

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

END OF YEAR REPORT 2014



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

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## **Regional Progress to Counter-Trafficking**

*From 13 – 16 October 2014, the African Union convened the first regional conference on human trafficking and smuggling from the Horn of Africa in Khartoum. There was wide participation with IOM and UNHCR as members of the dedicated conference secretariat. The conference featured two days of presentations and discussions by four core member states (**Eritrea, Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan**) and partner countries (Djibouti, Yemen, South Sudan, Tunisia, Libya) as well as relevant INGOs and regional economic communities including IGAD and ECOWAS. The member states acknowledged the issue of trafficking in this region, possible root causes and the required initiatives needed to address it. On the final day, senior ministers from core and partner countries adopted a **Declaration of Intent** to combat trafficking and smuggling in persons in the region, a **Plan of Action** and a **Terms of Reference** of a regional committee that will meet again to discuss implementation in six months' time in Egypt.*

*The third day of the above conference included a presentation by the European Union of the '**Khartoum Process**' - an initiative launched in Rome last November to fund a substantial number of projects in the region intended to address the influx of irregular migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees to Europe since January 2014, including the high numbers of deaths in the Mediterranean Sea. This initiative involved the same core and partner countries as were involved in the AU regional conference in October.*

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*Delegates to the AU Regional Conference on Human Trafficking at the Ministerial Day on 16 October 2014*

## VICTIM PROFILE

Victims	East	Khartoum
Total trafficked in 2014	24	15
Total verified in 2014	56	57

In 2014, 113 victims of trafficking (VOTs) were verified by UNHCR Sudan. Less than half of those verified experienced a trafficking incident in 2014. This remains a significant decrease from the 338 cases reported to the office in 2012. In 2014, UNHCR Khartoum hired a case manager dedicated to the verification of victims of trafficking which has significantly improved the identification of and assistance given to VOT cases residing in the capital city.

Approximately 30 vulnerable migrants were identified by IOM in 2014 as in need of assistance and who had paid smugglers to enter Sudan. They came from Ethiopia, Liberia, South Sudan, Nigeria, Somalia and Central African Republic.

The following victim profile was extracted from the UNHCR VOT Database:

1. The vast majority of identified victims of trafficking in Sudan are asylum-seekers or refugees.
2. The average age is 18. Of the total VOTs verified, 24 are unaccompanied minors.
3. The highest prevalence of kidnappings occurred at the Eritrean/Sudanese border.
4. The most common locations where VOTs are held in captivity are in urban areas (Kassala, Khartoum) and border villages.
5. The alleged perpetrators are described most commonly to be Rashaida, however, Eritreans are the second most common reported person involved in a trafficking incident, followed by Sudanese.
6. 25 per cent of all trafficking cases were initially reported to be smuggled either into Sudan or to Khartoum before they were trafficked.
7. Almost all female survivors of trafficking were sexually assaulted or raped (71% in Eastern Sudan and 96% in Khartoum).

While the situation in and around the Eastern refugee camps has significantly improved, with only two kidnapping incidents having taken place inside the camps since March 2013, an increase in cases of kidnapping and trafficking, in particular against women and girls, has been noted in Khartoum in 2014. UNHCR provides psycho-social assistance in collaboration with two Khartoum based NGOs – Al Fanar and Seema as well as psychologists from Human Appeal International (HAI) and the Sudanese Red Cross (SRC) in the Eastern refugee camps. With the enactment of the Human Trafficking Act in May 2014, UNHCR has monitored and assisted victims of trafficking who are witnesses to prosecutions under the new law with assistance from its legal aid partner, the Sudanese Organisation for Development (SOD).

## WHO DID WE REACH?

In February 2014 an information campaign was rolled out in the camps, reception centres and security offices in Eastern Sudan as well as Khartoum. Posters and leaflets warning against the risks of trafficking with advice were distributed in key locations. These materials will be updated and redistributed in 2015. Permanent steel boards have also been erected at the NISS and new arrivals reception area at Shagarab camp.

- **10 trainings to the authorities**
- **57 information sessions reaching 5,679 asylum-seekers**
- **5 focus group discussions in border towns with 235 persons**

Nine trainings were facilitated by UNHCR in Eastern Sudan in 2014 including for the first time in Gedaref State at the border with Ethiopia. These trainings discussed key provisions of the newly enacted Asylum and Trafficking laws. Awatif Kareem, formerly of the Ministry of Justice facilitated three workshops on the new Human Trafficking Act that she initially drafted. It was discussed at length with judges, lawyers and prosecutors who expressed their concerns with the definition of trafficking, penalties and absence of a federal law against smuggling. Awatif will compile a report to share with the NCCT as it considers drafting regulations in 2015.

IOM organised a training on passport examination procedures for 20 officials from the Department of Passport and Immigration and a study tour to Italy on border management for eight officials.

