection and humanitarian assistance.

Priority will be given to identifying and supporting the most vulnerable and at-risk groups, ensuring their safe relocation from transit sites to designated camps and settlements, where they can access protection, shelter, education, health, nutrition, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and livelihood opportunities.

Recognizing that many refugees opt to live outside camps, partners will adopt a whole-of-society and area-based approach to extend services and inclusion to urban and out-of-camp populations, integrating them into national and local systems wherever feasible.

In light of severe funding constraints, partners will enhance prioritisation and targeting, promoting efficiency and sustainability by strengthening links between humanitarian assistance and national service delivery systems, particularly in health and education.

3: Strengthen resilience, self-reliance and inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers, contributing to sustainable development, peace and human rights in South Sudan

Building on South Sudan's progressive legal framework, which grants refugees the right to work, access to services, and education recognition, CRRP partners will support efforts to enhance resilience, self-reliance, and local inclusion.

Through area-based and settlement approaches, partners will promote livelihood opportunities, access to land, and local economic participation, especially in Maban, Jamjang, and Aweil, where the Government has generously allocated agricultural land.

The response will aim to reduce aid dependency and strengthen community ownership, local governance, and self-management, in close collaboration with local authorities and host communities.

In 2026, the response will advance the implementation of multi-year strategies in Maban, Jamjang, and Renk, linking humanitarian and development interventions to support coexistence, local service delivery, and long-term integration.

Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Approaches to Promote Protection, Resilience, Inclusion and Solutions

The CRRP for South Sudan is anchored in the interconnected pillars of humanitarian assistance, development, and peacebuilding, recognizing that durable solutions for displaced populations can only be achieved through their coordinated and complementary implementation.

Humanitarian partners continue to address immediate protection and life-saving needs, including access to territory and asylum, emergency shelter, food, sanitation, health, and education, while development actors lay the foundation for resilience, inclusion, and self-reliance through investments in skills development, livelihoods, and access to national systems. Wherever possible, humanitarian interventions are designed with a development lens, ensuring that short-term responses contribute to long-term, sustainable and resilient outcomes for both refugees and host communities.

In 2025, under the leadership of the HC/RC, South Sudan rolled out an Area-Based Coordination Model nationwide, operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus at the subnational level. Within this framework, UNHCR leads coordination in Upper Nile State, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, and Ruweng Administrative Area—three areas hosting the largest concentrations of refugees. Additionally, UNHCR leads deep-field coordination (sub-state level) in Renk and Maban, serving as critical hubs for cross-border response and local integration efforts. This model allows partners to strengthen area-based approaches, moving beyond a purely refugee-centred response toward joint programming that benefits both displaced and host populations, reinforces local governance, and enhances community resilience.

The peace component of the nexus is particularly important given the protracted nature of the Sudan conflict and limited prospects for return. With new arrivals and constrained resources, the potential for inter-community tensions remains high. To mitigate these risks, CRRP partners facilitate community dialogues, joint planning platforms, and conflict resolution training, building trust and cooperation among refugees, returnees, and host communities.

At the national level, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) have agreed on joint outcomes that directly support the nexus approach, focusing on rapid response, solutions, and peacebuilding. Refugees and asylum-seekers are explicitly included within these outcomes, ensuring that refugee response priorities are integrated into broader UN planning, complementing national and local development frameworks and enabling coherent engagement across humanitarian, development, and peace actors.

Furthermore, equitable resource distribution and inclusive service delivery are prioritised to reduce competition, strengthen social cohesion, and foster mutual support. Community-led conflict prevention mechanisms help identify and address grievances early, ensuring that tensions are managed constructively.

By linking humanitarian response with development and peacebuilding efforts, and aligning with UNCT-HCT joint outcomes, the CRRP contributes to a cohesive, stable, and forward-looking refugee response, advancing protection, resilience, and inclusion while supporting South Sudan's broader pathway toward sustainable peace and development.

South Sudan GRF Pledges

At the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, South Sudan made five pledges in education, jobs and livelihoods, energy and environment, statelessness, and solutions. During the 2025 GRF Progress Review, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to these pledges. The review also highlighted progress in key areas, including the inclusion of refugees in national statistics (Household Budget Survey 2025), efforts to address risks of statelessness, rollout of the Durable Solutions Strategy, and strengthened engagement with Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs), as well as development and humanitarian actors, to advance the inclusion of forcibly displaced persons in national systems.

South Sudan Durable Solutions Strategy and Plan of Action for Refugees, IDPs, Returnees and Host Communities

In October 2023, the South Sudan Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA) and the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) presented the [National Durable Solutions Strategy and Action Plan for Refugees, Returnees, Internally Displaced Persons \(IDPs\), and Host Communities](#), which the Council of Ministers subsequently approved. Pursuant to the Revitalized Agreement for Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), the [2019 National Framework for Return, Reintegration, and Relocation of Displaced Persons](#), was developed as well as the South Sudan Action Plan for Return and Recovery: 2024-2028. The plan provides a comprehensive guide to addressing the challenges faced by displaced persons returning to their places of origin, integrating into host communities, or seeking refuge in South Sudan.

