Addressing Human Trafficking, Kidnapping, and Smuggling of Persons in Sudan.

SECOND QUARTER REPORT 2015

The necessity of providing refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants alternatives to a hazardous onward movement.

On the 4th of June an armed group opened fire on a convoy organized by the Sudanese Commissioner for Refugees carrying 49 Eritrean asylum-seekers from Wad Sharifey reception center near Kassala to Shagarab refugee camp. In the aftermath of the attack 14 people, including seven unaccompanied children, five women and two men, were abducted by an unknown armed group. Immediately following the incident UNHCR began providing emergency support to the survivors, who were moved to Shagarab camp. UNHCR also established contact with the Sudanese authorities, who immediately began investigating the case. UNHCR welcomed the investigation and assured the Government that no effort be spared in apprehending those responsible. UNHCR also began communicating with family members living abroad of those as they were contacted by the unknown group and were asked for ransom. UNHCR’s contact with family members was in order to relay necessary information to relevant Sudanese authorities in order to achieve a favorable outcome for those kidnapped. Following the incident convoys were given armed escorts to dissuade similar attacks.

On the 11th of June there was another unfortunate event an armed attack targeted at a group of 19 Eritrean asylum-seekers, majority under the age of 29. The group had left Shagarab via a smuggler and were on route to Khartoum. The vehicle they were in was shot at multiple times by the unknown assailants, prompting the driver to accelerate in order to evade the attack. As a result of the high speeds the smuggler reached while trying to flee the attackers, the pickup truck overturned, killing the smuggler and 4 asylum-seekers. UNHCR assisted in providing emergency support to the victims.
NEW ARRIVALS

UNHCR has witnessed a significant decline (20%) in the number of new arrivals being registered at the border entry points in Sudan. The number of newly arriving asylum-seekers to Sudan has decreased from an average of 1,350 per month in the first quarter of 2015 to 1,076 per month so far in 2015.

ONWARD MOVEMENT

UNHCR continues to observe an onward movement of victims of trafficking from the camps in the East to Khartoum and beyond, which reconfirms the strong push and pull factors operating in the region that compel youth to continue the dangerous journey to Libya and Europe. UNHCR recently received reports on 9 August that 38 asylum-seekers, from the group of 47 victims of trafficking who were released by Kassa state police on 27 June, had left Shagarab camp and are presumed to have travelled to Khartoum and beyond.

UNHCR was unable to interview five female unaccompanied minors from a group of six UAMs raped during captivity and receiving medical assistance in Shagarab camp, due to their onward movement from the East of Sudan. UNHCR was able to conduct a full protection interview for one of the female unaccompanied minors.

Fear remains among the main reasons for the victim of trafficking population residing in the camps to be compelled to move to Khartoum and other urban areas. UNHCR has learned that the victims of trafficking make the journey from the camps to the capital because they feel unsafe both internally due to lack of communication opportunities between persons of concern and security staff, resulting in incidents such as rape, and externally from fear of traffickers on account of the camp proximity to where the trafficking originated. UNHCR has been using the Strategy to Address Human Trafficking, Kidnappings and Smuggling of Persons in Sudan as a guide to work within the pillars provided to address key push and pull factors.

Trafficking in numbers

42 New cases of trafficking were verified by UNHCR in the Second Quarter, adding to the 24 verified in the first quarter. In the second quarter 8 victims were verified in the east and 34 in Khartoum.

67% of reported cases are female survivors of sexual and gender based violence in eastern Sudan. 77% of female victims reported surviving sexual and gender based violence.

USD 5,000 was the average ransom demanded in eastern Sudan, whereas in Khartoum USD 14,000 was the average ransom demanded.

