

**Voluntary Repatriation of Sudanese Refugees  
From Gambella, Ethiopia, to Blue Nile State, Sudan**

**Mission Report**

**Return and Reintegration Planning Mission  
UNHCR Multi-sectoral Mission to Blue Nile State & Assosa/Gambella Ethiopia**

**17-27 October 2005**



An elderly Uduk refugee in Bonga camp, Ethiopia looking at the pictures of Kurmuk/Sudan and her relatives, including her son living there. Pictures were taken by this mission during their visit to Kurmuk and surrounding areas. (Photo Asuka Imai)

## **Acknowledgements**

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Furthermore, we would like to acknowledge the professionalism of UNHCR drivers who, in extremely difficult roads conditions between Damazin, Kurmuk and Diem Mansour, drove responsibly.

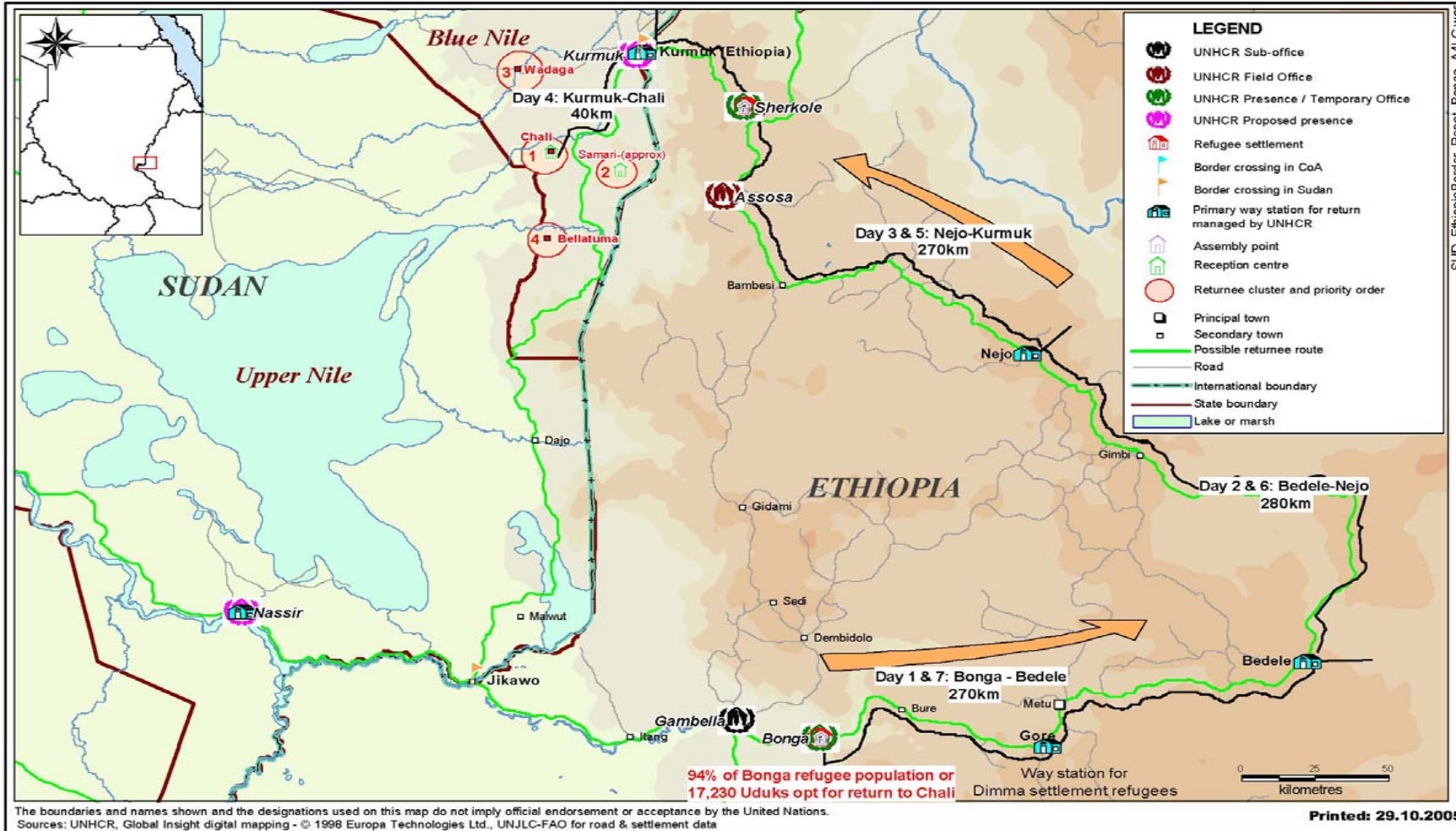
In Ethiopia the mission was joined by the UNHCR Head of Field Office Assosa, UNHCR Head of Sub-Office Gambella and his staff and UNHCR colleagues from the Regional Liaison Office, Addis Ababa. The mission greatly appreciated the support received and the organization of the entire programme, including the one-day planning workshop in Gambella in which all partners and refugee representatives participated. Our special thanks go to Elleni Senbeta, Kouassi Etien and Fernando Protti for facilitating this mission. Special thanks also go to Akbar Hussain, Admin Officer, who arranged for the air charter on very short notice, thereby allowing the mission to spend two days on the Gambella workshop and visiting the refugee camps. We would also like to thank Jasna Kaleb for arranging all other flights for the mission in timely manner.

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

1. A recently carried out “survey of intention” in many refugee camps confirms that the overwhelming majority of refugees in the neighboring countries are willing to return to their areas of origin to restart their lives and livelihoods and also to contribute to the recovery and development process. UNHCR is currently preparing in western Equatoria to receive returnees from the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the coming weeks and months, repatriation from Ethiopia and Kenya to Upper Nile and Blue Nile, Jonglei as well as to eastern Equatoria is also envisaged. At the time of writing, UNHCR had deployed four Emergency Response Teams to boost its operational capacity for returns in Kapoeta, Bor, Malakal/Nasser and a roving team based in Juba to cover Pibor, Pochalla and Akobo. IDP return movements from north Sudan and from within the south continue to take place to many of these areas of origin.
2. In this regard a UNHCR multi-sectoral mission traveled to Blue Nile State and refugee camps in Ethiopia to plan for the return and reintegration of some 18,000 Uduk refugees who have shown great desire to return home.
3. In Blue Nile State, the mission visited Damazin, Kurmuk and Diem Mansour areas and held extensive discussions with UNMIS, WFP, UNICEF, UNMAS, the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SRRC) and the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). A number of meetings were also held with the NGOs in Damazin and Kurmuk. The mission spent several days in Kurmuk and Diem Mansour areas. It surveyed part of the main route of return, border crossing point, way station site, reception/absorption capacity constraints and needs in areas of return and en route, protection aspects, conduciveness of areas for return, security, logistics needs, livelihoods and some essential community-based reintegration projects (water points, health clinics, etc.). Preliminary discussions were held with NGO partners, GOAL, Samaritan’s Purse, CEAS, ROOF and Islamic Relief for the implementation of some of the priority projects for the repatriation of refugees.
4. In Ethiopia, the mission, joined by UNHCR Ethiopia, visited Sherkole and Bonga refugee camps and held in-depth discussions with refugee community members, leaders and elders. Planning meetings were also held with UNHCR and partner agencies, including WFP and ARRA. In Gambella, the mission, UNHCR Ethiopia and major partners and refugee representatives participated in a one-day cross-border planning workshop. A plan of action to prepare for and undertake repatriation was developed as an outcome of this workshop.
5. The overwhelming majority of Uduk refugees in Bonga refugee camp wish to return home now and have been preparing to spend their 2005 Christmas in Sudan. Refugees were bitterly disappointed when informed that they will have to wait a few more weeks for a minimum level of conditions to be established en route (repair of critical sections of the road, way stations, reception facilities, etc.) and upon arrival (food assistance, some basic services, non food items, etc.) so that their repatriation can be safe and dignified. The return route from Bonga refugee camp through Kurmuk to Chali is more than 850 kilometers and through difficult terrain. Uduk refugees insisted to return home despite the fact that basic services are not available and that arrangements are not in place. They requested UNHCR to start the movements as quickly as possible and put in place basic infrastructures while they are moving or even after they have returned home. Refugees would like to build their own villages as no one else could do it for them.

6. The Nuer refugee community indicated that most of the Nuer refugees are from Upper Nile State and are willing to return. Many of the refugees, however, have preoccupations regarding disarmament of militias who are still active, frequently looting properties and cattle rustling in Upper Nile State. Refugees would like to see the disarmament process progressing. Refugees would also like to know more about the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and its implementation as they are getting news that conflicts are still persistent in many places in South Sudan.
7. The Anuak community raised concerns similar to the Nuers on the issue of disarmament. Lack of basic services such as school, health facilities in Jonglei State especially in Bor, Pochala and Okobo areas, was also a major concern of many refugees. Anuak refugees generally lack information on the security situation in their place of origin and have heard rumours that Kobo is occupied by other groups who are not originally from that area.
8. Ethiopia currently hosts over 73,000<sup>1</sup> Sudanese refugees in five different camps. Given the distances involved, size of the caseload and the complexity of situation on both sides of the border, repatriation has to be planned as a multi-year operation. In this respect, and although the focus of the mission was the return of approximately 18,000 Uduk refugees, preliminary plans were also drawn to gradually begin to repatriate refugees of other ethnic origin including Dinkas, Equatorians, Nuers, Mabaan and Shiluks.
9. The mission, in consultations with SRRC/HAC, UNHCR and ARRA Ethiopia, sister UN agencies and NGOs as well as refugee communities, designed a return and reintegration plan and identified immediate and urgent preparatory activities on both sides of the border to start repatriation of some 18,000 Uduk refugees in a phased manner. These Uduk refugees originate primarily from Chali, Samari, Bellatuna and Wadega areas of Southern Blue Nile State. Assessments made by this mission primarily focused on the first priority group originating from Chali and surrounding villages. Kurmuk, a border town of some 4,000 inhabitants was designated as the main return corridor and border crossing for this group.
10. In Blue Nile State, UNHCR is designated to play the lead role for the protection, return and reintegration of the displaced – IDPs and refugees. The State is also home to some 20,000 Uduks living in Bonga and Sherkole refugee camps in Ethiopia who are desperate to come home.
11. In July 2005, at the All Funj Conference in Kurmuk, which brought together major leaders of the State, North and South including the Umdas and King of Funj, UNHCR was specifically requested to play a significant role in the repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation of both IDPs and refugees. One of the recommendations of the conference was the establishment of a local commission to help coordinate between UNHCR and partners. Many of the Government officials have been refugees themselves and still have family members in the refugee camps in Ethiopia. There is great deal of respect for UNHCR and in general they have high expectations from the international community.
12. The general security situation in Blue Nile State was reportedly calm. The Blue Nile State communities are said to be generally “non-aggressive” with diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. These communities have been co-existing by and large peacefully in SBNS; however, with the returning IDPs and refugees pressure on land allocation and natural resources will increase. There are no major tribal conflicts and disputes are settled through the traditional courts. The governance structure in

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex- 1 for details

accordance with the CPA was in the making during the mission to the region. At the time of writing, UNMIS reported that formation of the government in Blue Nile State continued to be delayed due to an internal power struggle within the National Congress Party (NCP), and the slow process of approval of the state constitution.

13. The main north-south road from Kurmuk to Yabus in SBNS is some 80 Km, frequently used by NGOs and is only passable during dry season. This mission was fielded towards the end of the rainy season. It got stranded at various locations and had to be rescued by NGO tractors. Most of the refugees will be returning to areas along this road. Repatriation will have to take place during the dry seasons only.
14. Repatriation of Uduk refugees is planned to start in February 2006, in phases and in order of priority to four geographical areas in SBNS – Chali, Samari, Wadege and Bellatuna. The first priority area identified was Chali and a cluster of nine villages<sup>2</sup> within three to four hours walking distance around Chali, for which preparatory activities, including projects for provision of basic services, were identified by the mission.
15. The mission held preliminary discussions with the NGOs in Kurmuk for the implementation of repatriation and urgently needed community-based reintegration projects (CBRPs). GOAL was willing and has the capacity to expand its projects in water and health sectors; CEAS and ROOF can expand their primary education programme; Samaritan's Purse (SP) has a well established base at Diem Mansour (20 km from Chali) for agriculture and livestock projects and was willing to up-scale to cover returnee villages. SP is also running the only hospital in Kurmuk which will require support and a referral system to cater for the needs of additional populations. There are other NGOs, such as Mercy Corps and IRC who are also interested in BNS and are planning to establish base in Kurmuk.
16. Currently there are no UN agencies present in Kurmuk. All agencies having bases in Damazin plan to expand their operations to SBNS.
17. UNMIS plans to establish a base in Kurmuk and Dindero. In Kurmuk and Dindero, there will be UN Observers, UN Police, logistics and force protection staff (about 100 -150 persons). During this mission to Kurmuk, the UNMIS team was in Kurmuk to also look at the site for the UNMIS base. UNMIS currently has a flexible flight schedule from Damazin using helicopters.
18. This mission report covers in large part the planning of return and reintegration of Uduk refugees and identifies preparatory activities in Ethiopia and in Sudan, based on rapid assessment, which UNHCR and its partners are expected to undertake to reach a level of preparedness by end January 2006 and be able to start repatriation. It also covers preliminary planning aspects for the return of Dinkas from Fugnido refugee camp to Bor, Pibor and Rumbek.

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<sup>2</sup> Cluster of villages around Chali: Borfa, Gindi, Pambe, Dampudaon, Kolangura, Penmayo, Langungoro, Pambitko, Sotna

## Major recommendations and time line

Task/Recommendation	Responsible office	Time Frame
<p><b>UNHCR Presence</b></p> <p>Upgrade Damazin Office to a Sub Office level and reinforce presence with protection and programme staff to provide effective leadership in BNS for the protection, return and reintegration of displaced populations – refugees and IDPs. Please also refer to the mission report of UNHCR Deputy Representative (Operations) on UNHCR Damazin structure.</p> <p>Rapidly establish presence in Kurmuk to manage day to day operations in Kurmuk and South of Kurmuk with Damazin providing overall policy guidance and support. Kurmuk should be equipped with all operational management infrastructure – vehicles, telecoms equipment, etc and national staff. To open up base in Kurmuk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain Media Centre from SRRC for office and temporary accommodation. Preliminary discussions held during this mission with Commissioner SRRC.</li> <li>• Obtain land for permanent UNHCR office and warehousing. Site was identified during this mission.</li> <li>• Start making arrangements for staff accommodation at the new UNHCR permanent site.</li> <li>• Deploy a Programme Officer on mission to Kurmuk to finalize concrete CBRP proposals, expedite signing of sub-agreements and start project implementation.</li> </ul>	<p>UNHCR Khartoum &amp; UNHCR Damazin</p>	<p>Opening up of Kurmuk Office by mid-December 2005</p> <p>Decision on upgrading Damazin to Sub Office as soon as possible</p>

Task/Recommendation	Responsible office	Time Frame
<p><b>Programme</b>            In Kurmuk and Chali areas, as a matter of urgency, start preparing for repatriation of refugees through protection and urgently needed community-based reintegration projects. For the first phase of repatriation it is advisable to take maximum benefit and up-scale the Kurmuk-based NGOs and their implementation capacities for service delivery: GOAL for water and primary health care; SP for Kurmuk hospital/referral system and livelihoods; CEAS/ROOF for primary education.</p> <p>Mission identified projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair of the Kurmuk-Chali road (50 Km) to make return safe</li> <li>• Construct, using local material, a reception/way station in Chali</li> <li>• Support Kurmuk hospital with an X-ray machine, TB ward and a 4WD ambulance as pressure on hospital will increase with arrival of refugees and IDPs</li> <li>• Establish water points in and around nine villages of return</li> <li>• Establish PHCU for the first cluster of returnee villages and establish referral system</li> <li>• Arrange for seeds and tools and for a tractor to help plough the land for the first harvest to be managed by communities (using the co-operative approach). Communities should also be involved to support the vulnerable among them</li> <li>• Repair the SRRC offices in Kurmuk and provide a small generator and arrange for computer training for SRRC staff (SRRC Kurmuk has a computer but no generator)</li> <li>• Place order for two 4WD tractors and two - 4WD quad bikes. Tractor should come with complete accessories for ploughing – one from 2005 budgets and one from 2006. Tractors are indispensable in Kurmuk during dry and rainy seasons for any operations.</li> <li>• Review recommendations of the assessment mission conducted by UNMAO to Kurmuk and returnee areas and make necessary arrangements to follow-up on priority recommendations associated with repatriation from Ethiopia.</li> <li>• Arrangements need to be made with UNICEF for the drilling rig to remain in SBNS until such time that alternative arrangements are made. Procurement of additional rig given the expansion of programme in the whole of SBNS and parts of NBNS should be envisaged in 2006 budgets</li> </ul>	UNHCR Khartoum UNHCR Damazin UNHCR Geneva	All tasks under implementation or arrangements for implementation by January 2006



**Protection**

- Develop a project to provide technical support and training to local authorities specifically to police/security/immigration officers on refugee law, human rights and IDP guiding principles, good governance and judiciary
- UNHCR/FAO should conduct workshops on land and property reconciliation /restitution/allocation and technical support to local authorities, traditional chiefs, women's group, youth, and community leaders in order to prepare ground for return
- Mine clearance should be given due priority in determining areas of return and return routes. This should also include demarcation of infested areas and routes, and awareness raising in areas of return and in refugee camps before the repatriation begins.
- MRE and area specific information to refugees should be provided on a regular basis. In this regard, a mission should be fielded from Sudan of mine action staff who is actually involved in operations in and around Chali.

**Security**

- Security briefing must be provided to all staff traveling to the region. A strict regime should be introduced on travel by road - vehicles must use the existing main roads only which are cleared for traveling by UNMIS. Advice by local people must be considered seriously.
- All vehicles meant for Blue Nile State should be MOSS compliant and fitted with winches, shovels, etc.
- Kurmuk should link up with the UNMIS evacuation plan – security and medical
- Warden system should be introduced in Kurmuk with the arrival of more UN agencies

**Telecoms**

- UNHCR Regional Telecoms Officer should urgently field a mission to Damazin and Kurmuk and set up a network of communications for across the border as well. This should be done in consultation with UNMIS as they have plans to set up a telecoms base in Kurmuk which could also support other UN agencies and NGOs.

**Inter-agency and lead role**

- Organize an inter-agency Return and Reintegration Working Group to jointly make arrangements to support returnees and displaced in BNS:
  - WFP for pre-positioning of food assistance for returnees
  - UNICEF for the Non-food items (for IDPs) and reconstruction and re-commissioning of Kurmuk secondary school; support to Diem Mansour Vocational Training and Teachers Training Institutes
  - UNDP for the rule of law and governance projects (support to judiciary etc.) and to develop a Joint Reintegration and Recovery Programme for BNS
  - Establish contacts with the World Bank for initiating Community Driven Recovery programme in BNS
  - WHO to support health sector projects in areas of return of refugees and IDPs
  - FAO for the livelihoods programme in Chali and surrounding areas, up-scaling some of the existing agriculture and livestock projects and introducing new ones
  - UNAIDS to assist in designing programme in returnee areas as many locals fear that returnees will bring with them HIV/AIDS
  - OCHA to assist in establishing tracking and monitoring of IDPs
- Organize inter-agency assessment mission to IDP camps and to areas of spontaneously returned refugees (December 2004 group from Ethiopia) and draw plan to support their reintegration.