Developed through extensive consultations involving displaced persons and host communities, the strategy aligns with Chapter 3 of the 2018 Peace Agreement on Humanitarian Assistance and Reconstruction. It is grounded in principles of development-oriented, area-based, and rights-based approaches, emphasising national ownership and the active participation of affected communities.

Key objectives include:

1. Creating a safe environment for durable solutions;
2. Providing basic services to support returns and integration;
3. Promoting social integration and livelihoods for refugees, IDPs, returnees, and host communities;
4. Strengthening government capacity at all levels; and
5. Enhancing government ownership and coordination for effective interventions.

Maban Strategy

Maban County in Upper Nile State is home to over 200,000 Sudanese refugees, with refugees making up a population roughly three times the size of the host community.

As the lead for the strategy, UNHCR's vision, jointly constructed with the local authorities and communities, is to build a peaceful, inclusive, and self-reliant Maban County, where refugees, returnees, and host communities live harmoniously, access quality, climate-resilient services integrated into national systems, and thrive through sustainable economic opportunities that foster dignity and resilience for all.

Strategic Objectives

- 1. Transition to sustainable settlements**
Promote a voluntary, secure transition from camps to integrated settlements that uphold refugee rights and dignity, promote inclusion in national systems, and ensure safety throughout the process.
- 2. Improve infrastructure and services**
Upgrade roads, water, sanitation, energy, health, and education with climate resilience and integration into government systems. Develop shared facilities to foster income generation and social cohesion.
- 3. Strengthen livelihoods and economic resilience**
Promote self-reliance and inclusion through access to documentation, work, education, and finance. Prioritize vulnerable groups and support climate-resilient livelihoods, with security measures enabling continuity.
- 4. Foster social cohesion and peacebuilding**
Scale-up conflict-sensitive inclusive peacebuilding and dialogue platforms to promote cooperation and peaceful coexistence.
- 5. Localize service delivery and governance**
Handover leadership to national authorities, refugee-led and host community structures. Build institutional capacity for inclusive, accountable services and support sustainable return, reintegration, and local ownership.

Jamjang Strategy

As the lead agency for this strategy, UNHCR's vision in Ruweng Administrative Area is to provide sustainable responses that promote solutions and self-reliance, while saving lives through emergency response and provision of essential basic services to the most vulnerable. Around 78 per cent of refugees and asylum-seekers are hosted in two camps: Pamir and Ajoung Thok, while 22 per cent of the refugee population has settled in the Yida settlement.

Strategic Objectives

1. **Promote the area-based and settlement approach:** Gradually transitioning from camps to integrated settlements while upholding the rights and dignity of refugees, IDPs and returnees through an area-based coordinated approach. This includes the engagement of all stakeholders as well as the government, communities, partners, donors and private sectors.
2. **Promote access to sustainable basic services:** Build institutional capacity for inclusive and accountable services including improvement of roads, water, sanitation, energy, health, and education with climate resilience while gradually handing over to state and national authorities, refugee-led and host community structures in IDPs and returnee areas.
3. **Promote self-reliance and economic empowerment:** Advocate and facilitate self-reliance and inclusion of refugees, IDPs and returnees into state and national systems through access to documentation, farmland work, education, agriculture and finance.
4. **Promote social cohesion and peacebuilding:** Scale-up conflict-sensitive inclusive peacebuilding and dialogue platforms to promote cooperation and peaceful coexistence between refugees, IDPs, returnees and host community.
5. **Deliver lifesaving and emergency response:** Enhance preparedness capacity to respond to life-saving needs of refugee new arrivals and other emerging humanitarian situations including flood affected communities, IDPs, refugees and returnees targeting the extremely vulnerable population.

Country Cross-Cutting Response Priorities



Age, gender, and diversity (AGD) and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

CRRP partners prioritise meaningful inclusion and diversity, focusing on age, gender, disability, and other identity aspects while ensuring strong accountability to affected populations. The 2026 CRRP promotes transparent, inclusive, and two-way communication to actively engage refugees and asylum-seekers, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are incorporated into decision-making processes. Tools such as focus group discussions, participatory assessments, community dialogues, and household surveys provide vital insights into the diverse circumstances of refugees, ensuring interventions are responsive to their unique needs. By fostering a sense of ownership and partnership, the CRRP enhances accountability, upholds dignity, and improves the effectiveness of interventions for the most vulnerable groups, ensuring that inclusivity is at the heart of the response.



Disability Inclusion

The South Sudan Refugee Response Plan places a strong emphasis on disability inclusion through the implementation of robust registration and profiling systems to effectively identify individuals with disabilities among refugees and asylum-seekers. Targeted interventions will encompass essential services such as healthcare, GBV prevention and response, education, and livelihoods, ensuring access to maternal and sexual and reproductive health services. The plan prioritises creating an accessible environment by ensuring that transit and reception centres, refugee camps and settlements have accessible facilities.



