

Central African Republic (CAR) – UPDATE ON THE SUDAN SITUATION

19 - 25 December 2023



Sudanese refugee children playing at the child-friendly space at the Korsí site in Birao. ©UNHCR/ Photo by Gloria Ramazani

Overview of the situation

The ongoing clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) that started on 15 April 2023 have continued for 254 days as of 25 December.

Over the past week, since the RSF captured Wad Madani, [SAF recruitment increased](#) across River Nile State. Army supporters are reportedly exploiting ethnic undertones to recruit young men and some are reportedly being arrested, tortured or killed based on ethnicity or tribal affiliations.

Increased checkpoints between Gedaref and Sennar are preventing impeding people to move. Security checkpoints have also been set up inside Wad Madani city's neighborhoods.

Heightened tension is being observed in Port Sudan along with an increase of military presence. Port Sudan is also considered to be the swiftest exit route in the event of further escalation of hostilities.

Shelling was reported at Al Kamlin town 93 km North of Wad Madani and Al Getina area north of Kosti. Gunfire exchanges were reported in Sennar town and along El Obeid – Bara Road near El Obeid town. Clashes were also reported in Khartoum South and aerial bombardment reported in Nyala in South Darfur on the evening of 20 December.

Situation and Operational Response

Highlights

- As of 25 December, the Korsi site hosts 2,692 Sudanese refugees (1,390 households), 70% of whom are women and children. Of these, 1,843 (1,041 households) arrived at the site on their own since the relocation was suspended on 21 June. Spontaneous arrivals at the Korsi site in Birao are increasing due to the current security situation in Sudan. Most Sudanese arriving in CAR are from Nyala.
- UNHCR and the Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés (CNR) have registered 10,614 Sudanese individuals (3,632 households) using biometrics. Most refugees live in small villages in various prefectures other than Vakaga. Since the beginning of the crisis, some 25,836 people have arrived in CAR from Sudan. This includes 21,135 Sudanese refugees and 4,701 Central African returnees, 88 per cent of whom are women and children.
- The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean Pierre Lacroix, visited Birao on 21 December, where he met with local authorities, Sudanese refugees and their host communities. The USG confirmed the deployment of a United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) battalion to the border areas of AmDafock (65 km, northeast of Birao) and Tissi-Fongoro (85 km, north of Birao) in the coming weeks. This will facilitate the resumption of the relocation of Sudanese refugees still in Am Dafock to Birao.

Protection

UNHCR, CNR, NOURRIR, and INTERSOS teams continue to welcome and register refugees at the Korsi site. UNHCR and CNR continue to provide documentation through ongoing Level 2 registration of new arrivals. Several Sudanese individuals are reported to be present at Am dafock. However, they are unable to reach the Korsi site due to recent security incidents reported on the AmDafock-Birao axis, while organized relocation has not yet resumed.

Last week, UNHCR's partner INTERSOS carried out 34 protection monitoring visits, notably to the Korsi site and in the host community. During these visits, 32 protection incidents were documented, mainly involving violations of the right to property, the right to life/physical integrity, and gender-based violence (GBV). Of these incidents, five new cases were related to GBV, although this represents a decrease from the previous week. Care for survivors is ongoing, including medical referrals to IMC and the Birao health district of three survivors, as well as psychosocial support at the Ma Mbi Si listening center.

As part of its GBV prevention efforts, INTERSOS organized group awareness-raising sessions at the Korsi site, covering topics related to forced and early marriages, as well as stressing the importance of schooling for young girls. These sessions reached 734 people. In addition, INTERSOS organized 10 individual counseling sessions, targeting pregnant women, unaccompanied and separated children, and women at risk among new arrivals at the Korsi site. Group discussions were also organized on violence prevention, reaching 170 people. These activities have helped to improve the emotional well-being of the refugees living on the site.

The safe space established at Korsi has received a total of 607 participants to date. The women who frequent the space are engaging in an experimental community farm. Despite water supply problems, the activities have had a positive impact on the emotional state of the women and girls.