Over the course of the strategy implementation, UNHCR has conducted individual and group counselling to asylum-seekers and refugees including unaccompanied children on the risks of trafficking during irregular movement in Sudan, as well as personal safety advice to 5679 persons.

In addition to reaching out to the asylum-seeker and refugee communities, five focus group discussions on issues surrounding smuggling and trafficking were also hosted by UNHCR in Sudanese/Ethiopian border towns reaching 235 community members. Common concerns discussed included the high prevalence of known community members engaging in these crimes, fear of reporting to the police due to retaliation from traffickers and a request for assistance with the increasing numbers of asylum-seekers and migrants entering through Gedaref.

In Khartoum, a training to sensitize the media to issues of human trafficking was conducted with journalists and trainings on the definition of human trafficking and smuggling were held for local NGOs. These workshops reached 20 individuals.

## LAST QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS

**In September 2014, Sudan and Eritrea acceded to the *Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children*. Sudan further established the National Committee to Combat Trafficking, which held its inaugural meeting that same month. Sub-committees on key thematic areas including victim assistance and capacity building were formed and a timeline for the formation of a national strategy established.**

### **UNODC begins activities in Sudan**

UNODC delivered a workshop titled “Capacity building on the implementation of Sudan’s anti-human trafficking law” in Khartoum between 3 and 5 November 2014. National and international experts on trafficking law spoke about the different dimensions of Sudan’s recently enacted Trafficking Act and techniques for identifying and investigating trafficking cases. UNHCR’s Counter-Trafficking Project Coordinator spoke about the international protection needs of human trafficking victims in Sudan and IOM’s

### **KASSALA SAFE SHELTER**

In its first year of operation, the Kassala Safe House assisted 38 persons who were given secure shelter, psychosocial support and medical treatment. The average length of stay was three months. Two residents were referred to Khartoum for tertiary medical treatment for serious injuries incurred while in captivity and a third has received psychiatric therapy and drug treatment. One resident was successfully resettled to Sweden whereas five former residents are awaiting resettlement after returning to the camps. Between 8 and 10 December 2014, IOM’s Case Worker visited the Kassala Shelter to provide peer support and training to the psychosocial workers. Safe shelter SOPs were also finalised and shared with the authorities in a one-day workshop in September.

Migration Management Project Coordinator provided a briefing on principles in the provision of assistance services to human trafficking victims. UNHCR supported the attendance of six participants from COR, Police Intelligence and the judiciary in Eastern Sudan with the assistance of funding from the Italian Government. UNODC will follow up with another workshop in 2015 on investigative techniques for cross-border crimes.

### **Reaching Out to Vulnerable Migrants in Khartoum**

Throughout November and December, IOM met with migrant communities in Khartoum, including the Ethiopian, Eritrean, Liberian and Filipino communities. IOM was asked by community schools to provide awareness sessions for youth between the ages of 10 and 16 on the risks of irregular migration and human trafficking. The Ethiopian church and Ethiopian Community Association also welcomed support from IOM for their upcoming workshop on migration and human trafficking for religious leaders in the Horn of Africa.

### **World migrant day**

IOM hosted two events for Sudanese and migrant communities in the run up to International Migrants day, which is observed on 18 December 2014, to raise awareness to migration and migrants in the Sudanese society. On 14 December a screening of the documentary ‘Surprising Europe’ took place at the Goethe Institute in Khartoum. This documentary looks at the lives of migrants in Europe and the successes and struggles they face. On 16 December, a cultural event was held in Khartoum, creating a space for migrants from different communities along with Sudanese to learn about each other’s cultural backgrounds.



*Left: The UNHCR anti-trafficking unit and COR finish a focus group discussion at Um Khariat village.*



*Right: The IOM Migration Unit at the Green Yard in Khartoum for World Migrant Day*

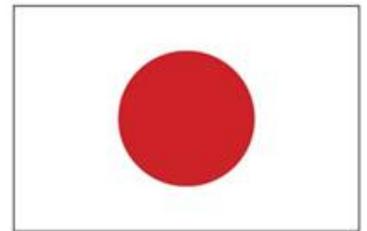
## The Joint Strategy in Brief

Since mid-2012, UNHCR and IOM have been working together to increase the protection of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants at risk of abuse by smugglers and traffickers on the way into, through and out of Sudan by comprehensive, complimentary measures. To build on the progress made in 2012 and achieve sustainability, in late 2013 UNHCR and IOM began implementing the **Joint National Strategy Against Trafficking, Kidnapping and the Smuggling of Persons**, endorsed by the Government of Sudan. The five strategy objectives are: Enhancing Security and Mitigating Risks, Strengthening Protection Responses, Identifying Solutions and Alternatives, Building Capacity and Enhancing Cooperation.

In 2014, the Joint Strategy was supported by the following donors:



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