Youth

Recognizing the pivotal role of young people in shaping the future, the 2026 CRRP prioritises refugee youth's unique needs and aspirations. This includes providing targeted interventions such as education, skill-building, and vocational training programmes to empower youth to actively contribute to the socioeconomic development of refugee camps and settlements. The plan promotes youth participation in decision-making processes, ensuring their voices are heard and valued. Investing in youth, the CRRP aims to enhance resilience, foster a sense of purpose, and promote a foundation for long-term sustainable development and positive community engagement. Additionally, engagement with youth as agents of change in out-of-camp and urban contexts will be a priority in 2026.



Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The partners are committed to creating a safe and secure environment that mitigates the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. Comprehensive measures will be implemented, including awareness campaigns, training sessions, and community engagement initiatives. Clear reporting mechanisms will be reinforced to ensure that individuals can safely and confidentially report any concerns or incidents of abuse. By embedding a robust PSEA framework into its operations, the response plan will uphold the highest standards of integrity, accountability, and protection, safeguarding the dignity and well-being of all displaced people.

Partners will also strengthen survivor-centred referral pathways and coordination to ensure timely, confidential, and appropriate support for survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse. Continuous monitoring and accountability mechanisms will be applied to reinforce zero tolerance for SEA and promote trust between affected communities and service providers.



Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

Mental health and psychosocial well-being are essential components of the 2026 CRRP. The plan integrates MHPSS services across all sectors, including health, protection, and education, providing community-based psychosocial activities and targeted mental health services for individuals requiring specialised care. MHPSS will strengthen supportive systems for families and communities while building resilience through scalable interventions. These services will ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers can cope with the trauma and stress of displacement, fostering recovery and well-being.



Localisation

The 2026 CRRP will focus on expanding and deepening localisation efforts, recognizing the crucial role of local partners and communities in the refugee response. A key priority is addressing the need for more local partners by investing in capacity-building initiatives, ensuring that local NGOs and refugee-led organizations (RLOs) are not only recipients of seed funding but also fully engaged in CRRP planning and decision-making. In addition, humanitarian partners will increasingly work with community-led organizations to strengthen community-based protection and local solutions, which will also foster a gradual transition out of humanitarian assistance.



Climate Action

Refugees and asylum-seekers face heightened vulnerabilities in the context of climate change, with increased risks of extreme weather events and resource scarcity. The CRRP integrates climate-resilient measures into infrastructure development, resource management, and livelihood support with a strong focus on preventing the effects of climate shocks like floods, drought and heat waves in South Sudan. Sustainable practices, such as renewable energy solutions and environmentally conscious initiatives, will be prioritised to minimise the ecological footprint. Furthermore, community awareness and capacity-building programmes will enhance resilience in the face of climate-related challenges, with refugees and their hosts included in early warning systems.



Use of Cash Assistance

Cash assistance in 2026 will address refugees' immediate needs while promoting flexibility and efficiency. Through unrestricted multipurpose cash grants, partners empower refugees and asylum-seekers to make choices best suited to their personal circumstances, whether to secure food, shelter, or other essentials. This approach, based on robust market assessments and implemented in areas with safe access to markets - upholds dignity and autonomy, allowing individuals more control over their resources and reducing the logistical challenges associated with traditional in-kind aid. The use of cash assistance also brings economic benefits, stimulating local markets, enhancing supply chain routes, access to nutritious foods and supporting local businesses within and around refugee-hosting areas. By prioritising cash over physical aid where appropriate, the sector maximizes the impact of humanitarian interventions, ensuring a cost-effective, adaptable, and responsive approach. Similarly, partners provide cash to GBV survivors through cash for protection initiatives and explore cash modalities within the health sector. Cash assistance will also be provided as part of a survivor-centred GBV response to support immediate safety needs, recovery, and access to essential services while upholding dignity and confidentiality.

Sectoral Responses



PROTECTION

At key border points, the Government of South Sudan, in collaboration with humanitarian partners, will monitor population movements, conduct vulnerability profiling, and carry out health and nutrition screenings to ensure timely, lifesaving first-line responses. In line with the Refugee Act (2012), the Government will maintain access to territory and refugee status determination for all individuals in need of international protection arriving from Sudan, while preserving the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum through screening to separate combatants from civilians.

Upon arrival, refugees and asylum-seekers will receive protection assistance and support for safe transit to camps, settlements, or alternative reception sites. All new arrivals will be registered and issued documentation to safeguard their rights and facilitate access to services.

As more refugees settle in out-of-camp and urban areas, the 2026 response will scale up mobile registration, legal assistance, and community-based outreach to ensure equal access to protection and referral mechanisms beyond formal settlements. Following recent trends of spontaneous returns to Sudan, projected at approximately 115,000 individuals in 2026, a nationwide verification exercise – should funding allow - will generate updated population data to refine targeting and strengthen evidence-based planning across sectors.