Task/Recommendation	Responsible office	Time Frame
<p><b>In Ethiopia</b> (Please also see detailed report prepared by UNHCR Gambella on cross border meeting between this mission and UNHCR Ethiopia)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Finalize following tasks (including developing check-lists and standard operating procedures): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. information campaign</li> <li>ii. pre departure, en-route, at way stations and at exit points;</li> <li>iii. construction of way stations and assembly points</li> <li>iv. convoy movements and management</li> <li>v. pre-positioning and distribution of non-food items in Ethiopia</li> <li>vi. arrangements with WFP for food assistance for return/en route (Ethiopia WFP) and upon arrival (Sudan WFP)</li> <li>vii. pre-positioning of seeds &amp; tools packages upon arrival in Sudan</li> <li>viii. dispersal of returnees from the reception centre at Chali (and subsequently other locations)</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Revise composition of convoy for transportation of refugees and their assets.</li> <li>c. Explore possibilities of Ethiopian fleet crossing over into Sudan at Kurmuk - Ethiopian trucks/buses should continue the last 50 km journey inside Sudan up to Chali and return to Kurmuk/Ethiopia the same day. [An issue for Tripartite Agreement discussions]</li> <li>d. Explore possibilities of supplying fuel for UNHCR operations in Kurmuk and Chali pending establishing a supply line from Damazin. [An issue for Tripartite Agreement discussions]</li> <li>e. Establish a vehicle maintenance workshop at Kurmuk/Ethiopia (as part of the transportation contract).</li> <li>f. Start MRE in all refugee camps</li> <li>g. Make arrangements for go-and-see visits for Uduk refugees</li> <li>h. Finalize refugee documentation - birth, marriage, and education certificates)</li> </ul>	<p>UNHCR Addis Ababa UNHCR Gambella UNHCR Assosa UNHCR Khartoum UNHCR Damazin DOSS</p>	<p>Please see section on Ethiopia</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Arrangements for repatriation of mixed marriage couples (nationality, visa and if other formalities are required).</li> <li>j. Explore possibility of contracting a Road Construction Company from Ethiopia which can cross over to Sudan to repair Kurmuk- Chali road (about 50 km).</li> <li>k. UNHCR Sudan and Ethiopia to identify issues for discussion at Tripartite Agreement, such as UNHCR and partner staff and vehicle movement across border; convoy fleet to cross over into Sudan; supply of construction material/fuel/earth moving equipment across border etc.</li> <li>l. UNHCR Sudan and Ethiopia to develop a list of staff who would be required to travel frequently across border for repatriation operations</li> <li>m. UNHCR Sudan and Ethiopia to establish a Joint Coordination Committee for Repatriation (JCCR) and hold regular cross-border meetings. UNHCR Ethiopia and UNHCR Sudan to designate a maximum of 4 members each to the JCCR</li> </ul>		
<b>Task/Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible office</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
<p><b>Go-and-See</b></p> <p>Arrange for go-and-see visits for Uduk refugees, who are desperate to come home and are frustrated for not being able to celebrate Christmas 2005 in Sudan. Such go-and-see visits would also help allay fears/anxieties and avoid their premature spontaneous return to Sudan. Premature spontaneous return through difficult territory and long distances is bound to create serious problems for the population</p>	<p>UNHCR Khartoum UNHCR Damazin UNHCR Addis Ababa UNHCR Gambella</p>	<p>First go-and-see visit of the Uduks, accompanied by UNHCR Gambella by January 2006</p>

Task/Recommendation	Responsible office	Time Frame
<p><b>Logistics of Return</b> (please see Logistics Section for detailed plan of action)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given the size of the operation and remoteness of the area of return, assign a Logistics Officer to the region to coordinate the day-to-day activities of the repatriation.</li> <li>• Repair the Kurmuk Chali road (50 Km) as the repatriation operation is entirely dependent on it</li> <li>• Establish basic warehousing capacity (one rubhall) in Kurmuk - set up a containerized workshop and deploy a mechanic before repatriation</li> <li>• Damazin has an all-season road link with Khartoum/Kosti and a sizable logistics infrastructure. The road, however, linking Damazin and Kurmuk is inaccessible during the wet season. The UN should influence early repair of this road. Assosa, Ethiopia, should be used as a back-up supply source. Access to Assosa market should therefore be arranged under the Tripartite Agreement</li> <li>• A fleet of two 4WD light vehicles, one 4WD pick-up and two tractors and two quad bikes should be deployed to support the operation in Kurmuk. Logistics capacity in UNHCR Damazin should also be reinforced – warehouse rented, NFI, fuel and office stationeries / equipment propositioned</li> <li>• Two rented trucks should be deployed to Chali for dispersal of refugees from the reception centre/way station</li> <li>• Kurmuk and Yabus airports should be repaired. UNMIS plans to repair Kurmuk airstrip. This should be speeded up.</li> <li>• UNHCR should include Kurmuk and Damzin in its weekly flight schedule.</li> <li>• UNHCR Ethiopia should start an information campaign and prepare refugees on “what assets refugees can carry and what they cannot”.</li> <li>• Arrangements should be made to allow Ethiopian buses and trucks to cross into Sudan. Rented trucks and buses will be used to transport refugees from Bonga to Kurmuk and this should be clearly articulated in the Tripartite Agreement. Detailed terms of reference of the contractor/transport should be agreed upon before the repatriation can</li> </ul>	<p>UNHCR Khartoum UNHCR Damazin UNHCR Addis Ababa UNHCR Gambella</p>	<p>Please see section on detailed logistics plan</p>

<p>begin. Issues such as contact person(s), refuelling locations, presence at way station, stop-over places (for rest) etc. should be addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WFP agreed to provide returnees a two-week ration at the point of departure. The agency will also distribute three month food rations and a three-month food for work upon return. UNHCR should share with WFP information on returnee figures and places of return (origin).</li> </ul>		
<p>Task/Recommendation</p>	<p>Responsible office</p>	<p>Time Frame</p>
<p><b>Return of 1,300 Dinkas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary plans discussed during this mission need further inputs from areas of return. A set of activities to be implemented to prepare for repatriation by air was identified jointly by the mission and UNHCR Gambella/Addis team. A plan of actions should be developed for repatriation by air from Fugnido/Gambella of Dinkas to Bor, Pibor, Wau and Rumbek.</li> <li>The Framework Agreement with IOM for the Tambura air repatriation could be expanded to cover Gambella corridor.</li> <li>ERTs covering Bor, Pibor, Malakal/Nassir and other areas, should help create the necessary ground for return by identifying and initiating implementation of immediate and urgently needed return-related infrastructure. This should be done in close coordination with other UN agencies responsible for respective sectors. Where absolutely necessary, urgently make arrangements with NGOs to initiate projects to support the return of refugees from Ethiopia and Kenya.</li> </ul>	<p>UNHCR DOSS, UNHCR Juba UNHCR Addis Ababa UNHCR Gambella</p>	<p>ERTs to develop returnee area profiles by end December 2005</p> <p>Detailed planning meeting (UNHCR Juba/Gambella/Addis) to be organized in January 2006</p>

Task/Recommendation	Responsible office	Time Frame
<p><b>Tripartite Agreement</b></p> <p>Urgently conclude Tripartite Agreement with the Government of Ethiopia as the successful completion of preparatory activities and movement of assets (e.g. road construction equipment, fuel, construction material etc.) across the border from Ethiopia to facilitate work in Kurmuk and returnee areas also depends on the Tripartite Agreement.</p>	<p>UNHCR Khartoum UNHCR Addis Ababa</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>
<p><b>Inter-agency Mission to Jikaw and Pagak border crossing and routes of return</b></p> <p>UNHCR, in partnership with other agencies WFP, UNICEF, FAO, UNMIS, IOM, WHO and selected NGOs should organize an assessment mission in December 2005/January 2006 to open up Itang/Jikaw and Pagak road corridors to Nassir, Mabaan and Malakal – areas of return for over 30,000 Sudanese refugees living in camps in Ethiopia. Repatriation through these corridors is only possible during the dry season (November-May/June).</p>	<p>DOSS UNHCR Malakal UNHCR Gambella</p>	<p>Planning for the mission to start early December 2005</p>
<p><b>Information Campaign</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mass Information Officer should field a mission to BNS and Ethiopia refugee camps and develop information campaign leaflets and a strategy of dissemination of information</li> <li>• Arrangements should be made with agencies to obtain information on areas of return where UNHCR is not present, e.g. Nuba Mountains, and share with the refugees in Bonga through UNHCR Gambella. Similarly, information on areas of return of Anuaks, Nuers, Shiluks, Brun and Mabaan should also be developed and shared with refugees on a regular basis</li> <li>• Through GoSS, arrangements should be made for go-and-tell missions to refugee camps for disseminating information on CPA</li> </ul>	<p>UNHCR Juba UNHCR Gambella</p>	<p>By January 2006</p>

Task/Recommendation	Responsible office	Time Frame
<p><b>Alternate route to bring assistance to Yabus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake joint assessment with WFP of Kosti-Renk-Pollich-Mabaan-Yabus route for bringing supplies to SBNS– including food assistance for returnees</li> </ul>	<p>DOSS UNHCR Khartoum</p>	<p>Initiate consultations with WFP and agree on time frame and TORs of the mission. Field assessment mission preferably by mid-January 2006</p>
<p><b>UNHCR Flights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNHCR should include Damazin and Kurmuk in its regional flight plan. The landing permits for Damazin need to be obtained in advance</li> </ul>	<p>DOSS UNHCR Khartoum UNHCR Damazin</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>



## **A. Blue Nile State**

19. The STARBASE and the research conducted by the recent inter-agency/multi sectoral mission led by UNHCR to Blue Nile State (BNS) documents that BNS comprises five localities, namely Roseres, Damazin, Bau, Geissan and Kurmuk. The State was divided into GoS (Northern Blue Nile State-NBNS) and SPLM (Southern Blue Nile State-SBNS) zones. The estimated population is 850,000, of which 74.3% live in rural areas. Damazin is the biggest urban centre in NBNS and Kurmuk in the SBNS.
20. Climatically, the BNS falls within the low rainfall woodland savannah. Rainfall is less towards the north and heavier towards the south (Kurmuk, Chali, Yabus, Bellatuna) mainly falling between the end of April and the end of October. The State has 19 forest reserves covering 33.9% of the total land of the State. The establishment of rain-fed schemes since 1960 has led to the clearing of most of the woodlands in the State. Forests also provide firewood, building materials and are a source of income for the population. The State is rich in minerals, particularly in the Ingessana Hills where gold, chromites and magnetite are found. Small quantities of gold are mined along riverbeds in the southern part of SBNS.
21. The State population is largely dependent on land and water for their livelihoods. Those residing near sources of water practice cultivation of different crops for subsistence. Villagers in the central plains suffer from lack of water sources and have to move during the dry season to areas where water is available and return to their lands during the rainy season to start cultivation of crops for subsistence. While away, they engage in a number of activities mainly as hired labour in the villages they attach themselves to. The major resources of the pastoral groups are animal herds; grazing lands and cultivation of small plots during the animal movement which part of the household members return to harvest.
22. GoS and SPLM/A have contested control over BNS since 1997. This has resulted in the division of the region into two separately administered units, the Funj Region under SPLM control (formerly Southern Blue Nile region), and the Blue Nile State, controlled by GoS. The CPA considered BNS as one of the three areas where power should be shared between SPLM/GoS during the six-year transitional period. According to the Peace Protocol signed in 2004, the SPLM should share 45% of the power in the State while the GoS share should be 55%. With the formation of the Government of National Unity, Damazin became the seat of the local administration, including the joint HAC/SRRC office established in September 2005.
23. The State's administrative names and boundaries vary between SPLM and GoS. The provinces in BNS are Damazin (capital of the State), Roseres, Kurmuk and Bau. GoS controls three quarters of the State, including all of Damazin and Roseres, and part of Bau and Geissan. The SPLM-administered structure refers to Geissan and Kurmuk.
24. Population displacement began in 1987. While parts of the population were displaced to Northern States, some became IDPs within the State, mainly in Damazin and Roseres. Others fled to Ethiopia. According to State officials, an estimated number of 165,000 have been displaced inside and outside BNS representing about 17% of the population of the entire State. In NBNS, settled IDPs have made considerable progress in restarting their livelihoods. Up to 88% of the IDP and returnee population farm their own land. Those who arrived in 2002 have however limited access to land and rely on working as agricultural labourers or relief assistance. In SBNS income/employment opportunities are markedly limited in comparison with NBNS. The population is predominantly agriculturalists and relies on neighbouring Ethiopia as the source of more than 90% of their food and Non-food items. Mining is a notable source of income for about 30% of the population. The poorest and more recently

displaced remain vulnerable to food security. They have little, if any, access to land, own no livestock and rely on kinship and seasonal labour to survive.

## **B. Current Situation** (based on secondary data and observations of the mission)

25. Blue Nile State (BNS) is one of the three “transitional areas” where joint GoS and SPLM administrative structures are in the process of formation. There is anxiety among the new partners in the State Government as to power sharing and actual control over the newly established governing bodies. This account for the fact that even already set up joint administrative bodies such as HAC/SRRC are not yet fully functional. Although the situation has reportedly improved, Blue Nile State is still de facto split into SPLM/GOSS controlled south SBSN (zone south of Dindero) and the northern part that has been under GoS control.
26. **Damazin** is the main economic centre of BNS. The city also hosts the Blue Nile State University. Damazin disposes of an airport which is linked to Khartoum by regular UN operated flights. There is a paved road (approximately 7 hrs travel by car) leading to Khartoum. The existing urban infrastructure can be regarded as adequate within the Sudan context.
27. **Kurmuk** is the centre of and an economic hub of SBNS. The population of Kurmuk is estimated to be 4,000 inhabitants. Employment opportunities being extremely scarce, the population is chiefly engaged in agricultural activities and partly in small trade with neighboring Ethiopia. Despite the fact that there is no official border check point, all Sudanese nationals have a free access into Ethiopian territory. Ethiopian communities along Kurmuk play a significant role in supplying goods to Kurmuk and surrounding urban areas. These goods vary from basic commodities to petrol and construction materials. Inflow of commodities from Damazin is limited to the so called dry season and does not significantly influence the local market. The Ethiopian currency Birr has become the legal tender in Kurmuk, while the Sudanese Dinar is limited in circulation. There are no banks and all transactions are done using cash. In rainy periods, Kurmuk is inaccessible from Damazin by road. Similarly, areas like Yabus further south of Kurmuk cannot be reached. There is a 750 m long airstrip not far from Kurmuk centre, but it needs upgrading. The airstrip is used by several international NGOs present in Kurmuk for delivery of relief items and other material from Kenya.



Kurmuk town and primary school

28. Except for military and police, other authorities have little impact on people’s daily life. The capacity of the local administration is very limited and requires support in every domain. Major social infrastructure in Kurmuk consists of two primary schools and a hospital that function exclusively with international NGO support. The only secondary school in town lies in ruins. There are no other functioning public services

available. The old town water supply system was being rehabilitated by the International NGO COOPI. Support structures like warehouses, storage facilities, etc. are either inadequate or in bad condition. At the same time, the town has a potential for development if access from Damazin to Kurmuk improves to an all-season road. The town's advantageous location on the border with Ethiopia can transform it into a commercial "crossroads" of importance to the entire State of Blue Nile and set in motion the agriculture development and marketing of produce to Ethiopia and other parts of BNS.



Kurmuk Market

29. The Blue Nile State communities are generally considered "non-aggressive" with diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. These communities have been co-existing by and large peacefully in the SBNS. There are no major tribal conflicts and disputes are settled through the traditional courts. The SBNS communities have a very unique life style and reportedly there are no militia groups or bandits. The code of carrying small arms is quite strict. However, at the time of writing, the UN Police was monitoring the investigation of the shooting death of a 30 year-old man by GoS police in Damazin. The locals were unhappy as the deceased was allegedly armed only with a machete and the strong police team could have overpowered him without using lethal force. Reportedly, the anger of residents was compounded by the fact that inter-tribal tensions were running high at that time due to traditional/seasonal issues.



Kurmuk Town Hall/Civil Service Headquarters; and SRRC office in Kurmuk with leaking roof

30. The governance structure in accordance with the CPA was in the making during the mission to the region. There was much anxiety about the formation (and the delays in the formation) of the State Government. At the time of writing, UNMIS reported that following the establishment of the State Legislature, a joint draft constitution has been written and is reported to be in discussion in the State Legislature.

31. UNMIS plans to establish a military base in Kurmuk. It currently has a flexible flight schedule from Damazin. UNMIS mandate rotates around observing CPA, monitoring and provision of training to the local police. No major security problems were reported. The number of military personnel was planned to go up to 1,300 men strong contingent mainly from Pakistan including an aviation group and a fully equipped hospital. UNMIS was also in advance planning stages to open up two fully equipped outposts in Kurmuk and Dindero. The latter site will be a HQ for the joint GoS-SPML military force. In Kurmuk and Dindero there will be UN Observers, UN Police, logistics and force protection staff.
32. Currently the ever supportive UNMIS management in Damazin also provides logistics support to the sister UN agencies established in Damazin (e.g. air transport, vehicles) and incoming agency mission. UNMIS management confirmed that it will continue to do so when and as needed.

## **I. Legal System in SBNS**

33. The structure of the judiciary in South Blue Nile State (Kurmuk) is not so clear as yet and is evolving with the signing of the CPA. According to the pre-CPA structure, the highest court was in Kurmuk and worked under the responsibility of the New Sudan Judiciary in the SPLM/A controlled areas. It was run by a county Judge of first grade but currently it is run by the panel of traditional chiefs. The same structure is applied to payam and boma courts.
34. In county courts 6-7 of traditional chiefs preside over cases. The presiding judge or court president is nominated amongst the chiefs by virtue of experience and years of service in customary law court. The same system also applies to payam and boma courts. The panel, however, varies from 5 to 8 members. None of the courts have female members.
35. In Northern Blue Nile State (Damazin) the judiciary system is well structured and the Chief Justice and judges are assigned by GOS. The mission was informed that in accordance with the CPA, the judiciary headquarters for BNS is very soon going to be established in Damazin. SBNS (Kurmuk) will rely on Damazin vis-à-vis the system of the courts, appointment of judges and their transfer. BNS is to have a decentralized governance system with independent administration. The judiciary system is however, centralized within the region. Therefore, the appointment and transfer of judges will be done by the Governor and the Chief Justice of BNS Damazin.
36. There are urgent needs in SBNS to reinforce human rights, rule of law and governance institutions. In Kurmuk County the capacity of these institutions - police, judiciary, prison and land commission - is either very limited or non-existent.

## **II. Land**

37. In SBNS, the ownership of land is classified into two categories: i) rural and ii) urban. In rural areas, land is owned by the community of that specific locality. Disputes are resolved by the traditional chiefs and elders who have the expertise and knowledge of the communal land including of neighboring/bordering communities. Reconciliation on land, property restitution and allocation in rural areas is done by the traditional chiefs and community leaders.

38. In urban areas, land is privately owned and many houses, shops or residential plots of the displaced are occupied, including by SPLM/A soldiers and commanders. Urban land/property disputes are expected to be settled by the county courts.
39. In rural areas there is no gender discrimination on ownership or usage of land. Men and women have access to and ownership of their land and property. A divorced woman is customarily barred from any entitlement to a property of her former husband unless the deed is transferred through her children. Minors (children who lost both parents) and vulnerable groups like elderly persons are taken care of by their relatives or guardians. This may create some problems for returnees in this particular social group and would require close follow-up.
40. With the expected large number of returnees, refugees and IDPs, there is potential for dispute and even conflict especially in urban areas. Currently there is no land policy in SBNS. Disputes are settled by the county/payam/boma courts. Customary land surveyors, who are part and parcel of civil authority, are working in consultation with the traditional chiefs and elders to demarcate the borders or frontiers between the payams and bomas to avoid confusions and conflicts and also preparing the ground for the return of IDPs and refugees. A Land Commissioner is planned to be appointed in Damazin to formulate legislations and policies related to land tenure and ownership.

