

**THE PROSPECTS OF ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AMONG THE SUDANESE
POPULATION IN GREATER CAIRO**

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations	4
Acknowledgments	5
Executive Summary	6
Introduction	10
Definitions and Concepts	12
Migrants and Refugees	12
Repatriation	13
Assisted Voluntary Return	13
Literature Review	
Repatriation and Assisted Voluntary Return	19
Background Information	19
Profile of Sudanese in Egypt	19
<i>Residence</i>	20
<i>Housing</i>	21
<i>Work</i>	21
Access to Social and Public Services	21
<i>Health</i>	22
<i>Education</i>	23
Methodology	25
Research Team	27
Limitations of the Study	27
Demographic Characteristics of the Sample	29
Primary Research Findings	35
Prospects of Return	36
AVR Operations: Stakeholders' Involvement	43
Interest in and Components of Reinsertion Programme	44
<i>Job Placement</i>	45
<i>Transportation and Relocation Cost</i>	46
<i>Vocational Training</i>	46
<i>Business Set-Up</i>	46
<i>Security and Protection</i>	47
<i>Psychosocial Support</i>	47
<i>Health Care</i>	47
<i>Follow-up</i>	47
<i>Family Tracing</i>	47
<i>Housing and Infrastructure Development</i>	48
<i>Education</i>	48
<i>Special Components for Vulnerable Groups</i>	48
Conclusion	49
Recommendations	50
References	52
Appendices	54
Appendix 1-Survey Questionnaire	54
Appendix 2-Focus Group Discussion Guide	68
Appendix 3-In-Depth Interview Semi-Structured Questionnaire	70

Tables and Figures

Table 1: Total Repatriated Refugees from Egypt to Sudan, 1996-2006	10
Table 2: Access to Health Care	23
Table 3: Geographical Distribution of Households	29
Table 4: Distribution of Household Members by Relationship to Heads of Households	30
Table 5: Ethnic Composition of Household	31
Table 6: Age of Household Members	32
Table 7: Highest Degree Obtained by Heads of Households	32
Table 8: Total Monthly Income of Household	33
Table 9: Index of Number of House Facilities' Possession	33
Table 10: Number of Immediate Family Members in Sudan	34
Table 11: Answer to Question: What is better for you in terms of socioeconomic conditions?	35
Table 12: Answer to Question: What is better for you in terms of socioeconomic conditions? By number of family members in Sudan	36
Table 13: Answer to Question: Given the conditions in Sudan within the next five years, are you planning to return to Sudan? By Residency Status	36
Table 14: Answer to Question: Given the conditions in Sudan within the next five years, are you planning to return to Sudan? By Respondents' Highest Level of Education Achieved	39
Table 15: Answer to Question: Given the conditions in Sudan within the next five years, are you planning to return to Sudan? By Respondents' Gender	40
Table 16: Answer to Question: Given the conditions in Sudan within the next five years, are you planning to return to Sudan? By Area of Origin	41
Table 17: Places of Return in Sudan	42
Figure 1: Percentage of Possession of Household Facilities	34
Figure 2: Preferred Countries of Resettlement	37
Figure 3: Components of Re-insertion Programme	44

Abbreviations

AVR: Assisted Voluntary Return.

CMRS (FMRS): Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies (formerly Forced Migration and Refugee Studies Centre)

IOM: International Organization for Migration

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

CBOs: Community-Based Organizations

CPA: Comprehensive Peace Agreement

STAR: Student Action for Refugees

CCIP: Cairo Community Interpreter Project

AUC: American University in Cairo

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Executive Summary

This study looked at the prospects of assisted voluntary return among Sudanese migrants currently residing in Greater Cairo, Egypt. Its main objectives were to identify elements affecting the migration choices of Sudanese already residing in Egypt, especially their propensity to stay in Egypt, return to Sudan or move to a neighbouring country and to suggest components of a reinsertion programme that best suits the needs of potential returnees.

This research project was commissioned by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and conducted by the Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies Program (CMRS) at the American University in Cairo. The project aimed to provide an analysis of the attitudes of the Sudanese population in Greater Cairo towards return and to gather demographic characteristics that affect migration choices. Using the knowledge gained, the project proposes a suitable framework for the anticipated reinsertion programme. There is limited research on or documentation of Sudanese migrants' particular needs vis-à-vis their return despite the fact that statistical data indicates an increasing interest in return among this population. Thus, providing action-oriented research on this issue is a crucial step to ensure an effective, sustainable and smooth return operation.

Structure of the Research

Survey and focus group participants in this research were migrants from different parts of Sudan currently living in Cairo. A survey that included **293** households comprised of **1016** members provided the baseline data for our study. The study included **six** focus group discussions with **66** Sudanese participants, **five** in-depth interviews with Sudanese families residing in Egypt for more than twenty years, **three** field visits to al-Haganna informal settlement and **four** semi-structured interviews with representatives of national, international and community-level stakeholders.

Key Survey and Focus Group Findings

The survey conducted showed that although the majority of research participants would prefer to be resettled to a third country (78.2 percent), many are considering returning to Sudan given the limited possibility of resettlement combined with the limited access to social services in Egypt. The majority of the survey respondents live in overcrowded neighbourhoods, are underemployed, have children outside of the formal schooling system, suffer from discrimination in the streets and are on the margins of the already-limited Egyptian social service system. Focus groups discussions mirror these findings. Thus for many, returning to Sudan could be an option to ameliorate their socioeconomic conditions. This thought, however, was not expressed by migrant families who have resided in Egypt for more than twenty years as many have adapted to the life in Egypt and are not familiar with the current situation in Sudan. Specific findings show:

- **Only 2.7 percent** of survey respondents claimed that staying in Egypt is better for them in terms of socioeconomic conditions. However, most of the old migrants interviewed reported that staying in Egypt may be better unless a concrete opportunity appears in Sudan.

- **38.6 percent** of survey respondents reported an interest in returning to Sudan depending on the conditions over the next five years. The majority of focus group participants, however, with the exception of Darfuri, expressed a general interest in returning to Sudan. Furthermore, some of them have even tried to go back or have family members sent back for exploration purposes. In addition, **94 percent** of the survey respondents follow information in Sudan.
- **Southern Sudanese** were the highest group expressing an interest to return (**71.4 percent**) followed by **Eastern Sudanese (62.5 percent)**, **Nubians (55 percent)**, those from **Khartoum (37.7 percent)**, **Darfur (33.3 percent)** and **Central Sudan (26.8 percent)**.
- Concerning the places of return, **25.3 percent** claimed that they intend to return to their area of origin, **10.2 percent** are planning to settle in Khartoum, **3.1 percent** are intending to resettle elsewhere and **2.7 percent** were not sure.
- With regard to participants' interest in a reinsertion programme, **41.3 percent** of the total percentage of survey participants expressed being interested. As for the programme's components, job placement came at the top of the list (**56.2 percent**), followed by business set-up (**24.9 percent**), security and protection (**21.8 percent**), vocational training (**19.5 percent**), health care (**19.1 percent**), transportation coverage (**9.9 percent**), a follow-up programme in Sudan (**9.9 percent**) and psychosocial support (**9.2 percent**). All components were perceived by survey respondents as extremely important, except psychosocial support which was considered a priority.

Interviews Key Findings

Stakeholder interviews noted that the issue of return is a major concern among Sudanese migrants in Egypt at the moment. However, groups differ in terms of their interest in returning mainly due to security and economic reasons as well as lack of basic services, particularly in post-conflict areas. Assisting the migrant community to return has been identified as a crucial element that would promote return. Stakeholders noted that the different components suggested are highly important to returnees. However, housing, education and employment are considered priority areas that need intervention and combined efforts of national, international and local authorities.

Recommendations

Based on the study, we recommend the following:

To the Government of Egypt

- Facilitating exit procedures and other formalities, in collaboration with UNHCR.
- Exempting returnees from all types of taxes, exit-based expenses and custom charges.
- Appointing government officials as focal points for return operations. They will act as facilitators in other issues as needed.

