SUDAN SITUATION | CHILD PROTECTION BRIEF

Jan 2025 - Feb 2026

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

4.5M
Sudanese refugees and returnees in neighboring countries

329K
Children at risk supported with protection services

42K
Unaccompanied and separated children identified

21K
Children at risk benefitted from Best Interest Procedures

119
Child friendly spaces supported

1:450
Ratio of social worker to children at risk

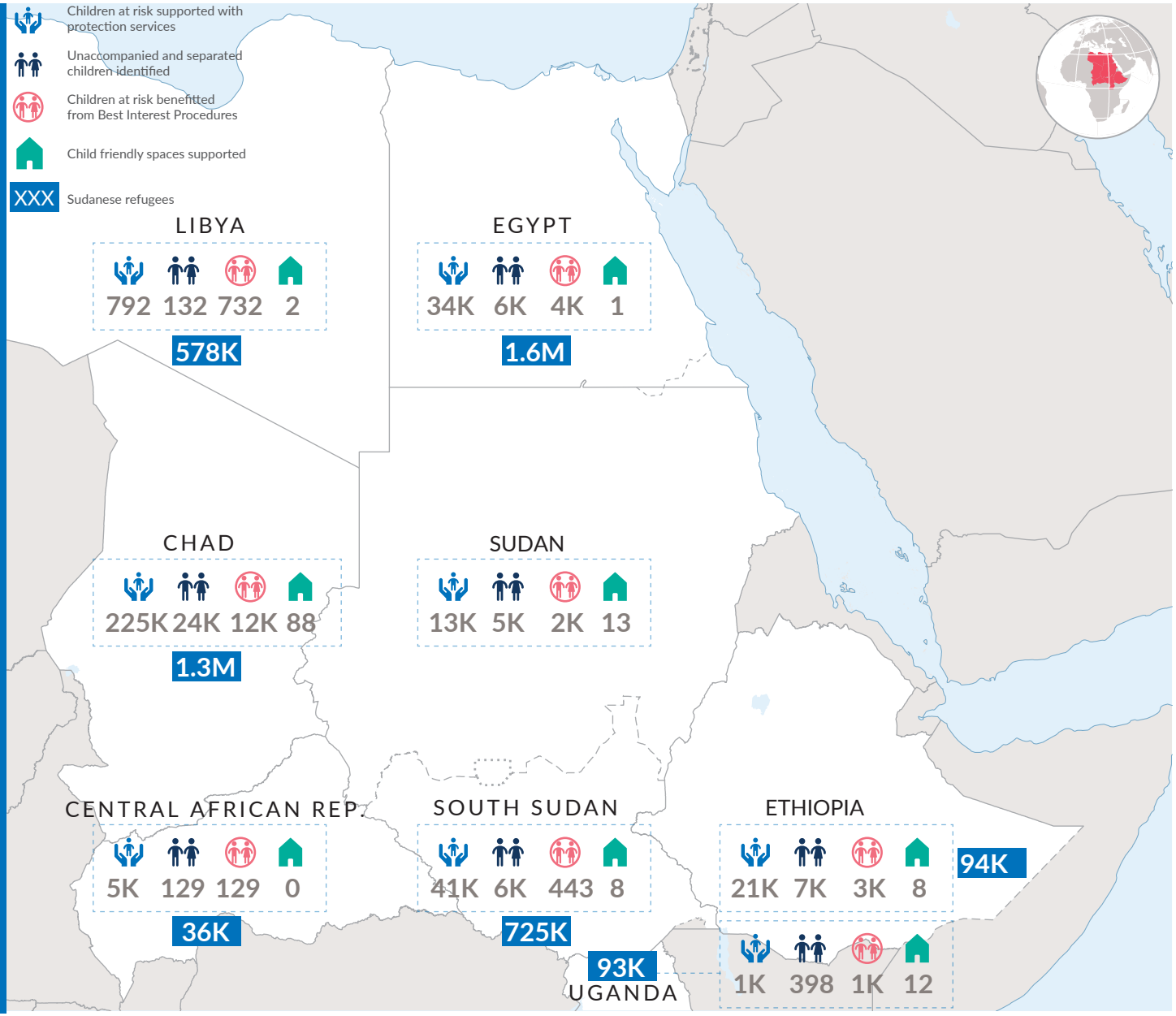
USD 66M
2026 financial requirements for child protection response (RRP 2026) (2025 RRP funding gap was 78%)

Key Child Protection risks

- Family separation
- Recruitment by non-state actors
- Child labour & exploitation
- Child and forced marriage
- Psychosocial distress
- Limited access to birth registration
- Harmful coping mechanisms

Cross cutting challenges

- Severe underfunding threatens continuity of services
- Stigma and fear reduce reporting rates
- Insecurity limits access to CP services
- Destruction of education and health facilities
- Limited livelihood opportunities driving negative coping mechanisms
- Movement restrictions increasing risk of smuggling /trafficking
- National systems overburdened



