

UNHCR plans for return of another 2,000 Sudanese refugees from Chad

In May 2017, UNHCR and the Governments of Chad and Sudan signed a Tripartite Agreement outlining the legal framework to ensure the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of refugees from Chad. The agreement provides the basis for UNHCR's voluntary repatriation (volrep) programme.

Before the end of 2018, UNHCR and the Governments of Sudan and Chad plan to assist up to 2,000 additional Sudanese refugees to return from Chad, along with 1,000 households that previously returned to Darfur spontaneously. The volrep programme for Sudanese refugees first began in April 2018, but was paused in June due to road accessible issues during the rainy season.

The programme resumed on 28 October, with a joint 'come-and-tell' mission of Sudan's Commission for Refugees (COR), UNCHR and Chad's Commission Nationale d'Accueil et de Reinsertion des Refugies et des Rapatriés (CNARR) to Sudanese refugee camps and settlements in Chad to meet with refugee communities to discuss the volrep process and the living and security conditions in areas of return in the Sudan. Visits to Bredjing and Treguine camps were canceled after an outbreak of violence in Bredjing camp on 29 October led to the deaths of six refugee leaders. The unrest followed community disagreements over changes to beneficiary targeting for food distribution. Assistance activities have been temporarily suspended until the security situation improves.

On 7 November, refugee leaders from Kerfie settlement in Chad participated in a 'go-and-see' visit to their home villages in Central Darfur to assess the prevailing conditions in their areas of origin, before deciding to take part in the volrep process.

From 29 November, UNHCR and COR will facilitate the return of Sudanese refugees living in Chadian camps through road convoys to return areas for those refugees who wish to repatriate from select camps in Chad. So far over 715 refugees have registered to return to Sudan. Since the start of the volrep programme (14 April), UNHCR and COR have assisted 353 Sudanese refugees to return to parts of North and West Darfur from Chad.

A small number of returnees have faced challenges returning to their original lands. UNHCR is working with the relevant government authorities, including locality commissioners and native administration, to resolve these issues and prevent further land disputes as the volrep programme continues. Based on the Tripartite Agreement, the government has committed to providing refugee returnees with land, security and documentation, including national identity cards and health insurance. UNHCR and COR are continuing to monitor the situation of the returnees and the overall implementation of the Agreement.

Refugee returnees are also provided with non-food items (NFIs) by UNHCR at reception centres before departing Chad. In Darfur, returnees are verified in the reception centres and provided with further return assistance, including cash assistance to help rebuild their shelters and livelihoods. UNHCR is also in the process of constructing and rehabilitating schools, police posts and water sources in some return villages, while working to mobilize UN Country Team members to provide further reintegration assistance. WFP has agreed to provide food assistance for three months to help refugees settled in their return areas.

Spontaneous refugee returnees have also been reported in parts of Central, North and West Darfur since 2016, with an estimated population of over 20,000 individuals. UNHCR and COR plan to verify up to 1,000 of these households by the end of 2018, and will provide verified returnees with cash assistance to help with shelter construction. Their refugee status will then be deactivated in line with the Tripartite Agreement.

With over 300,000 Sudanese refugees that remain displaced in Chad from the conflict that began in 2003, UNHCR will continue to work with the Governments of Sudan and Chad to ensure that those refugees that wish to voluntarily return to Darfur may benefit from the Tripartite Agreement.

Repatriation of Chadian refugees to continue with another 1,050 registered to return

4,800 Chadian refugees voluntarily returned prior to the start of the rainy season.

UNHCR and COR will resume the volrep programme for Chadian refugees living in Um Shalaya camp, Central Darfur, after pausing for the rainy season in June 2018. However, recent storms in Moudeina, Chad have destroyed the reception centre and have led to a temporary setback to the start of the road convoys from Central Darfur to Chad. In the meantime, voluntary repatriation registration is ongoing at Umshalaya camp, with over 1,000 Chadian refugees having registered to return so far.

Prior to the rainy season, UNHCR and COR facilitated the return of 4,800 Chadian refugees via 15 road convoys to the Moudeina reception centre in Chad, from Um Shalaya and Mukjar refugee camps. In addition to transportation assistance, refugee returnees were provided with return packages consisting of NFIs and cash assistance. They have further benefited from reintegration assistance in Chad provided by UNHCR and the Government of Chad.