To the Government of Sudan

- Facilitating entrance procedures and exempting returnees from all types of

entrance fees.

- Introducing and maintaining an efficient security system in post-conflict areas.
- Developing a housing scheme in collaboration with investors and other key stakeholders for those who lost their homes before fleeing or during their stay in Egypt.
- Establishing a network of international, non-governmental, community-based organisations and community leaders that would advocate for and promote structural factors leading to the sustainability of return.
- Raising funds, in collaboration with other stakeholders, from the Sudanese Diaspora in order to implement development projects that would secure employment opportunities for returnees.
- Encouraging investment and all sorts of developmental projects by facilitating bureaucratic procedures and other related formalities.
- Identifying training areas that could match the economic sector in the Sudan.
- Ensuring adequate and easy access to social services, particularly in the areas of health and education.

To International Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and Community-Based Organisations in Egypt

- Conducting awareness sessions on the prospects of return.
- Providing returnee-sensitive psychosocial health care services to Sudanese migrants and reporting on cases that would need extensive follow-up to NGOs/CBOs in the Sudan.
- Conducting training of trainers for returning community leaders so that they could initiate further trainings upon their return.
- In coordination with the Government of Sudan and CBOs, increase the level of inclusion and trust of the Sudanese vis-à-vis the Sudanese government.
- Providing vocational and on-the-job trainings for returnees, particularly women and craftspeople, in the areas suggested later in the report.
- Advocating with relevant stakeholders to include returnee-focused activities in their projects.
- Setting-up a placement test for student returnees so that they could be smoothly reinserted in schools.

To International Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and Community-Based Organisations in Sudan

- Engaging community leaders who are already involved in assisted voluntary return programmes such as representatives of the Nuba Mountains Associations, Refuge Egypt and Sakakini Church.
- Recruiting old returnees to Sudan to assist new returnees in adaptation to the new life.
- Developing special programmes for vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors.
- Providing individual counselling in order to tailor a suitable and relevant programme for each returnee and following-up cases at risk, in collaboration with Egypt-based NGOs.
- Establishing contact with organisations in Egypt to learn about the general situation of returnees and to explore potential collaboration.

- Conducting an employment mapping and ensure that the skills and experiences of returnees match employment gaps through trainings.
- Contributing towards ensuring adequate health systems for returnees through the establishment of a network of formal and informal health care service providers.
- Monitoring, evaluating and contributing to children's schooling, possibly through the establishment of one classroom schools suitable to the needs of returnees.

Introduction

In April 2008, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) commissioned the Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies (formerly the Forced Migration and Refugee Studies Program) to undertake a study on the prospects of assisted voluntary return among the Sudanese migrants in Egypt. The aims of the study are to: (i) conduct a profiling exercise to map the Sudanese population in Greater Cairo; (ii) explore the main characteristics and composition of the Sudanese population in Greater Cairo; and (iii) identify migrant groups who are potentially interested in returning to Sudan. Initially, IOM was interested in understanding the prospects of return of the following groups:

- Approximately 10,200 asylum seekers who hold yellow cards from UNHCR, whose interviews have been suspended since 2004;
- Approximately 16,000 asylum seekers with rejected asylum claims;
- Approximately 20,000 Southern Sudanese who are considered as stranded migrants in Egypt and are in need of voluntary transport assistance.

This study contributes towards understanding the potential for assisted voluntary return (AVR) activities for Sudanese migrants in Egypt. Moreover, following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM/SPLA) of 9 January 2005, initiatives were undertaken by relevant stakeholders to voluntarily repatriate Sudanese migrants and refugees, particularly those who were from the South, and to facilitate their return and reintegration process in their home country. UNHCR has recently launched an appeal for donations for US\$11.9 million to fill a funding gap in its repatriation and reintegration operation to South Sudan which commenced in late 2005 (UNHCR 2008).¹

UNHCR statistical records indicate a noticeable increase in the number of Sudanese refugees repatriating from Egypt to Sudan over the last ten years - from 1996 until 2006 (see table below).

Table 1: Total repatriated refugees from Egypt to Sudan from 1996 to 2006²

	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Sudan	188	5	3	13	1	3	1	2	88	924

According to the UNHCR, in 2008, "The number of returns has consistently grown in that time with the record 60,000 in the first half of this year exceeding by 14,000 the total returns for all of 2007."³

For long term plans regarding repatriation, UNHCR adds that "the planning figures for assisted voluntary repatriation from Egypt to the Sudan are 2,500 (in 2007), 3,000

¹ See: <http://www.unhcr.org/news/NEWS/48808f134.html>

² Data processed from the UNHCR statistical online population database. See <http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/45c063a82.html>. Accessed June 2008.

³ *Ibid.*

(in 2008) and 5,000 (in 2009), growing progressively with the pace of development in the South of Sudan and with it, prospects for livelihoods and employment of a largely urbanized Sudanese refugee population in Egypt” (UNHCR 2007, 12). Furthermore, efforts are exerted by the UNHCR, in collaboration with relevant partners, to effectively put in place and streamline functional and logistical arrangements concerning voluntary repatriation processes. For instance, the Egyptian Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs agreed to facilitate exit formalities from the Egyptian border. In addition, the Sudanese Embassy in Egypt agreed to provide free of charge travel documents for and to renew passports of returnees.⁴

Accordingly, this report is timely, participatory and action-oriented as it aims to present Sudanese migrants’ views and attitudes regarding the potentials of their return and the challenges that they may encounter upon their reintegration in Sudan. It provides guidelines for policy-makers and relevant stakeholders engaged in and/or interested in undertaking future AVR operations from Egypt to Sudan who wish to meet the challenges and avoid the flaws of previous repatriation and AVR programmes, which are discussed in the literature review section of this report.

4 <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/46fbc03d2.pdf>

Definitions and Concepts

For the purpose of this report it is necessary to provide conceptual definitions for the terms extensively used in the research to avoid confusion and to ensure clarity of their usage.

Migrants and Refugees

There is a long history of migration between Sudan and Egypt, which includes marked periods of mass migration as individuals fled the war in Sudan. Today, there is a large population of Sudanese in Egypt who migrated for a variety of reasons, though these are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, some individuals from the target population who took part in this study fled due to the unstable political situation in their place of origin but, at the same time, came to Egypt seeking better economic opportunities. The majority of Sudanese hosted in Egypt come from the centre and the north of Sudan.

Refugees are a particularly vulnerable group of non-nationals as they are deprived of the protection of their national state. It is this particular vulnerability that compels their protection under international law. A “refugee” is a person who meets the eligibility criteria under the applicable refugee definition, as provided for in international or regional refugee instruments, under UNHCR’s mandate, and/or in national legislation. A refugee is a person who, “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country” (Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A (2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol). In Africa, the refugee definition has been broadened to encompass persons compelled to leave their country not only as a result of persecution, but also “owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality.” (Art. 1(2) Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 1969)

The term migrant, is usually understood to cover all cases where the decision to migrate is taken freely by the individual concerned for reasons of ‘personal convenience’ and without intervention of an external, compelling factor. The term therefore applies to persons and family members moving to another country or region to better their material or social conditions and improve prospects for themselves or their family (Glossary on Migration, IOM, 2004).

For ease of reference and for the purpose of the present report, the term migrant is used to encompass all individuals across this divide. In this report, persons are defined as migrants by virtue of the fact that they move from their own country to another, regardless of the reasons and their needs. Simultaneously, when adopting this definition it should not be assumed that migrants are a homogeneous group or that the specificities of refugee status can be dismissed or denied to them. Therefore it should be acknowledged that the Sudanese community in Egypt is a diverse group with a diversity of needs that may differ according to gender, age, education and ethnicity.

It is important to point out that throughout the report, the use of the term ‘refugee’ will be unavoidable, as it was used by relevant stakeholders and in the literature reviewed.

Repatriation

Repatriation is one of the three durable solutions offered for refugees. Repatriation can be voluntary or compulsory (involuntary). As we will discuss, the latter is considered a violation of international refugee law and various international human right instruments.

