

Key Figures



7,179

Arrivals at
border points as
of 23 March



Key Highlights

- Sudan's Government Commissioner for Refugees (COR), supported by UNHCR, completed household registration in the six border areas hosting new arrivals.
- The Blue Nile Ethiopia Emergency Response Plan was drafted and shared with partners through the Refugee Consultation Forum (RCF).
- UNHCR is preparing to voluntarily relocate the asylum seekers from the border to a new area designated by the Government, near Village 6. Preparation includes the drilling of boreholes and construction of latrines at the camp site. Relocation is expected to begin by end of March.

Priorities

- Provision of emergency assistance in all six sites along the border, including food.
- Community-based information campaigns in all six sites to inform refugees about the relocation.
- Preparation to ensure minimum standard living conditions in the new location and access to basic services, health and protection to refugees upon relocation.
- Planning for potential arrivals.

Operational Context

Since January 2021, several thousand people from Ethiopia's Benishangul Gumuz region have sought safety in Sudan's Blue Nile State. Tensions have been high in the Metekel Zone since 2019, leading to an increase in violence in the region. Over the past months, the situation has worsened, and the federal Government of Ethiopia declared a state of emergency in the area on 21 January 2021.

UNHCR is working closely with Sudanese authorities and partners to assess the situation on the ground and respond to the humanitarian needs of the asylum seekers, many of whom arrived in hard-to-reach locations along the border. The response is being coordinated through the newly established Blue Nile Refugee Working Group and sector groups, falling under the Refugee Consultation Forum (RCF) co-led by UNHCR and COR at national level.



Preparations are underway at the new refugee site, near Village 6. © UNHCR



Protection

- COR, supported by UNHCR, carried out household registration of the new arrivals in all six current hosting sites.
- Sudan’s Government, in coordination with host communities, designated a location further inland where to voluntarily relocate and host the arrivals.
- On 10 March, UNHCR and COR facilitated a Go and See visit, joined by 14 partners, to the new location and the host community near Village 6. Host communities expressed their welcome to the new arrivals.
- The Protection Working Group agreed on March 22 on responsibilities and coordinated efforts.
- UNHCR shared the first draft of a relocation plan which is expected to start at the end of March.
- People with specific needs were identified at the border sites.
- UNFPA will provide support in the management of gender-based violence in the new location.







Child/Youth Protection

- A Child Friendly Space will be set up in the new location, near Village 6.



Education

- Save the Children International (SCI) has committed to provide basic education at the new site for six months.

 <p>Health and Nutrition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Doctors Without Borders (MSF) committed to support a clinic with primary health services in nutrition, mental health and anti-natal care in Dem Saad border site until April 20, when it will be handed over to UNFPA. ■ UNHCR, UNFPA, WHO, SCI and World Vision International (WVI) stand ready to support access to basic health services to refugees at the new site. Coordination on the support is ongoing.
 <p>Food Security and Livelihoods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ WFP distributed high energy biscuits (HEB) to both refugee and host communities at the six border locations. There was also a one-time food distribution in Menza, Manchaleng, Yabacher and Dem Saad. ■ WFP will provide monthly food distributions at the new location.
 <p>WaSH Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The WaSH sector group held a second meeting on March 21 to coordinate the preparations of the new site. Gaps in access to handwashing facilities, soap, and hygiene kits were identified. ■ Sudan's Government Water and Environmental Sanitation Department (WES) completed a geotechnical inspection on March 22-23 to identify suitable areas for the drilling of boreholes at the new location. ■ WVI started the drilling of the borehole and construction of communal latrines on March 25 at the new site.
 <p>Shelter and Non-Food Items</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shelter/NFI sector group held a second meeting on March 21 with participation of UNHCR, SCI, and World Relief (WR). ■ SCI set up two rub halls in Damazine and is setting up another one in the new location to store relief items. It also committed to install the family tents at the new site and to provide hygiene kits. ■ 1,500 tents and 2,000 non-food item kits (NFIs) were allocated and arrived to Blue Nile. ■ UNHCR and SCI agreed to distribute standard NFI kits to the arrivals upon their relocation to the new location.

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