### **III. Landmines & UXOs**

41. Presence of land mines/UXOs remains a serious threat in SBNS and a major constraint to returns of refugees and IDPs. Repatriation operations will have to be carefully planned in close consultations with authorities and local communities, UNMAS/UNMAO and UNMIS. There are reportedly mine contaminated areas in the Kurmuk corridor, including the hills around the town and some of the roads around Diem Mansour – which the locals call the “roads of old Sudan” and avoid using them. New roads/tracks have opened up which are called the roads of New Sudan. Some areas around Chali are also infested with UXOs and mines but no real data is available.
42. This mission was unable to obtain detailed information on mined areas other than some briefing from the local communities. UNHCR had requested UNMAO to include returnee areas around Chali in their planned assessment mission to SBNS. At the time of writing UNMAO was on their mission to BNS. Their assessment report will form the basis of next steps.
43. For repatriation of refugees a general briefing on mine risk will not be sufficient as many of the refugees will be returning to their areas of return for the first time in their lives. The local communities have knowledge of mined areas. Returnees do not have the benefit of that knowledge and will be at greater risk. Prior to repatriation, a mine action survey and demarcation of polluted areas would be required. Furthermore, intensive area-specific information and MRE will be required in refugee camps.

### **IV. General security situation & police presence in Kurmuk**

44. The security situation in general was relatively calm. The situation has improved considerably after the signing of CPA in January 2005. The main threat remains the presence of land mines and UXOs all over the State. In Damazin, there is an organizational police force of all units, e.g. crime, security, immigration, customs, fire brigade, wild life, prisons and other units commanded by a Major General. In

Kurmuk locality, there is an untrained SPLM police force which is composed of 340 men with two senior police officers. According to the two commanders, the police force will soon get integrated with that of Damazin. UNMIS police are organizing training sessions for the untrained police force. There is reportedly no militia in Southern Blue Nile – which is one of the reasons that the security situation is calm compared to neighboring Upper Nile State.

## **V. Returnee's rights to bring their assets with them**

45. The Customs and Police authorities confirmed that refugees returning to Sudan can bring all their assets with them unless limited by UNHCR repatriation procedures. Except for vehicles, refugee assets are free of taxes. Tractors used for agricultural purposes will not be taxed.
46. Immigration procedures for returnees will be done according to the Tripartite Agreement, which the Deputy Commissioner of Police Blue Nile State in Damazin and SPLM Commander in Kurmuk are aware of. Returnees who wish to apply for nationality certificates will be issued one on request upon arrival in Sudan at the prescribed fee.
47. Regarding children born outside Sudan, the authorities confirmed that birth certificates may be issued inside Sudan upon return. However, it is preferred that refugees returning from Ethiopia carry their birth certificates. The mission was assured in Ethiopia that all children born in refugee camps have been issued with birth certificates. Those who lost theirs have been encouraged to go and ask for duplicate copies.
48. Regarding mixed marriages, the Sudanese authorities have no restriction on return of couples of mixed marriages, provided they are in possession of marriage documents from the country of asylum (from the Mosques in case of Muslims or from the Church in case of Christian or from a court of law). Ethiopian authorities (ARRA) have also expressed the same.

## **VI. Visa requirements for staff for cross-border meetings and evacuation in case of emergency**

49. At the border crossing at Kurmuk, currently there is no customs or immigration presence on either side of the border. SRRC issues permits for staff wishing to cross the border to Ethiopia. This is done without difficulty. This facility, however, is limited to national staff. Movement of international staff across border is extremely time consuming. The mission movement across the border was facilitated by UNHCR Addis Ababa through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense. On the Ethiopian side, the Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) is also involved in the facilitation of cross border meetings for repatriation. A system will have to be put in place for frequent movement of staff across the border for emergency evacuation (medical or security) or to plan and facilitate repatriation. This important aspect of the repatriation operation should be discussed as part of the Tripartite Agreement.

## **VII. Evacuation/Medevac Plan**

50. The only means to move out of Kurmuk during an emergency is by air (helicopter or plane) during day time and by car only during the dry season. Relocation to Ethiopia by road, in case of security emergency, seems to be the most viable option for which arrangements should be made through the Tripartite Agreement discussion forum. Any evacuation plan, medevac or security should be linked to the UNMIS evacuation plan.
51. Currently Samaritan's Purse (NGO) has an air craft that comes to Kurmuk every fortnight on Thursdays from Loki. GOAL has a once a month flight (16<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup>) from Loki to Kurmuk. GOAL provides seats free of charge even to non GOAL staff. Church Ecumenical Action in Sudan (CEAS) flight is also once a month at the beginning of every month (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>). Currently, no plane can land in Kurmuk after 15:30 hours. UNHCR should include Damazin and Kurmuk in its regional flight plan. The landing permits for Damazin need to be obtained in advance.

## **VIII. Logistics**

52. The purpose of the logistic aspect of this mission was to establish a framework and identify operational requirements for the planning, implementation and monitoring of organized returnee/refugee movements. Logistical gaps and bottlenecks were identified and recommendation made on key supply issues such as study on main return routes; analysis of mode of transport (air/surface), availability of trucks and sources of supplies (fuel, NFI, water, first aid medical kits, workshop and warehousing facilities, etc.). Mission recommendations take into consideration the necessity for UNHCR to respond in a flexible manner according to needs in line with the existing logistics infrastructures in the region and the concept of UNHCR's phased implementation approach.
53. The returnee convoy (Bonga, Gambella to Chali, Southern Blue Nile State – via Assosa) will take 7 days for the round trip. For exigency purposes and in order to account for delays, an additional day was plotted. This is shown on the Sample Convoy Movement Plan as fleet maintenance/repair day. It brings the total turn-around trip to 8 days per convoy.
54. The distance from Bongo (Gambella) to Chali is 857 kms. Of these, 717 km is a national trunk road (all season murrum) and stretches from Gambella (Bonga) to Assosa via Bedele and Nejo. An additional 100 km section (Assosa – Sherkole – Kurmuk stretch, inside Ethiopia) is under repair and is expected to be completed by mid-January 2006. The distance from Kurmuk to Chali is 50 km, accessible only during the dry season.
55. The Kurmuk-Chali section of the road is a dirt track and in very bad conditions, passable during dry season but full of large pot holes and stretches of dried up black cotton soil. Organizations present in Kurmuk use tractors for overland transport during the wet season. For instance, it took the mission 6 hours to cover a distance of 20 km with the help of a tractor. During the wet season, no vehicle can move without a tractor. The mission was helped by Samaritan's Purse tractor.
56. The Kurmuk/Chali road is essential for the safe and dignified return of refugees. Local authorities also consider it important as it will contribute to the reconciliation and development of the area. It is crucial that repair and rehabilitation of this section of the road is completed before the repatriation operation can begin.



Kurmuk – Chali road

57. Within Sudan, Damazin is the nearest city to Kurmuk with a sizeable facility – construction machineries included. The distance between Damazin and Kurmuk via Deindro is 185 km. The section of the road between Damazin and Deindro is in a reasonably good condition and passable during all seasons. Repair is however still required. The section from Deindro to Kurmuk, which falls under SBNS is in a very poor state. This section is inaccessible during the rainy season and requires significant repair. Landmines remain a serious threat on certain loops of the road which are avoided by the locals.
58. Kurmuk has a limited logistics infrastructure – i.e. rental trucks (both long haul and short haul 4x4 trucks) are not available. Workshop services, warehousing facilities (storage structures) and fuel depot are also almost non-existent. International NGOs present in the area bring their expatriate staff (mechanics, logisticians, finance staff, etc.) and purchase fuel imports from Ethiopia. Fuel is stored and sold in drums.
59. Given the distance and the condition of the road between Damazin and Kurmuk, as well as time constraints, it is important, that alternative options are explored for procurement and pre-positioning of fuels supplies, deployment of roads equipment and construction material sought from Damazin. One alternative is through Ethiopia, as construction equipment and materials are available (cost estimate to be provided) in Ethiopia. What is, however, unclear is whether the Government of Ethiopia will grant permission to allow its private construction companies to cross the border into Sudan and undertake/implement road rehabilitation work. Authorities in Kurmuk/Sudan showed their support to the proposal. The mission requested UNHCR Ethiopia to look into the possibility of finding potential contractors willing to implement such a project. It is recommended that, if feasible, such arrangements could be discussed under the Tripartite Agreement – granting permission to Ethiopian equipment and fuel to cross over into Sudan to rehabilitate the Kurmuk/Chali road.

### **C. Sectoral Activities and presence of agencies in SBNS**

Currently there is no permanent UN presence in Kurmuk, the centre of SBNS.

#### **GOAL**

60. GOAL, an international NGO, has presence in Kurmuk and Yabus and has a total of 17 international staff. It has well-established compounds at both locations and a very well-established logistical set up including mechanical workshops. The fleet includes 4WD vehicles, 4WD quad bikes and tractors. Quad bikes, as the mission learned, are indispensable in rainy season, when other vehicles cannot move around. GOAL in Kurmuk reports to its Office in Nairobi. It is, however, quite independent in operational matters. It relies on the airlifts from Nairobi via Lokichokio as regards



their main project supplies, although some things are purchased in Ethiopia through local agents. They plan to open an office in Damazin for administrative purposes as well as for using banking facilities there.

61. GOAL's programme consists of two main components: support to primary health care/sanitation (funded through ECHO) and water – drilling of boreholes. It currently supports 13 primary health clinics/units and 9 community-based clinics by way of providing basic drugs and paying personnel, involving communities in self management and providing necessary training. Seven PHCUs are located in Anyile, Mayak, Keli, Nassira, Mayas, Bellatuna, Mugaya; two PHCCs are in Kurmuk and Yabus; four sub-PHCUs are supported in Deim Mansour, Mugufu, Jardan, Wadaga. Until now, there were no interventions in the potential refugee return areas like Chali. In future, the number of supported units/clinics will be rationalized.
62. The GOAL water programme includes boreholes in Kurmuk County where they have drilled 23 boreholes (cost varies from USD 7,000 to USD 10,000 per unit, depending on the depth of the borehole). The drilling team includes a hydro-geologist. Boreholes are to serve schools and the population at large. At present, GOAL has a drilling rig given to them on a temporary basis (until end of 2005) by UNICEF South. With the arrival of returnees, there will be an increase in demand on water supply for which there will be a continuous need of at least two drilling rigs in the area. Arrangements need to be made with UNICEF for the rig to remain in SBNS and for an additional rig, given the expansion of the programme in the whole of SBNS and parts of NBNS.
63. In terms of future plans, GOAL intends to carry on their water projects and continue to support primary health structure, as well as to establish a diagnostic station in Kurmuk. GOAL has expressed interest in expanding their projects into areas of potential refugee return.

### **Samaritan's Purse (SP)**

64. SP, an international NGO, established itself in Kurmuk in 2002. The operation in SBNS is managed and run by 6 international staff (five sector coordinators and a logistics coordinator). It has a fleet of 4WD vehicles, tractors and 4WD quad-bikes. Project supplies are delivered by air from Nairobi; however, it also obtains a number of construction materials from Ethiopia. SP reports to its office in Nairobi; but many operational decisions are taken in the field. SP also has an office in Khartoum. Upon arrival into the area, SP has taken over provision of support to the town hospital from GOAL. They have managed to repair hospital wards and build an operation theatre. SP de facto administers the 70 beds hospital in Kurmuk, the only hospital in SBNS. All services provided to the local population were provided free of charge. This however, attracted quite a number of patients from Ethiopia. Consequently, a fee for "medical cards" had to be fixed, since such services are paid for in the neighboring country. Introduction of payment can also be regarded as a first step in achieving self-sustainability of the hospital (although it is not feasible in the foreseeable future), as salaries to 130 staff and a doctor are provided for through SP.
65. SP is also active in the agricultural sector including livestock restocking. Projects like demonstration farm in Deim Mansour, cross breeding goats to boost local milk production, vaccination of livestock, introduction of new crop/vegetable varieties and techniques like using donkeys for ploughing (farm in Kelly), mobilizing village community in achieving self-reliance (seed bank), etc. are all very valuable interventions. The Deim Mansour agriculture compound is a very well established unit equipped with basic tools and managed by qualified and experienced staff. This unit, with some assistance could easily transform into a main agriculture centre supporting livelihoods projects in the SBNS. SP is also running a community center in Kurmuk and is engaged in income generating activities (e.g. block making that has been taken over from USAID).



Water point in Kurmuk and section of Kurmuk hospital

66. SP has shown interest in working with UNHCR and expanding some of their activities into areas around Chali. SP is most interested in carrying on the hospital component in Kurmuk as well as in continuing to build on their agriculture and livelihoods related experience in SBNS.

### **CEAS (Church Ecumenical Action in Sudan)**

67. CEAS has been active in Blue Nile State (Kurmuk and Yabus) since 1997 when they started an emergency programme targeting IDPs. CEAS started its health programme which was later on handed over to Samaritan Purse. Presently, CEAS is dealing mainly with education. Their educational projects are implemented through ROOF (an indigenous NGO) that is funded by CEAS (70% of Roof's total funding).



Diem Mansour Vocational Training Institute and Teachers Training Institute

68. CEAS plans to continue working in the education sector including the secondary school in Kurmuk, support to and expansion of a Vocational Training Institute in Diem Mansour and the Teacher's Training Institute in Diem Mansour (both institutes run by ROOF) among educational priorities. Reconstruction of "feeder roads" is another area of interest for CEAS for which they are in contact with WFP to use its "food for assets" scheme. Both organizations have acquired some experience in implementing such projects in Upper Nile State.
69. CEAS is also engaged in agricultural activities: restocking of goats, demonstration farms (seven are planned but funds are only available for two), three bee-keeping projects in Yabus, Jerdan and Diem Mansour etc. Proposals for funding have been submitted to some donors.



Destroyed school building; and Diem Mansour-Chali road with seasonal river flooded (*mission got stranded overnight because of flash floods*)

70. Apart from Kurmuk, CEAS is represented in Juba. The Director is based in Nairobi. CEAS has expressed its interest in cooperation with UNHCR in SBNS in the educational sector.

### **COOPI (Cooperazione Internazionale)**

71. COOPI has opened a small office (2 international staff) in Kurmuk reporting to its main office in Nairobi. Currently, COOPI is implementing a Kurmuk town water supply project which includes reservoir rehabilitation (66,000 cubic meters) and eight distribution points in town. The project includes a community mobilization aspect which manages and operates the water supply system to lead to the project's self sustainability. The project also includes technical training and training in water management. COOPI plans on completing the project by end-December 2005.
72. COOPI could be interested in carrying out work in the returnee area in and around Chali including collection of rain water in small scale Hafier dams and other infrastructure projects and community-based interventions. Further discussions are required with COOPI to explore areas of mutual interest and establish implementation arrangements.

### **ROOF (indigenous NGO)**

73. ROOF's main office is based in Nairobi. Lately, plans have been made to open an office in Damazin. ROOF is an indigenous NGO and the main implementer of CEAS in Kurmuk. It has also carried out some small scale projects on behalf of Samaritan's Purse. Areas of intervention include primary education (biggest and most successful component), literacy classes for adults, income generating projects for women including revolving fund (difficulties in managing it); HIV programme, water/sanitation (establishment of committees) civic education (provision of news and other material about life in Kurmuk/South BNS that is regularly gathered by a journalist from Nairobi and then published in a ROOF-run newspaper targeting refugees in Kenya and return communities in Sudan).
74. ROOF is running two primary schools in Kurmuk town (711 students in both) and one in Yabus (305 students). They employ 18 teachers who receive salaries. These teachers work in Kurmuk and Yabus. Outside Kurmuk, there are 23 functioning primary schools that are supported only by the local communities. ROOF provides them with some schooling material from time to time. Teachers at community schools are not receiving any remuneration. Roof is also administering the Teachers' Training Institute (TTI) in Deim Mansour. The first batch of 32 graduates has already received their certificates. TTI needs expansion as ROOF cannot enroll all those who wish to do so. The demand for teachers is very high. Their number should be drastically increased as today classrooms are overcrowded not only because of lack of space, but also due to the deficit of teachers in BNS. Similarly, the Vocational Training Institute

(VTI), also run by ROOF, should be supported to resume classes. Reportedly, UNICEF once provided funding in the form of small grants for quick impact.

75. ROOF's plans for 2006 are linked to expansion of the education system; reconstruction of schools outside Kurmuk and rebuilding of the secondary school. They also planned constructing boarding facilities for the secondary school as it serves the entire SBNS.
76. As an indigenous NGO, ROOF needs further boosting of its capacities, specifically in project management and monitoring for which they need training and substantial support in the form of communication and transportation means if their project is to be expanded outside Kurmuk.

#### **D. Agencies in BNS - Damazin**

UNICEF, WFP and the NGO community in Damazin hold fortnightly coordination meetings, which are presided over by SRRC/HAC.

#### **WFP**

77. The WFP office in Damazin has a total of 21 staff covering NBNS only. SBNS is covered by the southern team which only comes to Kurmuk whenever there is an air-drop. The programme in NBNS targets some 23,500 beneficiaries, including IDPs and returnees. WFP also provides food for 15,500 children and 44 schools. Registration of the beneficiary groups was done by WFP. Distribution of food to the population of targeted communities is carried out monthly only during the so-called gap period between April and September. During the remainder of the year, beneficiaries are expected to rely on their own coping mechanisms. The food basket is calculated at 50% of the standard calorie intake and it includes cereal, pulses and oil. The recommended food basket was computed on the basis of annual needs assessments. No malnutrition had been observed. The annual needs assessment for 2005/2006 was ongoing during this mission's visit to Damazin.
78. WFP implements its activities through the only international NGO – Islamic Relief Worldwide (IR) present in NBNS. The capacity of local NGOs is reportedly very weak. This is also the case with the Red Crescent Society that worked with the IDP and returnee groups.
79. WFP Damazin considers that expansion of operations, if need be, will not create major logistical problems, especially in storage and organizing transport and food delivery to Damazin and further on. The Damazin market has required a number of trucks at a competitive price for the expansion of operations.
80. WFP emphasized that beneficiary numbers are difficult to obtain and this is a major constraint for planning food requirements. The numbers communicated by the authorities usually do not correspond to the actual number in the field. For example, of a reported 12,000 returnees in Gessain area, only 3,000 were found by WFP.
81. WFP has expressed its readiness to support the UNHCR repatriation programme in BNS and provide assistance to the returning refugees. For food assistance, WFP would require more information from UNHCR on when, where and how many people are returning from Ethiopia.
82. There is currently no WFP presence in Kurmuk for SBNS.

## **UNICEF**

83. The UNICEF office in Damazin at the time of mission had only two staff – both Sudanese nationals. Recruitment of four more persons is planned to ensure proper monitoring of UNICEF's projects in BNS. The ongoing UNICEF projects relate to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Another major component of UNICEF's projects is the Integrated Management of Child Disease. In practical terms, the latter translates into rebuilding of primary health care facilities (units, dispensaries), provision of essential drugs and training of personnel. UNICEF projects target the most vulnerable communities and services are extended to IDPs and returnees alike. Gessain is one such area of intervention, since it has a big potential for return. Construction of a way station is planned there for returnees transiting through the area.
84. As the school enrolment level in BNS is very low, UNICEF equally supports educational projects. Currently, UNICEF runs mobile schools for nomads. UNICEF implements its projects through several NGOs. Its main partner is Islamic Relief Worldwide (IR). Organizations like the Sudanese Red Crescent Society are also involved in UNICEF-funded activities: awareness raising campaigns, measles, polio, etc. UNICEF highlighted the following major challenges faced by all agencies: (a) poor infrastructure, (b) difficulties in finding qualified staff, specifically with good knowledge of English and (d) limited presence of NGOs, international and national alike.
85. UNICEF Damazin confirmed that they have borehole drilling rigs and that one could be deployed to the Kurmuk area to drill boreholes in returnee areas under the UNHCR-funded return programme. This will require rapid follow-up with UNICEF offices responsible for NBNS and SBNS.
86. There is currently no UNICEF presence in SBNS.