UNFPA, in collaboration with its partner Olivier l'Homme de Gallilé pour le Développement Social (OHG-DS), supported 258 people during the week, including 52 men and 206 women. 173 girls and teenagers received GBV services, among whom 134 Sudanese refugees, 85 Central African returnees, and six people with various disabilities. In addition, three GBV survivors received case management services and psychosocial support in one-to-one sessions.

The complaints and feedback mechanism set up by INTERSOS at the Korsi site to improve communication with refugees documented 16 requests for information relating to humanitarian assistance at the site during the week. A total of 48 feedbacks were provided concerning requests for non-food items, food security, shelter, and health. All complainants expressed satisfaction with the responses to their complaints.

UNHCR, together with its government partner PARET (Ministry of Humanitarian Action), is continuing to register Central African returnees in the Vakaga region while waiting to support them with cash assistance so that they can leave the Korsi site and return to their areas of origin in CAR. A total of 606 households from 1,989 returnees have been registered in the PARET database.

Shelter, Core Relief Items (CRIs) and Food Distribution

During the week, UNHCR's partner NOURRIR completed the framing of 162 shelters on the Korsi site, which will be covered with tarpaulins next week. This brings the total number of shelters constructed in Am dafock and on the Korsi site since the start of the response to 572. In addition, 31 community shelters have been built on the site to accommodate new arrivals and people who do not yet have family/individual shelters.

NOURRIR also served 2,452 hot meals during the week, or 350 meals per day, for a cumulative total of 18,113 meals served since 13 August.

During the week, 183 households of 335 people benefited from the distribution of non-food item kits consisting of mats, blankets, mosquito nets, buckets, kitchen sets, jerry cans, soap and solar lamps.

Education

A total of 427 children have benefited from psychosocial support since the creation of the child-friendly space in Korsi, managed by INTERSOS. Children attending the center also benefit from a range of developmental activities, including educational awareness.

Over the course of the week, the psychosocial support team established at the site identified and documented five cases of violation of children's rights and one case of rape in a school setting. As soon as the cases were identified, they were actively listened to and provided with psychosocial support by our partners. Two awareness-raising sessions on the importance of school education were organized.

Health and Nutrition

NOURRIR, International Medical Corps, and the Birao Health District received a total of 347 patients for medical consultations during the week, 86.46 per cent of which were refugee patients from the Korsi site. The main causes of morbidity remain malaria, acute respiratory infections and gastrointestinal infections. Since July 2023, a total of 11,930 consultations have been carried out at the Korsi site, benefiting refugees and the Central African host population.

During the week, three children suffering from moderate acute malnutrition were treated at the site, bringing the total number of children treated and monitored in the nutritional rehabilitation program to 273.

WASH

All households on the Korsi site benefited from potable water supplies at a rate of 16.21 liters of water per person per day, for a total supply of 40 m³ of water per day. The ratio per person per day remains below SPHERE standards, and the main challenge for the refugees on site remains the remoteness of the water points. It is necessary to multiply the sources of water supply on the site in order to avoid any protection risk that this remoteness might create.

Coordination

UNHCR supports the CNR to lead and coordinate the Sudanese refugee response. In Birao, whereby regular meetings with all relevant actors intervening in the area can exchange on the opportunities, challenges, and solutions vis a vis refugees present on site and the areas nearby.

Revised Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) – May-December 2023

- On 4 September, UNHCR and 64 partner organisations published a revised inter-agency [Sudan Emergency Regional Refugee Response Plan – May to December 2023](#), which is appealing for **USD 42,649,652 for the Central African Republic** to provide essential aid and protection to 26,000 people expected to arrive in the country by the end of 2023, fleeing ongoing conflict in Sudan. As of 25 December, total funding of over USD 17 million has been recorded or **40%** of the funding requirements ([Refugee Funding Tracker](#)).

- RRP Summary: [Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan \(May-December 2023\) – At a Glance.](#)

Resources

- UNHCR's [Operational Data Portal \(ODP\) for the Sudan Situation](#) provides daily updates on the refugee and returnee arrivals in Sudan's neighbouring countries.
- [UNHCR Global Focus Sudan Operation page](#)
- [UNHCR Sudan Emergency website](#)

Contacts: Gloria Ramazani – External Relations Officer, (ramazang@unhcr.org).

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