2,708 asylum-seekers were sensitized about the risk of smuggling, kidnapping and trafficking

32 days was the average time of captivity in Khartoum average days of captivity was 110 days

23 victims of trafficking were referred for residence in the Kassala safe shelter

6 new trafficking cases were admitted to the Kassala safe shelter

4 unaccompanied and separated minor cases of trafficking was verified by UNHCR

28 individual counselling sessions with victims of trafficking were conducted by the Psychosocial and Mental Health Consultant. 2 cases were referred in eastern Sudan and 26 referrals were made in Khartoum

15 New additions to the Direct Financial Assistance programme in Khartoum

11 Referrals to Medical services in Khartoum

286 vulnerable migrants received meals, medical attention and counselling from IOM in Khartoum
At Khartoum level there have also been reports of onward movement. Through contact with individuals close to the victims of trafficking, UNHCR Khartoum Counter Trafficking unit was able to gain insight into the motivations, which appear to be related to the lack of job opportunities in Khartoum. The number of reported cases that have moved onwards from Khartoum remained at less than 2 victims of trafficking a month on average.

Roughly 70% of the 37 trafficking cases identified in Khartoum were noted to have bypassed the East for registration on their journey to Khartoum. The vast majority of these individuals approached the general counselling window and were consequently directed to the attention of the Counter Trafficking Unit.

Through coordinated efforts such as information sharing between Kassala and Khartoum, UNHCR has been working to minimize possible protection concerns of persons of concern such as smuggling from the east to Khartoum, which could potentially expose individuals to trafficking. Early information of exit from Kassala is relayed to Khartoum, at which point attempts to contact persons of concern is made in order to offer mechanisms to curb vulnerabilities.

**VICTIM IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL**

In Eastern Sudan, UNHCR received reports of 68 trafficking cases from its staff, family members of the victims, the Police Intelligence office in Kassala, and implementing partners, the Sudanese Red Crescent Society, and the Sudanese Organisation for Development. The locations of the reported incidents were Kassala city and Girba. The 68 trafficking cases identified include a kidnapping incident on the 4th of June, in broad daylight, of 14 asylum-seekers from a truck transporting asylum-seekers from Wad Sharifey camp (Kassala) to Shagarab camp, which is one of the worst incidents that UNHCR has witnessed in Eastern Sudan in the last two years.

In Khartoum, UNHCR in Khartoum conducted 37 interviews with suspected victims of trafficking from April-June 2015. The age range of victims is from 16-47 years. The majority of persons of concern interviewed were Eritrean, the second being Ethiopian.

UNHCR in Khartoum identified a trend wherein female victims of trafficking seem to be in need of greater direct financial assistance than their male victim of trafficking counterparts. The assistance was provided after vulnerability assessments were made. Various trigger factors including age, access to communal services, size and composition of family unit, as well as ability to gain access to employment were taken into consideration prior to provision of financial assistance. UNHCR Khartoum added 15 victims of trafficking to the direct financial assistance programme.

26 Psychosocial and 11 Medical referrals were made in Khartoum during the second quarter. Survivors of sexual and gender based violence were directed towards HIV screening and those who had become pregnant as a result were given adequate attention. Female victims of trafficking referrals were initially directed towards Community Services female staff members to ensure sensitivity towards persons of concern. Persons of concern were then referred to UNHCR’s implementing partners for further assistance and follow up.

With support from UNHCR counter-trafficking unit, The Sudanese Red Crescent Society provided food, clothes, hygiene kits, age assessment, and medical assistance and HIV/AIDS tests for the 47 victims of trafficking.
ENSURING PROTECTION MECHANISMS AND THE PROVISION OF DIRECT ASSISTANCE

On 27 June, Kassala state police freed 47 asylum-seekers of Eritrean origin (11 female, 35 male, 1 unaccompanied and separated minors, aged 5-23 years old) held by human traffickers in a village outside Kassala city. The police arrested six traffickers on site, and confiscated two pickup trucks along with arms, and ammunition belonging to the traffickers.

With support from UNHCR, Sudanese Red Crescent provided food, clothes, hygiene kits, age assessment, medical assistance and HIV/AIDS tests for the 47 victims of trafficking. All of the female victims of trafficking were raped repeatedly during their captivity. UNHCR psychosocial and mental health consultant is coordinating and assessing the psychosocial needs of the victims.

