Background

Chad is rated 171 out of 177 according to UNDP's 2006 Human Development Report. About 80% of its population lives on less than $1 a day – despite of a Gross Domestic Product per capita of $1,210. The annual growth rate is placed at 2.8% with an estimated life expectancy at birth of 43.6 years.

However, today the most critical humanitarian challenge for Chad derives from the continued population displacement in the East, which results both from conflict in the Darfur region of neighboring Sudan and from insecurity within Chad. Over 230,000 Sudanese refugees and about 172,000 internally displaced are now located in the East. Over 85 per cent of them are children and women.

Internally displaced Chadians

Humanitarian intervention in Eastern Chad in 2007 has to respond to the assistance needs of 172,659 [Profiling UNHCR/June 2007] internally displaced Chadians, who are currently located in the following five administrative departments:
- Assoungha: Goz Bagar/Arkoum, Goundiang, Alacha and surroundings, Adre, Goungour, Goundou, Quadjiye, Bredjil, Goundo
- Dar Tama: Kekerke, Abdi and surroundings
- Dar Sila: Ade,Karoub-Tawa, Daguessa-centre, Dogdore/Tour,Aradip/Goz Amir, Habile, Gourounkoun, Sanour, Koubigou, Koloma, Gassire, Kerfi;
- Djourouf Al Ahmar : Haouich;
- Bahr Azoum: Am Timan, Mouraye.

The majority of them are Dadjo and Massalites; so-called "Arab" communities have recently come under increasing attacks from militias.

The sudden rise in population density is leading progressively to disputes over limited resources amongst newcomers and host communities. In the same time overcrowding is increasing the risk of disease outbreaks, especially during the ongoing rainy season with the consumption of contaminated water and inadequate sanitation facilities.

Currently local authorities and IDP leaders prepare for the return of IDPs to their villages of origin. According to a recent survey conducted by UNHCR up to 40% of the IDPs would go back to their villages if their security is guaranteed. Military support arrived for their protection but did not secure yet the areas of destination. As nothing can actually be implemented before October-November 2007 the humanitarian community has started to discuss contingency plans for assistance to those who decide to return to their villages.

Host population

The humanitarian community is committed to allocate additional resources to assist an estimated 700,000 host community population who are experiencing a depletion of their resources as a result of the presence of refugees and IDPs. Efforts are being made to ensure that humanitarian activities are aligned with longer-term development and capacity building initiatives aiming at reducing the friction between the refugee/IDP population and the host communities.

Security and access

The Darfur crisis in Sudan increased the number of armed groups in the border areas and overstretched the capacity of the Chadian Government to ensure security. Proliferation of handguns, maintenance of traditional violent practices, emergence of rebel movements and rebel activities together with violent abuses by security forces and the proliferation of Unexploded Ordinances (UXO) have further contributed to a deterioration of the security conditions. While the risk of armed attacks decreased with the beginning of the rainy season (June-Sept), due to a de facto inaccessibility of most parts of the country, a significant increase of local criminality has been noted within the past weeks.

The civilian population caught in the conflict and usually self-reliant is facing today difficulties in coping with their daily activities due to the prevailing insecurity. For fear of attacks when moving outside of IDP-sites and villages they are progressively forced to rely on external assistance for their survival. Violations against civilians - refugees, IDPs and local communities - are often perpetrated in impunity.

Humanitarian Situation Overview 2007

Between January and June 2007 the number of displaced Chadians increased from 100,000 to over 172,000, as a result of attacks allegedly perpetrated by Sudanese and Chadian Janjaweed militias. Lack of adequate food and water supplies, as well as acute insecurity, are major causes for concern in the border region, which is already host to more than 230,000 refugees from Darfur. The local population demonstrated an extraordinary willingness to accept the new arrivals, but their scarce resources are now stretched to the ultimate limit. The overarching strategy is thus to support willing communities in relatively safe locations to assist those who have been forced to relocate.

UN agencies and NGO continued in 2007 to respond to the needs of both refugees and IDPs. However the needs of IDPs and their host communities are immediate and increasing, and in that context, they represent a first priority to the humanitarian actors in Eastern Chad. The fact that their living standards, whether for health, nutrition, water, sanitation, education, food security or protection are significantly lower than those of Sudanese refugees is further highlighting the necessity for urgent interventions.

The security situation in Eastern Chad is the major constraint to implementation of programmes and monitoring as it results in lack of access and a limited number of available partners. The landlocked situation of Chad and the barely developed roads are the other major challenge as access to IDP areas is close to impossible during the rainy season from June to October.

Humanitarian Review Process and IASC Cluster Approach

The Protection Cluster in Chad is a forum that seeks to provide the basis for effective, coherent and complete humanitarian response by all actors that seek to intervene in this protection area.

At global level, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has embarked on an effort to improve the predictability, timeliness and effectiveness of a comprehensive response to humanitarian crisis while laying the foundations for recovery. In this process, the IASC agreed to organize its support to rescue, relief and early recovery efforts under different clusters in Chad. In accordance with this, a Protection Cluster has been established.