## **UNMAS**

87. The mission had a meeting with UNMAS Head of Office in Damazin for BNS who had just arrived and was in the process of establishing presence in the region. UNHCR plans to work very closely with UNMAS/UNMAO in SBNS in returnee areas.

## **Islamic Relief Worldwide (IR)**

88. Islamic Relief established presence in Sudan in 1999 and leads the NGO Consortium that includes national and international NGOs like CF/Sweden, Spanish Red Cross, MAG, etc. IR proper has five staff and plans recruitment of additional staff as well as expansion of its programme. These plans are linked to new grants that the NGO will have at its disposal.
89. The Consortium has recently won a three-year EU grant of 5.8 million Euros for community level projects in health, education and livelihoods. The planned number of beneficiaries will reach 60,000 persons that include 45,000 returnees. Areas of intervention will extend to Gessain and Kurmuk where 20 villages will be covered. IR will carry out projects related to health, water and village development; SCF will take care of livelihood-related projects; while MAG will deal with cross-cutting issues of de-mining. It should be noted that the above planned beneficiary figures have been established after the workshop held with the local authorities/government. No real time assessment has been undertaken.

90. IR has also received funds from DFID (approximately 500,000 GB pounds) for community mobilization and development. All planned activities will be expanded to SBNS and the Kurmuk corridor. IR plans to open its offices in Gessain and Kurmuk by January 2006. The return areas of interest to UNHCR, Yabus and Chali will be targeted by their projects.

## **E. Main constraints in Kurmuk/Southern BNS**

- No UN presence in SBNS
- Most if not all, areas of SBNS are inaccessible in rainy seasons
- Rudimentary infrastructure; no electricity supply; logistic/warehousing and storage facilities almost non-existent
- Local authorities need substantial technical support, training/upgrading
- There are no immigration authorities; and no official border checkpoint
- Limited capacity in rule of law, police and judiciary structures
- Inadequate water supply and in many areas of return no water supply
- Very limited self-employment and employment opportunities
- International NGO presence is limited
- Local NGOs in need of capacity building
- Mine and UXOs infestation and unavailability of maps/information of contaminated areas
- Low level of local community mobilization
- Difficulties in finding locally qualified personnel for eventual recruitment
- Cross border movements of foreigners from Sudan to Ethiopia require special authorization from Addis Ababa

## **F. Ethiopia - Sherkole/Assosa, Gambella & Bonga Refugee Camp**

91. The mission crossed the border from Sudan to Ethiopia by road at Kurmuk. Due to prior arrangements made by the UNHCR Regional Liaison Office (RLO) in Addis Ababa with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Administration for Refugees and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and by the UNHCR Office in Assosa at the regional level, the mission crossing over into Ethiopia went smoothly. It must be noted that there are no immigration offices at Kurmuk/Ethiopia or at Assosa. On the Sudanese side, SRRC issues permits for travel to Sudanese who can cross the border freely. There are three market days per week – two in Kurmuk, Sudan, and one on the Ethiopian side of the border. People and goods move freely across the border.
92. In Ethiopia, the mission was joined by the Head of Field Office, Assosa, the Head of Sub-Office Gambella, staff of UNHCR Sub-Office Gambella and Regional Liaison Office, Addis Ababa. The mission covered the following issues: routes of return, road conditions to exit points, border crossing points, dispersal points, assembly points and way stations, procurement of non-food items and telecom equipments, road and airlift possibilities, intention of refugees, organized mass information campaigns, modus operandi for transportation of refugees and their belongings, landmine issues, general conditions in areas of return, reception/absorption capacities of areas of return, security conditions and major items to be included in the Tripartite Agreement.
93. A one-day planning workshop was organized by UNHCR Ethiopia in which all major stakeholders took part. This planning forum proved to be a most useful exercise as UNHCR and its partners in Ethiopia, including refugees, discussed and developed an outline plan of action for the repatriation of refugees from Bonga refugee camp. During the workshop, tasks were identified and a timeline developed to reach a state of readiness by the end of January 2006 to start repatriation. UNHCR Ethiopia developed and disseminated a comprehensive report on this cross-border meeting. This report covers some of the major recommendations on the way forward.
94. There have been ethnic conflicts and incidences in the region between Anuak and Nuer ethnic groups over one getting more power than the other in regional government offices. The security situation in Gambella region has, however, shown improvement since November 2004 and UN staff were allowed to return to their respective duty stations since their evacuation in December 2003. Nonetheless, military escorts are still being used for travel between Gambella town and Fugnido refugee camp (covering a distance of 110 kilometres) and between Koy River and Dimma refugee camp (covering about 25 kilometres). All travel between Gambella town and Fugnido is limited to Mondays and Fridays and that to Dimma to Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Access to Bonga refugee camp is undertaken without any escort.
95. A total of 73,000 Sudanese refugees (a few number of Ugandans and Burundians included) are currently being hosted in Bonga, Dimma, Fugnido, Sherkole and Yarenja refugee camps. Refugee registration exercises in all Sudanese refugee camps were completed except that of Fugnido camp where the registration was expected to be completed by the end of October 2005. A survey on “intention to return” was conducted in all camps and some 10% of the refugee population was interviewed. According to the preliminary results, more than 90% of the refugees are willing to return home.
96. In terms of preparatory activities, UNHCR Ethiopia organized a number of planning meetings which also involved the refugees. One such planning meeting took place in Addis Ababa. This meeting came up with a number of recommendations. The

following are some of the major achievements/tasks accomplished and in the pipeline:

- i. Non-food items: 70% of the local procurements (40,000 pcs of plastic jerry cans, 16,000 pcs of plastic buckets and 10,000 plastic sleeping mats) have been completed. Most of the internationally procured items (5,000 kitchen utensil sets, 9,000 pcs blankets, and 10 pcs of hospital tents with 50 pcs of hospital beds) have been received. Plastic sheeting is in the pipeline.
- ii. Communication equipments (10 pcs of Thuraya 18 pcs of VHF mobile radios, 10 pcs of HF radios, and 40 pcs of handheld radios) were procured.
- iii. Light vehicles: a total of 6 Toyota Land Cruisers have been delivered and dispatched to various UNHCR field offices. In the pipeline are 5 Toyota Land Cruisers (hardtop), 3 Land Cruisers (ambulances), and 3 Land Cruiser (pick ups).
- iv. All internationally and locally procured items which are already in the pipeline will be received in about a month.
- v. Way stations & assembly points: preparatory activities have been finalised for the construction of four way stations (at Gore, Bedele, Nejo and Kurmuk) for the repatriation of Uduk refugees from Bonga. Four assembly points (at Bonga, Fugnido, Dimma, and Sherkole camps) and for two rub-halls (storage for non-food items at Gambella and Assosa towns) sites identified and construction starting shortly.
- vi. Three main exit points have been identified (Jikawo, Bambudi, and Kurmuk corridors) for the repatriation operation to Sudan.
- vii. Road maintenance for main routes on-going. The last stretch of Kurmuk corridor will be ready by mid-January 2006.

97. Following were some of the issues highlighted and follow-up actions agreed upon:

- a. UNHCR has standards and criteria to fulfil for the repatriation operation – a certain level of minimum standards will be respected to effect organised repatriation.
- b. The Logistic Units of UNHCR Ethiopia and Sudan will prepare, in close collaboration, a detailed plan with standard operating procedures, timelines, responsible offices/staff, and a checklists for the following activities:
  - i. information campaign
  - ii. pre departure, en-route, at way stations, and at exit points
  - iii. convoy movements and management
  - iv. pre-positioning and distribution of non-food items in Ethiopia
  - v. arrangements with WFP for food assistance for return/en route (Ethiopia WFP) and upon arrival (Sudan WFP)
  - vi. pre-positioning of seeds & tools packages upon arrival in Sudan
  - vii. dispersal of returnees from the reception centre at Chali (and subsequently other locations)
- c. UNHCR Ethiopia to revisit composition of convoy for transportation of refugees and their assets.
- d. UNHCR Ethiopia to explore possibilities of Ethiopian fleet crossing over into Sudan at Kurmuk – currently there is no capacity in Kurmuk on the Sudan side. Ideally, the Ethiopian trucks/buses should continue the last 50 km journey inside Sudan up to Chali and return to Kurmuk/Ethiopia the same day. [An issue for Tripartite Agreement discussions].
- e. UNHCR Ethiopia to explore possibilities of supplying fuel for UNHCR operations in Kurmuk and Chali pending establishing a supply line from Damazin. Currently, fuel to Kurmuk for private and NGO consumption is supplied through Assosa. [An issue for Tripartite Agreement discussions].



- f. As a component of the repatriation transportation and fleet management contract, establish a vehicle maintenance workshop at Kurmuk/Ethiopia to facilitate vehicle repair/check-ups during cross-border movements and repatriation operations.
- g. Both UNHCR Country Offices of Sudan and Ethiopia should identify detailed lists of items/issues and send them to the Tripartite Agreement negotiating team before end of November for inclusion in the agreement, such as UNHCR, partner staff and vehicle movement across the border; convoy fleet to cross over into Sudan; supply of construction material/fuel/earth moving equipment across the border, etc.
- h. UNHCR Sudan and UNHCR Ethiopia should put in place family tracing and reunification systems for unaccompanied minors, separated children or separated families. Information on this aspect should be part of the mass information campaign.
- i. Mapping of mined areas in and around villages of return should be completed and information made available to refugees in Bonga refugee camp not only in the form of MRE but specific to their areas of return. Mine Action staff from Sudan should come on mission on a regular basis and provide more practical information to refugees. This should also be part of the mass information campaign.
- j. As the distances involved are long (more than 850 km), UNHCR Ethiopia should advise refugees to sell off their livestock prior to repatriation. In this regard arrangements need to be made for refugees to return with cash and, if need be, currency exchange mechanisms should be set-up before exit.
- k. UNHCR Sudan and UNHCR Ethiopia should soon make arrangements for go-and-see visits for refugee women, youth groups and other Uduk refugee representatives as well as arrangement for come-and-tell by elders and leaders from the Blue Nile State, Sudan. This will also help calm down anxieties and fears of Uduk refugees.
- l. All documentation (birth, marriage, education certificates) should be complete before repatriation. Arrangements should also be put in place for mixed marriages (nationality, visa and if other formalities are required).
- m. UNHCR Ethiopia to explore possibility of contracting a Road Construction Company from Ethiopia can cross over to Sudan to repair the road from Kurmuk to Chali village (about 50 km). UNHCR Sudan in the meantime will explore the possibility of deploying road equipment from Damazin. If it is determined that road equipment is to be deployed from Ethiopia, then such an arrangement will also be discussed at the Tripartite Agreement discussion forum.
- n. UNHCR Sudan and UNHCR Ethiopia should develop a list of staff who would be required to travel frequently across border for repatriation operations. Staff on that list (UNHCR, WFP and NGOs) should have valid multiple visas and SRRC permits. Exit and entry formalities for movement of staff of UNHCR, WFP and other NGOs across borders should be finalized. [An issue for Tripartite Agreement discussions]
- o. UNHCR Sudan and UNHCR Ethiopia should establish a Joint Coordination Committee for Repatriation (JCCR) and hold regular cross-border meetings. UNHCR Ethiopia and UNHCR Sudan to designate a maximum of 4 members each to the JCCR.
- p. Regular cross-border coordination meetings should be held. Security permitting, these meetings should alternate between Assosa/Gambella and Kurmuk/Damazin. Arrangements should be made to hold the next cross border meeting at Kurmuk towards mid December 2005.

## I. Refugees in Ethiopia

98. The refugees in Bonga refugee camp were happy to see UNHCR staff from Sudan and to discuss their repatriation. They were, however, very unhappy to discover that the preparatory activities are just beginning inside Sudan and that their repatriation will not start soon. The large majority of the participants underscored that they were expecting the repatriation to start in October 2005 for them to celebrate their Christmas this year at their home villages.



Bonga refugee camp and Uduk refugee elders

99. Almost all of the participants highlighted that they are ready to go home even if basic social services are non-existent in their area of return. They requested UNHCR to start the movements as quickly as possible and put in place those basic infrastructures while they are moving or even after they have returned home. Refugees would like to build their own villages as no one else could do it for them. To substantiate their argument, they frequently referred to the infrastructures and facilities built in Bonga refugee camp, which were put in place after the arrival of the refugees there. They strongly argued that their presence in their area of return is vital and do not believe that the setting up of basic services should delay their return.



Children in Bonga refugee camp

100. UNHCR staff at the meeting urged the refugees to be patient and stressed that it is important to make some absolutely necessary preparations to make their return home safe and dignified. With reluctance they accepted to wait; however, the younger generation warned that if repatriation is delayed, refugees will move on their own.
101. The mission also held meetings with Burun, Shiluk, Nuba, and Equatoria refugees. These groups of refugees also expressed their strong desire to return home but not as forcefully as the Uduks. Most of them lamented the lack of information about the situation in their areas of return. They insisted that information should be made available by UNHCR and that go-and-see visits arranged for them to plan for

repatriation. Among this group in Bonga refugee camp are some 300 Shiluk, 108 Equatorians and 334 Nuba refugees (many of whom arrived as unaccompanied minors) as well as 396 refugees of Burun ethnic origin.

102. The refugees in Fugnido camp made their case strongly at the Gambella workshop. The chairman of the Nuer refugee community indicated that most of the Nuer refugees are from Upper Nile State and are willing to return. Many of the refugees have preoccupations regarding disarmament of militias who are still active, frequent looting of properties and cattle rustling in Upper Nile State. Refugees would like to see the disarmament process making progress. Refugees would also like to know more about the CPA and its implementation as they are getting news that conflicts are still persisting in many places in South Sudan.

103. The Anuak representative raised similar concerns on the issue of disarmament. Lack of basic services such as schools, health facilities and the like in Jonglei State, especially in Pochalla and Akobo areas, was also a major concern of many refugees. Anuak refugees generally lack information on security situation in their place of origin and there are rumors that Akobo is occupied by other groups who are not originally from that area.

## Refugees population in Ethiopia

Registration/revalidation was completed in all five camps.

### Statistics as at November 2005

Camp	Sex	0-4 Yrs	5-17 yrs	18-25 Yrs	26-59 Yrs	60+	Total
Bonga	Female	2441	3007	1701	2412	110	9,671
	Male	2660	3150	1417	1432	75	8,734
							<b>18,405</b>
Dimma	Female	839	1112	784	869	48	3,652
	Male	863	1728	1343	961	24	4,919
							<b>8,571</b>
Fugnido	Female	2712	4401	2447	3732	172	13,464
	Male	2801	5304	2148	1969	72	12,294
							<b>25,758</b>
Sherkole	Female	1970	2508	1510	1723	95	7,806
	Male	2042	3135	1526	1669	89	8,461
							<b>16,267</b>
Yarenja	Female	431	727	355	542	57	2,112
	Male	439	865	213	529	86	2,142
							<b>4,254</b>
<b>Total</b>							<b><u>73,255</u></b>

## Refugee return from Ethiopia

### Tribe, place of origin, intended destination and exit corridor – Bonga refugee Camp and estimated population

TRIBE	Place of Origin		No. of Persons	Dispersal Point In Sudan	Exit Point
	Province	VILLAGE			
<b>Uduk</b>	Blue Nile	Chali	17,230	Chali	Kurmuk
Burun	Upper Nile	Buldit	396	Maute	Lare/ Pagak
Shilluk	Malakal	Tonyji	293	Nasser	Jikaow
Equatoria	Juba	Magwi	108	Buma	Raad
Nuban	Kabukle	Razefil	334	Dungule	Jikaow

### Tribe, place of origin, intended destination /selected routes corresponding number of refugees and exit corridor - Dimma refugee Camp.

TRIBE	Place of Origin		No. of Persons	Dispersal Point In Sudan	Exit Point
	Province	VILLAGE			
Nuer	Upper Nile		6942	Nasser	Jikawo
Anuak	Upper Nile	Pochalla	609	Pibor	Raad
Dinka	Bahr el Ghazal		479	Rumbek	Gambella
Murule	Upper Nile	Pibor	154	Pibor	Raad
Shilluk	Upper Nile	Fashoda	56	Nasser	Jikawo
Nuba	Southern Kordofan		68	Chali	Kurmuk
Funj	Blue Nile	Damazin	17	Chali	Kurmuk
Uduk	Blue Nile	Chali	8	Chali	Kurmuk
Mabaan	Upper Nile	Chali	19	Chali	Kurmuk

### Tribe, place of Origin , intended destination / selected routes corresponding number of refugees and exit Corridor - Fugnido refugee Camp

TRIBE	Place of Origin		Dispersal Point	Exit Point
	Province	VILLAGE		
Nuer	Upper Nile	Akobo	Maute	Jikaow
Nuer	Upper Nile	Diror, Waat, etc.	Nasser	Jikawo
Dinka	Upper Nile	Bor & Pibor	Rumbek	Gambella
Anuak	Upper Nile	Akobo & Pochalla	Pibor	Pochalla
others				

## Spontaneous refugee return from Ethiopia (December 2004 group) – WFP assessment

## Northern communities

Community	SRRC/A	Team tukul count (HH)	Team assessment (6 per HH)
Nazilah	3,327	250 – 300	1,500 – 1,800
Mayas	2,515	80 -120	480 – 720
Kayli	2,240	200 – 250	1,200 – 1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,082</b>	<b>530 – 670</b>	<b>3,180 – 4,020</b>

## Southern communities

Community	SRRC/A	Team tukul count (HH)	Team assessment (6 per HH)
Dugabelle	3,411	150 – 200	900 – 1,200
Gondolo	7,209	400 – 450	2,400 – 2,700
Muguf	2,665	250 – 300	1,500 – 1,800
Oss	1,250	80 – 100	480 – 720
Allele	698	115 – 120	690 – 720
Jerdan	2,076	120 – 150	720 – 900
Kaffe*	115	20 – 25	120 – 150
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,424</b>	<b>1135 – 1345</b>	<b>6,810 – 8,070</b>

North and South	SRRC/A	Assessment(6 per HH)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>25,446</b>	<b>9,990 – 12,090</b>

**World Food Programme Damazin Sub-Office  
Results of Verification and Registration Exercise March 2005 Blue Nile State**

Population Breakdown by Age/Gender												
Summary	Status	Children		Youth		Adult		Elderly		Sub-Total		Grand Total
		Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
	IDPS	3796	3330	2634	2745	4217	3375	917	725	11564	10175	21739
	Returnees	286	251	201	208	317	255	70	56	874	770	1644
	<b>Total</b>	4082	3581	2835	2953	4534	3630	987	781	12438	10945	<b>23383</b>

IDPS		Population Breakdown by Age/Gender										
S/No	Location	Children		Youth		Adult		Elderly		Sub-Total		Grand Total
		Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
1	Bakori	1117	939	734	914	1559	864	361	205	3771	2922	6693
2	Soda	521	495	388	367	487	461	79	80	1475	1403	2878
3	Geissan	366	337	269	256	493	482	122	104	1250	1179	2429
4	Balmango	188	201	139	141	157	148	33	26	517	516	1033
5	Bout	661	492	420	369	458	430	107	97	1646	1388	3034
6	Bulang	427	413	366	296	500	471	57	68	1350	1248	2598
7	Khor Geigi	123	148	75	92	121	118	18	23	337	381	718
8	Khor Dahab	147	106	76	77	160	138	61	31	444	352	796
9	Amora	246	199	167	233	282	263	79	91	774	786	1530
	<b>Total</b>	3796	3330	2634	2745	4217	3375	917	725	11564	10175	<b>21739</b>

## Repatriation Logistics Plan

1. The purpose of the logistic aspect of this mission was to establish a framework and identify operational requirements for the planning, implementation and monitoring of organized returnee/refugee movements. Logistical gaps and bottlenecks were identified and recommendation made on key supply issues such as study on main return routes; analysis of mode of transport (air/surface); availability of trucks; and sources of supplies (fuel, NFI, water, first aid medical kits, workshop and warehousing facilities, etc.). Recommendations made by the mission take into consideration the need for UNHCR to respond in a flexible manner based on needs in line with the existing logistics infrastructures in the region and the concept of UNHCR's phased implementation approach.
2. Given the size of the caseload – Ethiopia currently hosts over 73,000 Sudanese refugees in five different camps – repatriation is planned as a multi-year operation. In this respect, and although the focus of the mission stayed on the return of approximately 18,000 Uduk refugees, in 2006, UNHCR will gradually begin to repatriate additional refugees.
3. Please find below a table which summarize refugee size per camp in Ethiopia and their nearest/recommended return corridors:

Refugee camp	Estimated refugee figure	Nearest/recommended return corridor
Bonga	19,326	Kurmuk
Sherkole	16,326	Kurmuk
Yarenja	4,275	Geissan
Fugnido	32,634	Jikawo
Dimma	8,619	Raad

4. The mission designed logistics plan to repatriate 18,000 refugees who are currently hosted in Bonga camp, Ethiopia. These refugees are of Uduk ethnic origin and originate from Chali locality, Southern Blue Nile State. Accordingly, assessments made thus far (inside Sudan) focused mainly on Chali, the main return area. Kurmuk was also designated as the main return corridor for the group.
  - Ethiopia            Bonga – Bedele – Nejo – Kurmuk – Chali            Road Repatriation
5. The returnee convoy (Bonga, Gambella to Challe, Southern Blue Nile State – via Assosa) will take 7 days. For exigency purposes and in order to account for delays, additional day was plotted. This is shown on the Sample Convoy Movement Plan as fleet maintenance/repair day. It brings the total turn-around trip to 8 days per convoy. The distance from Kurmuk to Chali is 40 km which is accessible only during the dry season. For more information, please refer to the enclosed SAMPLE CONVOY MOVEMENT PLAN (ANNEX I).