This report will use the definition provided by IOM, which states that repatriation refers to:

The personal right of a refugee or a prisoner of war to return to his/her country of nationality under specific conditions laid down in various international instruments (Geneva Conventions, 1949 and Protocols, 1977, the Regulations Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, Annexed to the Fourth Hague Convention, 1907, the human rights instruments as well as in customary international law). The option of repatriation is bestowed upon the individual personally and not upon the detaining power. Repatriation also entails the obligation of the detaining power to release eligible persons (soldiers and civilians) and the duty of the country of origin to receive its own nationals. Repatriation as a term also applies to diplomatic envoys and international officials in time of international crisis (Glossary on Migration, IOM, 2004, p. 55).

While voluntary repatriation is:

Return of eligible persons to the country of origin on the basis of freely expressed willingness to so return (Glossary on Migration, IOM, 2004, p. 69),

Involuntary repatriation refers to:

Repatriation of refugees to the country of origin induced by the receiving country by creating circumstances which do not leave any other alternative. As repatriation is a personal right (unlike expulsion and deportation which are primarily within the domain of State sovereignty), as such, neither the State of nationality nor the State of temporary residence or detaining power is justified in enforcing repatriation against the will of an eligible person, whether refugee or prisoner of war. According to contemporary international law, prisoners of war or refugees refusing repatriation, particularly if motivated by fears of political persecution in their own country, should be protected from refoulement and given, if possible, temporary or permanent asylum (Glossary on Migration, IOM, 2004, p. 34).

For refugees and asylum seekers, the decision to return should be free, well-informed and in consultation with the UNHCR.

Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR)

In general, return refers:

Broadly to the act or process of going back. This could be within the territorial boundaries of a country, as in the case of returning IDPs and demobilized combatants; or from a host country (either transit or destination) to the country of origin, as in the case of refugees, asylum seekers, and qualified nationals. There are subcategories of return which can describe the way the return is implemented, e.g. voluntary, forced, assisted and spontaneous return; as well as subcategories which describe who is participating in the return, e.g. repatriation (for refugees) (Glossary on Migration, IOM, 2004, p. 56).

However, as opposed to simple return, AVR includes:

logistical and financial support to rejected asylum seekers, trafficked migrants, stranded students, qualified nationals and other migrants unable or unwilling to remain in the host country who volunteer to return to their countries of origin (Glossary on Migration, IOM, 2004, p.7) based on their free and informed decision.

Several scholars have argued that return migration may foster positive development in the public and the private sectors of the country of origin, together with direct foreign investment (FDI), trade liberalisation, remittances and improved governance (Diatta and Mbow 1999; Olesen 2002). This report follows Ammassari's conceptualisation of development as "not only conceived in terms of its economic dimension but just as much in terms of its socio-cultural and political dimensions. It consists of dynamic and multifaceted processes tending towards the reduction of poverty and the widespread well-being" (2004:134). Thus, in addition to the economic development, it has been argued that many returnees accumulate significant human capital abroad that they transfer to their home country upon return, particularly highly skilled and professional migrants. Empirical research among Greek and Cambodian returnees illustrates that returnees may bring back new values and ideas on democracy and social behaviour as well as political awareness. Moreover, in the case of elite migrants, many return to occupy key positions in the public and private sectors, from where they are capable of affecting the course of events due to the high level of responsibility, authority and power (Ammassari 2004). From this literature, we have learned that introducing concepts of participation, trust and state credibility as well as good governance may encourage emigrants to return. This will be discussed further in the literature review section.

Literature Review

This section focuses on the literature on repatriation and return. It was necessary to consult this literature in order to extract lessons learned from previous repatriation and assisted voluntary return operations. Very little research has been done on AVR of migrants as opposed to repatriation of refugees. While the two concepts present policy makers with similar challenges, there exist differences and specificities that should be taken into account and that will be briefly analysed in this section.

Repatriation and Assisted Voluntary Return

Voluntary repatriation is one of the most popular, yet controversial, durable solutions for refugees. It has attracted scholarly attention for over a decade (Chimni 1999). In this body of literature, repatriation has been perceived as a complex and multi-layered process that requires more attention from policy makers. Scholars have highlighted how issues of security in the country of destination as well as the voluntary nature of repatriation have not received adequate attention by policy makers and international organizations (Helton 1992; Harrell-Bond 1989, al-Salem 2004). Various case studies from Cambodia, Afghanistan, South Africa, Russia and other countries have been discussed to argue that refugee repatriation programmes need to be more critically reviewed in order to avoid allegations of coercion, *refoulement* and involuntary return (Black and Koser 1999). Others have addressed major barriers associated with repatriation programmes. Rogge (1994) states that the repatriation of refugees poses a number of challenges, such as: economic barriers to self-sufficiency, social problems such as education, language, health care and the protection of groups at risk.

Repatriation programmes have also often been criticised when the actual return is not to the area of origin but to a new area designated by international agencies and governments as such. On this issue, Hammond (2004) presents an ethnographic account of the 1993 Ethiopian refugee repatriation from camps in Sudan to Ada Bai, their new home. She explores how seven thousand refugees engaged in activities related to creating a “home” including: building physical structures, establishing healthcare systems, strengthening the financial sector and investing in community formation. Hammond argues that despite the efforts exerted by the returnees, the repatriation failed for the residents of Ada Bai due to unclear responsibility on the part of the international community and poor planning of aid programmes facilitating repatriation and reintegration in Ada Bai.

To address these concerns, scholars exerted effort to outline some general principles for repatriation and return operations. For example, Arthur (1992) drafted principles for repatriation, including: 1) ensuring safety and security of individuals in their home country upon return; 2) guaranteeing the voluntary nature of return, and 3) strengthening the collaboration among relevant stakeholders such as the UNHCR and civil society organizations operating in the home country to offer continued support upon return for both organized and “unassisted” repatriation. Moreover, Collier (2006) highlights the importance of establishing North-South networks for facilitating return from Northern to Southern countries and the need to adopt bottom-up approach through identifying refugees’ priorities in research on durable solutions. For the purpose of this research, it is worth noting that while the majority of respondents were

registered with UNHCR, only 38 percent of the total respondents are recognized refugees and fall under repatriation programme. The remaining percentage is concerned with AVR operations, which will be discussed in what follows.

Alongside security and material support, the psychosocial well-being of returnees is another aspect that should be considered when implementing AVR programmes. On that issue, Ghanem (2003) offers a seminal, comprehensive and informative article on the psychosocial aspects of return. She focuses on the psychosocial difficulties that migrants and refugees may encounter in the reintegration process upon their return. She argues that when migrants are repatriated, they are seen incorrectly as being 're-rooted' and that the right order of things is restored as soon as they are 'back home'" (p. 15). She posits that variables such as age, gender, and marital status affect the experiences of return (p. 19). Furthermore, she theorizes that although national identity and emotional connection to home can be used as survival strategies for individuals in exile, they could also create unrealistic expectations due to the myth of return. Accordingly, those who have more realistic expectations for return are less likely to encounter emotional difficulties than those with unrealistic expectations (p. 52).

Furthermore, while it might be assumed that refugees with a positive attitude towards "home" may have the easiest reintegration, this is not always the case (34). Ghanem writes that actual return represents the "end of the myth" (p. 39) and that one common experience is "reverse culture shock" upon return (43) and strained relationship between "returnees" and "stayees" (44). She also highlights the gendered reintegration of returnees while arguing that women whose status and autonomy changed in exile face more difficulties than those who maintained the same status. Many scholars have argued that return migration may foster positive development in the public and the private sectors of the country of origin if return policies are part of a broader development strategy that includes other elements such as direct foreign investment (FDI), trade liberalisation, remittances and improved governance (Diatta and Mbow 1999; Olesen 2002).

