Border Monitoring

PROJECT 21

Comparative analysis

Chad - Sudanese emergency (*April 2023 – March 2026*)

Displacement and protection dynamics related to the Sudanese crisis (*April 2023 – March 2026*)

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Data sources

CRT : Red Cross of Chad
CIAUD : Comité International pour l'Aide d'Urgence et le Développement
UNHCR : United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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1. General Context and Framework for Analysis

Since the outbreak of the armed conflict in Sudan in April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the region has been facing a major displacement crisis. The intensification and prolongation of the fighting has led to a widespread deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation, particularly in Darfur and in the border areas.

Over time, civilian populations have faced serious violations of rights including the right to life, disruption of essential services, and limited access to economic opportunities and livelihoods. This situation has forced many households to flee to neighboring countries, including Chad, to seek international protection.

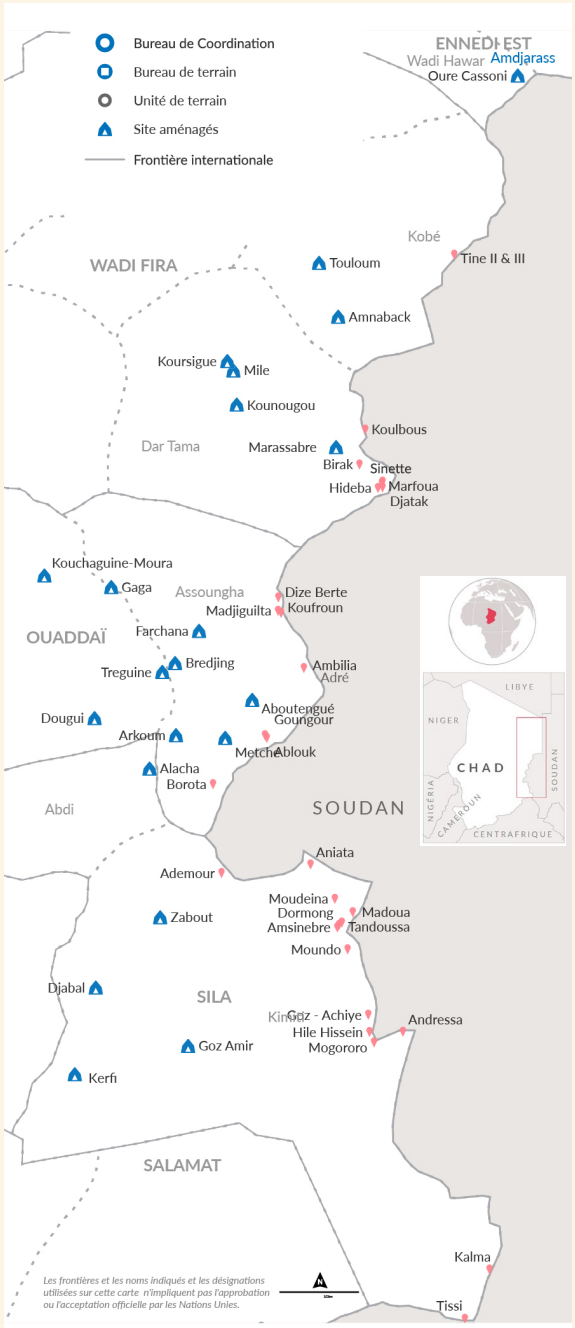
Eastern Chad serves as a major destination for displacement flows from Sudan, particularly in the provinces of Ouaddaï, Wadi Fira, Ennedi Est and Sila, through the main entry points of Adré, Tiné, Kariari and Adé.

Project 21 (P21) border monitoring documents displacement dynamics based on profiles, reasons for departure and protection risks.

Over three time periods (April 2023 – March 2024, April 2024 – March 2025 and April 2025 – March 2026), more than 67,000 households, representing more than 213,000 individuals, were interviewed at ports of entry and transit sites.

This report provides a comparative analysis of the three periods in order to identify the evolution of displacement dynamics, profiles and protection risks.

