

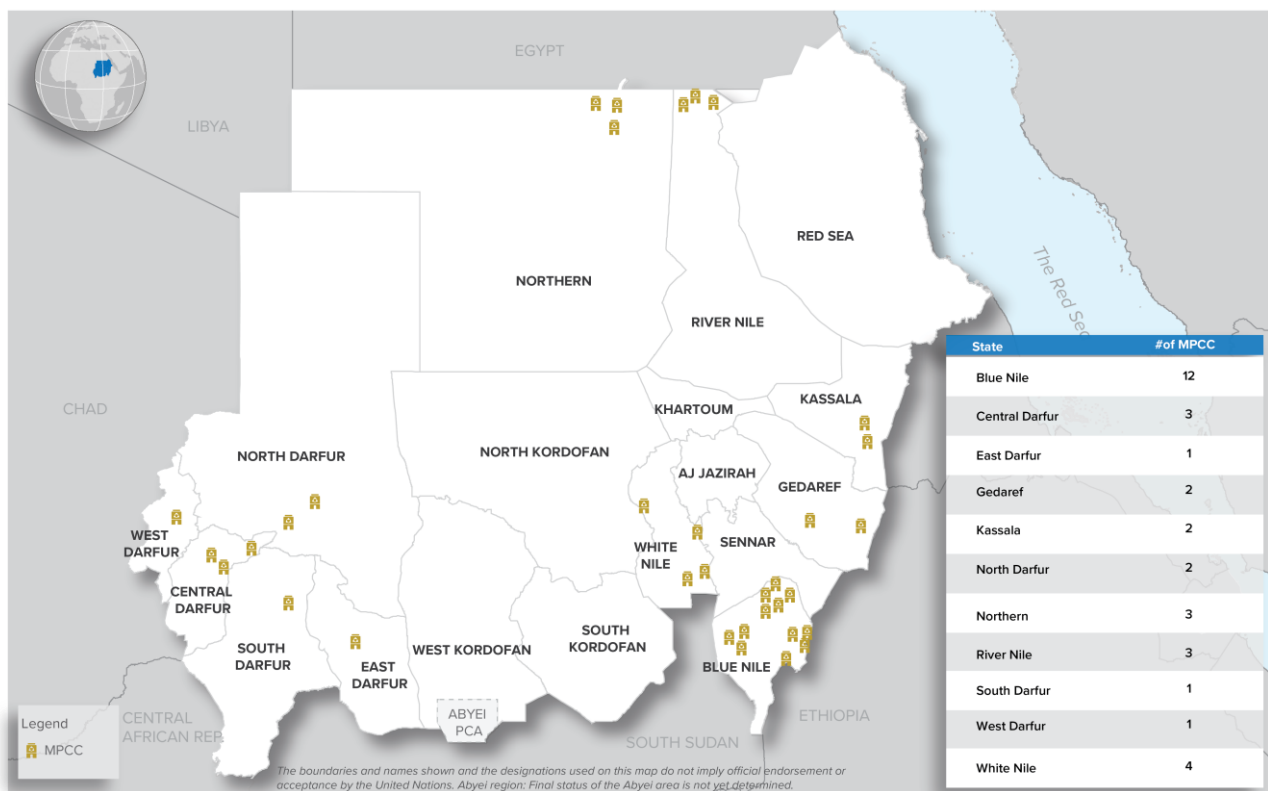
Multi-Purpose Community Centers in Sudan

December 2024

34 multi-purpose community centres (MPCCs) in Sudan.

MPCCs are operational across 11 states in Sudan.

An average of 280 people visit each MPCCs on a weekly basis.



Map of locations of MPCCs. (Source: UNHCR)

Background

Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) are central to UNHCR's community-based protection program in Sudan, enhancing access to essential services for both forcibly displaced and host communities. By serving these groups, MPCCs strengthen social cohesion in conflict-affected areas. They function as hubs for community-based protection activities, community meetings, and awareness-raising events. The centres also provide protection desks, where UNHCR and partners offer counselling, information, and referrals for specialized services, particularly for individuals with specific needs like psychosocial support. MPCCs are open to UNHCR, its partners, community-led organizations, and other operational partners, allowing for comprehensive service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas.

MPCC locations are selected based on population needs, including access to services, security, and vulnerability levels. The centres are strategically placed to serve populations in high-need areas, facilitating access for communities within walking distance. Prioritizing areas with significant displacement ensures that both newly displaced and protracted populations receive vital protection and other forms of assistance.

Currently, 34 MPCCs are operational across Sudan, in Blue Nile, Central Darfur, East Darfur, Gedaref, Kassala, North Darfur, Northern, River Nile, South Darfur, West Darfur, and White Nile states, reaching an estimated population of over 1 million people. Each MPCC is managed by a Centre Management Committee (CMC), which oversees daily operations, ensures responsiveness to community needs, coordinates services, raises awareness, and encourages community participation. CMCs, composed of both displaced and non-displaced members, follow the Age, Gender, and Diversity Approach to ensure inclusivity.

Community-Based Protection Networks (CBPNs) are also closely linked to MPCCs as part of UNHCR's protection model. CBPNs, established within local communities, identify protection risks, raise awareness, and provide initial support to those with specific needs, particularly near MPCCs. Their strong community connections ensure that MPCC services are aligned with local needs, creating a more coordinated, sustainable, and comprehensive approach to protection.