Another key issue related to repatriation and return is the question of "sustainability." Black and Gent (2004, p.4) made a distinction between narrow indicators of sustainability which only focus on the success of the individual to reintegrate and the broad conceptualisation of the sustainability which also entails the broader macro-economic and political setting. They argue that the latter conceptualisation may better lead to a successful and sustainable return, particularly in post-conflict areas. This is due to the fact that in these areas, international organizations and donor countries have to prove that implemented policies will lead to political stabilisation and conflict resolving. Moreover, if there is some sense of permanence, stability and participation among returnees, they may contribute to creating positive conditions in their country. This is especially true for investors, professionals and to-be-returnees abroad. For instance, in Senegal, the government has encouraged and promoted the participation of Senegalese residing in Switzerland, Saudi Arabia and Germany to sponsor development projects in the fields of artisanal, industry and vocational training. In addition, repatriation and AVR programmes should also bear in mind the impact of their activities on host communities, as this element is oftentimes overlooked.

Policy makers, researchers and governments set indicators to measure the sustainability of return, while introducing a rights-based approach to this process. According to Piperno (2004) in Kosovo, a *Manual of Sustainable Return* was drafted by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to encompass four areas: 1) security and freedom of movement, 2) access to public services, 3) access to shelter, and 4) fair and equal access to employment opportunities (Ibid, p.12). Based on empirical research with returnees to Bosnia and Kosovo, researchers found several additional factors that influence the physical sustainability of return to include: 1) whether or not returnees intended to re-emigrate; 2) whether or not they found a job and 3) whether or not they experienced security-induced fear (Ibid, p. 15). Others have set a sustainable livelihood framework which focuses on whether or not returnees can maintain their livelihoods without relying on external inputs like aid offered by organizations or individuals. Progress towards sustainability could be monitored by providing reinsertion aid to individuals and families in two instalments in six months increments which would include individual follow-up sessions. Scholars have also noted that enhancing the monitoring and evaluation capacities of government authorities in charge is necessary to ensure successful return operations.

In addition, Piperno (2004) highlights the social and emotional dimensions of sustainability. With regard to the former, he argues that social sustainability refers to relations between returnees and the receiving community. In many countries social services are ineffective and the local community is the only way to access financial support and employment. If returnees are stigmatised by the local community, they could be excluded from these services, which may jeopardise their successful integration. To measure the level of social stigma, several indicators have proved useful in previous cases: discrimination in access to work, less-privileged position in the wedding market and troubles in relations with friends, relatives and neighbours. As for the latter which concerns emotional sustainability, Piperno argues that feelings of depression, incompetence or that the migration project did not end successfully may lead migrants to alienate themselves from the local community. Thus, the psychosocial components of AVR operations should not be underestimated.

Migrants do not represent a homogenous group and thus their needs may differ according to class, gender, age, etc. With regard to class, the majority of survey respondents live in poor economic conditions and have little technical training. A similar case is Keralites returning from the Gulf countries. Nair (1999) presented a set of suggestions that could be applied to Sudanese in Cairo, as well: 1) setting a reliable information database for returnees; 2) comparing the capacities and aspirations of returnees with their employment and entrepreneurial potential and then incorporating reintegration schemes in local development plans, 3) developing infrastructure by providing guarantees to investors in this area and 4) identifying investment areas for returned migrants and providing them with individual career counselling and trainings to undertake projects in these areas and finally 5) creating an investment-friendly climate.

Based on this literature, one can argue that several aspects should be carefully considered while implementing AVR operations. These include: 1) facilitating self-reliance for returnees through securing employment opportunities; 2) helping returnees to integrate in their areas of origin, unless they want to resettle elsewhere; 3)

providing individual counselling for returnees in an attempt to consider variables such as age, gender, number of children on individual reintegration; 4) avoiding burden-relief perceptions; 5) finding a security system to ensure protection when necessary, and finally 6) addressing the psychosocial aspect of returnees before and after returning, especially for those who fled war and persecution as well as those who have an idealized and unrealistic image of their areas of origin and may be traumatised when faced with reality. In addition, an emphasis on strengthening the capacities of national stakeholders involved to ensure an efficient implementation of the operations is essential.

Background Information

Profile of Sudanese in Egypt

Though their exact number is unknown and often disputed, Sudanese represent the largest migrant population in Egypt. Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers were estimated by the World Refugee Survey (2008) at 23,700 and in 2007 at 24,700 (USCRI 2007). The UNHCR estimated Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers at 23,498 (UNHCR 2008). However, the Sudanese population at large is often estimated to be much higher, though population censuses do not corroborate these estimates. Grabska (2005) states ‘although it is difficult to estimate how many Sudanese live in Egypt, the numbers predominantly quoted by various sources range from 2.2 – 4 million, with only a very small portion of them having an official refugee status’ (p.17). This is the estimate usually quoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Egypt as well. It must be noted that this is not based on any kind of factual counting within the population itself and has therefore to be taken as an estimate rather than as a real figure.

The Sudanese population in Egypt is comprised of different groups who migrated to Egypt for a variety of reasons throughout history. 1955 saw the start of the civil war in Sudan and a wave of emigration continued into the mid 1980s following the outbreak of civil war in Southern Sudan in 1983 and the overthrow of the government in 1989 (Grabska 2005). Recently, another wave has resulted from the ongoing civil war in Darfur. Beyond this, a continuous inflow has been observed throughout the years as thousands of Sudanese migrate to Egypt due to the political situation across Sudan.

Historically, Sudan and Egypt have a history of bilateral agreements, manifested in the 1976 Wadi El-Nil Agreement (Nile Valley) which granted Sudanese nationals in Egypt rights on par with Egyptian nationals, including the right to enter and exit the country without visa requirements and unrestricted access to education, employment, health-care and ownership of property (Azzam 2006). This agreement was revoked in 1995 after an assassination attempt of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak which was blamed on Sudanese Islamist extremists in Ethiopia. The sudden change in the law caused a number of Sudanese migrants previously residing lawfully in Egypt to find themselves within a very short space of time in an irregular situation. Freedoms previously granted to them were progressively restricted. A recognised refugee in Egypt is now in a more stable situation than a Sudanese migrant in Egypt. Likewise the recognized refugee has easier access to public services and some humanitarian and religious-based services. Our study revealed that refugees and asylum seekers were more likely to report that they have access to health and legal services than migrants.⁵

However, in 2004, Egypt signed the *Four Freedoms Agreement* with Sudan. The bilateral Agreement ‘promised a partial return to the Wadi El-Nil Agreement of 1976’ (Azzam 2006 p.10) and supports reciprocal treatment and rights of each other’s nationals regarding the (1) freedom of movement, (2) residence, (3) work and (4) ownership of property. However, the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) states that although the Egyptian government ratified the Four Freedom

⁵ See Appendix 2.

Agreement in 2004, it did not actualize the reciprocal rights it was intended to entail.⁶ Accordingly, Sudanese continue to experience the same problems in Egypt that the treaty set out to solve, such as those associated with freedom of residence and movement. Azzam (2006) notes that it is uncertain how the treaty may impact asylum seekers and refugees and states that ‘many worried that its effect on them would be negative’ (p.10) in that they would lose the exercise of the rights and freedoms granted to them as recognized refugees by the UNHCR.

With the absence of a national asylum system in Egypt (UNHCR 2008), UNHCR has been granted responsibility for the administration of the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process and currently runs one of the world’s largest resettlement operations in Cairo. This has been a motivating factor for many asylum-seekers, including Sudanese, who come to Egypt with the hope of resettling to the West. In reality, only approximately a quarter of recognized refugees have actually been resettled. Since the ceasefire between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) in 2004, the UNHCR stopped its Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedures for all Sudanese asylum seekers regardless of their place of origin in Sudan. Though the peace agreement paved the way for return and reintegration, it undermined the claims for refugee status in Egypt and, therefore, all asylum seekers from Sudan were offered a yellow card which grants temporary protection against *refoulement*. The UNHCR decision was a difficult blow for Sudanese asylum seekers ‘as it put a heavy damper on their hopes for resettlement and relegated them to longer waiting periods under difficult conditions in Egypt’ (Azzam 2006, p. 10).