Graph 1: Map of refugee reception areas and entry points in eastern Chad



2. Methodological framework

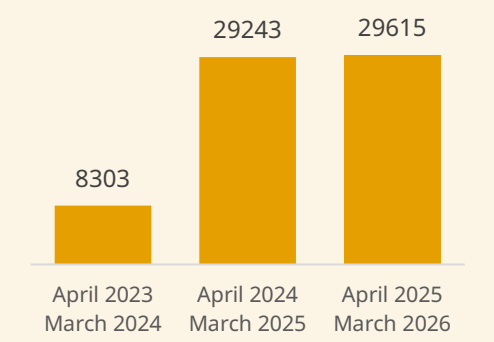
The analysis presented in this report is based on consolidated data from Project 21 (P21) border monitoring, collected between April 2023 and March 2026 at border entry points and transit sites in eastern Chad. Interviews were conducted with households in the days following their arrival, documenting perceptions directly linked to the experience during flight.

Over the three periods analyzed, the data cover 8,303 households (24,909 individuals) for April 2023 – March 2024, 29,243 households (105,324 individuals) for April 2024 – March 2025 and 29,615 households (83,172 individuals) for April 2025 – March 2026, respectively.

In total, the data represent about 30 per cent of the households registered since April 2023, giving the analysis a high level of reliability and representativeness of the trends observed.

The report takes a comparative approach over three successive twelve-month periods, in order to highlight the changing profiles of the new arrivals, the reasons for the displacement and the protection risks they face during their flight. This approach makes it possible to identify both the structural trends of the crisis and the gradual transformation of displacement dynamics, in line with the evolution of the security, humanitarian and socio-economic context.

Graph 2 : interviewees by period



Adré entry point, arrival of new refugees in Chad. ©UNHCR 2024

3. Profiles of new arrivals

The analysis of household head profiles reveals a significant increase in the proportion of women among the border flows observed during the first two years of the crisis. From April 2023 to March 2024, 82per cent of the households interviewed were headed by women, compared to 18 per cent by men. This trend is reinforced in the second period (April 2024 - March 2025), when the proportion of women climbs to 85 per cent, confirming a marked overrepresentation of female-headed households in the early stages of displacement.

This configuration is largely explained by the security situation in the areas of departure, where men of fighting age are at high risk of arbitrary arrest, suspicion of belonging to armed groups or forced recruitment. According to survivors' testimonies, some men attempting to flee were also systematically executed; which severely hampers their ability to leave certain areas.

This situation leads households to adopt different displacement strategies, prioritizing the departure of women, children, and the elderly.

The third period (*April 2025 – March 2026*) marks, however, a significant change in the profile of arrivals, with an increase in the proportion of households headed by men, which reaches 34 per cent, compared to 66 per cent of women. This evolution is part of a more refined dynamic observed during this period.

Between August and September 2025, the proportion of male heads of household sporadically reached about 60 per cent, exceeding that of women and reflecting a temporary shift in the demographic profile.

This shift comes amid rapidly changing security conditions, particularly following the fall of the city of ***El Fasher***[1] on October 24, 2025.

This event likely contributed to increased flight movements, including by men, due to increased exposure to the risks of forced recruitment, arbitrary arrest, and other forms of targeted violence.

Moreover, this development may reflect a relaxation of passage constraints, combined with an intensification of security and economic pressures, which have facilitated, but also forced men to leave their areas of residence.

Despite the peak observed in August and September 2025 in the proportion of male-headed households, the predominance of female-headed households remains a structural feature of migration patterns, reflecting gender-based differences in risk exposure and vulnerability.

[1] *The city of El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, is located in western Sudan, relatively close to the border with Chad; this makes it a strategic location whose security situation has a direct impact on displacement flows to eastern Chad.*

4. Displacement dynamics

The analysis of the reasons for departure highlights a gradual evolution of the dynamics of displacement during the three years of the crisis.

Widespread insecurity linked to armed conflict remains the main driver of displacement in all the periods analyzed. It was cited by 89 per cent of households during the first period (*April 2023 – March 2024*), reflecting an immediate flight from violence and direct threats. This proportion then decreased to 52 per cent during the second period, before stabilizing at 57 per cent during the third.