The overall purpose of the Protection Cluster in Chad is to ensure:
- Up-to-date assessments of the overall protection needs and implementation of durable solution for IDPs
- Linkages among different humanitarian sectors to prevent duplication with other structures - including preparedness measures and long-term planning, standards and best practices, advocacy and resource mobilization;
- Reviews of currently available capacities and means of their utilization;
- Taking action so that vitally needed capacities and mechanisms are put in place at local, national, regional and international levels as appropriate, with the use of existing resources where possible.

Aims of the Protection Cluster:

To coordinate activities aimed at strengthening the protection of the affected population. This Cluster will focus on protection issues that result from or have been exacerbated by the conflict.

Protection, as defined by the IASC protection working group, are "all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law."

Framework:

The Protection Cluster recognizes that the protection of all persons affected by the conflict is the primary responsibility of the Government of Chad. It also recognizes that civil society, including NGOs and religious organization as well as community members, play an important role in strengthening the protection of the affected population. The aim of the protection cluster is to strengthen and build upon existing protection mechanisms.

Protection is also seen as a cross cutting issue in the humanitarian response. As such, all humanitarian actors share responsibility for ensuring that activities in each cluster are carried out with a 'protection lens'. Thus there are two types of protection activities:
- Activities that are designed explicitly to strengthen the protection of vulnerable groups affected by the conflict;

- Other sectoral activities that impact on the level of discrimination, abuse, violence, neglect or exploitation of the population.

At the global level, the Protection Cluster has defined nine functional areas as follows: rule of law and justice; prevention of and response to gender based violence; child protection, protection of other groups with specific protection concerns; prevention of and response to threats to physical safety and security and other human rights violations; mine action; land, housing and property issues; facilitation of solutions and logistics and information management support for the cluster.

At NDjaména level, under the coordination of UNHCR the Protection Cluster lead, these issues will be reviewed and adapted to the local context, and sub working groups on Child Protection (under the leadership of UNICEF) and SGBV (under the leadership of UNFPA) will be formed at Abéché level to address those specific areas.

Tasks of the Protection Cluster

1. To facilitate the exchange of ideas, information and knowledge, including facilitating the development of shared understanding and greater awareness of protection concerns and responses.
2. To understand and map protection needs.
3. To map capacities and responses of agencies.
4. To develop a common work plan for the sector addressing both explicitly protection activities and the impact of other sectors on protection issues.
5. To facilitate coordination, reduce overlap, address gaps and solve problems.
6. Facilitate inter-organizational collaboration and sharing of resources.
7. To develop and adapt relevant locally appropriate guidelines for protection actions.
8. To provide technical support, as needed, to other Clusters.
9. Take the necessary decision to facilitate and refer strategic decision to UNCT/Government as necessary.

UNHCR as the "Cluster Lead"

The specific responsibilities of Cluster Leads are spelt out in the *IASC Generic Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads at the Country Level*. These Terms of Reference are attached as an Annex to the *IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response (November 2006).*

The *IASC Generic Terms of Reference for Sector/Cluster Leads* lay out minimum standards for all Sector/Cluster Leads. These Terms of Reference may be contextualized and added to, but may not be reduced.

Because of global commitments to humanitarian reform, country level cluster leads may not opt out of certain provisions of the cluster approach, such as "accountability", "partnerships" or "provider of last resort".

UNHCR as the cluster lead agency at the country level is responsible for appointing an appropriate person, with the necessary seniority, facilitation skills and technical expertise to be the cluster coordinator.

Other cluster participants

The Protection Cluster at country level is constituted by the following members:
First level of meetings with IASC members: UNICEF, UNFPA, OCHA, UNDP and ICRC as an observer.
Second level of meetings: IASC members + ICRC and selected international NGOs.
Third level of meetings; IASC members + ICRC + representatives of NGOs and relevant government officials.

Meetings

At NDjaména level, meeting of the Protection Cluster are scheduled once a month and on an ad hoc basis when required; while in the field, meeting are held twice a month.

Reporting lines

Protection Cluster at the country level reports to the Humanitarian Coordinator on issues related to the functioning of the sector in a particular emergency.

Coordination with Government of Chad/local authorities

A key responsibility of the Protection Cluster at the country level is to ensure that humanitarian actors build on local capacities and that they develop and maintain appropriate links with Government and local authorities, state institutions, local civil society and other stakeholders.

The Protection Cluster approach does not diminish the responsibility of the State, first and foremost to take care of the victims of conflict and other emergencies occurring on its territory. The affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance (GA Resolution 46/182).

The approach does not imply that the Protection Cluster lead is responsible for leading the overall humanitarian response within the sector, as this may be the responsibility of a government department or a local authority.

UNHCR as the sector lead is responsible for promoting close cooperation among international humanitarian actors working in the Protection sector, and for ensuring appropriate linkages with government and local authorities.