Community engagement and two-way communication will remain central, enabling refugees to participate in decision-making and provide feedback through inclusive mechanisms. Strengthened community structures will promote self-management and resilience, reducing aid dependency and enhancing local coping capacities. Continuous protection monitoring, safety audits, and participatory assessments will inform advocacy, risk mitigation, and tailored interventions in both camp and urban settings. In 2026, partners will also seek to expand resettlement and complementary pathways for refugees facing heightened protection risks, while promoting local solutions that enhance coexistence and self-reliance.



Sub-Sector: Child Protection

The Child Protection subsector faces reduced funding and a decline in partner presence. In 2026, it will prioritise strengthening services for children at risk. Key efforts will include timely identification, Best Interests Procedures (BIP), and family tracing and reunification for unaccompanied and separated children. Child protection mechanisms will ensure that refugee and asylum-seeker children—both in camps and urban areas—are identified early, supported appropriately, and referred to relevant services.

The subsector will also build on existing collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, and partners to strengthen refugee-led organizations and community-based structures to increase community engagement and advance local solutions.

Through the area-based coordination model, partners will work with local authorities and service providers to integrate refugee children into national child protection systems, promoting sustainable, locally led responses. Child protection will continue to be mainstreamed across all sectors, ensuring children's safety and well-being. In addition, child participation and child-friendly communication will enhance accountability and empower children to actively engage in their own protection.

Data and evidence will guide the 2026 response, with findings from the verification exercise used to update information on children remaining in South Sudan following spontaneous returns to Sudan, thereby improving targeting, case management, and service delivery.



Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

In 2026, the GBV sub-sector will continue to strengthen survivor-centred prevention and response services through case management, psychosocial support and cash assistance, and comprehensive healthcare, including the clinical management of rape. These services will be delivered in close coordination with the protection, child protection, and health sectors across transit centres, camps, settlements, and urban areas. Advocacy with authorities will continue, to address child and early marriage, while systematic documentation and analysis will be maintained through the GBV Information Management System (GBVIMS+) to improve data quality and inform evidence-based programming.

In urban and out-of-camp settings, the GBV sub-sector will advocate for the inclusion of refugees within national GBV prevention and response systems, facilitating their access to existing service delivery points such as women and girls' friendly spaces, one-stop centres, and temporary shelters. This approach aims to strengthen local systems and reduce dependency on parallel humanitarian structures.

Specialised prevention initiatives such as SASA!, Girl Shine, and Engaging Men through Accountable Practice (EMAP) will continue to empower women and girls while promoting positive behavioural change among men and boys to prevent intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and early marriage. All sectors will integrate GBV risk mitigation, supported by joint safety audits, risk assessment training, and the promotion of safe disclosure and referral pathways to ensure comprehensive risk awareness.

Partnerships with livelihood and education sectors will focus on building resilience and economic independence for women and girls at risk, through safe livelihood opportunities and continued access to education. Capacity building for government counterparts, line ministries, and women-led refugee organizations will promote localisation, sustainability, and community leadership in GBV prevention and response.

The sub-sector will ensure ethical and confidential data management, with continuous training on GBVIMS+ to maintain data integrity and accountability. GBV prevention, risk mitigation, and response interventions will remain inclusive, addressing the needs of women at heightened risk, persons with disabilities, and LGBTIQ+ individuals.

In addition, the GBV sub-sector will prioritise community-based prevention approaches by strengthening engagement with refugee and host communities, including traditional and religious leaders, youth groups, and community volunteers. Enhanced awareness-raising on survivors' rights, available services, and prevention of harmful practices will be promoted through culturally appropriate messaging.



EDUCATION

As of November 2025, South Sudan hosts approximately 365,800 refugee children and young people in need of education services including 282,500 school-aged refugee children (3-17 years) and 83,300 aged 18-24 in need of tertiary education. Given this large student population, the 2026 education response will prioritise continuity of learning and the inclusion of refugee learners within the national education system, which remains under severe strain. With more than 2.8 million South Sudanese children already out of school, the arrival of new refugees will increase the pressures on limited educational infrastructure and teaching capacity. Education continues to be a key priority among refugee families, often influencing their settlement choices. As more refugees settle in urban and out-of-camp areas, closer collaboration with the Ministry of Education and education partners will be required to expand classroom capacity, support teachers, and integrate refugee students into local schools.

Education partners will adopt an area-based, 'whole-school' approach to address access barriers. Priorities include constructing and upgrading learning spaces, providing teaching and learning materials, strengthening foundational literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional learning, and offering teacher incentives and professional development. Child-friendly spaces in transit locations will also support structured play and early learning, while families receive information on schooling options to facilitate rapid enrolment and minimise learning loss.

In 2026, partners will also strengthen education opportunities for adolescents and youth, including those who were forced to abandon secondary or university studies during displacement. Working with higher education institutions, partners will explore scholarships, online learning, and skills-based training to expand access to post-secondary education and promote self-reliance. Language support and accelerated learning programmes will help students previously educated in Arabic transition into the South Sudanese curriculum, ensuring equitable access to education for all learners.