### AIR REPATRIATION: Fugnido and Bonga – Bor, Pibor, Wau and Rumbek

6. Though the focus of the mission remained on organized repatriation of some 18,000 Uduk refugees by surface, discussions were also held and tentative plans made on repatriation by air of 1,300 Dinka refugees in Fugnido and 300 Nubians in Bonga. Their main places of return (within Sudan) are Bor, Pibor, Wau and Rumbek. They will be repatriated by air to major cities where UNHCR will arrangements for their onward transfers to final destinations.



7. Air repatriation begins with movements of 40 returnees per trip, two rotation per day, 5 days per week. This implies 320 returnees will be repatriated a week and the entire caseload of 1,600 in a month time.
8. Should there be a need UNHCR can increase the capacity by chartering larger aircraft.
9. The plan for repatriation by air would require further investigation in areas of return and a plan of action will be required for making implementation arrangements.

**ROAD REPATRIATION:** Bonga – Bedele – Nejo – Kurmuk – Chali

10. The distance from Bongo (Gambella) to Chali is 857kms. Of this, 717 km is a national trunk road (all season murrum) and stretches from Gambella (Bonga) to Assosa via Bedele and Nejo. Addition 100 km (Assosa – Sherkole – Kurmuk stretch, inside Ethiopia) is under repair and is expected to be complete mid January 2006.
11. The remaining 50 km are inside Sudan (from Kurmuk to Chali). This section of the road is dirt track and in a very bad condition which is passable only during the dry season. It is full of large pot holes and stretches of dried up black cotton soil. Organizations present in Kurmuk use tractors for overland transport during the wet season. For instance, with the help of a tractor it took the mission 6 hours to cover a distance of 20 km. As a backup, a Goal tractor was used to accompany the mission. The Kurmuk/Chali road is essential for the safe and dignified return of refugees. Local authorities also consider the repair of this road important as it will also contribute to the return of displaced, their reintegration and development of the area. Therefore, priority should be given to the repair and rehab of this section of the road before repatriation operation can begin. Ideally, rehabilitation work should start December 2005 so as to maintain the date set for the commencement of the repatriation operation (February 2006). The entire corridor will be complete end of January 2006. Progress on road repairs inside Sudan is dependent on availability of equipment.

**Equipment Availability:**

12. The war split the Blue Nile State into two separate administrative regions – Northern Blue Nile State (NBNS) controlled by GoS and Southern Blue Nile State (SBNS) administered by SPLA. Kurmuk was the capital of SBNS whereas Damazin was the NBNS. Under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) these two administrations regions are to unite and Damazin is expected to serve as the state capital.
13. Kurmuk has a limited logistics infrastructure – i.e. rental trucks (both long haul and short haul 4x4 trucks) are not available. Workshop services, warehousing facilities (storage structures) and fuel depot are also almost non existence. International NGOs who operate in the area bring along their expatriate staff (mechanics, logisticians, finance, etc) and purchase fuel imports from Ethiopia. Fuel is sold/purchased and stored in drums.
14. Within Sudan, Damazin is the nearest city with a sizeable logistical facility to Kurmuk – construction machineries included. The distance between Damazin and Kurmuk is 185 km. The road has two sections: part one falls within the GoS controlled area (during the war time). This section of the road is in good condition and passable almost all seasons. Repair of some parts of the road is however still required. The second section falls within the SPLM Administered geographic areas and is in a state of demolition. This section is inaccessible during the rainy season and requires significant repair. Landmines as well remain a serious threat on certain

sections of the road. Locals are fairly well aware of those sections, thus avoid using them.

15. Given the distance and the condition of the road between Damazin and Kurmuk (half of the road is impassable) and time constraints (Feb 2006 is set as the start of repatriation operation), it is important that alternative options are also explored for the procurement and propositioning of fuel supplies, deployment of road equipment and construction material sought from Damazin. One alternative is through Ethiopia as construction equipment and materials are available (cost estimate to be provided) in Ethiopia. The mission could not determine whether the Government of Ethiopia will grant permission to allow its private construction companies to cross over the border to Sudan and undertake/implement road rehabilitation project. Authorities in Kurmuk/Sudan showed their support to the proposal. The mission requested UNHCR Ethiopia to look into the possibility of finding potential contractors willing to implement such undertaking. It is recommended that such arrangements are made under the Tripartite Agreement – permission to allow Ethiopian machineries to cross over to Sudan to rehabilitate the Kurmuk/Chali road.

#### Convoy Assets and Refugee Movements

16. UNHCR RLO Ethiopia will, through tendering process, assemble a total of 6 buses, 3 trucks and 1 mobile workshop. Each bus will carry 40 – 50 passengers per trip. Trucks are set aside to transport returnee belongings. Additional buses and trucks can be deployed on the Bonga/Kurmuk/Chali route to increase capacity to reach the target 500 returnees figure per convoy. At this initial [trial] period, convoy assets are expected to transport 200 returnees per trip, three convoys per month. This will bring the expected monthly returnee transfers to 600. It is recommended that an additional bus and a truck accompany each convoy. The bus and truck will serve as a back-up mechanism in the event of a breakdown.

Bonga – Bedele – Nejo – Assosa – Sherkole – Kurmuk – Chali Convoy Trucks and Buses Required Recommended – initial 200 per convoy increased to 500 per Convoy Movement
<p><b>For 200 per/convoy:</b>            6 – Buses (capacity of 40 passengers to be confirmed) (5 returnee buses and 1 emergency back-up)            3 – UNHCR/Gambella/ETH trucks (7 – 10MT each) (2 personal belongings, 1 emergency back up)            1 – Hauling trailer (livestock)            1 – Lead light vehicle (UNHCR)            1 – End light vehicle (UNHCR)            1 – Mobile Workshop (contractor)            1 – Ambulance escort – ARRA Ethiopia</p> <p><b>For 500 per/convoy</b>            12 – buses; (capacity of 40 paxs – to be confirmed) (10 returnee buses and 2 emergency back-up)            5 – trucks; (7 – 10 each) (5 personal belongings, 1 emergency back up): will appreciate economies of scale            2 – hauling trailers (for livestock);            1 – lead vehicle, (UNHCR);            1 – End light vehicle; (UNHCR);            1 – Mobile workshop (contractor); and            1 – Ambulance (ARRA Ethiopia)</p>

#### PERSONAL ASSETS AND RETURNEE BELONGINGS: Bonga – Kurmuk – Chali route

17. UNHCR Gambella/Ethiopia will determine the returnee livestock assets – poultry and dogs. UNHCR will endeavour every effort to assist the community to enable them return home with their assets. Before departure, returnees are however expected to sell their livestock such as cows. For this to happen in a timely manner, UNHCR Gambella was requested to carry out an assessment and provide advance information campaign on “what refugees can carry and what they can not”.
18. Sample visit to some of the possible returnee tukuls suggest transport requirement for returnee personal effects as high as 25 percent of total convoy capacity. Start up operation identify that a total of 6 buses and 3 trucks per convoy will suffice to cover transport needs for 200 (and eventually 500) returnees and their belongings. Where necessary a trailer will be added to address livestock asset transport needs. UNHCR/Gambella will work closely with returnees/refugee leaders and formulate policies on luggage handling/expectations.

#### FLEET MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

19. Under a contractual agreement, UNHCR will outsource the day-to-day management of the fleet, its maintenance and provision for fuel.
20. The potential supplier (contractor) will recruit and train truck drivers and designate operations manager who will act as a focal point for UNHCR. To simplify the process and ensure efficiency, the supplier shall establish operations base and fuel depots in all overnight Way Stations and Assembly Points – Bonga, Bedele, Nejo and Kurmuk.
21. UNHCR should assist the contractor with the border-crossing formalities by liaising with the authorities on both sides of the border. One way of evading potential delays is to include a clause in the tripartite Agreement which demand for blanket exemption and freedom of movement for UNHCR staff, vehicles and relief supplies of both ends of the borders.

#### STAFF MOVEMENT – ROAD & AIR

22. Travel by road from Damazin to Kurmuk in dry season takes 8 hours (it took the mission vehicles two days towards the end of the rainy season) whereas the Kurmuk to Chali/Yabus takes 5-6 hours. During the rainy season the trip can take in as much as week which could only happen if a tractor is used. Kurmuk, Yabus and Chali are located in remote and isolated areas of Southern Blue Nile State (SBNS). During the rainy season it is recommended that UNHCR’s dedicated aircraft support staff movement.
23. UNMIS plans to establish a military base in Kurmuk. It currently has a flexible flight schedule from Damazin. Priority is however, given to UNMIS. In addition, UNMIS plans to repair Kurmuk airport. To avoid unnecessary delays in staff deployment and delivery of essential relief supplies, the mission recommends that UN should give priority to repair of Kurmuk and Yabus airstrips primarily for staff safety and security reasons.
24. The runway in Yabus also requires a repair. Both airstrips are important for the efficient and effective delivery of humanitarian supplies. Local authorities also

consider them important as they will significantly contribute to community integration and development of the region.

## PLANNED LOGISTICS NETWORK

25. Damazin is the capital of Blue Nile State and is located in southeast part of Sudan. It borders Upper Nile State to the west and Sennar State to the north. On the east, it borders with Ethiopia. Ideally relief supplies should come through Damazin due to bad road conditions in the wet season this route is inaccessible. It is advisable therefore, to use Ethiopia corridor (via Assosa) as back-up supply corridor. For this to materialize arrangements must be made through the Tripartite Arrangement.

### **Option 1**

Damazin has all season road link to Khartoum. This makes it attractive to serve as the main logistics hub for Blue Nile State. A range of supplies and support services which are necessary for implementation of program activities (i.e. construction materials, warehouse spaces and trucks/buses) are available. It must be noted however, some sections of the road linking Kosti to Damazin (348 Kms) requires repair works.

The only limitation to the use of this route is the fact that half of road between Damazin and Kurmuk (Dindero-Kurmuk section) is badly damaged and requires substantial repairs. UNMIS plans to repair this road. This might, however, take sometime.

UNHCR should identify logistics implementing partner who will manage warehouses both in Damazin and Kurmuk. The same organization should establish and run satellite workshop facility in Kurmuk.

UNHCR should immediately procure and deploy to Kurmuk two tractors (with ploughing accessories) and two 4x4 quads-bikes. Tractors will be used for rescue purposes whereas quads-bikes as means of transport during the wet season. This will enable UNHCR access to isolated/remote places in the rainy season.

A rubb hall should also be deployed to Kurmuk to address storage needs.

### **Option 2**

Assosa, Ethiopia will serve as a backup source of supply. Assosa has all season murrum road-network-link with Addis-Ababa. At the present, goods sold in Kurmuk are all imports of Ethiopia. There are two limitations which require to be overcome before this route can be used as a backup source of supply. They include:

- Absence of a functioning customs posts in Kurmuk – Sudan.
- Lack of clarity, on the SBNS side, of who should be responsible for and will regulate customs policies in the Southern Blue Nile State.

## WAREHOUSING AND STORAGE

26. The Kurmuk satellite facility is considered critical to logistically support in isolated areas deep within Southern Blue Nile State. The mission identified alternative sites and options do exist. The mission recommends UNHCR Damazin follows-up on this. Rub hall erection is estimated *two weeks* – laying foundation and erection. It's recommended this exercise is completed before December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2005.

## MECHANICAL WORKSHOPS

27. Commercial workshops exist in Damazin. Although at the time of this mission a through assessment could not be conducted, capacity exists for the provision of routine fleet maintenance and emergency repair services. Major repair work should, however, be undertaken in Khartoum.
28. Workshop facilities are almost non-existent in Kurmuk. Humanitarian agencies which operate in the area (i.e. Goal and Samaritans Purse) employ their own mechanics and import spare parts. Roads are rough and a mechanic in isolated places such as Kurmuk is considered an essential asset without which offices cannot operate. The need, therefore, of a workshop facility can not be over emphasized. In addition, a mobile or containerized unit should be deployed. This unit will also serve as rescue vehicle.

## FUEL SUPPLY AND STORAGE

29. Assessments in the past determine that fuel supply is limited and not reliable in the Southern Blue Nile State. Recently, however, the situation has improved and independent fuel providers are now in place securing fuel supply from Ethiopia. In Kurmuk, fuel is supplied and stored in drums. Prices are, however, high (US\$ 1.4 per liter). On the Ethiopian side of the border, fuel prices are stable (estimated US\$1 per liter) and cheaper as compared to Kurmuk. The complete absence of customs authorities in Kurmuk imply fuel is imported to Sudan without taxes and duties. As the road link between Damazin (fuel price per liter US\$ 0.40) to Kurmuk opens-up, fuel prices are expected to fall sharply (dry season).
30. Field Office Kurmuk should maintain minimum fuel stock level of 4,000 l (20 drums). A buffer/emergency stock of 10 drums/200 l each [as a caution] is also desirable.
31. Fuel for convoy vehicles and buses will be supplied from Ethiopia under transport agreement between UNHCR SO Gambella and potential transporters.

Planned Fuel Storage and Distribution Repatriation 2006					
Fuel Station		Containerized System	Drum s	Capacity	
				<i>Diesel</i>	<i>Petrol</i>
Main Office	Damazin	X	-	10,000 lts	2,000 lts
Satellite Logs Hub	Kurmuk	X	-	4,000 lts	500 lts

## TRANSPORTATION OF SUPPLIES BY SURFACE

32. Due to varying factors, there are limited numbers of private transporters on the Damazin/Kurmuk route. The reverse is, however, expected as we approach the dry season. Generally speaking, short haul 4x4 trucks are recommended by such road. These are available in Damazin.

33. Transport prices will rise as demand increases. We were informed five new NGOs and two UN Agencies are scheduling to establish their presence in Kurmuk. This will stress the limited resources in Kurmuk.

#### EXTERNAL COUNTRY TRANSPORTATION OF SUPPLIES BY SEA AND LAND

34. The current international procurement and supply chain flows mainly through the Port Sudan for Damazin and Port Djibouti for Assosa/Sherkole/Gambella, Ethiopia. Since Assosa/Sherkole has been chosen as Option 2 for the supply of fuel, NFI and construction materials to Kurmuk, every effort should be made to keep assets in transit until they reach their final destination. The draft Tripartite Agreement between UNHCR, Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and Government of Sudan (GoS) should include a paragraph which clearly stipulates the need for a free-passage for UNHCR staff and relief supplies.

#### NON FOOD ITEM SETTLEMENT PACKAGES GUIDING PRINCIPLES

35. With the exception of seeds and tool kits all NFI commodities is planned to be distributed at returnee entry points [Kurmuk Way Station] before crossing border to Sudan.
36. The mission recommends that kits of Non-food items, if feasible, be packed in prepared "Collect & Go" carrying bags and be made available at designated points. Ideally Non-food items should arrive in bulk at Sherkole/Assosa and be sorted and packed into carry bags with the help of local labourers. NFI family settlement packages for an average family size of 5 and include the following:

- 1 Kitchen set
- 2 Plastic sheets
- 2 Blankets
- 2 Mosquito nets
- 2 Plastic jerricans 10 l ea.
- 2 Buckets
- 1 bar of soap (250g)
- 2 Synthetic sleeping mates

UNHCR Ethiopia: Procured (locally)

Local Procurement				International Procurement			
Item description	UoM	Qty	Delivery Status	Item description	UoM	Quantity	Delivery Status
J/cans	Pcs	40,000	Received	Kitchen sets	Sets	5,000	Received
Buckets	Pcs	16,000	Received	Blankets	Pcs	9,000	Received
Sleeping Mats	Pcs	10,000	Received	Hospital tents	Sets	10	Received
Soap	Pcs	25,000	In pipeline				
P/Sheets			In pipeline				
Hospitals beds with mattresses	Pcs	50	Received				

Vehicles:

**Received:** 5 Toyota l/cruisers received and dispatched as follows:

- 4 Sub-Office Gambella
- 1 Field Office Assosa
- 1 Satellite Office Markush

**In pipeline:** 5 land cruiser hardtops; 3 land cruiser hardtops – ambulance (fully equipped) and 3 land cruiser pick-ups. These vehicles are all earmarked for ARRA.

All vehicles are MOSS compliant

Non Food Items in Ethiopia	
Item	Qty
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blankets	9,000
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kitchen Sets	5,000
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buckets	16,000
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jerricans (Collapsible)	40,000
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kitchen sets	8,000
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Soap (250 gr)	25,000
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sleeping Mats	10,000
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hospital Tents (plus 50 beds with mattresses)	10

37. In addition, returnees will receive two weeks dry ration at the point of departure. This aims to address f returnee nutritional needs enroute. Upon arrival returnees will receive 3 months food rations and an additional assistance of 3 month ration through food for work or other schemes. To enable WFP to plan ahead, the agency requested UNHCR to provide information on returnee estimates (caseload/figures), timeline for the return and places of return/dispersal area. **Action: UNHCR Damazin/Kurmuk**

38. Returnees will also receive, upon arrival, seeds and agricultural tools. UNHCR program and logistics staff in Khartoum should make every effort to make these kits available before January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006

#### PRIMARY WAY STATIONS AND ASSEMBLY POINTS

39. The prime purpose for the construction of Way Stations and Assembly Points is to provide critical support to returnees. They will be constructed along the returnee routes and meant to provide a secure place to rest, first aid, food and water.

40. For this specific caseload - 18,000 Uduk refugees in Bonga – Way Stations will be built along the route linking Bonga, Ethiopia to Chali, Sudan. The main WS include Bedele, Nejo and Kurmuk.