The recently arrived Psychosocial and Mental Health Consultant conducted six individual counselling sessions in July, of these two are victims of trafficking. Two residents of the Kassala safe shelter were successfully referred to Khartoum for non-minor surgeries. Refugee Status Determination and registration was also conducted at the safe shelter with the cooperation of the COR to expedite cases of safe shelter residents.

IOM and the Complex Crimes Unit in Khartoum worked closely in June and July to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to migrants apprehended by the police being taken across the borders. IOM provided meals, medical attention and counselling to some 286 vulnerable migrants of which 85 were minors.

ENSURING PROTECTION MECHANISMS AND PROVIDING DIRECTASSISTANCE

Legal interventions

In Eastern Sudan, the Prosecutor’s office has preferred charges against the six suspects from the 27 June arrest. The accused individuals have been charged with kidnapping, illegal detention, rape, illegal possession of weapons, attempted homicide and violations of the Anti-terrorism Act.

The Prosecutor’s office has also charged 16 perpetrators from 11 other trafficking cases reported to them by the Police and Immigration office. The 16 individuals have been charged under articles 7, 9, and 13 from the 2014 Trafficking Act. The total numbers of the victims are 93 and all are Eritrean nationals.

In Khartoum, the Head of Complex Crimes informed UNHCR that he would work in partnership with UNHCR in an effort to arrest any perpetrators who are present in Khartoum. Currently Complex Crimes department is investigating 3 cases referred by UNHCR.
Detaining Victims of Trafficking as Witnesses

The Prosecutor’s office continues to request the court to detain victims of trafficking in Kassala prison, PI office, and other detention centres, overlooking the rights of the victims of trafficking in their pursuance of justice and a successful conviction of the perpetrators. Witnesses are charged under article 30 of the Immigration Act, thus detaining them until they give their testimony fearing the victims of trafficking (witnesses) may abscond before the case is decided. UNHCR continues to advocate to the prosecutor’s office to stop this practice and find alternative ways of ensuring witness attendance, as it is an infringement on the freedoms of witnesses. UNHCR has also initiated dialogue in order to assess the possibility of creating a separate safe house wherein witnesses will be hosted instead of being charged and detained until the court dispense of them. Risk assessment of proposed action is ongoing.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Information sessions

26 information sessions on the risks of human trafficking, smuggling, kidnapping and irregular movement and increasing personal protection were conducted with 2,708 new arrivals, of which 185 were unaccompanied and separated minors, in April-June 2015.

Engaging with migrant communities

In an effort to raise awareness in the migrant community, IOM and UNHCR’s Counter Trafficking Unit in Khartoum continued to develop pamphlets, posters, and leaflets with the aim of dissemination in locations with high populations of persons of concern in order for the regular and irregular migrant community Sudan wide to better understand their rights. The objective is to create an environment in the general community where the role and responsibilities of UNHCR are understood and to potentially invite persons of concern to attend future information sessions in Khartoum.

Enhancing cooperation with regional actors

UNHCR’s Counter Trafficking Unit in Khartoum continues to share information with the Counter Trafficking department in UNHCR Ethiopia. The information is taken from cases which highlight protection issues for persons of concern travelling through Ethiopia on their way to Sudan. Ideally the information will result in an increased level of security and protection through UNHCR Ethiopia’s addressing the specific concerns and sensitising potential victims. With the consent of the concerned individuals, information to Ethiopia will be relayed through Khartoum for study purposes in order to build and implement safeguards on the aforementioned issues.

IOM continues to support the Government of Sudan to address the flux of people crossing the borders and to provide irregular migrants (who lacked the necessary documentation to be in Sudan legally) human support according to international human rights and standards.

Assistance provided
During the reporting period, IOM screened 28 cases of migrants of Ethiopian, Kenyan, DRC, Nigerian, CAR, Syrian, South Sudanese and Liberian nationality. After a comprehensive assessment, 5 were found to have been victims of trafficking as compared to the 21 cases in the last reporting period. 13 of the screened migrants were cases where they had been smuggled and/or were stranded in a vulnerable situation. 10 of these were provided with assistance; psychosocial counselling, medical and other services. Where the migrants expressed an informed voluntary consent to return to their country of origin, IOM facilitated this (3 plus an accompanying child), obtaining a waiver of the penalty for unauthorized presence in the country and obtaining travel and exit documentation. The migrants were also provided with a reintegration package that included counselling on sustainable plans to use this grant to facilitate their social and economic integration upon return so as to minimize the risk of a repeat irregular migration. In coordination with IOM missions in the country of return, the re-insertion and progress of the migrants was monitored (still on-going) and any additional support provided e.g. medical.