Since the outbreak of violence in Chad from 2005 to 2007, UNHCR and partners have worked with the Government of Sudan to provide Chadian refugees with protection and assistance, including the establishment of two refugee camps in Central Darfur. Mukjar camp was closed in May 2018 with the repatriation of the entire refugee population, while services are continuing in Um Shalaya camp for the remaining 4,842 refugees.

The voluntary repatriation of Chadian refugees follows the signing of the Tripartite Agreement. More than half of Chadian refugees in Darfur have expressed their willingness to return to Chad. Those who remain in Darfur will continue to benefit from the principles of international protection.



Chadian refugees from Mukjar camp returning to Moudeina, Chad.
Photo credit: Samir Ismail Adam / UNHCR

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Number of Chadian refugees repatriated (since Dec 2017)

4,800

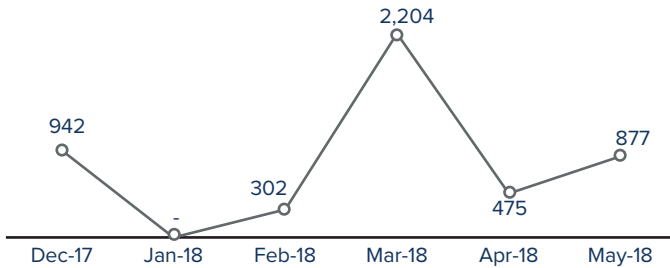
Number of Chadian refugees remaining in Sudan

4,208

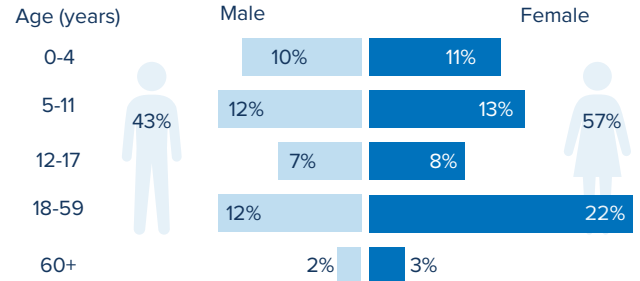
Total number of convoys (since Dec 2017)