With support from the Mastercard Foundation over 200 students graduate from a 3-month long English Language Skills course © UNHCR/Reason Moses Runyanga



FOOD SECURITY

In 2026, the food security response will continue the strategic shift from blanket food assistance toward needs-based and self-reliant approaches, building on the joint UNHCR-WFP assessment conducted under the Joint Programme Design Mission (JPDM, 2023). The approach prioritises life-saving food support for the most vulnerable refugees and targeted assistance. Community consultations held during earlier phases will guide ongoing adjustments in 2026, ensuring transparency and accountability in targeting decisions. The response will focus on general food distribution, through cash-based transfers, tailored to local market conditions, seasonal trends, and vulnerability levels.

The transition from in-kind to cash is underpinned by continuous market and price monitoring, post-distribution reviews, and strong coordination with protection and cash stakeholders. Furthermore, contingency measures will be applied in areas with weak or highly volatile markets, which may include hybrid in-kind and cash modalities. This is particularly critical for refugee settlements in the northern regions bordering Sudan, where the lean season and rainy period heighten dependence on cross-border supplies. These imports often come at inflated prices, increasing vulnerability and reducing the effectiveness of cash-based transfers if not complemented by in-kind support.

To promote self-reliance and resilience, partners will scale up emergency agriculture and livelihood initiatives, including short-cycle food production, vegetable gardening, and fishing activities, to provide quick access to food within the first month of settlement. Collaboration with development and livelihood partners will be expanded to strengthen agricultural inputs, improve access to markets, and reduce reliance on monthly food assistance. The sector will also anticipate and mitigate the risks of land disputes within host communities and will incorporate conflict-sensitive land allocation mechanisms to ensure equitable access, reduce tensions, and safeguard both refugee and host community livelihoods.

For new arrivals, continuous food assistance will be provided from border entry points through transit sites to final destinations. Refugees will receive ready-to-eat food or high-energy biscuits during transit as well as a one-month cash ration in transit centres. Newly arrived refugees will then receive food assistance upon arrival in camps or settlements to ensure stability during the initial phase of displacement.

In established camps and settlements, general food distribution will continue to be based on needs-based targeting, supported by continuous monitoring, post-distribution assessments, and food basket price tracking to ensure equitable coverage. Combined with enhanced livelihood support and community engagement, this approach aims to build household resilience, strengthen food security, and reduce dependency on humanitarian aid while empowering refugees to achieve long-term self-sufficiency.



A Sudanese girl eats fortified biscuits after arriving in Renk with her family, waiting to register and receive cash assistance from WFP. © WFP/Eulalia Berlanga.



PUBLIC HEALTH

In 2026, life-saving health services will remain a top priority at reception, border, and transit locations, ensuring access to essential primary healthcare and the management of communicable and non-communicable diseases. At the same time, the sector will advance a more system-linked approach that strengthens outbreak preparedness, continuity of care, and integration with national health services. Health screening and immunisation campaigns at entry points will continue to reduce the risk of infectious disease transmission, complemented by safe water supply and disease surveillance in transit areas to prevent waterborne illnesses. The sector will also continue to deploy rapid response teams as needed to reinforce preparedness and support emergency vaccination.

The GBV sub-sector, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, and partner organizations will continue to deliver maternal, sexual and reproductive health services, including the clinical management of rape. Health facilities at transit

centres, camps and settlements will be equipped to provide delivery assistance, post-rape treatment, care for sexually transmitted infections, miscarriages, and safe blood transfusions. Access to mental health and psychosocial support will be expanded by integrating these services within primary health facilities and ensuring availability of essential medications.

Referral systems will be strengthened to support continuity and secondary healthcare for refugees with health conditions that cannot be supported through the primary healthcare facilities at entry points, camps and settlements. Through this, ambulance services for medical and surgical services will be supported. Capacities of referral facilities will also be supported to provide timely treatment.

In line with the Health Sector Transformation Project (HSTP), Health partners will continue strengthening refugees' access to health services by advancing inclusion in national systems, building local health system capacities and implementing programmes to sustain their access to essential services, including health, nutrition, mental health, reproductive health and HIV services ensuring sustainability and equitable access. Capacity-building for health workers, joint supervision, gap filling support to health facilities in camps/settlements handed over to government management will support the long-term goal of refugee health inclusion within the national health framework.

Given the increasing number of refugees in urban and out-of-camp settings, the 2026 response will also strengthen public health services in towns and county hospitals, improving access to care through partnerships with local authorities and NGOs. Priority will be placed on critical medications, emergency supplies, and disease surveillance systems, while coordination with development partners will enhance investment in infrastructure and workforce development.



NUTRITION

In 2026, partners will continue delivering life-saving and preventive nutrition services across transit centres, camps and settlements with a focus on both treatment and long-term nutrition resilience. The response will align with national health and nutrition programmes emphasising capacity-building and integration.

