# Overview of Spontaneous Refugee Returns

**SOUTH SUDAN**
AS OF DECEMBER 2023

## 55,943

### South Sudanese spontaneous refugee returnees have been reported in December 2023

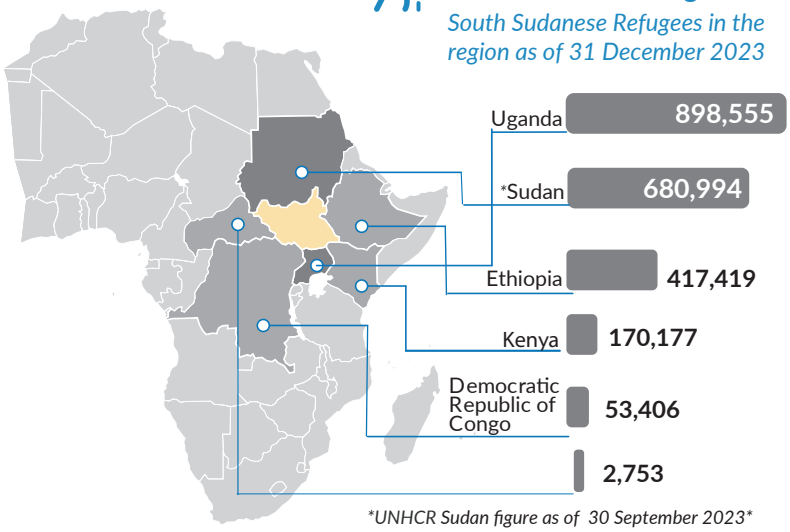
*An accumulated number of* **1,133,478** *spontaneous refugee returnees have been reported since the signing of the revitalized peace agreement in October 2018 to 31 December 2023*

*The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in South Sudan and the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) are hereby pleased to share the monthly update detailing the status of spontaneous refugee returns in South Sudan. This update specifically addresses the South Sudanese returning who have been adversely affected by the ongoing conflict in Sudan.*

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

## 2.2 Million Refugees

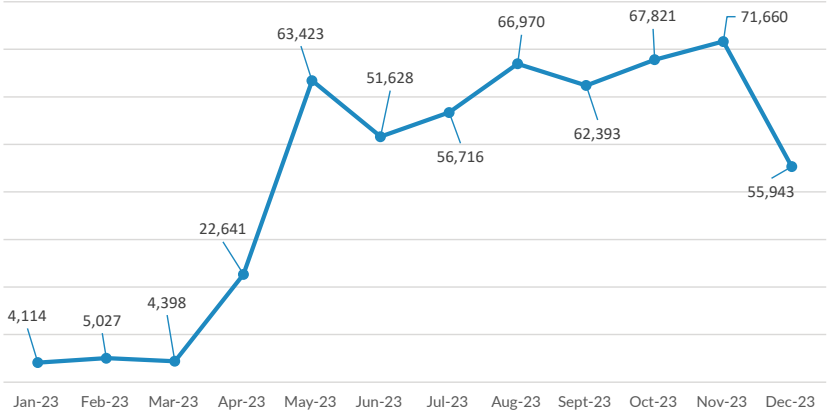
*South Sudanese Refugees in the region as of 31 December 2023*



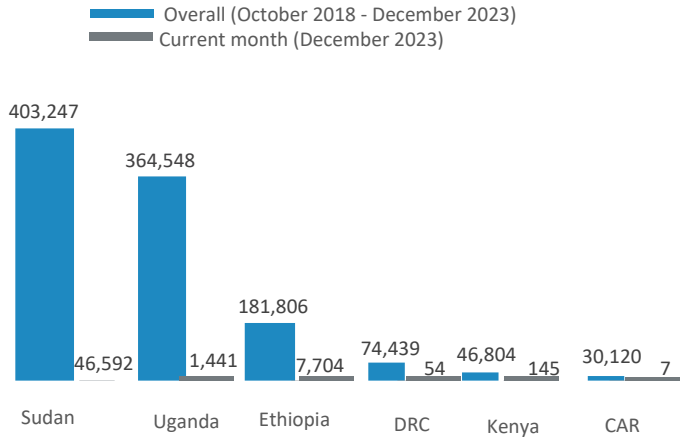

**UNHCR Sudan figure as of 30 September 2023**

### Monthly arrival for the last 12 months

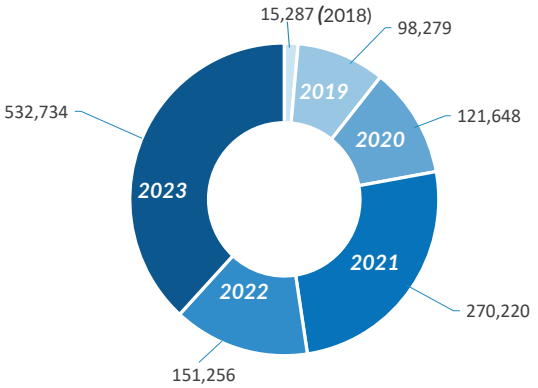
*According to UNHCR, IOM and RRC Joint border monitoring data, a total of 46,592 South Sudanese have been reported from Sudan while a total of 7,704 from Ethiopia in December 2023*