Residence

In close and regular coordination with the UNHCR, the Egyptian Department of Refugee Affairs and the Egyptian Ministry of Interior are responsible for residency matters related to migrants and refugees. The former is mainly in charge of issuing letters to obtain residence permits and securing release of detained asylum seekers and refugees whereas the latter is responsible for issuing residence permits for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants (Grabska 2006).

Following a three-month sit-in in Mustafa Mahmoud Park near the former location of the UNHCR office, according to the USCRI, the Egyptian police threatened to deport many Sudanese (p. 55).⁷ In fact “James,” one of the Southern focus group participants, reported that following this incident many Sudanese refugees decided to return to Sudan despite acknowledging the risks of such a decision.

Limited access to health, work and social services for Sudanese in Egypt is the main push factors that may lead them to return to Sudan if resettlement to a third country is not achieved. However, as we will demonstrate, for migrants who have lived in Egypt for a prolonged period returning to Sudan may be difficult as they have faced adversity to establish their lives in Egypt and are aware that if they return to Sudan they will have to rebuild their lives from scratch yet again.

Housing

⁶ USCRI (US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants) *World Refugee Survey*, Washington DC, 2007.

⁷ USCRI, 2007.

For most Sudanese migrants and refugees in Cairo, housing presents a big problem and ‘because most [of them] do not have a stable income, they are forced into overcrowded living quarters, which results in poor sanitation, minimal personal security, and a stressful home environment’ (Azzam 2006 p. 15). The unfair treatment of refugees while renting flats can lead to periodic evictions. In addition, the poor standard of housing combined with periodic evictions can result in refugees not having a permanent address. (Azzam 2006)

Work

Egypt did not declare reservations to either Articles 17 or 18 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees concerning wage-earning employment and self-employment of refugees residing on its territories (Fanjoy et al., 2005). Nevertheless, in order to protect domestic labour, the Egyptian government imposes the same employment regulations and restrictions on Sudanese migrants as those applicable to other migrants living in Egypt. This includes the need to obtain a work permit for employment in the formal sector, which necessitates the presentation of documents, the possession of unique qualifications and the payment of fees that reach as much as LE 1,000 (Grabska 2005).⁸ These requirements equally apply to Sudanese migrants who have long resided in Egypt. Mona, a thirty five year old woman born and raised in Egypt who has a B.A. from the Faculty of Commerce, *Ain Shams* University narrates,

I know there is a signed treaty between the Sudanese and the Egyptian governments called the “Four Freedoms” agreement. That’s why I suppose that we should be granted some rights here. My biggest problem here is to find a job...I applied for many jobs in both the private and the public sectors, but they didn’t hire me and asked me to submit so many documents, even though I have a valid residence.

Consequently, the majority of Sudanese work in the informal sector, particularly in private households as domestic workers. This type of work does not correspond with the high educational achievement of some Sudanese in Egypt. Moreover, employees in such positions are frequently subject to exploitation. The hope of occupying a position that matches their educational credentials is one major push factor that leads refugees and migrants to return to Sudan.

Access to Social and Public Services

Egypt is party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, the 1966 International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Egypt’s commitment for non-nationals is problematic because Egypt has made five reservations on the 1951 convention, namely: personal status (art. 12 (1)), rationing (art. 20), public education with respect to elementary education (22 (1)), public relief and assistance (art. 23) and labour legislation and social security (art. 24) (Grabska 2006, p.17). Being bound to the aforementioned international and regional legal instruments implies that Egypt has certain legal obligations to protect, respect, fulfil and facilitate rights of non-nationals in its territory, including the right of non-

⁸Although Sudanese can be exempted from some of them, articles regulating their exemptions are not clear (Grabska 2005).

refoulement as well as other rights, such as the right to work, health, education, equality before the courts and tribunals, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and freedom of movement. In addition to these instruments, Egypt is party to the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the 1981 African [Banjul] Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Grabska 2006).

Depending on their legal status, Sudanese migrants in Cairo have different options in terms of accessing services. As the following section will show, the majority of refugees have access to social services through UNHCR's implementing partners such as Caritas and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), while migrants can also access social services through faith-based organisations such as Refuge Egypt and Saint Andrews (Grabska p. 16).

Health

Although migration itself is neither individually nor collectively a risk factor to health, the process of migration can expose people to conditions which can create vulnerability to physical and mental health illnesses.⁹

As aforementioned, Egypt is party to and therefore bound by various treaties including ICESCR and ICRMW. Of particular interest to this report is article 12 of the ICESCR which states that the States party to the Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. This right, which is abbreviated as the right to health, is the right to preconditions for health (safe and potable water, adequate sanitation, an adequate supply of safe food, nutrition and housing, healthy occupational and environmental conditions and access to health-related education and information) and the right to appropriate preventive and curative treatment of diseases and injuries as well as a right to provision of essential drugs. The Committee that oversees the implementation of this treaty, whilst enumerating the specific legal obligations the state parties have, highlights that "States are under the obligation to respect the right to health by, *inter alia*, refraining from denying or limiting equal access for all persons, including prisoners or detainees, minorities, asylum seekers and illegal immigrants, to preventive, curative and palliative health services (...)".

Additionally, the ICRMW provides for the right to equal treatment regarding access to social and health services among regular migrant workers (article 43), members of their family (article 45) and nationals. Further, article 28 of Convention recognizes the right to medical emergency treatment for all migrant workers and members of their families regardless of whether their stay or employment is irregular. Emergency health care represents, nevertheless, a minimum standard for those migrants in an irregular situation.

With regard to access to health, public primary and preventative health-care can be accessed by all migrants in Egypt following a Ministry of Health decree in 2005.

⁹ IOM, Migrant Health for the Benefit of All, MC/INF/275. IOM, Geneva, 2004.

Recognised refugees pay domestic fees and only poor Egyptians are eligible for free treatment, other than in emergency circumstances (USCRI 2007).¹⁰ Depending on their legal status, Sudanese migrants in Cairo have different options in terms of accessing health services. Recognised refugees pay domestic fees and can only access free services in emergency circumstances (USCRI 2007). Outside the public health system, Sudanese, irrespective of their residency status, can access the health programmes at Refuge Egypt at All Saint's Cathedral. Recognised refugees can access UNHCR-subsidised services at Caritas. In addition, there are other religious- and community-based services that may offer basic health care services in the neighbourhoods of Sudanese migrants. It is important to highlight that these services are frequently overstretched. According to our survey covering 293 households, 46.4 percent of households have regular access to a health care provider, 47.4 percent do not have regular access to health care and 6.1 percent sometimes have access to health care (See Table 1 below). 61.7 percent claimed that they would seek health care in religious-based institutions such as Refuge Egypt.

Table 2: Access to Health Care

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 yes	136	46.4	46.4	46.4
2 no	139	47.4	47.4	93.9
3 sometimes	18	6.1	6.1	100.0
Total	293	100.	100.0	

It is noteworthy that although Sudanese migrants may have access to the Egyptian public health system, various factors lead to discriminatory treatment that may discourage or prevent them from accessing medical services. However, this is not to say that exclusion of migrants from services has been deliberately institutionalized in the Egyptian health system. Rather, the quality of service can be influenced by the fact that the national health system is significantly overburdened and stretched in its capacities, making it difficult to treat the sizeable Sudanese community whilst struggling to meet the needs of the local population. Moreover other factors, such as communication across cultures and previous incidences of mistreatment, may deter Sudanese from accessing public health services.