At border and transit sites where malnutrition risk is most prevalent, nutrition screening will identify malnourished children under five and pregnant and breastfeeding women, who will be enrolled in community and facility-based treatment programmes. Severe malnutrition cases with medical complications will be referred to stabilisation centres using transport assistance. In camps and settlements, nutrition services will be expanded through pre-positioning supplies, additional staff, and regular mass screenings using mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) measurements. Caregivers will be trained to screen their children at home, improving early detection and treatment.

Nutrition partners will also strengthen preventive measures which include the distribution of lipid-based nutrient supplements at border points and transit sites, with supplementary feeding for children under two and pregnant or breastfeeding women. Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) counselling will promote positive feeding and hygiene practices, while kitchen gardening demonstrations will enhance dietary diversity and self-reliance. Regular Vitamin A supplementation and deworming will support child health and reduce micronutrient deficiencies.

Given the growing number of refugees living in urban and out-of-camp settings, nutrition services will increasingly be delivered through public health facilities and community networks, ensuring equitable access to screening, counselling, and treatment. Community nutrition volunteers and health workers will continue to conduct outreach, awareness sessions, and referrals through radio messaging, peer education, and interpersonal communication. Coordination with the education sector will also continue, to provide school feeding programmes, support learning outcomes and address child hunger. This community-driven approach will meet immediate needs while building resilience and self-reliance.



LIVELIHOODS & ECONOMIC INCLUSION (LEI) AND ENVIRONMENT

Aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) pledges, the Government of South Sudan and partners will continue to expand refugee economic inclusion in 2026 through inclusive policies, social protection schemes, and livelihood support in refugee hosting areas.

The 2026 response will extend the 2022-2025 strategy and pave the way for the 2027-2032 framework, guiding efforts to expand economic opportunities through market-driven skills, employment, financial inclusion, and climate-resilient livelihoods. With refugees increasingly facing seasonal or targeted food assistance, scaling up livelihood interventions will be critical to reduce aid dependency, strengthen food security, and prevent harmful coping strategies.

Recognizing that many refugees, including new arrivals from Sudan, possess professional skills and higher education, partners will expand programmes that facilitate employment and entrepreneurship, particularly for those choosing to settle in urban and out-of-camp locations. Tailored interventions will link skilled refugees to opportunities in healthcare, education, construction, and small business sectors, in coordination with municipal authorities and private sector partners.

Vocational and technical training will bridge the gap between secondary and postsecondary skills, preparing refugees for both wage employment and self-employment. Training will focus on agriculture, crafts, industry, and services, complemented by apprenticeship and job placement schemes designed to meet local labour market demand and promote gender equality and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

To enhance self-reliance, partners will promote graduation programs that combine business development support, revolving grants, mentorship, and financial literacy with access to Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and microfinance institutions. Collaboration with development and private sector partners will strengthen value chains and open access to financial services. Digital connectivity and mobile banking will be leveraged to expand access to markets, education, and employment opportunities.

The LEI sector will also prioritise climate-smart livelihoods and environmental sustainability, including clean energy solutions, tree planting, and sustainable land management to build resilience against climate shocks. Through this integrated approach, the sector will foster economic empowerment, self-reliance, and resilience among refugees and host communities, contributing to sustainable development and peaceful coexistence in South Sudan.



SETTLEMENT & SHELTER/HOUSING

In 2026, partners will continue to implement a comprehensive shelter and settlement strategy to respond to the ongoing refugee influx from Sudan while strengthening sustainable, climate-resilient infrastructure in established refugee-hosting areas. Capacity for rapid expansion will be maintained in high-risk locations such as Renk, Malakal, Abyei, Maban, and Wedweil to ensure immediate response capacity should displacement patterns shift.

The shelter and settlement response will advance the integrated settlement approach, transitioning from traditional camp models toward planned settlements that promote self-reliance, coexistence, and access to shared services with host communities. The upgrading and expansion of Wedweil Refugee Settlement will serve as a model for integrated community planning, incorporating participatory design and equitable access to education, health, and livelihoods infrastructure.

Across all refugee-hosting areas, partners will support the progressive upgrading of shelters of over 9,000 temporary structures to durable, climate-resilient housing made with locally sourced and environmentally friendly materials. The focus will be on designs that improve safety, ventilation, and thermal comfort while reducing deforestation through the use of alternative, sustainable building materials. Green energy solutions, such as solar lighting and improved cooking technologies, will be incorporated to reduce environmental impact and strengthen community resilience.

The sector will also continue to utilise flood mitigation measures in areas prone to flooding through elevated shelter designs, improved drainage, and community-led preparedness efforts to minimise the impact of seasonal rains. Partners will also promote community-based maintenance and environmental management to ensure shelters remain safe and habitable over time.

Through this area-based and climate-conscious approach, the 2026 response aims to build sustainable settlements that support inclusion, reduce dependency on emergency shelter, and contribute to durable solutions for refugees and host communities alike.