41. Way Stations and Assembly Point will have the capacity to accommodate 500 persons. A Way Station accommodates returnees for up to three days and an Assembly Point for one day, providing relief to returnees with extended travel times.

Location and Assessment of Primary Way Station/Assembly Points

42. In Sudan a reception facility/way station will be constructed to facilitate dispersal of returnees. Chali reception/way station facility will be built with local materials, which upon completion of repatriation movement converted into a community structure or for similar purposes and handed over to the communities or local authorities.

43. The Government of Ethiopia granted permission to start construction of Way Station and Assembly Points. Other generic important measures to be considered included:

- Availability of permanent water supply
- Proximity to villages, healthcare for referrals and other services
- Unhindered physical access to Way Station/Assembly Points
- Unhindered access to UNHCR and partnering staff
- Drainage (no flooding areas)
- Absorbing communities, potential community conflict with returnee groups

44. Below is a table which summarizes location of Way Stations and Assembly Points in side Ethiopia:

Planned Primary Way Stations and Assembly Points	
Assembly Point	Way Station
1 Bongo	Bedele
2 Dimma	Nejo
3 Fugnido	Gore
4 Sherkole	Kurmuk

45. Tendering process for the construction of Way Stations and Assembly Points has begun for the following places: Bonga, Bedele, Nejo, Kurmuk and Sherkole.

The facilities in a Way Station and Assembly Points will include the following. :

Standardized Primary Way Station	
1. Communal Shelters (20m X10m)	5
2. Office (8m X 4m)	1
3. Health Tent	1
4. Dry Latrine of 16 seats each (refugee)	2
5. Dry Latrine of 4 seats each (staff)	1
6. Security/Guard House	1
7. Storage facility	1
8. Registration / Driver's area	1
9. Generator House	1
10. Water well/ boreholes	1
11. Garbage disposal pit	1
12. Parking lot	1
13. Barbed wire fence	



## UNHCR OFFICE/RESIDENCE SITES IN KURMUK

46. The mission requested local authorities in Kurmuk to identify/allocate office/resident building and a site to be used as warehouse/workshop facility. The aim was UNHCR to renovate buildings which will be used as an office, and import rubhall to be used as an storage facility.
47. At the time of the mission, local authorities proposed empty plot which could be used for warehousing/workshop site. The site is located 2km East of Kurmuk. The site is physically accessible by a vehicle but requires some grading. Water will be provided by drilling a borehole.
48. The team also identified the Media Centre as a possible location for office and living quarters. Discussions were held with the Commissioner SRRC for which follow-up will be required. If permission to use is granted, UNHCR could renovate the building. Follow up written certification authorizing the use of this site should be sought from the local administration. UNHCR Damazin to follow-up. Contact Person: Abdalla Ali, SRRC Commissioner, Kurmuk.

### UNHCR Office Kurmuk

#### Expedite construction

- Site clearing
- Perimeter fencing
- Drill borehole
- Rehabilitate building as offices
- Build residential Tukuls self contained bathrooms
- Communal dinning area/kitchen
- Meeting area

There is city electricity in Kurmuk. 40 KVa Generator set and a back-up solar panel are recommended.

## **LOGISTICS SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a. During phase I of the operation, 18,000 refugees will be repatriated by surface from Bonga to Chali. This requires significant logistical arrangement. Given the size of the operation and the remoteness of the area of return (route), a Logistics Officer should be assigned to region to coordinate the day-to-day activities of the repatriation.
- b. The repatriation operation is entirely dependent on the Kurmuk/Chali road (a distance of 40 km) which is presentably in poor condition. Priority should be given its repair/rehabilitation. The mission requested UNHCR Ethiopia to explore the possibility to identify potential contractors who is/are willing to undertake road rehab/repair work inside Sudan. The tripartite agreement should make provision for this.
- c. UNHCR should establish a presence in the Kurmuk and make necessary warehousing and workshop service in place prior to the start of repatriation operation. A rub hall should be erected and a containerized workshop and a mechanic deployed without a delay.

- d. Damazin has all season road link with Khartoum/Kosti and a sizable logistics infrastructure. The road, however, linking Damazin to Kurmuk is inaccessible during the wet season. Though it may take some time, UNMIS plans to repair this route. UNHCR should influence/bush-for quicker decision for its repair. Assosa, Ethiopia should be used as a back-up supply route. Access should therefore be sought off under the tripartite agreement.
- e. A fleet of: Two 4x4 light vehicles, one 4x4 pick-up and two tractors, and quad bikes should be deployed to support the operation in Kurmuk. Logistics capacity in UNHCR Damazin should also be reinforced – warehouse rented, NFI, fuel and office stationeries/equipment propositioned.
- f. Kurmuk and Yabus located in remote areas of Southern Blue Nile State. These two localities are unreachable during the wet season. To improve access and to better deliver humanitarian supplies and support staff, Kurmuk and Yabus airports should be repaired/rehabilitated. It is equally important as there are no other ways to reach these places in emergencies. Fixed flight schedule (twice a weekly) schedule should also be established.
- g. Returnees have limited packages and life animals. Though not many, some refugees own caws and other volume assets. UNHCR Ethiopia should start information campaign and prepare refugees on “what they can carry and what they can not”.
- h. Rented trucks and buses will be used to transport refugees from Ethiopia to Sudan. This should be clearly articulated in the tripartite agreement – allow Ethiopian buses and trucks to cross over to Sudan. It is also unclear how the contractor will work with UNHCR. Detailed terms of reference of the contractor/transport should be agreed upon before the repatriation can begin. Issues such as contact person(s), refuelling locations, presence at Way Station, stop-over places (for rest) etc. should be addressed before hand as these will have impact on success or otherwise of the operation
- i. WFP agreed to provide returnees 2 weeks ration at the point of departure. The agency will also distribute 3 months food rations and 3 months food for work upon return. UNHCR share with WFP information on returnee figures, places of return (origin), etc...
- j. Discussions were held to repatriate by air estimated 1,600 refugees from Fugnido and Bonga to various places in Southern Sudan (Bor, Pibor, Wau and Rumbek). UNHCR should identify partner air repatriation activities (IOM could be an option since the agency is undertaking similar activities in the South).

## CONVOY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF LOGISTICS ASPECTS

UNHCR Ethiopia and Sudan and operational partners should use the following information as a guide to discuss planned movements at cross border meetings:

- The number of returnees to be transported per site
- The possible date of return
- The capacity of the area of origin to receive returnees
- The truck capacity and availability
- Luggage limitations
- The road transport conditions
- Identified end point destinations
- Plan manifest processes and procedures (group population with areas of returns)
- Identify vulnerable and plan movements

Assembly point and boarding of the returnees

- Final convoy manifest delivered
- Assembly points, final processes (VOLREP FORMS)
- Boarding in line with endpoint destinations
- Labelling and securing identification tags
- Lead and end vehicle clearly marked with UNHCR and UN flags
- Radio system checked and training for radio users
- Security escort where necessary

**2006**  
**SAMPLE CONVOY MOVEMENT PLAN**  
**Recommended Movements of 600 Persons Per Month**

**MONTH 1**

Endpoint Destinations for Returnees	# of returnees	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Chali	200	Bonga – Bedele Way Station	Bedele – Nejo Way Station	Nejo – Kurmuk (W/S) – NFI dist upon arrival	Kurmuk (Eth) – Chali (Sudan) – Kurmuk Dispersal Point	Kurmuk – Nejo (return leg)	Nejo – Bedele (return leg)	Sunday
		Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14
Chali	200	Bedele – Bonga (return leg)	Rest & Maintenance Day	Bonga – Bedele Way Station	Bedele – Nejo Way Station	Nejo – Kurmuk (W/S) – NFI dist upon arrival	Kurmuk (Eth) – Chali (Sudan) – Kurmuk Dispersal Point	Sunday
		Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	21
Chali		Kurmuk – Nejo (return leg)	Nejo – Bedele (return leg)	Bedele – Bonga (return leg)	Rest & Maintenance Day			Sunday
		Day 22	Day 23	Day 24	Day 25	Day 26	Day 27	28
Chali	200	Nejo – Kurmuk (W/S) – NFI dist upon arrival	Kurmuk (Eth) – Chali (Sudan) – Kurmuk Dispersal Point	Kurmuk – Nejo (return leg)	Nejo – Bedele (return leg)	Bedele – Bonga (return leg)	Rest & Maintenance Day	Sunday
Bonga/Chali	600							

## **Some Useful Planning Data and Information**

**Gathered by the mission**



**Approximate time & km by 4x4 - Northern Blue Nile**

	<b>Khartoum</b>	<b>Wad Medani</b>	<b>Sennar</b>	<b>Sinja</b>	<b>Damazin</b>
<b>Khartoum</b>	-	2.5h/180km	3.5h/295km	4.5h/365km	7h/530km
<b>Wad Medani</b>	-	-	1h/115km	2h/185km	4.5h/350km
<b>Sennar</b>	-	-	-	1h/70km	3.5h/235km
<b>Sinja</b>	-	-	-	-	2.5h/165km
<b>Damazin</b>	-	-	-	-	-

**Approximate time (dry season/rainy season) & km by 4x4**

	<b>Damazin</b>	<b>Bakori</b>	<b>Geissan</b>	<b>Kurmuk</b>
<b>Damazin</b>	-	3h/4-5h/95km	5h/impassable	impassable via Bakori
<b>Bakori</b>	-	-	2h/impassable/55km	road abandoned
<b>Geissan</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Kurmuk</b>	-	-	-	-

	<b>Damazin</b>	<b>Derang</b>	<b>Dindiro</b>	<b>Kurmuk</b>
<b>Damazin</b>	-	1h/1h/65km	3h/3h/100km	7h/impassable/160km
<b>Derang</b>	-	-	2h/2h/35km	6h/impassable/95km
<b>Dindiro</b>	-	-	-	4h/impassable/60km
<b>Kurmuk</b>	-	-	-	-

	<b>Damazin</b>	<b>Derang</b>	<b>Bulang</b>	<b>Soda</b>
<b>Damazin</b>	-	1h/1h/65km	1.5h/1.5h/80km	2.5h/2.5h/90km
<b>Derang</b>	-	-	0.5h/0.5h/15km	1.5h/1.5/25km
<b>Bulang</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Soda</b>	-	-	-	-

	<b>Damazin</b>	<b>Roseres</b>	<b>Yarrada</b>	<b>Meza</b>
<b>Damazin</b>	-	15min/8km	2h45mins/2h45mins/108km	4h15min/impassable/148km
<b>Roseres</b>	-	-	2.5h/2.5h/100km	4h/impassable/140km
<b>Yarrada</b>	-	-	-	1.5h/impassable/40km
<b>Meza</b>	-	-	-	-

	<b>Damazin</b>	<b>Bout</b>	<b>Soda</b>
<b>Damazin</b>	-	5h/5h	-
<b>Bout</b>	-	-	3h/7h
<b>Soda</b>	-	-	-

**Approximate time by UNMIS plane or helicopter**

	<b>Khartoum</b>	<b>Damazin</b>	<b>Kurmuk</b>
<b>Khartoum</b>	-	1.5 hr by plane	-
<b>Damazin</b>	-	-	45 mins by helicopter
<b>Kurmuk</b>	-	-	-

## Approximate time (dry season/rainy season) &amp; km by 4x4 - Southern Blue Nile

	Kurmuk	Bilika	Sale Adam	Keyli	Nazila	Mayas
Kurmuk	-	1h/??/??	2h/??/??	3h/8-14h/54km	3.5h/8.5-14.5h/??	3h/8-14h/??
Bilika	-	-	1h/??/??	2h/??/??	2.5h/??/??	2h/??/??
Sale Adam	-	-	-	1h/??/??	1.5h/??/??	1h/??/??
Keyli	-	-	-	-	0.5h/0.5h/??	10min/10min/near
Nazila	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mayas	-	-	-	-	-	-

	Kurmuk	Korbodi	Deim Mansur	Ura	Anylei Junction	Anylei	Alele	Yabus Gaba	Yabus
Kurmuk	-	10min/1h/10km	50min/4-6h/21km	1.5h/7-11h/36km	2.5h/10-14h/51km	2h50min/11-15h/56km	3h20min/12.5-16.5h/??	4h20min/15.5-20.5h or impassable	4h50min/16.5-22.5h or impassable/96km
Korbodi	-	-	40min/3-5h/11km	1h20min/6-10h/26km	2h20min/9-13h/41km	2h40min/10-14h/46km	3h10min/11.5-15.5h/??	4h10min/14.5-19.5h or impassable	4h40min/15-21.5h or impassable
Deim Mansur	-	-	-	40min/3-5h/15km	1h40min/6-8h/30km	2h/7-9h/35km	2.5h/8.5-10.5h/??	3.5h/11.5-14.5h or impassable	4h/12.5-16.5h or impassable
<b>Dein Mansur River</b>									
<b>Barbalas River</b>									
Ura	-	-	-	-	1h/3h/15km	1h20min/4h/20km	1h50min/5.5h/??	2h50min/8.5-9.5h or impassable	3h20min/9.5-11.5h or impassable
Anylei Junction	-	-	-	-	-	20min/1h/5km	50min/2.5h/??	1h50min/5.5-6.5h or impassable	2h20min/6.5-8.5h or impassable
Anylei	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5h/1.5h/??	1.5h/4.5-5.5h or impassable	2h/5.5-7.5h or impassable
Alele	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1h/3-4h or impassable	1.5h/4-6h or impassable
<b>Begaro River</b>									
Yabus Gaba	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5h/1-2h
Yabus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

	Korbodi	Mofu
Korbodi	-	1h/impassable/20km
Mofu	-	-

	Anylei	Chali
Anylei	-	30-45min/10km
Chali	-	-

	Yabus	Bellatuma
Yabus	-	1h/3-5h/20km
Bellatuma	-	-

	Yabus	Muguf
Yabus	-	1h/3-5h/25km
Muguf	-	-



**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

## Road Mission Check List

### For vehicle

√

	Operational winch	
	Towing cable	1
	Spare tire	1-2
	Manual pump for tire	
	Solution & patches for flat tire	
	Tire lever	
	High lift jack	1
	Low ground jack	1
	Tools to change tire	
	Jerry can of fuel	1
	Engine oil	1
	Shovel	1-2
	Pick axe	1-2
	Machete	1-2
	Screw driver and other tools	
	Local staff for digging out stuck vehicle	1-2

### For communication

√

	Radio or/and Thuraya	
	Tools to fix radio	
	List of contact numbers	

### Others

√

	Jerry can of water	
	Medical kit	
	Food	
	Flashlight	
	Batteries for flashlight	
	Raincoats	
	Tent	





**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
<b>SBN Rainy season</b>						<-----	-----	-----	-----	----->			<b>SBN Rainy season</b>
<b>SBN Repatriation Season</b>												<-----	<b>SBN Repatriation Season</b>
<b>Sorghum 1</b>							Plow/Plant ----->			Harvest ----->			<b>Sorghum 1</b>
<b>Sorghum 2</b>							Plow/Plant ----->				Harvest ----->		<b>Sorghum 2</b>
<b>Sorghum 3</b>	Harvest ----->						Plow/Plant ----->						<b>Sorghum 3</b>
<b>Onion</b>	Harvest ----->								Plow/Plant ----->				<b>Onion</b>
<b>Peanuts</b>						Plow/Plant ----->			Harvest ----->				<b>Peanuts</b>
<b>Sunflower</b>						Plow/Plant ----->			Harvest ----->				<b>Sunflower</b>
<b>Black sesami</b>								Plow/Plant ----->		Harvest ----->			<b>Black sesami</b>
<b>South Sudan School Calender</b>					<-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	----->	<b>South Sudan School Calender</b>
<b>Ethiopia School Calender</b>													<b>Ethiopia School Calender</b>

Location	Organisation	Title	Name	Tel #	Thuraya #	E-mail	Others
Damazin	HAC/SRRC	HAC/SRRC Commissioner	Abdalla Ali	091-516-0669	+8821-63-33-53641		Former chairman of Sherhole camp
Damazin	HAC/SRRC	HAC/SRRC Deputy commissioner	Ramadan Yassin	091-268-9973	+8821-65-420-7303	tilett-unmisud@un.org	ZQ 2.1
Damazin	SLIRI North	Assistant Field Officer	Mashair Dafalla	091-807-1735		mishom26@yahoo.com	
Damazin	UNHCR	Office		0551-922-957			
Damazin	UNHCR	Head of Field Office	Alice Ballah-Conte	091-217-9244		ballahco@unhcr.org	o/m Geneva: 0041-79-818-8008
Damazin	UNHCR	Admin/Finance Officer	Theophile Ruzigandekwe	091-217-7798		ruzigand@unhcr.org	o/m
Damazin	UNICEF	Head of Office	Abas Ali	091-230-4047			
Damazin	UNMAS	Operations Officer	Richard Derieux	091-217-7643	+8821-65-420-8263	richardd@sudanmap.org	
Damazin	UNMAS	Quality Assurance Officer	Kassim Olukhanda	091-216-0223		kassimo@sudanmap.org	
Damazin	UNMIS	Regional Admin Officer	Coulter (Buddy) Tilett	091-217-0015	+8821-65-420-7781	abdulshokor@un.org	ZQ 5.1
Damazin	UNMIS	Regional Security Officer	Jamal Abdul Shokor	091-217-8330			
Damazin	UNMIS	UNMIS base					Sellcall 1707
Damazin	WFP	Office		0551-821-643			
Damazin	WFP	Head of Office	Maduok Akot	091-216-7054		maduok.akot@wfp.org	
Damazin	WFP	Field Monitor	Gideon Ben Thompson	091-120-7003			
Damazin	WFP	Admin Officer	Johnson Kamilo	091-809-3182		jonson.kamilo@wfp.org	
Damazin	Islamic Relief Worldwide	Programme Officer	Assam Mohamed	091-292-1539			
Damazin	Islamic Relief Worldwide	Programme Officer	Hyatt Eltom	091-248-6470			
Damazin	Islamic Relief Worldwide	Office		0551-20-963			
Damazin	Mine Action Group	Admin/Finance Manager	Umar Ali	091-217-2850		fam_magsudan@yahoo.com	
Damazin	University of Blue Nile State	Professor	Dr.Mohamed Hassan	091-239-2423			
Damazin	Private	Transport company	Fahmin Nojmudin	091-215-0350			FAX: 0551-823-124 He can arrange tractors and tracks
Kurmuk	Kurmuk locality	Executive Director Kurmuk	Tahazele				
Kurmuk	Kurmuk locality	Land Commissioner	Ibrahim Yassin				
Kurmuk	Kurmuk locality	Chief of Public Security	Hashim Algadi Adam				
Kurmuk	Kurmuk locality	Kurmuk Boma Police Cdr	Kamal Mohamed Abdal Fatah				
Kurmuk	Kurmuk locality	Kurmuk town Police Deputy Cdr	Hassan Mohamed Idris				
Kurmuk	SPLA	Field Front Cdr	Simon Yen		+8821-65-115-5547		Colonel Joseph Tuca will replace
Kurmuk	SPLA	Field Front Carnel after departure of Simon Yen	Joseph Tuca				
Kurmuk	SPLA	Cdr	Jafar Juma		+8821-64-333-3467		
Kurmuk	SRRC	Coordinator	Philip Gambi		no telephone		
Kurmuk	SRRC	SR Officer	Mohamed Suleiman		+8821-63-335-7605		
Kurmuk	SLIRI South	Director	Philip Chool		+8821-65-114-1236		
Kurmuk	CEAS	Programme Manager	Samuel Gonda		+8821-63-302861	pmanager@ceas.amosconnect.com	Kenya:254-20-573-043/573-054
Kurmuk	COOPI	Programme Coordinator	Federica Ferrari			fedefefer@uuplus.com	
Kurmuk	COOPI	Water Engineer	Felix Kahatwa		+8821-64-333-4395		Kenya:0725-732-365 Uganda:077-606-844
Nairobi	COOPI	Director	Serena Zanella			sudsudan@coopi.org	
Kurmuk	GOAL	Field Supervisor	Mike Seawright		+8821-65-119-4278	mseawright@goalss.co.ke	
Kurmuk	GOAL	GOAL Kurmuk base					HF Calling channel:8717.4 Talking channel:8278.4 Sellcall:3500
Kurmuk	ROOF	Field Coordinator	Peter Mogga				
Kurmuk	ROOF	Education Coordinator	Alfred Yanga		+8821-64-333-0574		
Kurmuk	ROOF	Women's Programme	Grace David				
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Programme Manager	Tohru Inoue				
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Logistics Officer	Brian Gresham				
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Agricultural Coordinator	Earnest Onegombe				in Keyli

Location	Organisation	Title	Name	Tel #	Thuraya #	E-mail	Others
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Brick/Block Programme	Chris Crowder		+8821-64-333-8502	spkurmuk@yahoo.com	
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Community centre	Clare Coburn				
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Medical doctor	Dr. Atar Adaha				Kenya:0733-858-686
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Nurse	Jen				
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Hospital worker	Shawil Thathe Bona				Former chairman of Bonga camp in Deim Monsur, HF frequency:10187, Sellcall:126
Kurmuk	Samaritan's Purse	Veterinarian	Dr. Mubarak Kabushi				
Nairobi	Samaritan's Purse	South Sudan Country Director	Doug Crockt	254-733-601-530		dcrockt@spafrika.org	
Kurmuk	Woman's association	Chair woman	Amona				
Kurmuk	Woman's association	Vice Chair woman	Phi Phi				
Kurmuk	Private	Tractor owner	Bashir				Owns tractors for rent and can be found in a shop near market
Chali		Pastor, Chief	Pastor Martin				

### **Market days**

Kurmuk, Sudan: Saturdays & Sundays

Kurmuk, Ethiopia: Mondays

Yabus: Tuesdays

### **Difference in prices of merchandise**

Cement: 140 Birr/bag in Ethiopia

60-70 Birr/bag in Damazin

### **Kurmuk border**

Opens between 8:30-16:00

Open access to Ethiopians and Sudanese

### **Airstrips**

- Yabus: 900-1000m long, maintained by GOAL, after 3 hrs of rain, plane can land
- Kurmuk: 700m long, 8m wide; 8km from town, surface marrum; in need of maintenance

### **Returnee monitoring**

- 3 field protection monitors with 15 enumerators in Yabus, Kurmuk, and Keyli report to SRRC Director who reports to SRRC HQ Rumbek
- Training to be held in Kurmuk in October

### **Quad bikes and tractors are very useful in rainy seasons for movement**

**Fuel** can be ordered from Ethiopia and picks it up from the border. It normally can be ordered and picked up within 1-2 days

### **Hafeer dam in Kurmuk**

COOPI has rehabilitated the Hafier in Kurmuk.