This relative decline does not reflect an improvement in the security situation, but rather a diversification of drivers of departure in a context of protracted crisis.

Indeed, the reasons related to the lack of access to economic opportunities and basic services, which were non-existent in the first period, emerge significantly in the second (25 per cent) before stabilizing at around 10 per cent in the third year.

At the same time, flight as a preventive measure also appear from the second period, around 10 per cent of responses, reflecting an atmosphere of anticipation regarding the deterioration of the security situation.

These developments indicate that, as the crisis drags on, households are adopting strategies that delay their departure.

Many households strive to maintain their livelihoods for as long as possible and only leave their area of residence after their resources are exhausted.

Thus, the displacement observed in the most recent periods increasingly reflects late departures, resulting not only from the persistence of insecurity, but also from the inability of households to continue to meet their needs in an increasingly constrained environment.

Adré entry point, arrival of new refugees, Chad-Sudan border, ©UNHCR 2024

5. Violations and hazards encountered and evolving risks

A comparison of displacement dynamics between the three periods reveals a gradual increase in exposure to violence, as well as a shift in the nature of the risks encountered during flight. The proportion of households reporting that they had experienced at least one violation rose from 45 per cent during the first period (April 2023–March 2024) to 56 per cent during the second, and then to 67 per cent during the third, reflecting a continuous deterioration in displacement conditions.

More specifically, physical assaults are steadily increasing (15 per cent → 25 per cent → 26 per cent), while extortion of property is increasing more sharply (11 per cent → 15 per cent → 25 per cent), reflecting an intensification of economic exploitation practices along escape routes. Illegal taxes, while still present (12 per cent → 8 per cent → 6 per cent), appear to be evolving into more direct and opportunistic forms of extortion. Sexual violence, consistently reported at lower levels (2 per cent to 3 per cent), indicates persistent risks, but likely under-reported due to cultural sensitivity and social norms.

Beyond the increase in the number of violations, the data reveal a shift in the nature of the risks. In the first year of the crisis, the violence observed was mainly linked to armed clashes and widespread insecurity in the areas of departure.

From the second period, and then more markedly during the third period, the risks evolve towards a more complex pattern combining physical violence, economic exploitation and other forms of coercive control.

This development shows that escape routes are spaces where certain actors systematically exploit the vulnerability of displaced populations. The intensification of extortion and economic predatory practices reflects an adaptation of the dynamics of violence to a context of protracted displacement.

Moreover, the evolution of risks appears closely linked to changing departure dynamics. As households leave their area of residence later, often after their resources have been exhausted and in precarious economic conditions, they begin displacement with greatly reduced resilience capacities. This heightened vulnerability increases their exposure to abuse and limits their ability to avoid or mitigate the risks they face.

Thus, flight no longer represents a simple transition toward safety, but has become a space of prolonged violence, where the effects of conflict, the deterioration of living conditions and the multiplication of exploitative practices of all kinds are combined.

6. Family fragmentation and associated vulnerabilities

Family fragmentation is a major and persistent trend observed over all three periods, with a notable intensification from the second year of the crisis. The proportion of households that reported having relatives who remained in Sudan increased from 31 per cent in the first period (*April 2023 – March 2024*) to 51 per cent in the second, before stabilizing at a high level of around 44 per cent in the third.

This development reflects a persistent trend of family separation, closely linked to the prolonged conflict and the increasing complexity of displacement conditions. It also indicates that departures are increasingly fragmented, as households are not always able to flee together.

The analysis of the reasons for these separations highlights a change in explanatory factors over time. While the reasons are not clearly documented in the first period, data from the subsequent periods indicate that the lack of means of transport becomes the dominant factor, reaching 22 per cent in the second period and then 62 per cent in the third (*April 2025 – March 2026*).

Fears of arbitrary arrest (10 per cent → 17 per cent) and forced recruitment (8 per cent → 6 per cent) also appear to be significant factors.

These indicators confirm that family fragmentation is not solely the result of strategic choices but is part of an environment marked by both security pressures and growing economic vulnerability, which limit the ability of households to organize a collective departure.