Education

The right to education for Sudanese migrant children and adolescents is a controversial issue. While Egypt declared a reservation on the right to education for refugee children, it is obliged to grant refugee children the right to education by virtue of being a party to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (Grabska 2006). In addition, in 1992 the Egyptian Ministry of Education issued Decree No. 24 allowing Sudanese children to access public schools as well as granting them the right to access free primary education in public schools. However, refugees have to present a number of documents to enrol in such schools including a birth certificate, a valid

¹⁰ The concept of what constitutes an emergency in a health-care situation is discussed further in the literature review where it is highlighted how complex the term emergency is when applied to the refugee context in Egypt.

passport or valid identity card (such as refugee card), the original school certificate from Sudan, a letter from UNHCR, in addition to other documents (Grabska 2006). In practice, however, findings of our survey, focus group discussions and interviews mirror the ambiguity of these decrees as expressed by Grabska (2006) in that migrant children do not attend public schools as they are often unable to fulfil the requirements. Needless to say, migrant children and refugee children and adolescents with rejected asylum claims do not have free access to public schools. As a result, both groups attend unaccredited church-based schools at Saint-Andrews, African Hope and Sakakini churches. Mothers who participated in focus group discussions expressed their concerns regarding the educational status of their children. Their concerns included such issues as depression and the possibility of gang membership. This mirrors findings of Dingeman (2002). Furthermore, the lack of formal education for Sudanese children has been identified by all focus group participants as a major reason for leaving Egypt and returning to Sudan. Joyce, a 35 year old mother, comments:

Here, the future for our children is very vague, they're not allowed to attend public schools and most of them grow up finding no activities but to join street gangs...they turn their energy to violence. Parents blame themselves because they can't do anything. Return could be a solution for us.

Parents, however, also share the opinion that students' reintegration in Sudanese schools upon return may be challenging as they have been outside of formal education for years. Children of Sudanese migrants who have long resided in Egypt mostly attend public or low-fee experimental private schools. However, to access public universities, they have to go through the International Students' Office, known as *Maktab al-Wafedeen*, and pay tuition fees like other migrants even if they were born and raised in Egypt.

Methodology

This research took a multidisciplinary participatory approach using quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. With regard to the quantitative component, an English standardized questionnaire was administered to 293 Sudanese households, which included 1016 individuals. The survey was implemented in various neighbourhoods of Cairo with a high concentration of Sudanese migrants such as Hadayek al-Maadi, al-Haganna, Arbaa' wa Nos, Ain Shams as well as other parts of Cairo, Helwan, 6th of October and Giza governorates.

The research started by compiling applications of Sudanese refugees for English classes being offered by the STAR Program at AUC.¹¹ The applications were sorted by place of origin in Sudan: Southern Sudan, Darfur and the rest of Sudan. Individuals were randomly selected using systematic sampling from these lists. Those selected were contacted by the research team and interviews were carried out with the heads of households. In order to ensure validity and reliability of the survey questionnaire, a training of interviewers, who are certified interpreters and community leaders, was conducted and a manual was developed to avoid misinterpretation of questions. A test survey was then carried out with a small sample of 30 households. Based on this test, the survey was edited according to the gaps identified and a pre-established coding scheme was assigned to closed questions. Afterwards, a snowball referral technique was adopted to widen the sample of the study.¹² After the completed questionnaires were received from the field, the following steps were taken:

- Main researcher went through the answers of each questionnaire filled to ensure that it is valid for data entry;
- Two research assistants were involved in the process of entering the data concerning closed questions, which was then revised by the study's statistician and the main researcher using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software;
- Open-ended questionnaire items, on the other hand, were coded before the analysis. Code categories were generated from heads of households' responses and were later quantified for analysis;
- The data was divided into two data sets: one for individuals and one for households;
- Data cleaning took place to eliminate errors by the statistician. This was done through: 1) constantly checking for errors while entering the data, and 2) examining the distribution of responses to each item in two data sets;
- Findings of the survey were analyzed using SPSS.
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¹¹ STAR, the Student Action for Refugees, is a student-run program at CMRS of AUC. It was established in 2001 to raise awareness about refugee issues and offer students the opportunity to work with refugees in practical ways through volunteering and education (FMRS Report of Activities 2006-2007).

¹² Snowball sampling is a “nonprobability sampling procedure that involves using members of the group of interest to identify other members of the group” (Adler and Clark 2003:130).

As for the qualitative component, field visits, a semi-structured questionnaire, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the targeted population were conducted alongside the quantitative research. Three field visits were undertaken to al-Haganna informal urban settlement, a very densely populated area with severe poverty. The purpose of these visits was to gain a first-hand understanding of the living situation there, conditions which could be easily read as push factors that may lead Sudanese migrants to leave Egypt.

Six focus group discussions were conducted with different migrant and refugee groups prior to, during and after administering the survey. A total of 66 individuals participated in the focus group discussions, with an average number of eight to twelve participants in each discussion. Participants of the focus groups were recruited by distributing flyers in various locations where Sudanese migrants are concentrated including, schools, churches, neighbourhoods, community associations as well as through classes at the Cairo Community Interpreter Project (CCIP). In addition, one focus group discussion was held with representatives from the Sudanese Embassy and community leaders. This exercise enabled the research team to collect data on the views of the target group with respect to the question of assisted voluntary return to Sudan, with particular emphasis on the potentials and challenges regarding return to Sudan. The discussion also generated suggestions for an AVR programme that would facilitate their reintegration in their areas of origin. Moreover, the effect of variables such as gender, area of residence, legal status and social class were considered. Focus group participants included community leaders from different ethnicities and places in Sudan including Darfuri, Southern and Northern Sudanese. Focus group discussions undertaken prior to the survey proved useful in designing the questionnaire, while focus groups conducted after the completion of the survey allowed for more in-depth discussion about patterns that emerged from the survey findings.

As the research team noticed that Sudanese migrants who have been residing in Egypt for more than twenty years were not represented in the survey, it was decided that a series of in-depth interviews would be conducted with Sudanese families in order to understand the views and attitudes of this group on the question of return. To that end, five in-depth interviews were conducted with Sudanese migrant households who have been residing in Egypt for twenty years or more. Their occupations varied from small traders to accountants and clerks in private companies.

Four semi-structured structured questionnaires were carried out with community leaders as well as representatives of international, non-governmental and community-based organizations. Organizations interviewed included: UNHCR, Nuba Mountains Association, a CBO currently organizing a community-based assisted voluntary return project for Sudanese migrants originating from Nuba Mountains, and AMERA-Egypt, an organization that provides legal and psychosocial services for refugees and asylum seekers. Finally, Elizabeth Gwang, a community leader who works as a school teacher at Saint Andrews, was interviewed in order to understand the educational needs of migrant and refugee children as this has been a major concern expressed by participants in focus group discussions. Organizations and interviewees were selected in close consultation with IOM. Moreover, a brief meeting was held with Mr. Sabry Nasrallah, a representative from Refuge Egypt who was the organization's focal point for a programme assisting some refugees and asylum seekers to return to Sudan by covering airfare cost.

Interviews with the international organizations provided insight into their particular experience in working on assisted voluntary return as well as what should be done in order to ensure a smooth return and reintegration process for returnees in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner. The interviews with the NGOs and service providers offered a particular understanding of the Sudanese community because they are in direct contact with the target group and supplied information on specific activities and suggestions that must be integrated in an assisted voluntary programme prior, during and after the physical return.

In order to ensure confidentiality, names of survey, focus group and in-depth interview participants were replaced by pseudonyms.

Research Team

Data for this report was collected for over a period of two months, starting from April 13 to July 13th, 2008, by the CMRS at the American University in Cairo and in close collaboration with IOM, Cairo. The research team is headed by two principal investigators - Dr. Philippe Fargues, Director of the CMRS, and Dr. Ray Jureidini, Associate Director. Yasmine Ahmed was hired to coordinate the research and to complete the final report. Rebecca Dibb was recruited to conduct interviews with international organizations. Zakareya Yehya Gibriel was hired as a research assistant and conducted interviews with migrants' households. He is also a member of the Sudanese population and thus, acted as a gatekeeper for the research. Researchers Carolyn Bancroft, Nohieir Nashaat, and Gehan Shaheen also contributed to the project on a task basis. Alyaa Awad provided technical support in statistical analysis to the research team. Nine certified interpreters from the CCIP, representing different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds, were hired to carry out the survey. The research team decided to select certified community interpreters to ensure that the survey questions and responses were translated correctly from English to the local language and vice versa. Below is the list of interviewers and their native local languages.