Additionally IOM assisted a family of four Sudanese with a reintegration package upon their return to Sudan from South Sudan where they had been subjected to physical abuse during the internal conflict. On another occasion, IOM assisted an individual of Sudanese nationality with medical treatment upon his voluntary return to Sudan, which was facilitated by IOM Egypt. This was in addition to the reintegration grant originally awarded.

As an immediate response in 2 occasions, the Migration Management Unit’s mobile assistance team has responded the Counter Trafficking Unit of the Police (CT Unit) request providing medical assistance, counselling and food assistance. The team visited the migrants at the police compound where they were temporarily held. A total of 278 migrants were assisted who had been apprehended trying to cross out of Sudan. After a screening most were found to be in a vulnerable situation. Of the 278, 80 were unaccompanied minors (70 female and 10 male). There were 234 individuals of Eritrean nationality, 42 Ethiopians, 1 Syrian and 1 who claimed to be a Sudanese but could not prove his nationality at the time.

**Victim identification and referrals**

The maternal grandparents of the child of a victim of trafficking (since deceased) have been located in Ethiopia through the combined efforts of IOM Sudan, IOM Addis and the Ethiopian Community Association Khartoum. As assessment of the grandparents’ fitness and capacity to be the primary caregivers of this child in on-going. In the meantime IOM continues to support and monitor the child at the Ethiopian Community Association safe house.

**Capacity building**

**State actors**

As part of its efforts to build the capacity of the government to address trafficking in persons and smuggling in migrants, in consultation with the Ministry of Justice, IOM provided a two-day training on International Migration Law to 16 members of the Ministry of Justice on the 3 and 4 June 2015. This training included sessions on Authority & Responsibility of States; Immigration Detention; Human Rights of Migrants; Irregular Migration, Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons. The training was well received and the Ministry of Justice has requested further training.
Over the reporting period, IOM has engaged with the National Committee for Combatting Trafficking, building a relationship with the committee and sub-committees such as the one charged with Awareness raising, Training and Victims Protection. In consultation with this sub-committee trainings and activities to address gaps and needs have been mapped out to take place in the next quarter.

Part of this engagement and capacity building was IOM’s facilitation of a Study Tour for 10 members of the National Committee for Combatting Trafficking to Egypt to meet with their counter-parts there. The objective of the tour was to exchange experiences; lessons learned and enhance cooperation as envisaged under the Joint Strategy as well as in furtherance of the Khartoum Process. The Study Tour was successful and resulted in an invitation from the National Committee for Combatting Trafficking to their Egyptian counter-parts to Khartoum as well as the National Committee for Combatting Trafficking’s better understanding and acceptance of concepts such as a rehabilitation centre for victims of trafficking and allowing access to migrants in detention to receive assistance and awareness raising sessions. Post this tour, IOM has made significant progress with the National Committee for Combatting Trafficking on both these issues with some 3 irregular migrants in detention being provided with assistance to return home and a waiver of the penalty by the aliens department for irregular presence in the country.

IOM and the Counter-Trafficking Unit of the Police, Khartoum, worked closely over in June and July to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to migrants apprehended by the police being taken across the borders. IOM provided meals, medical attention and counselling to some 278 vulnerable migrants of which 80 were minors. IOM also engaged the Police in consultative dialogue to identify training and capacity building needs on the national Anti-Trafficking Law 2014. A result of which was a planned 2-day training in September that will discuss the Law and its practical application in the field for investigating officers.