WASH

In 2026, CRRP partners will continue to provide life-saving WASH services at border entry points, transit locations, and refugee-hosting areas, with a target of 20 litres of safe water per person per day through a combination of solar-powered water systems, network extensions, and water treatment units. Building on the major infrastructure gains of previous years, efforts will focus on sustaining and upgrading existing systems to enhance efficiency, reduce operational costs, and promote self-reliance, especially as approximately 75 per cent of households report public tap stands as their main water source.¹² Water trucking will be used only as a last resort, while repairs and rehabilitation of existing boreholes and storage tanks will ensure reliable access to water in both camps and out-of-camp settings.

The expansion of safe, dignified, and gender-sensitive sanitation facilities will continue in transit, reception, and settlement areas. This includes the construction and rehabilitation of latrines, bathing shelters, and septic tanks, along with regular desludging and maintenance to maintain hygienic conditions. Hand-washing stations and cleaning mechanisms will be strengthened to support improved sanitation practices. The integration of WASH and health interventions will remain a key priority to prevent cholera and other waterborne diseases, through coordinated hygiene messaging, distribution of soap, and timely outbreak response.

At transit and urban sites, refugees and host communities will receive essential WASH items, including soap and dignity kits, complemented by community-based hygiene promotion and risk communication on safe water use and sanitation practices. Trained community mobilisers and hygiene promoters will conduct household visits, radio messaging, and community meetings, engaging local leaders and volunteers to sustain positive behaviour change.

In refugee camps and settlements, partners will continue to expand solarised water systems and promote household-level sanitation solutions to reduce dependency on communal facilities.

Climate-smart WASH solutions, including rainwater harvesting, improved drainage, and solid waste management, will be scaled up in 2026 to reduce environmental impacts and enhance resilience to floods and droughts. This revised approach in 2026 will ensure more sustainable access to safe water and sanitation, whilst fostering community ownership and building the foundation for resilient, environmentally sustainable WASH systems that benefit both refugees and host communities.



BASIC NEEDS

In 2026, the basic needs response will continue to combine cash-based assistance and in-kind support, ensuring refugees and asylum-seekers can meet their essential needs with dignity while progressively reducing dependency on aid. Given persistent inflation, rising market prices, recurrent flooding, and the continued movement of refugees into urban and peri-urban areas, predictable and flexible basic needs assistance remains critical. The response will be coordinated in line with the national Cash Coordination Model, bringing together government counterparts, UN agencies, and NGOs for a unified approach under the leadership of the Cash Working Group. This harmonised system will strengthen data sharing, joint targeting, and monitoring, ensuring efficiency and preventing duplication. With the majority of refugees biometrically registered, partners will use verified data to enhance accountability and transparency in assistance delivery.

Multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) will remain the preferred modality for meeting basic needs, enabling households to prioritise spending on food, shelter, healthcare, and other essentials. The 2025 Inter-Sector Needs Assessment highlights the scale of needs, with 92 per cent of households citing food and 79 per cent citing shelter as top priorities.¹³ MPCA will be complemented by sector-specific cash for protection and health to ensure that individuals with heightened vulnerabilities receive targeted support. As refugee populations increasingly reside in urban and out-of-camp settings,

¹²The ISNA refugee data is based on a sample of 146 households from selected sites and is not representative of the entire refugee population in South Sudan. With a margin of error of approximately $\pm 8\%$, these findings should be considered indicative only and not generalized to all refugees in South Sudan.

¹³Idem.

CRRP partners will scale up urban cash programming, integrating refugees into local markets and financial systems to foster inclusion and stimulate local economies.

Alongside cash, partners will continue to provide essential non-food items (NFIs) such as cooking sets, blankets, solar lamps, and hygiene materials to meet immediate survival needs for new arrivals. The 2026 response will include replacement NFIs for long-term refugees and vulnerable households whose items have worn out or been lost due to flooding or relocation. Replacement NFIs will be guided by vulnerability and needs assessments to ensure assistance reaches households with genuine gaps, avoiding blanket distribution. Whenever feasible, these NFIs will be delivered through cash or voucher mechanisms, promoting choice, reducing logistics costs, and supporting local supply chains.

The Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) framework will guide all targeting and delivery mechanisms to ensure inclusion of women, older persons, youth, and persons with disabilities. The sector will prioritise accessible distribution points and tailor support to ensure meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities, older persons, and caregivers. Cash and NFI assistance will be closely aligned with food security, protection, and livelihoods interventions, enabling a more holistic approach that links immediate relief with longer-term recovery.

In 2026, the sector will prioritise monetising assistance where markets are functional, while maintaining contingency stocks for emergencies and new influxes. Linkages with government social protection programmes and local safety nets will be reinforced, allowing refugees and vulnerable host community members to progressively access national systems. This integrated approach meets urgent humanitarian needs while building household resilience, strengthening coping mechanisms, and promoting self-reliance across all refugee-hosting areas.