- 7 m deep
- 85m x 125m
- max capacity = 65,000 m<sup>3</sup>
- sand filtration
- 10,000 population scenario → 20 litre
- 9 months recharge rate

### **GOAL drilled boreholes**

- 50-70m deep
- 90% drilling success rate in area
- dry season, drill in far distant villages
- drilling takes 3 days to 2 weeks
- hydro-geologist surveys the site; survey machine comes from Nairobi
- Preferably 2 boreholes per location so one can rest when the other is working
- Hand pumps
- GOAL submits a yield report to UNICEF
- Water quality testing kit (chemical) arrived, so they will start testing, but not biological test



**Voluntary Repatriation of Sudanese Refugees  
From Gambella, Ethiopia, to Blue Nile State, Sudan**

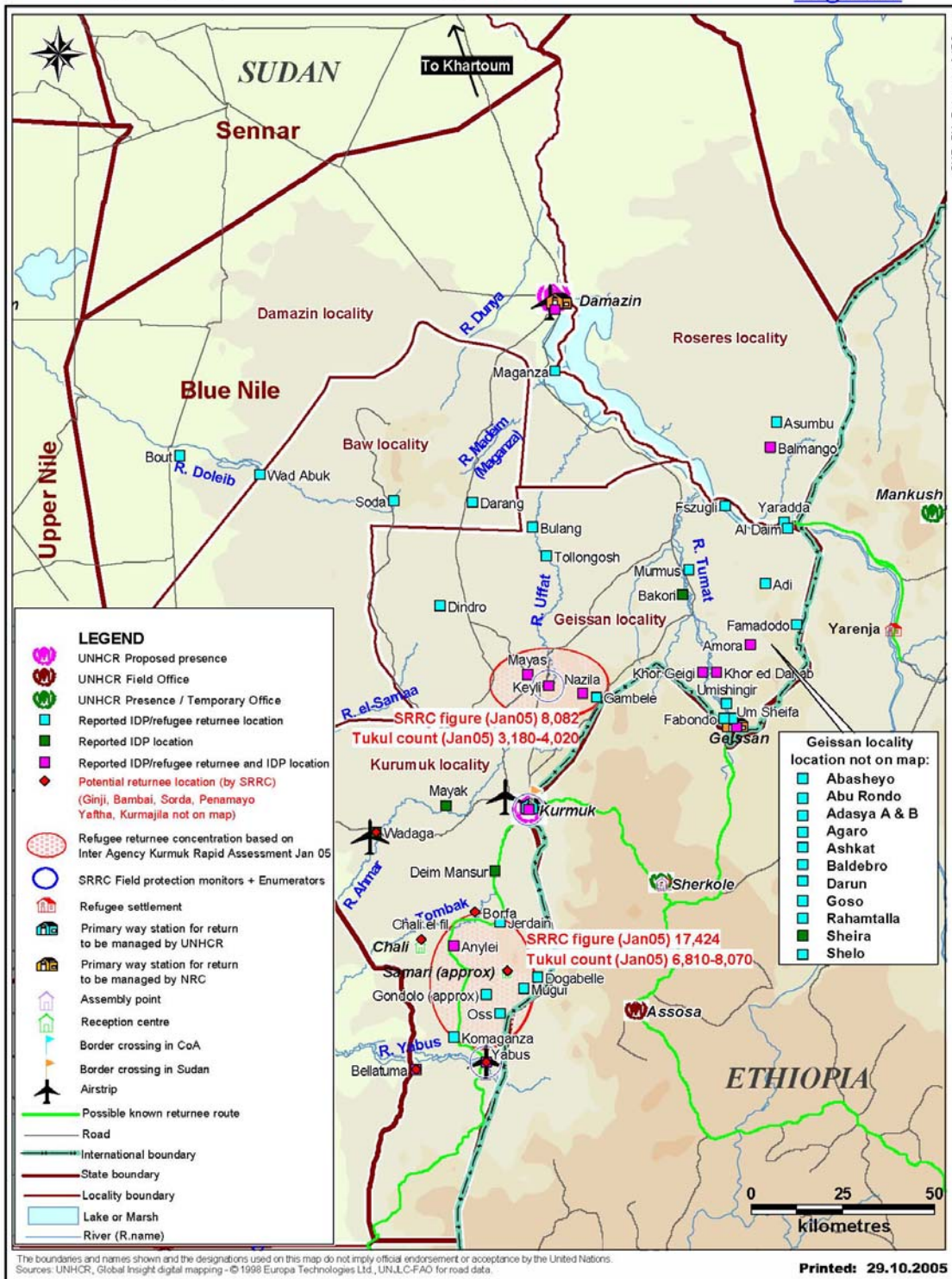
**Mission Report**

**Return and Reintegration Planning Mission  
UNHCR Multi-sectoral Mission to Blue Nile State & Asosa/Gambella Ethiopia**

**17-27 October 2005**

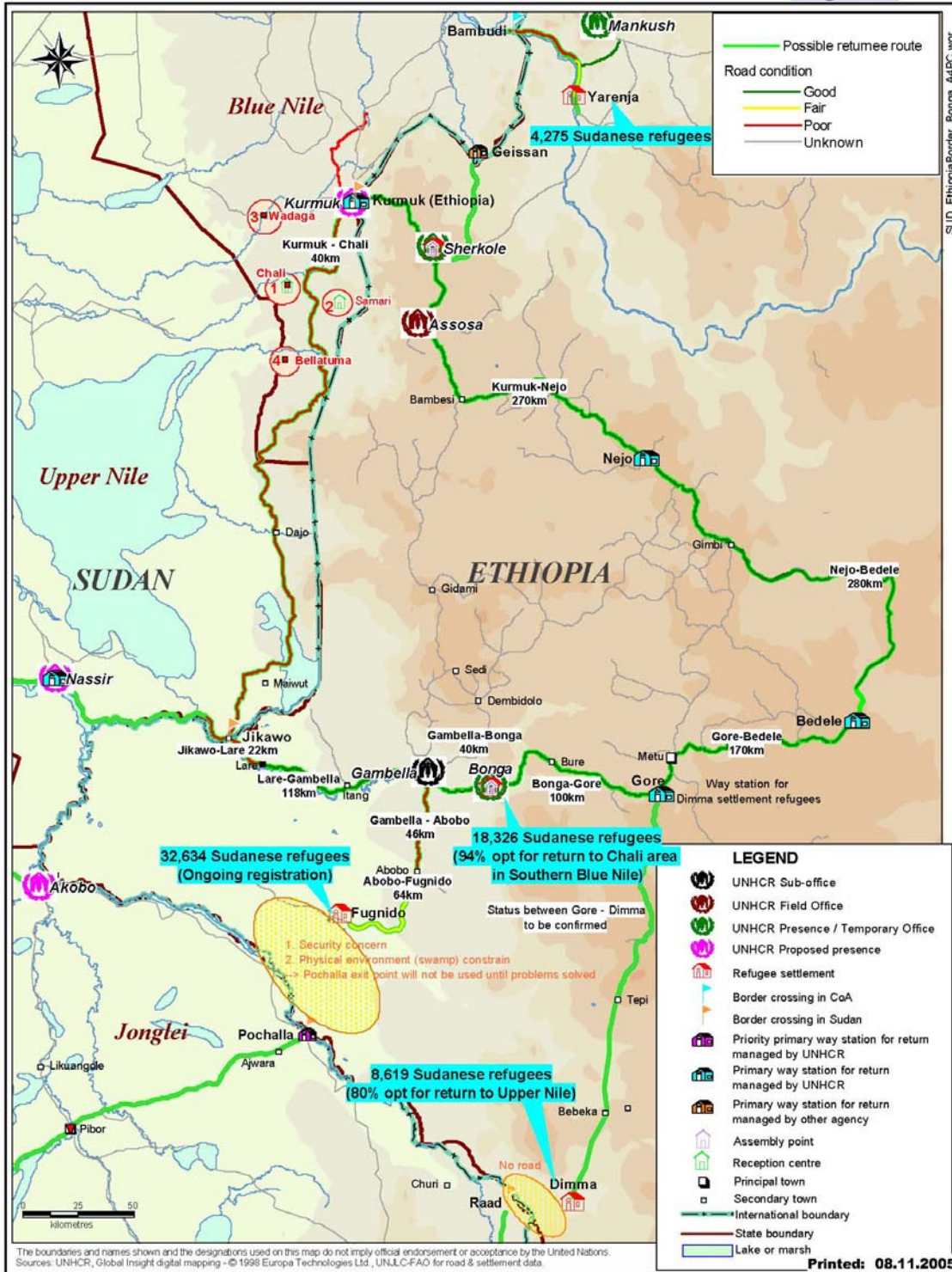
**Annex**

**Maps**

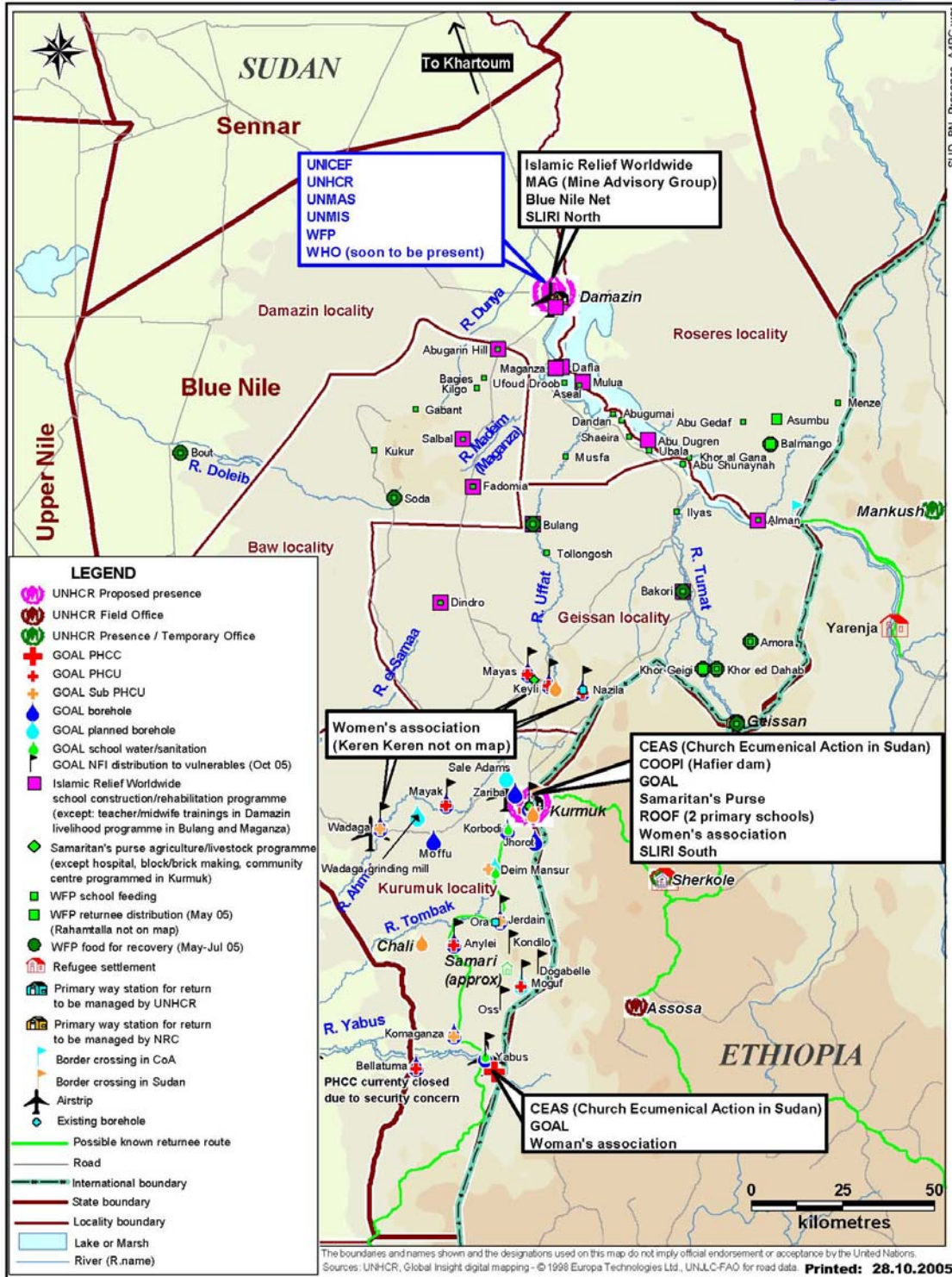


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Sources: UNHCR, Global Insight digital mapping - © 1998 Europa Technologies Ltd., UN, ILC-FAO for road data.

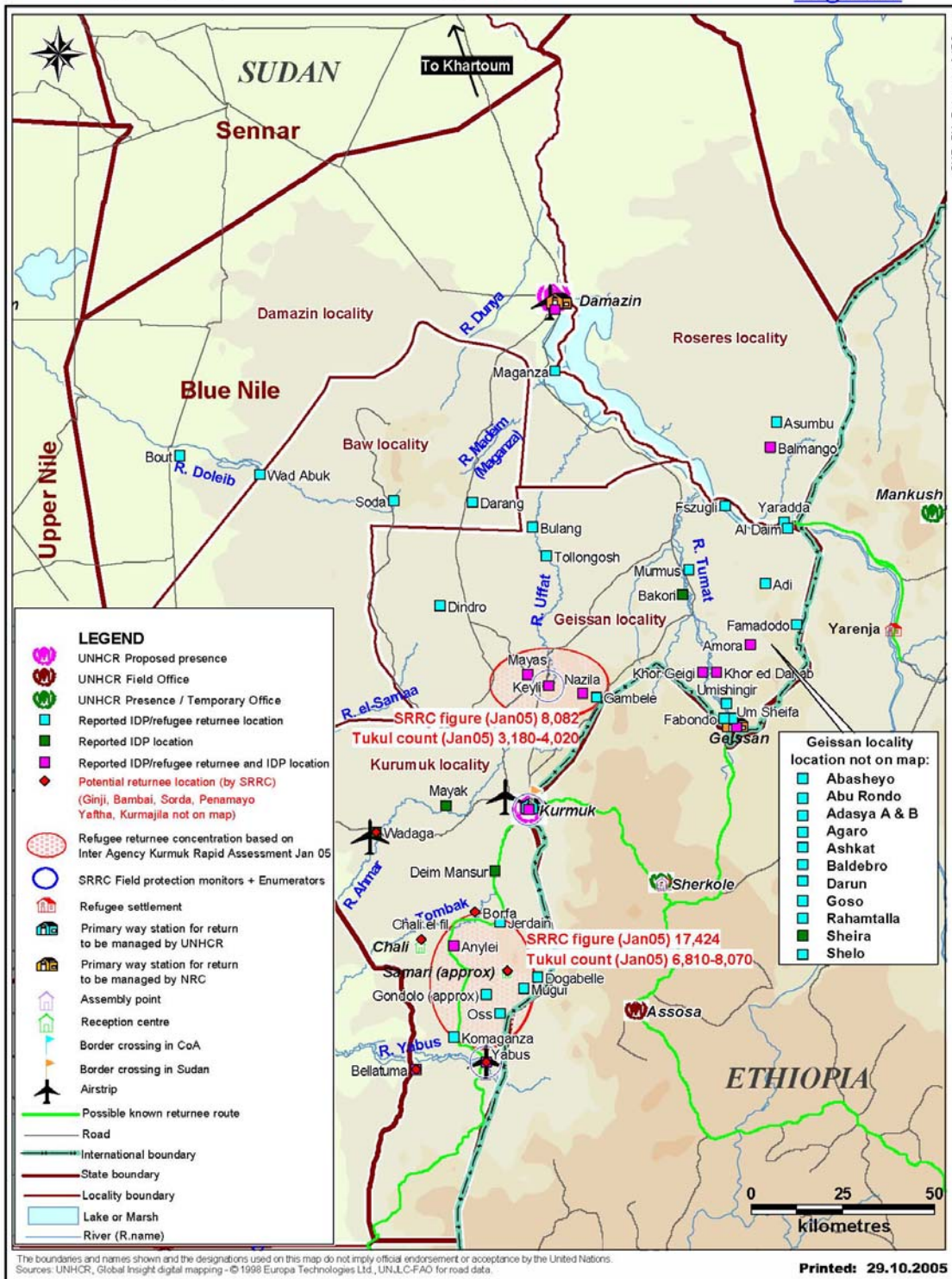
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Sources: UNHCR, Global Insight digital mapping - © 1998 Europe Technologies Ltd., UNL/C-FAO for road & settlement data.