The consequences of this fragmentation are multiple and linked to protection. It increases the psychosocial distress of households, complicates the care of children, particularly in cases of separation or unaccompanied children and weakens support mechanisms within families and communities. It can also influence future decisions of households, in terms of reunification, return or settlement, which often remain conditioned by the situation of family members/relatives remaining in areas of origin in Sudan.

Family fragmentation appears to be a key factor in exacerbating vulnerabilities and requires heightened attention in protection responses, especially in terms of family reunification, child protection, and psychosocial support.

7. Basic Needs

The analysis of the needs expressed by households shows a stability of priorities over all three periods, dominated by kitchen utensils and bedding items. In the first period (April 2023 – March 2024), these needs each reached 44 per cent. During the the second period, bedding items remained at 44 per cent, while kitchen utensils accounted for 31 per cent. During the third period, kitchen utensils reached 41 per cent and bedding items 39 per cent.

This consistency reflects the need for newly arrived households to quickly rebuild a minimum subsistence level, allowing them to organize the basic conditions of their daily lives after fleeing. It also reflects the immediate nature of their needs upon arrival, which focus on survival and the creation of a living environment that meets their basic needs.

However, a comparative analysis reveals a gradual evolution in the nature of needs, which goes beyond a basic emergency response. The persistence of these needs over time, combined with the recurrent presence of requests related to clothing, firewood, household items or building materials, indicates that some households are increasingly engaging in short to medium-term stabilization strategies.

This trend reflects a prolonged presence in and around transit centres, which were initially designed as temporary spaces.

In some cases, these places appear to be de facto settlement areas, particularly when they offer relative access to economic opportunities, services or community networks.

Thus, the needs expressed no longer reflect merely an emergency situation but indicate a shift toward strategies for adapting to a prolonged crisis, in which households are seeking to organize their daily lives in a sustainable manner.

Adré border (Ouaddaï), a new Sudanese refugee arrived in Chad. ©UNHCR 2024

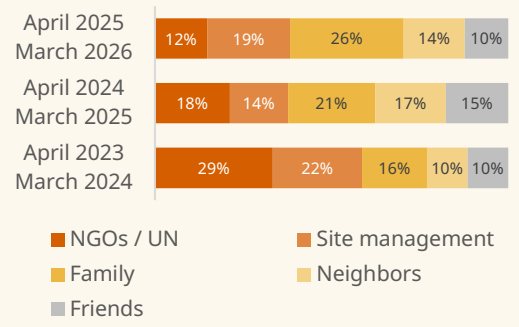
8. Gender-based violence: support mechanisms

An analysis of the support mechanisms used by survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) reveals a predominance of informal support networks, as well as a gradual shift in the ways in which survivors seek help across the three time periods.

During the first period (April 2023 – March 2024), NGOs and UN agencies were the main sources of support mentioned (29 per cent), followed by camp/site managers (22 per cent) and family (16 per cent). This pattern indicates that households were turning to humanitarian actors as a priority in an emergency context.

During the second period, sources of support become more diverse and dispersed, with a more balanced distribution between family (21 per cent), NGOs/UN (18 per cent), neighbors (17 per cent) and friends (15 per cent). This shift reflects a broadening of recourse strategies, in a context where formal and informal mechanisms coexist.

Graph 3: Source of support (GBV)



The third period marks a clearer reconfiguration of practices, with a predominance of local networks: the family becomes the first resort (26 per cent), followed by camp/site managers (19 per cent), while NGOs and UN agencies decline to 12 per cent. This trend indicates an increasing reliance on informal mechanisms to the detriment of specialized services.

This shift reflects persistent or even increasing underuse of formal GBV services, which can be explained by several factors: fear of stigma, privacy concerns, physical barriers to accessing services, lack of safe spaces, or a lack of information about available services.

While informal support networks are essential, they have limitations when it comes to care and confidentiality. This type of support can expose survivors to the risk of “revictimization”, particularly through stigmatization, pressure, or abuse.

Programmatically, these findings underscore the need to improve the accessibility and proximity of GBV services, enhance safe and confidential referral mechanisms, and intensify community awareness-raising efforts, particularly in transit areas where access to services remains limited due to certain social, cultural, and informational constraints.