Partnership and Coordination

The refugee response in South Sudan continues to operate under the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), jointly led by CRA and UNHCR, while remaining fully aligned with the national Humanitarian Coordination Architecture. In line with the Humanitarian Reset, RCM and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Cluster system work closely at both national and subnational levels. For the 2026 planning cycle, the Inter-Sector Needs Assessment (ISNA) explicitly included refugees as a population group, ensuring their needs are reflected in joint analysis and prioritisation. Sector leads under the CRRP are working more closely with the respective clusters to promote thematic analysis, shared assessments, and joint planning across population groups.

In parallel, the rollout of the Area-Based Coordination Model across South Sudan has strengthened subnational coordination. Within this framework, UNHCR leads state-level coordination in Upper Nile State, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, and Ruweng Administrative Area—three key refugee-hosting regions. The Area-Based Coordinators, who are UNHCR Heads of Offices in these states, facilitate inclusive coordination platforms that bridge humanitarian, development, and peace components, enabling joint action across actors and mandates. This model promotes locally grounded, integrated approaches to meet immediate humanitarian needs while supporting long-term resilience and inclusion.












At the national level, the Refugee Coordination Meeting serves as the primary forum for strategic discussions and decision-making, fostering collaboration among humanitarian and development partners and ensuring close engagement with government counterparts. Sectoral coordination groups provide technical support and facilitate information sharing, while regular coordination at camp and settlement levels ensures alignment between partners and local authorities. With the continued increase in out-of-camp and urban refugees, UNHCR and partners will strengthen coordination with municipal and county authorities to promote inclusion of refugees in national systems and broader humanitarian and development programmes.

The 2026 CRRP is structured around a dual focus on critical needs and sustainable responses, prioritising life-saving protection and assistance while planning and implementing interventions that reduce aid dependency, strengthen resilience, and advance pathways toward solutions. The critical needs component of the CRRP is incorporated in the Refugee Chapter of the HNRP, including its financial needs.

Annex 1 - List of Partners

Partner
Food and Agriculture Organization
International Organization for Migration
United Nations Children's Fund
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
United Nations Mine Action Service
United Nations Office for Project Services
World Food Programme
World Health Organization
ACROSS
Action African Help International
Adventist Development and Relief Agency
Africa Development Aid
Africa Humanitarian Action
African Initiative for Relief and Development
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
Alight
Caritas International
Coalition for Humanity
Community Engagement Network (CEN)
Community In Need Aid
Concern Worldwide
Danish Refugee Council
Fin Church Aid
Great Upper Nile Organization
Health Link
Healthcare Foundation Organization (HFO)
Hold the Child
Humanitarian and Development Consortium
Humanity and Inclusion
Humanity Worldwide
INKOMOKO
International Medical Corps
International Rescue Committee
Jesuit Refugee Service
Lutheran World Federation
Mentor Initiatives
National Initiatives for Development Organization
Network for Environment Programs
Norwegian Church Aid
Norwegian Refugee Council
OXFAM International - GB
Peace Winds Japan
Plan International
Refugee Central Committee
Refugee Development Organization
Relief International
Samaritan's Purse
Save the Children International
Solidarités International
South Sudan Red Cross
War Child Holland
Windle Trust International
Women and Girls Development Organization
Women Empowerment Network Organization
World Vision International
Youth Association for Peace and Development Organization

Annex 2 - Country Monitoring Framework

Sector	Indicator	Target	
	Protection	# of people recorded at border crossing points	171,587
		# of people registered on an individual basis	126,231
		# of people who received protection services	362,644
		# of people assisted with onward transportation to their intended location	75,525
		Proportion of people who have access to safe feedback and response mechanisms	100
	Child Protection	# of children and caregivers who received child protection services	44,025
		# of unaccompanied and separated children reunited with their caregivers	262
	Gender-Based Violence	# of identified GBV survivors and persons at risk assisted with appropriate support (including dignity kits, life-saving services, psychosocial support, case management, referral)	110,802
		# of people reached through GBV prevention activities	54,886
		Education	Number of children enrolled in primary education
		Number of children enrolled in secondary education	52,279
		Number of children enrolled in tertiary education	615
	Food Security	# of people receiving food assistance	293,601
	Health	# of individual consultations supported in healthcare services	264,691
		Refugees are included in national health policies and plans	Yes
		# of births attended by skilled health workers	13,685
	Nutrition	# of children admitted to therapeutic feed programme (TFP)	11,238
	WASH	# of people per communal toilets/latrines	20
		Average # of litres of potable water available per person per day	20
	Shelter	# of emergency shelters upgraded	9,492
		# of people supported with more sustainable shelter/ housing	48,159
	NFI	# of people who have received non-food items	87,770
	Basic Needs	# of people benefiting from the multipurpose cash assistance (CBI)	13,920
	Livelihoods	# of people who benefited from livelihoods and economic inclusion interventions	103,166
	Partnership	# of CRRP Partners able to deliver in the response	57