Non-state actors

In July, IOM provided a one day training session for 14 Journalists from 12 daily newspaper, on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants; the correct terminology; sensitization on migrant related issues; the messages they send out when reporting and using the media as a means to combat trafficking and smuggling by raising awareness within the host and migrant community. The training facilitated by a member of the Migration Management Unit, noted that journalist still tend to refer to smuggling of migrants as illegal and not irregular while reporting. This in itself is an indication that there is a gap here that needs to be addressed with more interventions.

Analyses on migration trends

IOM undertook an analysis of the data collected so far in 2015 to map trends of trafficking cases so far screened by the office. Parallel to this, an exercise of information gathered through the outreach activities was also compiled to mark trends to inform further interventions and provide an evidence base with in furtherance of the objectives of the Joint Strategy. This will also contributes to the research and advocacy component of the strategy.
UNFPA is working closely with many partners including the NGOs, INGOs and government institutions, to implement different anti-trafficking activities such as build capacity of services providers to ensure timely referral and medical response to survivors of gender based violence, raising the awareness towards prevention and response to gender based violence as well as identification of the needs and support to victims.

However, stigma and vulnerability can be a big problem despite the orientation and training provided for service providers. When it comes to rape and sexual abuses, victims tend to avoid seeking treatment and other services due to the high social and security sensitivities associated. This sensitivity stems from the fact that, issues of human trafficking and smuggling are combined with protections that are focused on gender based violence and reproductive health.

**Training of service providers**

To enhance the capacity of services providers to effectively response to the Victims this mainly handled through conduction of specific supportive activities. Two Clinical Management of Rape trainings have been organized by Khartoum State Ministry of Health that targeted 40 (23 females + 17 males) health providers selected from hospitals that serving Refugees and migrants. Following this training another training on referral pathways and psycho-social support and counselling for survivors of gender based violence were conducted, that targeted 20 (14 females + 6 males) Psychologists, social workers, counsellors and medical doctors in Omdurman, Bahari and Sherg Alnil localities. Both trainings addressed the general consequence of gender-based violence, with specific focus on Rape Treatment and psychosocial support.

**Distribution of personal hygiene kits**

A total number of 2940 sets of personal hygiene kits were procured by UNFPA during the second quarter. The kits have been supported with pamphlets containing messages on the importance of using the kit items. Currently, these kits are being delivered to UNFPA partners in Khartoum, in order to be distributed for use in quarter 3, aiming at connecting with 2490 vulnerable refugee and migrant women and girls. Among the targeted beneficiaries of this quantity, victims of smuggling, trafficking and exploitation women and girls currently living in Ethiopians and Eritreans safe houses will be targeted to receive support as well. Moreover, there will be a reserve quantity to respond to any cases of new arrivals.

**Medical treatment and support**

Due to the difficulties in referral of the cases to the medical treatment and psychosocial services, Sudan Family planning Association, Sudanese Ministry of Health, and Sudanese Fertility Care conducted three Mobile clinics as an open-day medical service in areas with high refugee and migrant concentration such as the Jeraif, Sahafa, and Sajana areas through the support of UNFPA. Furthermore, transportation cost and support to access high level care of treatment have been provided to 40 cases.
Assessment

UNFPA has conducted an assessment which has focused on service gaps with regard to reproductive health, gender based violence and psycho-social support for affected urban refugees, trafficked and irregular migrants and associated vulnerabilities in Khartoum and Eastern states. The findings of the assessment will be guiding the future planning on these aspects. The final assessment report is under process.

Awareness raising

As part of awareness raising on gender based violence prevention and response, two trainings conducted on HIV/Aids, sexual and reproductive health for 50 Eritrean youth peer educators girls and boys in Khartoum. The training was aimed at equipping the participants with knowledge and messages that can be conveyed to their peers.

Advocacy

A meeting was organized by the National Council for Child Welfare which was attended by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Family and Child Protection Unit, Commission of Refugees, Ministry of Justice, UNICEF and others on Monday the 9th of April. Advocacy was made with the National Council for Child Welfare representative who is a member of the National Committee for Combating Trafficking to use The Strategy to Address Human Trafficking Kidnappings and Smuggling of Persons in Sudan to reflect children issues.