The initial design of these centers, including their strategic locations and the provision of services complementing the response, has been well-received by other operational partners, who have adopted and utilized them. The examples below illustrate how some of the partners have embraced their use.

- **Health Services:** In South Darfur, partners like Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and ALIGHT used the MPCCs to consult with communities, recruit health staff, and train health promoters. National Initiatives for Development Organization (NIDO) also uses MPCCs for coordinating health services.
- **Education, Health, and Nutrition Services:** In Tawila locality in North Darfur, local organizations used the MPCC to provide education classes and health activities. In Kassala, MPCCs host education and skills training, including informal schooling for displaced children and livelihood training. In White Nile, MPCCs provide child-friendly spaces and kindergartens.
- **Legal Aid Services:** The Al Jabalain MPCC in White Nile hosts legal aid activities, including paralegal training for South Sudanese refugees.
- In Blue Nile and White Nile States, other than UNHCR implementing partners, other operational partners including UN sister agencies, and government partners are utilizing the centres for awareness raising campaigns on different issues including GBV, child protection, distribution of relief items, and meetings with beneficiaries.

Activities and Outreach

The MPCCs are integral to UNHCR's community-based protection model, serving as key hubs for protection-oriented activities. These centres provide an accessible entry point for a wide range of services and assistance, with protection services offered on-site by UNHCR partners, alongside specialized services from other operational partners. Core activities include the operation of protection desks, capacity-building for community structures, psychosocial support services, awareness-raising sessions, and community meetings.



Protection Desks: These are run by UNHCR partners and serve as the primary entry point for individuals seeking assistance and information-sharing. At protection desks, the partners identify individual cases that require specialised services or support and facilitate referrals to other operational partners. For instance, in Darfur, in the last quarter of 2024, close to 2,750 IDPs, refugees and host community members sought assistance from Protection Desks at MPCCs. Of those, 22.18% received protection counselling, 31.24% were referred for case management, 33.43% were referred for individual protection assistance either through cash or in-kind support, and 13.15% were referred to other specialized service providers such as individual psychosocial counselling and case management for child protection or gender-based violence incidents.



Capacity Building: UNHCR and its partners conduct capacity building sessions to build the skills and knowledge of Centre Management Committees (CMC) and Community Based Protection Committees (CBPNs).

- Each CMC is trained on their roles and responsibilities. The CMCs play a vital role in overseeing the use of the MPCCs by various community groups and service providers, while also ensuring that community members in the MPCC catchment areas are included and informed about the services and assistance available at these centres, same as CBPNs.
- UNHCR and its partners are using MPCCs as venues to provide trainings to CBPNs and other community structure and to have regular coordination meetings with them to follow up on issues related to community. CBPNs also understand specific protection concerns of the local population who are users of the centres and can help ensure that MPCCs are more responsive to local protection needs, priorities and vulnerabilities.



Training for CBPN facilitated by UNHCR at Elshahid-Afandi MPCC in Blue Nile State ©UNHCR



Psychosocial Support (PSS): UNHCR partners provide group and individual PSS services to support the recovery of individuals from protection violations. Group activities, such as music, drama, and sports, promote social cohesion and community involvement, while individual support is available on an as-needed basis.



Recreational Activities: The centres also offer spaces for recreational, cultural, and sports activities that help promote social cohesion among the different population groups and enhance the mental well-being of the community. These activities are determined in collaboration with the community.



IDP and host community youth at the MPCC in Kassala for recreational activities ©UNHCR

Case Study from Kassala: Community Initiatives at the MPCC

- The centre serves as a vibrant creative space, hosting a range of cultural and artistic activities. One such initiative is the Artaca Art Platform, which offers art drawing and other creative skills workshops. These activities are designed to encourage self-expression and foster creativity among participants, providing them with an opportunity to explore their artistic potential.
- The Hema'y'a Initiative which focuses on environmental sanitation to mitigate cholera-related risks and control vector-borne diseases such as dengue fever and malaria, utilizes the MPCC in collaboration with the government. The initiative conducts health promotion, environmental sanitation, and awareness campaigns through the MPCC to engage and educate the community.

Building on Success: MPCCs in 2025

In 2024, UNHCR made significant strides in scaling up its community-based programme, expanding the number of MPCCs across Sudan. Looking ahead to 2025, UNHCR plans to standardize and expand MPCC services, ensuring high-quality service delivery and improved coordination with CBPNs. This expansion will enhance the protection environment in Sudan, promote self-reliance, and ensure vulnerable populations have access to essential services. UNHCR will also advocate for increased partner collaboration to maximize the impact of MPCCs, particularly in hard-to-reach areas. In Darfur, for example, the establishment of four new MPCCs is planned, including one in Al Lait locality of North Darfur and one in each of the States of West, South, and East Darfur. White Nile State will also expand its MPCCs by repurposing four existing centres to cover localities not yet reached, such as Tandaliti, Al Salaam, and Guli.

The feedback from MPCC users in 2024 highlighted the centres as vital entry points for the delivery of protection services, which are tailored to the specific needs of local communities. This approach not only addresses immediate protection concerns but also fosters a more inclusive and community-driven model, empowering local populations to take an active role in their own protection and well-being.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

As of December 2024

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