

# Southern Sudan

Assuming that the ongoing peace negotiations in Kenya are successfully concluded leading to a comprehensive peace agreement, UNHCR's 2005 objectives are:

- Contribute to the creation of conditions conducive to the return of refugees and IDPs.
- Ensure that the voluntary repatriation of refugees and the return of IDPs to southern Sudan takes place in safety and dignity.
- Provide and ensure international protection to returnees and IDPs.
- Contribute to the provision of humanitarian assistance, particularly to meet the needs of refugee/IDP women, children, adolescents and older persons.
- Liaise and work with local authorities, United Nations agencies and NGOs with a view to implement the "4Rs" approach (Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction) in pursuit of durable solutions.

In 2004, under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Naivasha peace talks between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) reached historic agreements which built on the Machakos protocol of July 2002, the protocol on security arrangements signed in September 2003, and the subsequent protocols on wealth and power sharing.

The signing of the peace agreement will open up the prospect of voluntary repatriation for more than 600,000 Sudanese refugees originating from southern Sudan who are presently living in refugee camps, settlements and semi-urban agglomerations, in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR) and Egypt.

Repatriation of refugees is expected to take place simultaneously with IDP returns from the north to the south of the country. IDP returns are also expected within the south. The repatriation is envisaged as a multi-year operation, for which the initial planning figure is 150,000 returns over 18 months (starting at the end of 2004). The United Nations sustainable return plan will aim to assist communities, without distinguishing between different categories of beneficiaries: refugees, IDPs and host communities in areas of return. As part of the common United Nations effort, UNHCR is planning to assist those IDPs returning to the same communities as the refugees.

During the last part of 2004 and in early 2005, UNHCR will focus on consolidating its presence in the south, with the specific objective of improving the absorption capacity of host communities in selected areas of return, while at the same time addressing the needs of spontaneous returnees. Reintegration activities covering education, health, water and sanitation will be prioritized. UNHCR has opened offices in Juba, Rumbek and Yei. Offices in Kajo Keji, Kapoeta, Malakal and Yambio will be opened in 2005. In Kenya, logistics support units in Lockichoggio and in Port Sudan will be established. UNHCR will also establish a Liaison Office in Nairobi. Through its field offices, UNHCR plans to create conditions conducive to return by monitoring the well-being of spontaneous returnees, ensuring the voluntary nature of return, identifying protection concerns and building local protection networks and mechanisms to address them.

In pursuit of durable solutions for the returning population, the "4Rs" concept will be applied. This collaborative approach will underpin medium to longer-term programmes, in order to: create and strengthen local capacities; encourage community participation; and support good local governance. The approach will also strengthen peace building, reconciliation and conflict prevention efforts. As part of the Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) process, UNHCR on behalf of the UN and

together with the World Bank is co-leading cluster 7 which covers social protection and livelihoods. This cluster will also focus on displacement issues as well as Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR). UNHCR is also participating in Cluster 2 that focuses on the rule of law.

Insufficient funding for UNHCR's southern Sudan operation in 2004 affected the Office's capacity to complete a number of critical preparatory activities such as surveys, assessments and deployment of staff and equipment. However, several studies on land and property rights and protection concerns were commissioned, and a survey was undertaken in collaboration with ILO on the remunerable skills of refugees in the countries of asylum. UNHCR financed a series of protection training workshops in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council. At the time of writing, UNHCR is planning to rehabilitate basic infrastructure in south Sudan, particularly schools, hospitals and water systems.

The High Commissioner has declared the situation in Sudan (including Darfur) to be a priority for UNHCR in 2004 and 2005, necessitating maximum attention and exceptional measures. He has therefore established the position of Director of Operations for the Sudan Situation in 2004 to take managerial authority and responsibility for operational activities relating to the situation in Sudan, Chad, CAR, DRC, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Egypt. The country-specific operations in Sudan will continue to be managed by 174 staff including 43 international and 128 national staff. The branch office in Khartoum will be supported by sub-offices and field units.

**Total provisional requirements<sup>1</sup>: USD 56,725,331**

<sup>1</sup> This SB does not include a seven per cent support cost (USD 3,462,380) that is recovered from each contribution to meet the indirect support costs in UNHCR (field and headquarters).