UNOG Bi-weekly press briefing: Sudan Floods OCHA - UNHCR

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Shotlist

1. Exterior wide shot, Palais des Nations flag alley, nations’ flags flying
2. Wide shot, Press briefing, Palais des Nations
3. SOUNDBITE (English) — Jens Laerke, Jens Laerke, Spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): “In Khartoum state alone, more than 21,000 people have been affected by the flooding and on Sunday, the Government declared a state of emergency in Khartoum. Across the country, as of 25 August, 380,000 people have been affected and 90 have been killed”.
4. Medium shot, journalists
5. SOUNDBITE (English) — Shabia Mantoo, Spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR): “An estimated 125,000 refugees and internally displaced people have been affected in total. This is particularly in East Sudan, White Nile, Darfur and Khartoum, and many are in urgent need of shelter and other emergency assistance. Rains have been particularly heavy in North Darfur, leaving an estimated 35,000 IDPs, locals and refugees in need of help, and also 15 people have tragically died and a further 23 are missing”.
6. Wide shot, journalists in room with screen
7. **SOUNDBITE (English)** — Shabia Mantoo, Spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR): “Hygiene and sanitary levels have plummeted due to flooded latrines and contaminated water supplies, preventing people from exercising necessary COVID19 prevention measures such as regular handwashing. Some health facilities have been damaged, hampering their abilities to treat patients should transmission of COVID19 or other viruses and diseases increase”.


9. **SOUNDBITE (English)** — Shabia Mantoo, Spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR): “The damage to infrastructure has been devastating. Roads have become too muddy for traffic to pass, making it extremely difficult or impossible to deliver humanitarian aid to some communities, particularly in Blue Nile where humanitarian agencies are unable to reach some 5,700 people needing humanitarian assistance”.


11. **SOUNDBITE (English)** — Jens Laerke, Jens Laerke, Spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): “A quick response has been possible because the Government, UN agencies and our partners had pre-positioned supplies to respond to the needs of 250,000 people before the rain started. But these stocks are being depleted rapidly. We therefore call on more support from donors”.


13. Wide shot, podium in press Room III, Palais des Nations

14. Close up, hands typing on laptop
Heavy seasonal rains have caused severe flooding in Sudan leaving vast damage to people and infrastructure including access to clean water – critical in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Thousands of people, including internally displaced, refugees and host communities in Sudan have been affected by heavy rains which have triggered severe flooding and a rise of the river Nile up to nearly 17.5 metres, the highest level in 100 years according to Sudanese authorities.

“In Khartoum state alone, more than 21,000 people have been affected by the flooding and on Sunday, the Government declared a state of emergency in Khartoum. Across the country, as of 25 August, 380,000 people have been affected and 90 have been killed”, said Jens Laerke, spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) at a briefing today at the United Nations in Geneva.

According to OCHA, some 37,000 homes have been destroyed, forcing families to seek shelter with relatives and host communities. Another 39,000 houses have been damaged, along with 34 schools and nearly 2,700 health facilities.

Talking on behalf of the refugees, Shabia Mantoo, spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said that “an estimated 125,000 refugees and internally displaced people have been affected in total. This is particularly in East Sudan, White Nile, Darfur and Khartoum, and many are in urgent need of shelter and other emergency assistance”.

Ms. Mantoo added that “rains have been particularly heavy in North Darfur, leaving an estimated 35,000 IDPs, locals and refugees in need of help, and also 15 people have tragically died and a further 23 are missing”.

Many of those affected had been previously displaced by conflict and were already facing loss of income due to the economic challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Access to clean water which is critical in the Covid-19 pandemic has also been affected. Around 2,000 water sources are contaminated or non-functional, according to initial assessments.

“Hygiene and sanitary levels have plummeted due to flooded latrines and contaminated water supplies, preventing people from exercising necessary COVID19 prevention measures such as regular handwashing. Some health facilities have been damaged, hampering their abilities to treat patients should transmission of COVID19 or other viruses and diseases increase”, said UNHCR’s Shabia Mantoo.

Homes and community buildings have been badly damaged and destroyed leaving many in desperate need of shelter. “The damage to infrastructure has been devastating. Roads have become too muddy for traffic to pass, making it extremely difficult or impossible to deliver humanitarian aid to some communities, particularly in Blue Nile where humanitarian agencies are unable to reach some 5,700 people needing humanitarian assistance”, Ms. Mantoo said.

Across the country, UN and humanitarian partners are supporting the national response with emergency shelter and household supplies, water, sanitation and hygiene assistance, food, and health services.

OCHA’s Jens Laerke said that “a quick response has been possible because the Government, UN agencies and our partners had pre-positioned supplies to respond to the needs of 250,000 people before the rain started. But these stocks are being depleted rapidly. We therefore call on more support from donors”.

Story