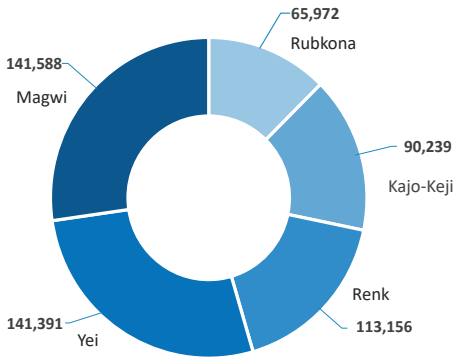

### Spontaneous Refugee Returns by Country of Asylum



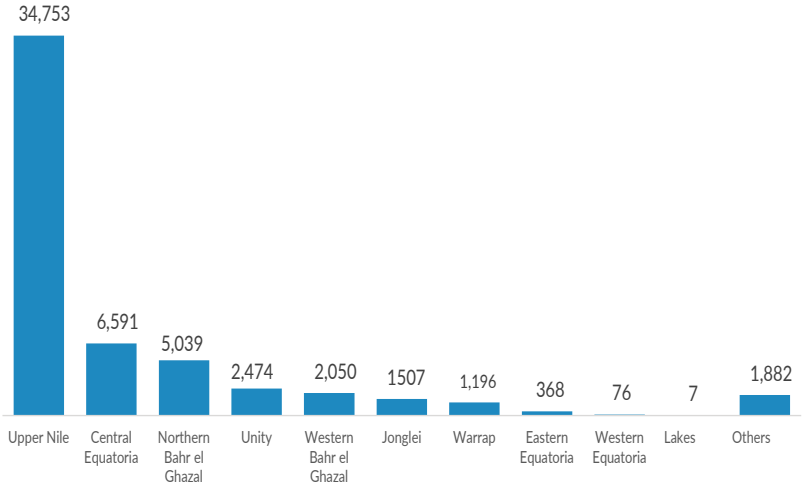

### Returns from October 2018 - December 2023



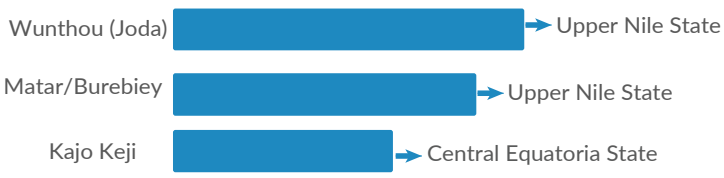

### Top 5 cumulative counties of return from October 2018 to December 2023




### Returns per State for the month of December 2023

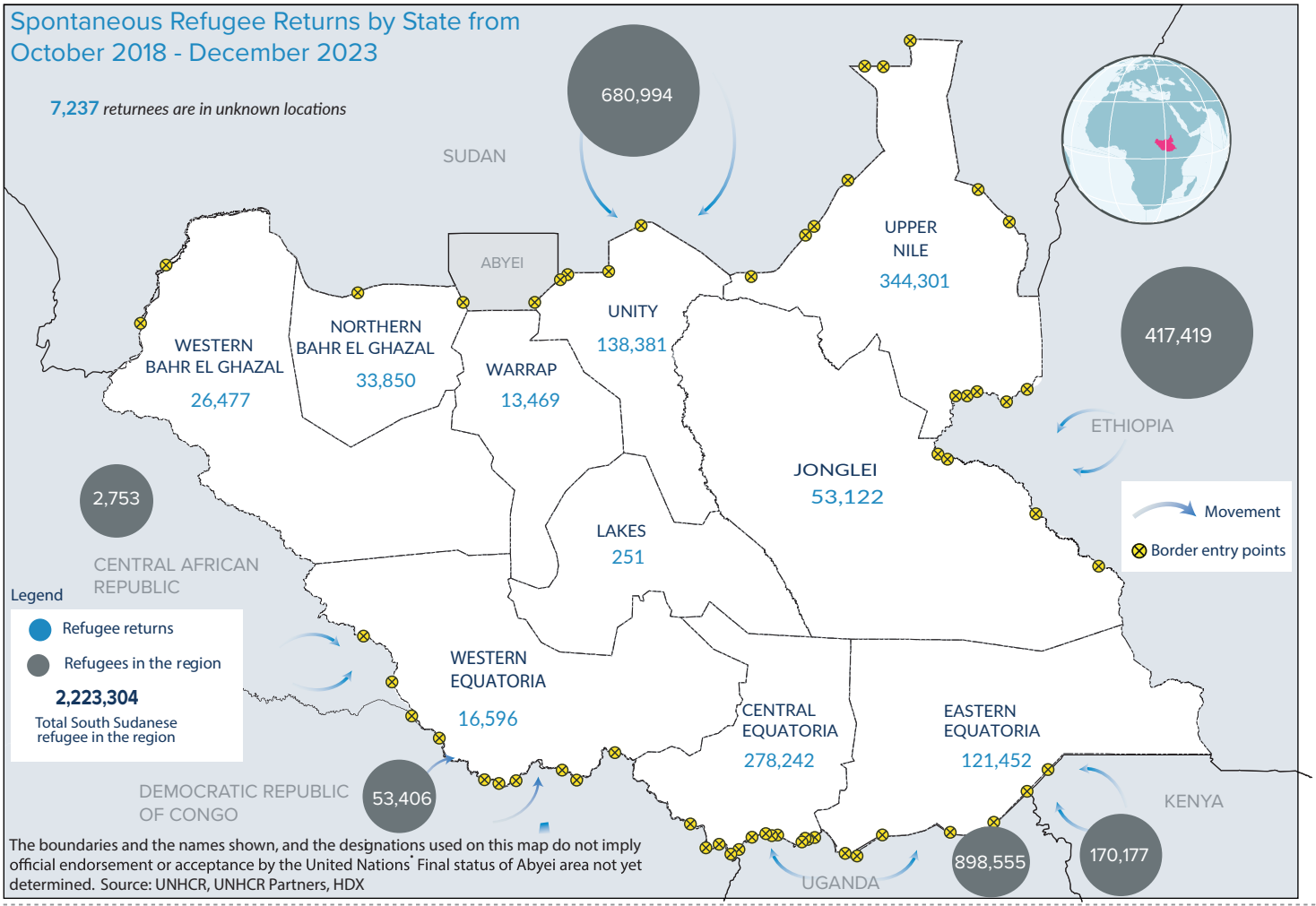



### Top 3 border entry point - December 2023



# Overview of Spontaneous Refugee Returns

**SOUTH SUDAN**
AS OF NOVEMBER 2023




## KEY HIGHLIGHTS ON REFUGEE RETURNS

The return of **45,333** South Sudanese was verified and reported in December 2023. There is a significant decrease **(37%)** as compared to the returns recorded in the month of November 2023.

The signifcant decrease is due to resumption of food ration in Country of Asylum especially in Ethiopia camps, lack of transport money where cited as the to main points which impacted the spontaneous refugee returns to South Sudan during the reporting month.

Most of the returns in December 2023 were from Sudan through Wun-thou (Joda) in Upper Nile while returns from Ethiopia through Degjock in Jonglei State and Burebiey in Upper Nile State

This information on returnees was validated through UNHCR - IOM, RRC joint border monitoring on Sudan, Ethiopian and UNHCR Spotaneous Refugee border monitoring interviews forUganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central Africa Republic during month of December 2023 in areas of return in the following **10** states; Upper Nile, Central Equatoria, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Unity, Jonglei, Western Bahr El Ghazal, warrap, Eastern Equatoria, Western Equatoria and Lakes. Most of the verified returnees to the beforementioned States were mostly from Sudan **(79%)**, Ethiopia **(17%)** and less than **10%** from Uganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central Africa Republic.