Name	Local Language spoken
1- Abdelrahman Sidig	Zaghawa
2- Abdelmageed al-Tahir	Sudanese Arabic Dialect
3- James Mayak	Dinka
4- Francis Pitia	Bari and Dinka
5- Agot Ayuel Deng	Dinka
6- Elizabeth Gwang Laa	Dinka
7- Atif Ismail	Sudanese Arabic dialect
8- Musa Eisa	Fur
9- El-Sadig Goma'a	Nubian

Interpreters participated in extensive trainings on interview and survey methods prior to their entry to the field. Moreover, weekly follow-up sessions took place to ensure the survey was being conducted correctly.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations were encountered during the field work and drafting of the report. Limitations of this study include:

- Sample of the survey is more biased towards members of the Sudanese population who perceive themselves as refugees more than migrants. This is a cluster effect due to the fact that the initial list mainly consisted of refugees.
- Field visits were conducted in one geographical area. It would have been beneficial to expand field visits to other areas.
- Conducting fieldwork during the summer vacation affected the capacity of the research team to access migrants, particularly qualified professionals, who were on leave at the time of research.
- Some of the survey questions, particularly those related to income and remittances as well as residency and migration status, are sensitive and often complicated questions that are difficult to capture in one visit through few survey questions.
- Although the research team intended to include qualified professionals in the sample, it was extremely difficult to access them as they tend not to belong to specific community associations.
- Like other research projects, this research only gives some indication on the Sudanese migrant population in Greater Cairo. It is not representative of the Sudanese population in Egypt, due to its sheer size.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

For the purpose of the study, the unit of analysis was the household.¹³ All households selected for the survey were located in urban areas, namely Cairo, Giza, 6th of October and Helwan Governorates. Interviews were conducted with heads of households, with consideration to influential factors including gender, age, place of residence, duration of stay and ethnic background. The sample reflected a high concentration of Sudanese migrants in Ain Shams, 6th of October City, al-Hay al-Asher, as well as al-Barageel, Arba' wa Nos, al-Maadi and al-Agouza (detailed provided in Table 1).

Table 3: Geographical Distribution of Members of the Households

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 6th of October	134	13.2	13.2	13.2
Abdeen, Down Town	12	1.2	1.2	14.4
Ain Shams	528	52.0	52.0	66.3
Al-Agouza	32	3.1	3.1	69.5
Al-Hay al-Asher	68	6.7	6.7	76.2
Al-Tagmo' al-Khamis	4	.4	.4	76.6
Arba wa Nos	29	2.9	2.9	79.4
Ard al-Lewa	1	.1	.1	79.5
Barageel	41	4.0	4.0	83.6
Bolak	17	1.7	1.7	85.2
Deir al-Malak	21	2.1	2.1	87.3
Dokki	4	.4	.4	87.7
Abbasseya	5	.5	.5	88.2
Maadi	8	.8	.8	89.0
Mohandesin	3	.3	.3	89.3
Sheikh Zayed	2	.2	.2	89.5
Al-Sherouk	1	.1	.1	89.6
Faysal	4	.4	.4	90.0
Giza	1	.1	.1	90.1
Hadayek al-Maadi	34	3.3	3.3	93.4
Hadayek al-Qobba	14	1.4	1.4	94.8
Helmeyet al-Zaytoun	22	2.2	2.2	96.9
Helwan	1	.1	.1	97.0
Manial	1	.1	.1	97.1
Mansheyat al-Bakry	5	.5	.5	97.6
Matareya	8	.8	.8	98.4
Masr al-Gedida	3	.3	.3	98.7
Moqqatam	2	.2	.2	98.9
Nasr City	6	.6	.6	99.5
Thakanat al-Maadi	5	.5	.5	100.0
Total	1016	100.0	100.0	

¹³ We follow other researchers such as Grabska (2005) in conceptualizing the survival of individual migrants in the wider context of household.

With regard to the type of accommodation, all respondents lived in rented apartments. The majority of respondents (76.8 percent) lived in rented apartments with nuclear family members while the remaining either lived in shared apartments with other family members, such as aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, brothers-in-law or sisters-in-law (17.4 percent) or with other Sudanese fellows and/or group of friends in collective accommodation (almost 8 percent). As for the relationship to the head of household, 31 percent were identified as heads of households, 14.5 percent as husbands or wives, 43 percent were either sons or daughters, 0.7 percent sons of husbands or daughters, 11 percent were grandsons or granddaughters, 2.9 percent were brothers or sisters, 3.1 percent other relatives, 3.2 percent other non-relatives, 0.3 percent were either mothers or fathers and 0.2 percent were either mothers in law or fathers in law (Table 2).

Table 4: Distribution of Household Members by Relationship to Heads of Households

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 head of household	315	31.0	31.0	31.0
2 husband or wife	147	14.5	14.5	45.5
3 son or daughter	437	43.0	43.0	88.5
4 child of husband or wife	7	.7	.7	89.2
5 grandson or grand daughter	11	1.1	1.1	90.3
6 mother or father	3	.3	.3	90.6
7 mother in law or father in law	2	.2	.2	90.7
8 brother or sister	29	2.9	2.9	93.6
10 other relatives	32	3.1	3.1	96.8
11 other non-relatives	33	3.2	3.2	100.0
Total	1016	100.0	100.0	

All household members were Sudanese and did not hold another nationality, with the exception of two wives of heads of households: one Egyptian and one Moroccan. Household members represented a wide range of ethnic groups and came from different parts of Sudan: 51.7 percent from Khartoum, 17.1 percent from Darfur, 10.4 percent from Central Sudan and the rest from Nuba Mountains and Southern Sudan. Household members came from more than 50 tribes and ethnic groups. The largest ethnic group interviewed was Dinka (30.6 percent), followed by Fur, Falata, Massalit and Nuba. The majority of household members were Muslim (94 percent), the remaining were either Christian (4.9 percent) or other (1.1 percent). As for the residency status in Egypt, the majority of respondents identified themselves as either refugees or asylum seekers (80 percent), with a small number of economic migrants and students. This over-representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the sample may be due to the fact that the original list from which households were selected was from STAR, a refugee-based service provider.

With regard to the ethnic composition within the household, the majority of respondents (almost 80.5 percent) include only one ethnic group whereas only 17.1 percent of the total percentage of survey respondents consists of two different ethnic groups and 0.7 percent of the total percentage of respondents lives in households with

more than two ethnic groups. These findings reveal that the households of Sudanese migrants are characterized by homogeneity with regard to nationality; they rarely mix with Egyptians or other migrant populations. Moreover, those who live in the same household are more likely to belong to the same ethnic group/tribe and thus enjoy intra-household homogeneity with regard to ethnicity (see table below).

Table 5: Ethnic Composition of Household

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 household with only one ethnic group	236	80.5	80.5	80.5
2 household with two different ethnic group	50	17.1	17.1	97.6
3 households with more than two different ethnic group	2	.7	.7	98.3
4 refused	1	.3	.3	98.6
5 NA	4	1.4	1.4	100.0
Total	293	100.0	100.0	

Only 60 percent of the household members were registered with the UNHCR and an even smaller fraction (38 percent) were recognised as refugees. All households left Sudan between 1986 and 2008 with the peak years of departure being between 2002 and 2006. Almost 48 percent of the respondents reported that they were internally displaced in different parts of Sudan, mostly Khartoum, before fleeing across international borders.

The gender composition of the household was relatively balanced with 51.8 percent being male and 48.2 percent female. This finding reflects the fact that Sudanese migration to Egypt is an ancient movement as gender balance is partly the result of a population reproducing itself locally. For decades, Sudanese enjoyed freedom of movement and establishment in Egypt. This allowed economic migrants who came alone to be later joined by their families. In addition, Sudanese refugees, like most refugees, move with their families.