Family and Child Protection Units to address child trafficking

Following UNICEF’s visit to the refugee camps in the east of Sudan during Quarter 1, UNICEF proposed the establishment of 3 Family and Child Protection Units. The proposed unites were set to be in localities where the refugee camps are located. With the financial support of UNICEF, National Mechanism was proposed to conduct a visit to Kassala in order to speed up the process of the establishment of the Family and Child Protection; proposed timeline was set for August of 2015. Kassala Police agreed to allocate a government building for the Family and Child Protections in addition to police forces. UNICEF agreed to allocate some funds for the rehabilitation of the buildings to be child friendly.
Training Workshops on the Development of a National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking

UNODC held a ‘Training Workshop on the Development of a National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking in Sudan’ from 5 to 8 April 2015 in Khartoum. The workshop lead facilitators were Dr. Mohamed Mattar, UNODC Anti-Human Trafficking Expert and Dr. Mohanad Al-Dweikat UNODC Law Enforcement Expert. The workshop was organized in coordination with the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking in Sudan and sought to support the Committee in drafting a national strategy and action plan to combat human trafficking, in conformity with the relevant international and regional instruments and good practices.

35 participants attended the workshop. Namely, members of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking in Sudan and other relevant partners. Members represented a variety of national institutions and organizations: the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Cabinet Affairs Ministry, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Science and Communication, the National Intelligence Security Service, the National Council for Child Welfare, the National Human Rights Advisory Council, the Financial Investigations Department, the Centre for Migration Studies, the Humanitarian Affairs Commission and Child Rights Watch. Particular emphasis was on Sudan’s institutional framework (national coordination efforts and legislative measures).

The workshop was to a high extent centred on interactive sessions and working groups, whereby participants were provided with a set of template tables to support the drafting of a national strategy and action plan. Those addressed strategic goals, specific objectives and activities to reach those, as well as financial and human resources needed and indicators to monitor progress. Committee members worked in groups on how to link strategic goals and specific objectives to concrete activities and measures, defining responsibilities and timelines and identifying necessary resources.

Practical Workshop on the Development of a Sudanese Strategy against Trafficking in Persons

In continuation of UNODC efforts to support the drafting of a national strategy and action plan to combat human trafficking in Sudan, a ‘Practical Workshop on the Development of a Sudanese Strategy against Trafficking in Persons’ was held in Cairo from 2 to 4 June 2015. This workshop was also organized in close coordination with the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking. UNODC hosted 7 members of the sub-committee of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking who were tasked with drafting the national strategy to combat human trafficking in Cairo.

The purpose of this activity was to review a number of national, regional and international strategy documents; to learn from the Egyptian experience in establishing a National Committee and a National Strategy; to develop a general structure and objectives for the Sudanese National Strategy; and to cultivate efficient cooperation among sub-committee members.

The workshop was also coordinated with IOM as it preceded the IOM study tour which was held in Cairo from 7 to 9 June and targeted the 7 members of the sub-committee along with 3 additional members of the National Committee. The coordination between UNODC and IOM ensured that both initiatives complemented each other and provided sub-committee members with the opportunity to
learn from the Egyptian experience. The study tour entailed visits to the National Committee to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking in Egypt and the National Committee to Prevent and Combat Illegal Migration in Egypt. UNODC and IOM split the costs of the flight tickets of the participants.

The lead trainer of the workshop was Ms Sandra Kozeschnik (UNODC Anti-Human Trafficking Expert). Counsellor Ahmed Aboul Enein, Head of the Technical Secretariat of the National Committee to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking in Egypt, also delivered 2 presentations during which he drew on Egypt’s experiences in order to discuss the role of national committees and inter-agency coordination in developing a national strategy and action plan against trafficking in persons; and priorities in the development of national strategies and action plans against trafficking in persons.

A spirit of community and accomplishment guided the workshop. Discussions were held in a respectful manner and participants were eager to engage and were fully aware of their role and responsibilities. Expectations and objectives of the workshops were met and the participants confirmed that the workshop was useful on a professional level and also served as a successful group-building exercise.