## PUSH FACTORS

*The most cited reasons for leaving Country of Asylum include:-*

I- Insecurity in country of asylum **(60%)**

II- Lack of employment, livelihood and economic opportunities **(13%).**

III- Reduction of food ration in Refugee camps **(9%)**

## PULL FACTORS

*The most cited reasons for returning to South Sudan from Country of Asylum include:-*

I- Improvement of security situation in South Sudan (21%)

II- Reunite with family members **(15%)**

III- Improved availability of services in South Sudan (12%)

## KEY PROTECTION CONCERNS AT BORDER POINTS AND IN AREAS OF RETURN ARE:

*The most cited protection concerns at boder points and in areas of returns include:-*

I- Physical violence **(12%)**

II- Psychological / Emotional Abuse**(11%)**

III- Medical emergency **(10%)**

IV- Exploitation (Corruption, Extortion) **(10%)**

## METHODOLOGY

UNHCR in collaboration with Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) 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 regularly at border points and in areas of high returns through KII and FGD. The information was then triangulated with data collected during physical observations, and meetings with local authorities, faith-based leaders, law enforcement agents, and immigration officers at border entry points and areas of returns.

***Disclaimer:*** *The number recorded is only indicative, and it covers the borders where UNHCR and partners currently have presence.*
*It is most likely that more returnees are arriving to South Sudan than recorded due to using unofficial border points and/or travelling at night.*

## Contributing partners

ACTED, ADRA, DRC Danish Refugee Council, ACF, MASS, ACROSS, CARDO, Humanitarian Development Consortium, JRS, World Vision, Hold the Child, ALIGHT, INTERSOS