15

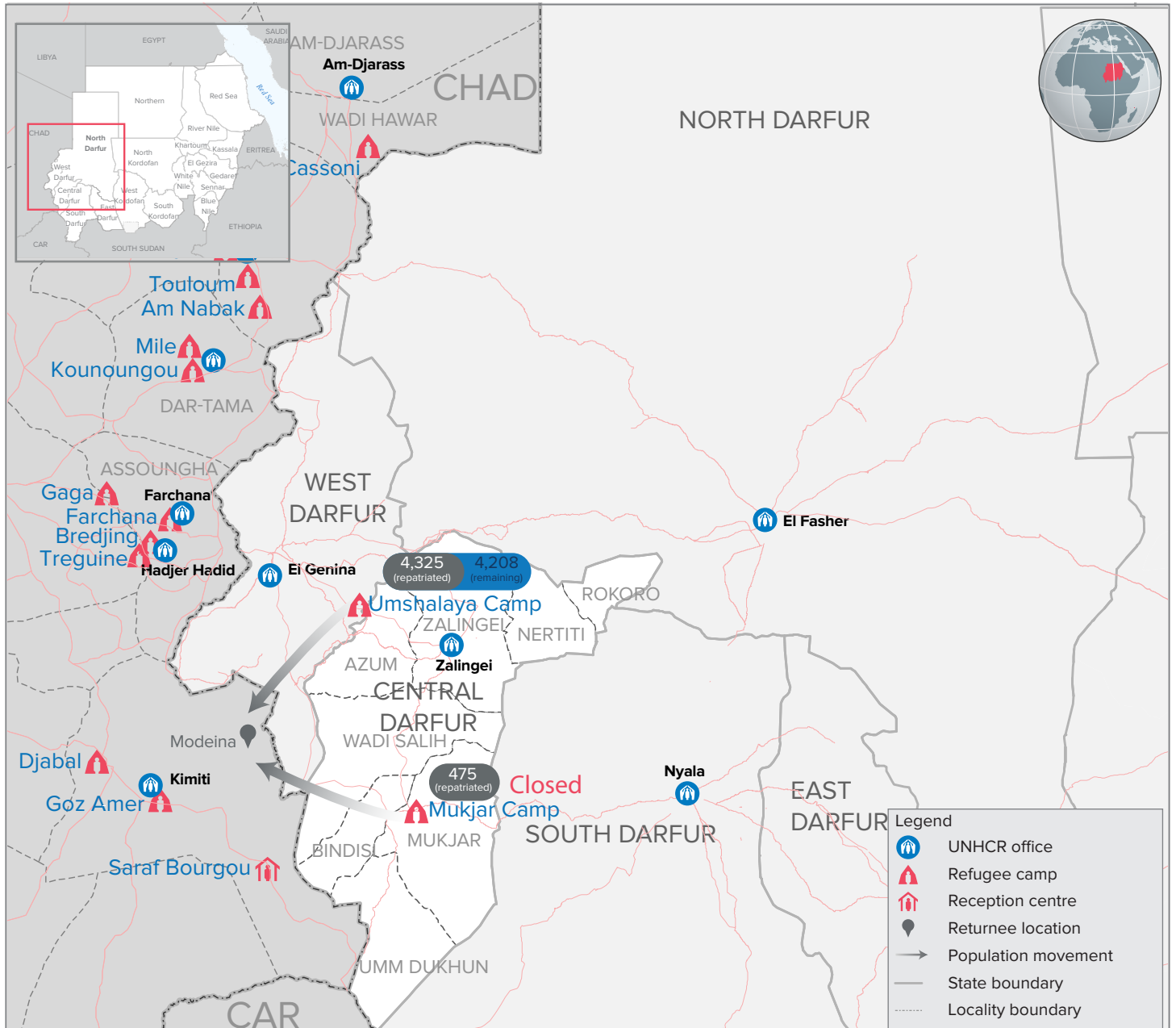
REPATRIATION MONTHLY TREND



AGE-GENDER BREAKDOWN



The repatriation of Chadian refugees from Sudan to Chad started in December 2017, after the signing of the Tripartite agreement in May 2017 between UNHCR and the Governments of the Sudan and Chad. Returnees have been assisted by UNHCR and COR with transportation, return packages, including core relief items and cash for shelter.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

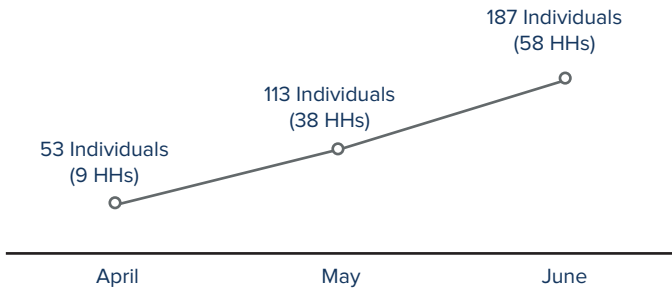
Number of refugee returnees (in 2018) **353**

Number of Sudanese refugees in Chad **335,392**

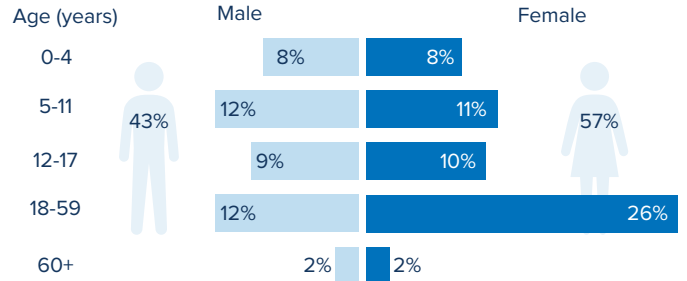
Number of returnee monitoring visits conducted by UNHCR (in 2018) **9**

