EXTERNAL UPDATE

Central African Republic (CAR) – SUDAN SITUATION

17 April 2024

Katidja, mother of 9, works as a basket-maker at "l'Espace sur" in Korsi. She fled armed conflict in Sudan and arrived in Birao, in the Vakaga prefecture, a year ago. @UNHCR - Ph. S. Fatime

Highlights

- This week marked one year since the outbreak of conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Over the past year, Sudan has become one of the world'sworst humanitarian tragedies and one of the largest internal displacement crises globally. Famine now looms. Statement by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan.
- On 15 April 2024, the one-year mark of the conflict in Sudan was observed. On this occasion, UNHCR joined other humanitarian agencies in reflecting on the devastating impact of the crisis on the lives of millions. The Paris conference brought together ministers and representatives from 58states, UN agencies, NGOs, and key stakeholders to address the urgent humanitarian needs in Sudan and advocate for finding solutions. The conference has brought much-needed visibility to the neglected crisis in Sudan and mobilized €2 billion to assist those affected, including internallydisplaced persons and refugees in the country and the region. Statements from UNHCR's High Commissioner and other organizations emphasized the importance of standing in solidarity with Sudan and supporting its people during this difficult time.
- The UN Secretary-General on 15 April warned "the world is forgetting about the people of Sudan",calling for a boost in humanitarian funding and a global push for peace to end a year of brutal fighting.
- Marking the one-year point of the conflict, the heads of UNHCR, OCHA, WFP and UNICEF calledfor unfettered access to deliver humanitarian aid and a sharp increase in funds for the

humanitarianresponse. They warn that "the predictable result of continued underfunding in front-line asylum countries is that more people will feel compelled to move – including attempting dangerous crossings across the Mediterranean."

- The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights warned of a further escalation, including an imminentattack on El-Fasher in North Darfur.

Situation and Operational Response

- The security situation remains volatile in the Vakaga prefecture. This Prefecture, which hosts most Sudanese refugees in CAR, continue to face considerable security challenges due to theactivities of non-state armed groups, including allegations of the presence of the Rapid SupportForces (RSF) from Sudan.
- UNHCR and the Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés (CNR) continued coordinating bordermonitoring, reception, screening, and registration of new arrivals. Along with CNR and humanitarian partners, UNHCR provided lifesaving assistance, including protection services, food, CRIs, emergency shelter, health care and education at Korsi settlement.
- Last week, MINUSCA escorted a joint mission with local authorities, UNHCR, the National Commission for Refugees (CNR), the National Project for Support for Return and Reintegration(PARET), and UNHCR's protection partner INTERSOS to the areas of Sikikede (200km northwest of Birao) and Ouandja-Djalle (175km south of Birao). The mission had beenpreviously canceled and rescheduled multiple times following security incidents on the axes. The successful mission to Sikikede allowed for a preliminary assessment including exchangeswith local authorities, focus group discussions with members from the 2,552 Sudanese asylumseekers who arrived in the zone between late December 2023 and March 2024. In Ouandja- Djalle, another axis impassable during the rainy season and often plagued by insecurity duringthe dry season, the team conducted a similar exercise including focus group discussions, andtraining of protection monitoring focal points. While these refugees are not stable in Ouandja- Djalle, this border area has hosted Sudanese communities fleeing violence in the past and remains a volatile area, requiring continued monitoring.

Population Movements and Registration

Sudanese refugees continue to arrive in CAR, through several border entry points. The majority are crossing through Am Dafock (situated 65 km from Birao town) in the Vakaga prefecture. As of 13 April, the population in Korsi has reached 11,196 refugees (4,878 households). Since January, 7,922 Sudanese refugees (3,516 families) have arrived in Korsi (Birao town), mainly from Darfur.

Over the last six weeks, coinciding with the month of Ramadan, the average number of arrivals per week to Korsi settlement has decreased steadily. There were more than 670 arrivals in the first week of March. This decreased to 215 arrivals in the fourth week of March. Last week, the 8 to 12 of April, there were less than 100 arrivals. Interviews with new arrivals and current refugees suggest that this decrease is related to Ramadan commemorations. Arrivals are expected to increase again in the coming weeks.

The population living in Korsi has more than tripled (up 291%) compared to the population living there on 31 December (2,866 individuals, 1,484 households). This overcrowding has deteriorated hygiene and sanitation conditions, with 150 people per latrine. The quantity of water distributed has also fallen below 12 liters per person per day.

Protection

Protection monitoring

INTERSOS conducted 20 monitoring visits this week, including nine to Korsi, where Sudanese refugees live, and to other areas of Birao, where host communities live. These visits enabled the identification of 36 protection incidents, including 12 cases of violation of property rights, 12 cases of violation of the right to physical integrity and 12 cases of sexual and gender-based violence, which were referred to relevant services. Additionally, protection monitors conducted 4 perception surveys among newly arrived refugee households in Korsi, who expressed an urgent need for food, essential relief items CRIs and shelter.

Prevention and Response against gender-based violence (GBV)

In the Safe Space at the Birao District Hospital, managed by UNFPA's partner OHdG, awareness raising sessions on the prevention of GBV were organized throughout the week with the participation of 110 people including 17 refugees from Korsi settlement. Case management specialists supported 13 new survivors of GBV including two refugees, who were referred to specialized services for further support. All cases received individual psychosocial support. Group psychosocial support sessions were also organized, benefitting 108 people including five refugees.