9. Child protection: dropping out of school and associated risks

The situation of children appears particularly alarming in light of the trends observed over the three periods, which are characterized by **school dropout rates** as well as by the significant presence of **unaccompanied or separated children (UASC).**

The proportion of households reporting that their children are out of school due to the crisis increased from 18 per cent in the first period (*April 2023 – March 2024*) to 84 per cent in the second, before remaining at a high level of 63 per cent in the third.

At the same time, the proportion of households with school-age children remains high (56 per cent → 66 per cent → 49 per cent), indicating that school drop-out is not the result of a small number of children concerned, but rather of severely disrupted access to education in the context of displacement, with many children not having been in school for nearly three years.

This prolonged out-of-school participation is a major aggravating factor in protection risks, exposing children to situations of child labour, early marriage, neglect and exploitation, in an environment marked by precariousness and instability.

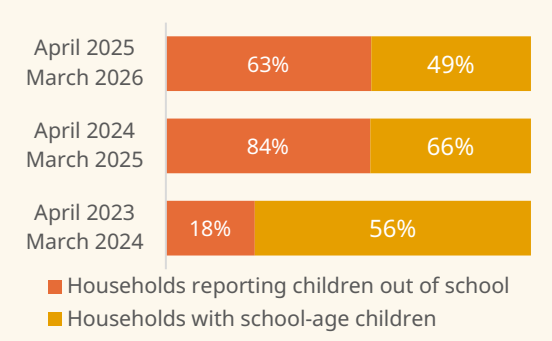
The presence of unaccompanied or separated children is another critical dimension. It is reported by 25 per cent of households in the first period, then 7 per cent in the second and 10 per cent in the third.

Although the proportion decreases after the first period, it remains significant and confirms the persistence of separation dynamics, including secondary separations, as well as situations of non-accompaniment linked to flight conditions and family fragmentation.

The combination of school dropout, the presence of unaccompanied / separated children and psychosocial trauma of children reflects a deterioration in child protection mechanisms, depriving children of a structuring environment and, sometimes, of their family support. This situation increases their exposure to risks and limits their access to protection services.

Child protection stands out as a key programmatic priority. It requires strengthening mechanisms for identifying and caring for unaccompanied and separated children, improving access to education, and developing holistic and integrated interventions aimed to reduce the protection risks to which children are exposed in reception areas.

Graph 4: Access to education



10. Documentation and legal protection

Documentation is a cross-cutting issue throughout all three years. The proportion of households without individual documents is very high in the first period (54 per cent), improves slightly in the second period (48 per cent), and then deteriorates significantly over the last 12 months (62 per cent).

In addition, the proportion of households possessing a birth certificate rose from 19 per cent in the first period to 23 per cent in the second, before falling to 8 per cent in the third period. This recent decline highlights the legal vulnerabilities of households, particularly children.

The reasons for not possessing documents are also changing. During the second period, documents were most often reported as lost (46 per cent) or burned (42 per cent). In the third period, destruction became the primary reason (68 per cent), surpassing loss (26 per cent). This trend indicates that the violence of the triggering events and the conditions of flight are increasingly contributing to the physical destruction of identity documents.

In situations of prolonged stay in transit or in exile, the lack of documentation increases the risk of abuse and heightens the risk of statelessness, particularly for children born in exile or who are not registered.

Exchange with refugees who have recently arrived in Chad. ©UNHCR 2025

11. Cross-sectional analysis

A comparative analysis of the three periods highlights a protection crisis that is becoming increasingly protracted and complex, with a gradual change in the dynamics of displacement.

The first year is dominated by sudden and hasty departures linked to widespread insecurity, while the subsequent periods are characterized by delayed displacement, occurring after livelihoods have been exhausted and in a context of lack of access to economic opportunities.

In addition, the continued increase in reported violations confirms that escape routes are high-risk areas, where physical violence, economic exploitation and forms of coercion are combined.