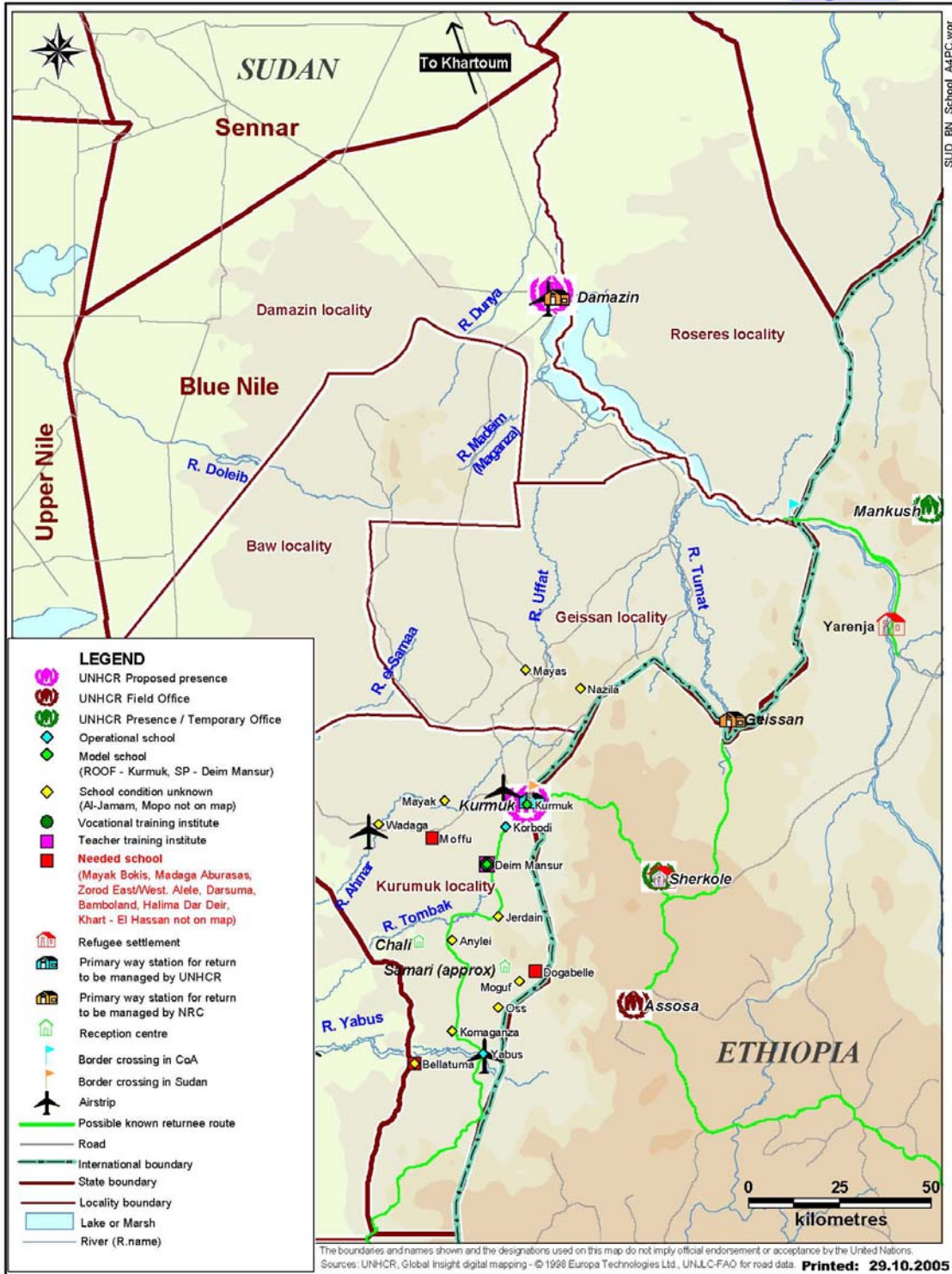




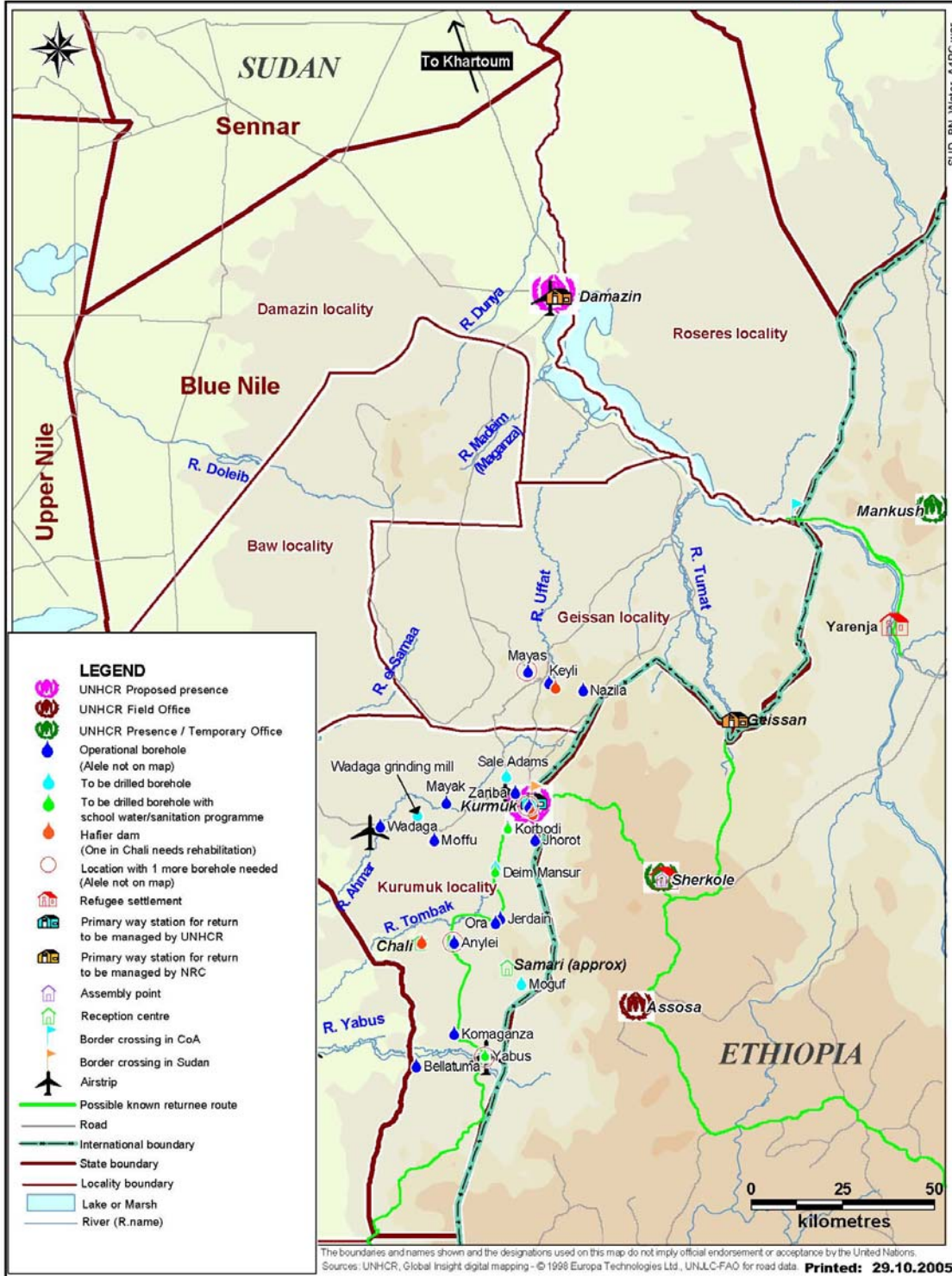


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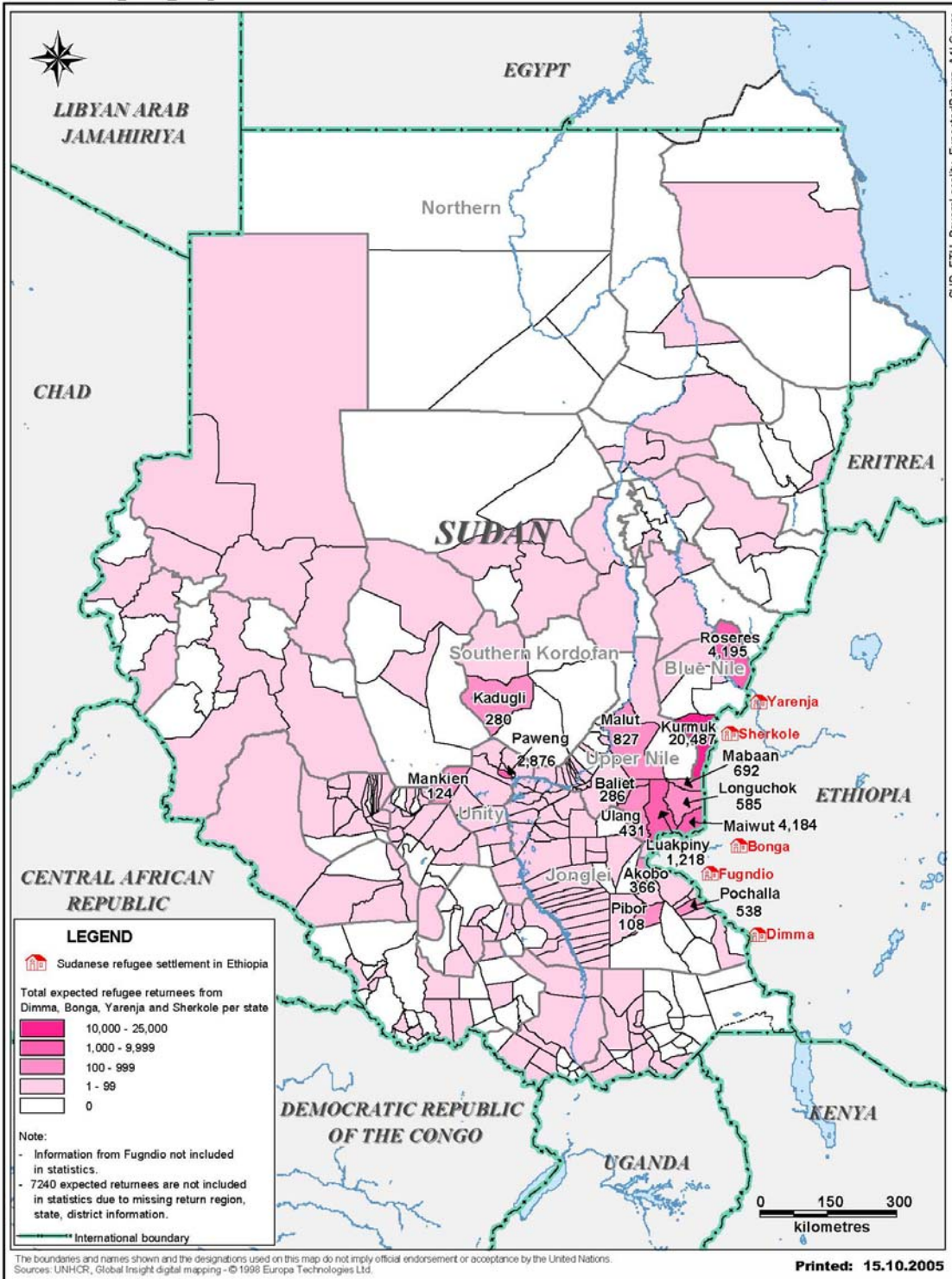
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Sources: UNHCR, Global Insight digital mapping - © 1998 Europa Technologies Ltd., UNLCC-FAO for road data. **Printed: 29.10.2005**

**EXPECTED REFUGEE RETURNEE FROM ETHIOPIA PER PAYAM/LOCALITY**

From Bonga, Dimma, Sherkole and Yarenja

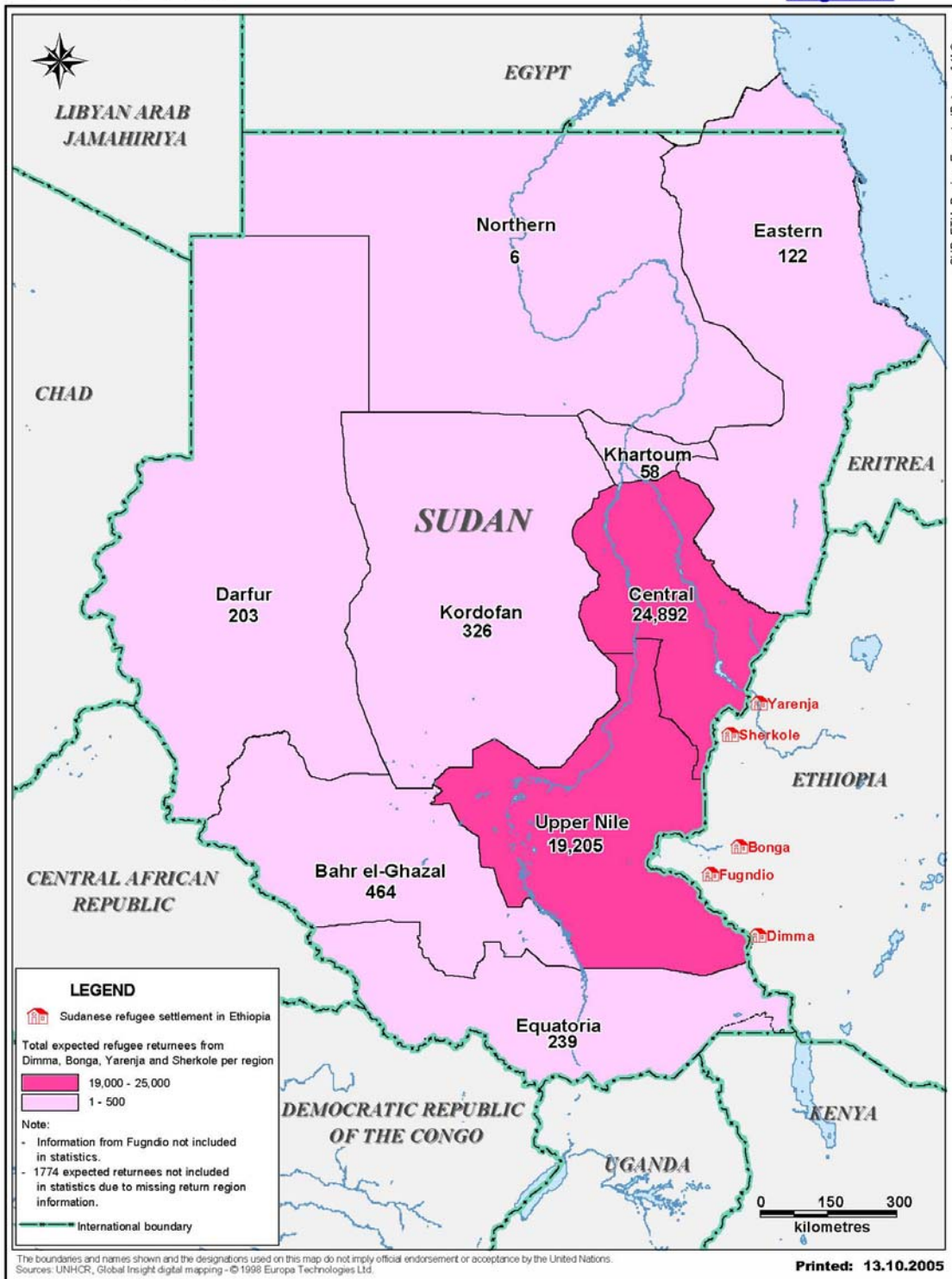
Geographic Information Systems  
UNHCR Khartoum, Sudan  
[imai@unhcr.ch](mailto:imai@unhcr.ch)

October 2005



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Sources: UNHCR, Global Insight digital mapping - © 1998 Europa Technologies Ltd.

SUD\_ETH\_PayamLocality\_ExpectedReturn\_A4L1C.wor



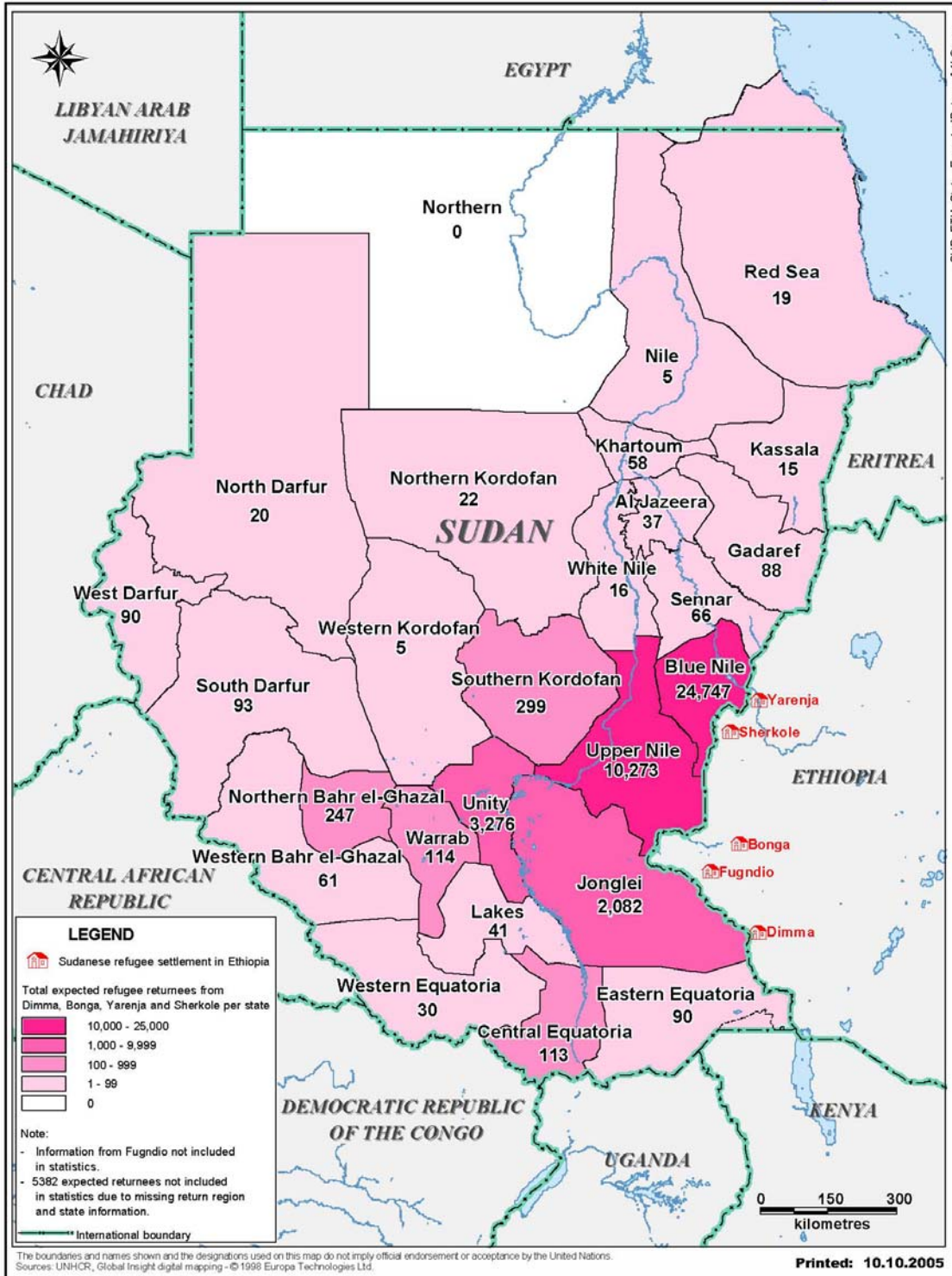
**EXPECTED REFUGEE RETURNEE FROM ETHIOPIA PER STATE**

From Bonga, Dimma, Sherkole and Yarenja

Geographic Information Systems  
UNHCR Khartoum, Sudan

October 2005

[imai@unhcr.ch](mailto:imai@unhcr.ch)



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