South Sudanese spontaneous returnees have been reported in August 2023

An accumulated number of 935,350 spontaneous refugee returnees have been reported since the signing of the revitalized peace agreement in October 2018 to 31 August 2023.

UNHCR and South Sudan’s Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) are pleased to share this monthly update on spontaneous refugee returnees and the returns of South Sudanese returning in adverse circumstance ascribing to Sudan conflict between arm groups.

The dashboard highlights cross-border refugee movements of South Sudanese from neighboring countries during the month of August 2023.

According to UNHCR, IOM and RRC joint border monitoring data, a total of 44,102 South Sudanese have been reported from Sudan in August 2023.

Top 5 cumulative counties of return from October 2018 to August 2023

Returns from October 2018 - August 2023

Return per States for the month of August 2023

Top 3 border entry point August 2023
KEY HIGHLIGHTS ON REFUGEE RETURNS

The return of 66,970 South Sudanese spontaneous refugees was verified and reported in August 2023. This is a significant increase as compared to the returns recorded in the month of July 2023.

The significant increase is due to conflict in the country of asylum especially in Sudan impacting the spontaneous refugee returns to South Sudan.

Most of the returns for August 2023 were from Sudan through Wunthou (Joda) in Upper Nile, Panakuach in Unity and Kir Adam in Northern Bahr El Ghazal States border crossing points of South Sudan. In addition, to return from Ethiopia crossed via Matar/Burebiey and Pagak in Upper Nile and Pochalla in Jonglei States.

This information on returnees was corroborated through 46 Focus Group Discussions and 26 key informant interviews during the month of August 2023 in areas of return in the following 10 states of Upper Nile, Unity, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Western Bahr El Ghazal, Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Western Equatoria and Jonglei.

The most verified returnees to nine States were mostly from Sudan (66%), Ethiopia (29%) and less than 10% from Uganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central Africa Republic.

I- Reunite with family (22%).
II- Insecurity in Country of Asylum (23%)
III- Lack of access to basic services (education, health, housing etc) (11%)

The most cited reasons for leaving the country of asylum include:

- Reunite with family members (22%)
- Insecurity in the country of asylum (23%)
- Lack of access to basic services (education, health, housing etc) (11%)
- Exploitation (corruption, extortion) (17%)
- Physical violence (17%)
- Loss of belongings (14%)
- Theft of belongings (11%)

The most cited protection concerns at border points and in areas of return include:

- Exploitation (corruption, extortion) (17%)
- Physical violence (17%)
- Loss of belongings (14%)
- Theft of belongings (11%)

**METHODOLOGY**

The Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) in collaboration with UNHCR and partners monitors cross-border movements in areas of high return and at 42 border entry points with Sudan recording the highest border entry points. Information is collected through interviews with returnees at border points and in areas of high returns through KII and FGD regularly in areas of high return. The information was then triangulated with data collected during physical observations, and meetings with local authorities and faith-based leaders, law enforcement agents, and immigration officers at border entry points and areas of returns.