This trend occurs in a context where populations are leaving their areas of residence under increasingly deteriorating conditions, thereby increasing their exposure to abuse

Exchanges between enumerator and new arrivals, Tiné border (Wadi Fira) ©CRT 2026

The continued fragmentation of households is another trend, reflecting increasingly forced and fragmented departures. This dynamic is closely linked to constraints related to the lack of economic opportunities and basic services as well as security risks, especially for men of fighting age.

The data highlight a deterioration in child protection mechanisms, characterized by persistent school dropouts and a significant of unaccompanied or separated children.

Despite the support mechanisms put in place by the authorities, UNHCR and partners, including foster families, their effectiveness remains limited. This limitation is linked to the reluctance of some children to stay in these places, as well as to the frequency of secondary movements.

As a result, many children remain insufficiently supported and face difficulties accessing basic services and education, which increases their vulnerability to exploitation, neglect, and violence.

Finally, the persistence of essential needs, the under-use of specialized GBV services and the difficulties of accessing to documentation confirm the gradual establishment of a protracted crisis in transit sites and their surroundings, which tend to transform these spaces into de facto places of settlement.

12. Implications for planning

In conclusion, analyses from border monitoring (P21) show that the humanitarian crisis in eastern Chad, induced by the armed conflict in Sudan, is no longer solely an emergency response, but is now part of a medium-term protection dynamic. This evolution reflects the persistence of needs, the increasing complexity of protection risks and the gradual anchoring of populations in protracted situations of displacement. It confirms that the crisis now goes beyond the mere management of flows at entry points and requires a continuous adaptation of responses.

In this perspective, the humanitarian situation calls for the implementation of more integrated and coordinated interventions between actors, articulating immediate assistance and resilience approaches, while being adapted to the duration and evolution of the crisis. Planning priorities include:

Area of intervention	Priority actions	Actors
Border protection	Strengthening border protection arrangements, including screening and early identification of persons at risk	UNHCR, CNARR, protection partners, NGOs, local authorities
Child protection	Expansion of child protection services, with a particular focus on (UAC/SC). (identification, case management, family reunification)	UNICEF, UNHCR, child protection partners, Government social services
Gender-based violence (GBV)	Strengthening support for survivors of gender-based violence and improving access to safe referral mechanisms	UNFPA, UNHCR, NGOs specialized in GBV, health structures, community actors
Civil documentation and legal protection	Strengthen access to civil documentation, through awareness-raising and legal support, in order to promote and facilitate birth registration.	UNHCR, CNARR, ANATS, administrative authorities (civil status), legal partners
Integrated approach / recovery	Development of integrated approaches combining protection, access to essential services and livelihood support, to respond to the prolongation of stays in transit sites	UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, FAO, multi-sectoral NGOs, local authorities

13. Annexes

Useful links

P21 Border Monitoring (interactive Dashboard) |	https://bit.ly/BorderMonitoring-SdnEmergency
P21Monitoring Protection (interactive Dashboard) |	https://bit.ly/MonitoringP21-Tchad
Monitoring Protection |	Analytical Report Jan-Sep 2025
Border Monitoring |	Main trends 2024 vs. 2025
Border Monitoring |	Annual Report 2025
Mapping of Refugee Led Organization (RLO) |	https://bit.ly/tchad-RLOs_2025
P21 Product Feedback Form |	https://bit.ly/EvaluationProduitsP21-Tchad
Operational Data Portal (UNHCR) |	https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/tcd
Sudanese Emergency Coordination Platform |	https://new.ajala.app/index.php

Acronyms

ANATS :	Agence Nationale des Titres Sécurisés
CNARR :	Commission Nationale pour l'Accueil et la Réinsertion des Réfugiés et des Rapatriés
FAO :	Food and Agriculture Organization
UNFPA :	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR :	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF :	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP :	World Food Programme

Contacts

Antony Abogi : *Deputy Representative, N'Djamena*, abogi@unhcr.org
Moulaye Aidara : *Senior Protection Officer, N'Djamena*, aidara@unhcr.org
Safi Ilunga : *Senior Protection Officer, Abéché*, ilungal@unhcr.org
Armand N'dri : *Associate Info. Management Officer, N'Djamena*, ndri@unhcr.org