UNHCR RBESA DIMA | rbesa-dima@unhcr.org

Published 24 March 2026

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Country	Response and Challenges
Central African Republic	UNHCR and partners implemented child protection programs in key refugee-hosting areas focusing on addressing heightened vulnerabilities, incidents of violence, abuse and exploitation while strengthening community led child protection structures and services. A total of **4,851 refugee children and 1,317 host-community children** received tailored psychosocial and case management support, including 129 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). Community-based child protection mechanisms were trained on psychological first aid and case management in Birao. Partners and community child protection networks conducted awareness-raising on identification of children at risk, survivors of abuse and referrals. The local government's civil registration authorities received equipment and supplies to improve and facilitate issuance of birth certificates and other civil documents, hence reducing statelessness risks. In Korsi, 3,885 refugee children and 413 host-community children accessed diverse activities at the child-friendly space, promoting healthy development, socialisation, and psychosocial well-being in Vakaga Prefecture, the main refugee hosting area.
Chad	In Eastern Chad, continued large refugee inflows in 2025 created significant protection challenges for children, many of whom arrived unaccompanied, injured, or exposed to violence and heightened risks such as child labour and unsafe migration. Despite these constraints, coordination mechanisms with government and partners were strengthened, child protection desks were established at key transit points, and **225,245 children accessed psychosocial support across 88 Child Friendly Spaces**. Over 12,000 children at highened risk received Best Interests support, 17,077 birth certificates were issued, and extensive capacity-building and awareness efforts reached communities, although serious gaps persist in case management, specialized services, safe spaces, and inadequate border monitoring.
Egypt	In Egypt, **over 34,000 refugee children were identified as being at heightened risk**, including **11,436 UASC,** of whom 49% were Sudanese. The prevailing child protection risks include family separation, discrimination, inability to meet basic needs, as well as exposure to general and gang-related violence. More than 54% per cent of Sudanese children reported resorting to harmful coping mechanisms, including reducing food consumption, borrowing money, and engaging in child labour. Children associated with armed forces or armed groups, or at risk of recruitment, remain a particularly sensitive group. In response, children at heightened risk benefited from case management, psychosocial support, and cash assistance. Strengthened coordination with partners, including UNICEF and Refugee Led Organisations, is required to harmonize responses. While system strengthening remains a priority, national systems are overstretched, underscoring the need for continued technical and in-kind support with key counterparts.
Ethiopia	In the Amhara and Benishangul Gumuz regions, UNHCR and the Refugee and Returnees Services (RRS), in collaboration with partners, continued delivering critical and life-saving child protection interventions for refugees, host communities, and refugee returnees amid a volatile security environment. Approximately 6,500 children were identified and recorded as UASC, reflecting significant protection needs. Key challenges include insecurity in Amhara, which has impeded access and delayed service delivery, reductions in incentive refugee workers and child protection staff due to budget constraints, and limited capacity of national and local child protection systems to provide comprehensive and holistic services. Despite these constraints, notable achievements were recorded. A total of **2,935 children at risk, including UASC**, were supported through Best Interest Procedures and case management. Alternative care arrangements were facilitated for 497 children, while 1,930 children and caregivers benefited from counselling and group sessions. Access to Child Friendly Spaces benefited 4,858 children, while 5,535 children benefited from community awareness and outreach sessions.
Libya	Children refugees and asylum-seekers in Libya continue to face complex protection risks, including family separation, exploitation, trafficking, gender-based violence, psychosocial distress, and limited access to essential services, particularly along displacement and migration routes. Operational constraints, including INGO suspensions and resource limitations, have reduced overall response capacity, while the number of UASC exceeds resources. Community-Based care arrangements are further impeded by government restrictions and limited foster support, and access to health and education remains constrained due to cost, documentation challenges, language barriers, and limited infrastructure. Despite these challenges, UNHCR sustained core child protection services through multisectoral interventions. **A total of 732 Best Interests Assessments** were completed, while Community-Based care arrangements supported 132 children and 47 caregivers. 11,116 children accessed Child-Friendly Spaces offering structured activities and early risk identification. Integrated protection responses linked children affected by violence, trafficking, and separation to psychosocial, legal, and material support. Through strengthened coordination and capacity-building with UNICEF, partners and communities, 5,437 out-of-school children were referred to education, seven schools rehabilitated, and school kits and sanitation facilities provided to enhance safe and inclusive learning environments for children.
South Sudan	In 2025, UNHCR's child protection response in South Sudan focused on ensuring access to quality, holistic services for refugee and asylum-seeker children through integrated prevention, response, and multisectoral strategies. Persistent challenges included ongoing displacement and cross-border movements leading to continued identification of UASC, complex family reunification processes, harmful traditional practices, and significant capacity and funding gaps that constrained service delivery. Despite these constraints, a total of 5,883 children benefited from case management services, including family tracing and reunification, while 4,862 received psychosocial support. **Over 41,251 children accessed child-friendly spaces and recreational activities**, while 443 Best Interests Assessments were conducted. Parenting sessions reached 4,575 caregivers, and more than 11,844 community members were engaged through child protection awareness-raising initiatives. Child protection reporting was enhanced through the training of 100 child protection staff on Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS+) and proGres database.
Uganda	In Uganda, **Best Interests Procedures (BIP) were provided for 398 children**, while community awareness-raising activities engaged 7,676 individuals, strengthening identification, reporting and referral of at-risk children. 626 caregivers were trained on positive parenting programmes, thus improving the well-being of children under their care. Despite these achievements, high school dropout rates limited children's access to education and increased exposure to protection risks. The motivation and effectiveness of para-social workers is undermined by lack of incentives, while insufficient support for foster parents constrains the placement of children in safe alternative care. Despite these challenges, UNHCR continues to work with the government to include children in national child protection systems, therefore enhancing access to services for forcibly displaced children.