Total number of convoys (since 14 Apr 2018) **3**

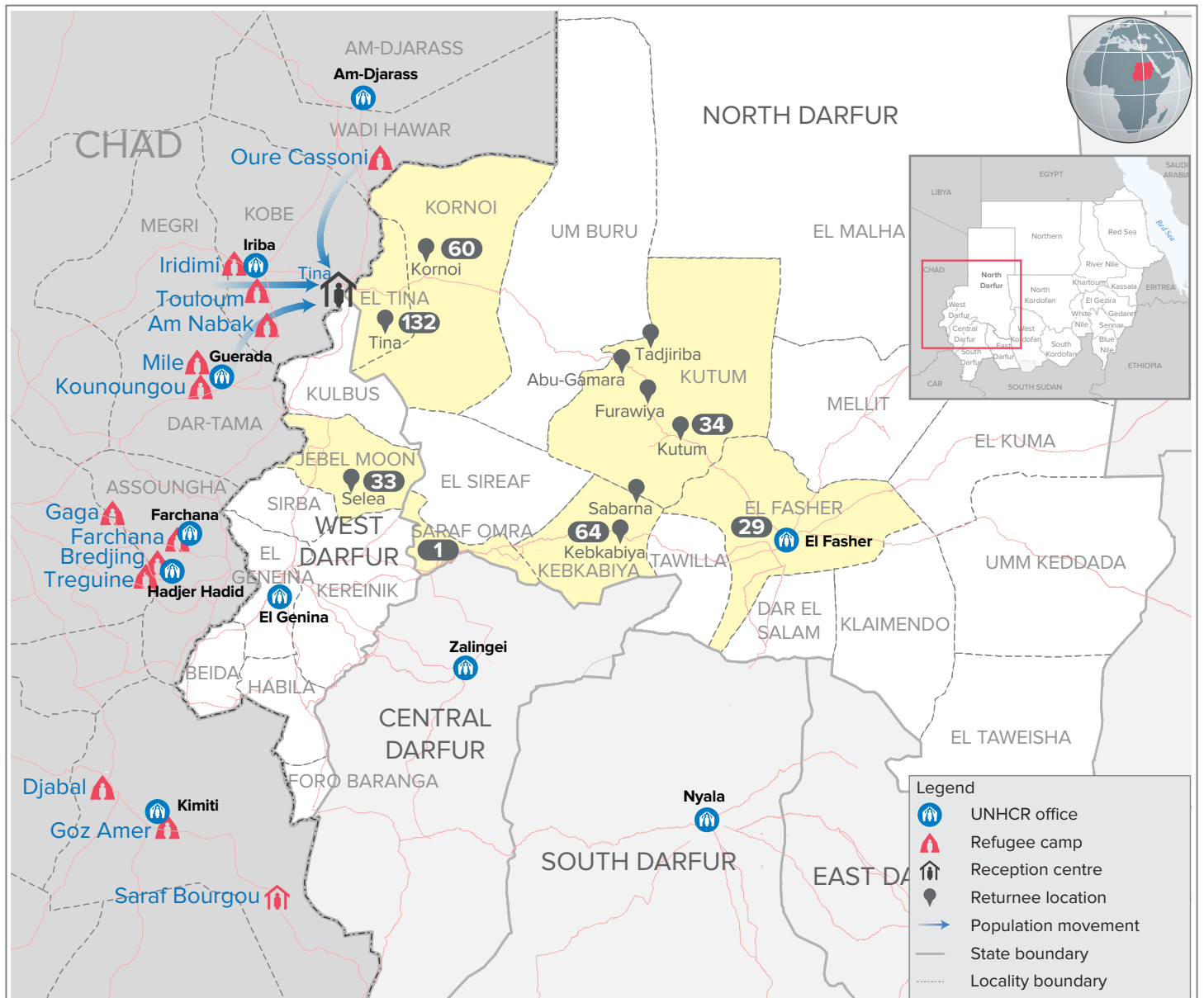
REPATRIATION MONTHLY TREND



AGE-GENDER BREAKDOWN



UNHCR facilitated repatriation of Sudanese refugees from Chad to Sudan started in April 2018, after the signing of the Tripartite agreement in May 2017 between UNHCR and the Governments of the Sudan and Chad. Returnees have been assisted by UNHCR and COR with transportation, return packages, including core relief items and cash for shelter. Approximately 20,000 Sudanese refugees are reported to have spontaneously returned to Darfur since 2016. UNHCR and COR plan to verify up to 1,000 spontaneous return households by the end of 2018 and provide returnees with assistance.



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