In the Safe Space at Korsi settlement, managed by UNHCR's partner INTERSOS, 12 cases of gender-based violence were received and documented, including eight cases of physical violence, three cases of psychological violence and one case of rape. All survivors received psychosocial support, and five survivors were referred to the IMC health center and received the necessary treatment. One survivor who is also a person with specific needs living with a handicap, received a personalized dignity kit composed of a mosquito net, clothing, fabric, a whistle, a solar lamp, a wash basin, and both reusable and disposable menstrual hygiene pads. Both individual therapy sessions and group therapy sessions were held last week, with 22 women and girls participating in individual therapy and 80 women and girls participating in five sessions of group therapy. Finally, 11 sessions of life skills were organized last week for 30 survivors, including basketmaking, knitting, and braiding.

Education

Last week, UNHCR and its partner INTERSOS organized a training for teachers, led by a licensed psychologist, on the topic of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in schools. The training was conducted in collaboration with the local education authorities and the Regional Pedagogical Center based in Birao. In total, 50 teachers including 7 women participated in the training which centered on understanding concepts of mental health, trauma-informed teaching, psychosocial support in schools, and the case referral circuits put in place in the school and community to connect those in need to appropriate services.

This training and the wider MHPSS-in-schools network set up by UNHCR and its partners in Birao has been made possible thanks to the support of Education Cannot Wait through its First-Emergency Response grant for the Central African Republic in the framework of its support to the regional Sudan Situation education-in-emergencies response.

Health and Nutrition

UNFPA, through their partner Olivier Homme de Galilee, has recently relaunched their programming in sexual and reproductive health at their health centers in Birao, including an outpost in Korsi. Last week, 35 people received sexual and reproductive health services, including seven refugees. The health team received 15 prenatal consultations including two refugees, saw five postnatal consultations including one refugee, and supported ten people including three refugees with STD management. The midwife team supported the delivery of five births including one refugee.

NOURRIR and International Medical Corps (IMC) completed 561 medical consultations, benefiting 61 host community members and 500 refugees, including 12 new arrivals to Korsi. Since the beginning ofthe year, 10,771 curative consultations have been carried out in Korsi to respond to the Sudan crisis, including 991 host community members. The top three causes of morbidity were malaria (28% of cases), respiratory infections (25% of cases) and intestinal parasitosis (24% of cases). All patients were managed on an outpatient basis.

WFP reached 57% of the planned beneficiaries in the ongoing distribution of food rations to the Sudanese refugees living in Korsi. A total of 2,170 people (928 households) were served last week, out of a planned total of 9,712 people (4,394 households).

NOURRIR distributed 3,446 hot meals with food donated by WFP and prepared and served 3,699 breakfasts supported by UNHCR to refugees in Korsi.

Last week, International Medical Corps (IMC) completed the second round of cash distribution in the framework of a twelve-month nutrition and food security assistance project which supports host-community families in multiple neighborhoods of Birao as well as Sudanese refugees in the Korsi neighborhood.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

The total number of usable latrines and showers in Korsi remains 74, with 150 people per latrine. However, as the population is still increasing and exceeding capacity, the ratio of water dispensed per person per day has dropped to 11.6 liters. The number of people per latrine and the quantity of water supplied are increasingly below humanitarian standards. It is, therefore, urgent that WASH actors build more infrastructures to raise standards.

Hygiene promotion activities continued in Korsi to ensure that refugees live in a healthy environment. This is done by promoting the cleaning of community spaces (latrines and showers, health centres and water distribution points) for 522 people. In response to an increase in conflicts arising from disputes over water access, INTERSOS also carried out awareness raising activities at the water points in Korsi and sessions on conflict resolution strategies.

Coordination

UNHCR continues to support the Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés (CNR) to lead and coordinate the Sudan 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 living in Korsi and the areas nearby.

Response Plans and Funding Situation

Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) – January – December 2024

- On 7 February, UNHCR and 81 organizations launched the Regional Refugee Response Plan, with an appeal for **USD 46.2 million for the Central African Republic (CAR)** to provide essential aid and protection to 71,176 people in need, **including 39,876 refugees** fleeing the ongoing conflict in Sudan by the end of 2024. As of 17 April, the funding for the CAR reached some USD 3.1 million or **7%** of the requirements.

UNHCR Supplementary Appeal – January - December 2024

- UNHCR's total financial requirement for the 2024 Sudan Emergency Supplementary Appeal – in Sudan and neighboring countries – amounts to **USD 988.1 million**. As of 10 April, the total available funding for the appeal is **12%** of the funding requirements.

Resources

- **NEW!** UNHCR dashboard: Sudan Situation: One year on
- **NEW!** UNHCR Story: Women and girls mired in Sudan crisis suffer surge in sexual violence
- Data story: Sudan: One year of spiralling conflict and displacement
- UNHCR's Operational Data Portal (ODP) for the Sudan Situation provides daily updates on therefugee and returnee arrivals in Sudan's neighboring countries.
- UNHCR Global Focus Sudan Operation page
- End of Year Report Sudan Regional RRP 2023

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