As for the heads of households, three quarters were men and the remaining presented as female heads of households.

As for the age distribution of the respondents, almost 44.4 percent were between 0 and 18 years old, 41.7 percent between 19 and 39 years, 13.6 percent between 40 and 64 years and only three members (0.3 percent) were 65 years or older (Table 3).

Table 6: Age of Household Members

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 < 18 years	451	44.4	44.4	44.4
2 18-39 years	424	41.7	41.7	86.1
3 40 - 64 years	138	13.6	13.6	99.7
4 65 years and more	3	.3	.3	100.0
Total	1016	100.0	100.0	

Concerning the highest level of education attained, it was reported that of respondents aged 15 years and above, 18.9 percent completed their university education, 36.6 percent completed their secondary education, while the 33.1 percent completed their primary education.

With regard to the heads of households only, the majority completed their secondary education (42.3 percent) whereas 24.2 percent completed their primary education and 21.8 percent completed their university education (table 5). Gender of head of household did not affect the level of education attained.

Table 7: Highest Degree Obtained by Heads of Households

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Primary	71	24.2	27.4	27.4
2 Secondary	124	42.3	47.9	75.3
3 Universities	64	21.8	24.7	100.0
Total	259	88.4	100.0	
Missin System	34	11.6		
Total	293	100.0		

Most of the heads of households and their spouses reported that they were employed or seeking work. The majority were either self-employed or employed in the private sector. Domestic work, including cleaning, cooking and babysitting, was a common occupation as well as other low-wage/low-skilled jobs in private companies, such as driving and security. Some of the participants reported that they were self-employed in the handicraft and hospitality fields. This indicates that respondents' educational credentials by no means correspond to their types of occupations.

As for the total household income generated from their employment, the majority of respondents reported that their total monthly income was between L.E. 250 and 500; the remainder were divided into different income categories as indicated in the table below (1 LE = 0.18 US\$). It should be noted that this figure excludes remittances, which are considered a main source of income for the sample selected. Remittances were sent mostly from siblings, children and non-relatives residing in Australia, Canada, Germany, Israel, Korea, Libya, Sudan, US and the UK. Remittances were mostly sent through money transfer agents. Interestingly, only five heads of households out of 293 reported that they send remittances to family or friends in Sudan. This might be due to the fact that the majority of households barely covered the cost of their living expenses in Egypt.

Table 8: Total Monthly Income of Household

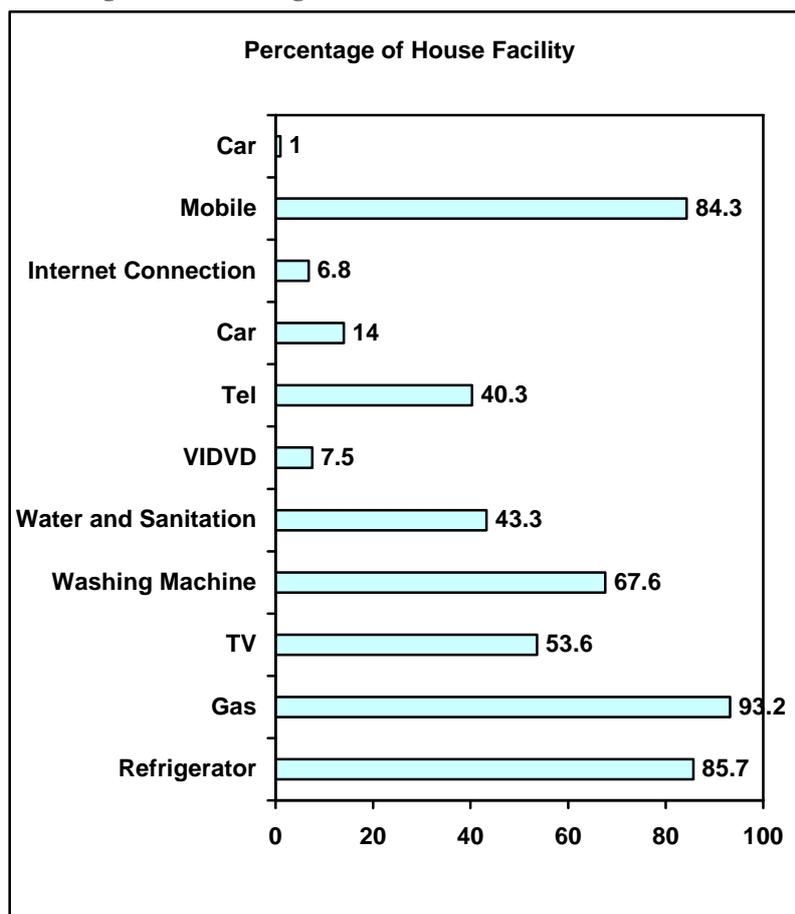
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 <250	29	2.9	2.9	2.9
	2 250<500	733	72.1	72.1	75.0
	3 500<1000	116	11.4	11.4	86.4
	4 1000<2000	125	12.3	12.3	98.7
	5 2000<4000	11	1.1	1.1	99.8
	6 <4000	2	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	1016	100.0	100.0	

With regards to school enrolment among Sudanese migrant children, it was reported that 34.5 percent of the household were enrolled in schools, with the majority in religious-based institutions such as al-Sakakini Church School. Focus group discussions revealed that many parents are not able to send their children to school due to economic hardships.

With regard to items possessed by the household, it was reported, as shown in Table 7, that most households possess between 4 to 6 items (mean = 4.97). This means that most of them possess the necessary items for a household to function. Among these items, it should be noted that most of the basic house appliances were owned by the landlord and that the only devices owned by household members were mobile phones, Personal Computers, Internet connections and cars. As for the percentage of possession by household item, the survey demonstrated that most of the households have gas (93 percent), refrigerators (85.7 percent), mobile phones (84.3 percent), followed by other items as indicated in Figure 1 below. The majority of households have access to housing, water, electricity, sanitation and food. On the other hand, a large number of households did not have access to education, health care, psychosocial care and legal assistance. Details are attached in Appendix 1.

Table 9: Index of Number of House Facilities' Possession

No. of house facility	Number	percent
0 item	2	0.7
1 item	11	3.8
2 items	14	4.8
3 items	33	11.3
4 items	49	16.7
5 items	72	24.6
6 items	57	19.5
7 items	30	10.2
8 items	15	5.1
9 items	9	3.1
10 items	1	0.3
Total	293	100.0
Mean number of house facility	4.97	

Figure 1: Percentage of Possession of Household Facilities

With regard to the number of immediate family members that survey respondents have in Sudan, as the table below indicates, the majority of respondents have 1 to 4 immediate family members back home. Immediate family members were defined as family members who lived with the head of household and his family in Sudan prior to fleeing. It may include: husband/wife, son/daughter, child of husband or wife, grandson or granddaughter, mother of father, mother in law or father in law, brother or sister, grandfather or grandmother, and finally other, to be identified. 61.6 percent of the total number of respondents had been in contact with their family members over the last month; 94.6 percent through the telephone, 5.9 percent through e-mail, 3.8 percent through chat programmes, 0.8 percent through SMS and 0.3 percent through mail.

Table 10: Number of Immediate Family Members in Sudan

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0 No family members	108	10.6	10.6	10.6
1 1-2 family members	288	28.3	28.3	39.0
2 3-4 family members	276	27.2	27.2	66.1
3 5-6 family members	227	22.3	22.3	88.5
4 7 and more family members	117	11.5	11.5	100.0
Total	1016	100.0	100.0	

Primary Research Findings

Prospects of Return

Most of the research participants (78.2 percent) reported that resettling in a third country is better for them in terms of socioeconomic conditions. However, as discussed earlier, this expectation may not be easily met considering the current UNHCR suspension of RSD procedures. In fact, only 38 percent of the survey respondents were recognized refugees. This was followed by 19.1 percent who mentioned that returning to Sudan is better for them and only 2.7 percent who claimed that staying in Egypt may be better for them (see table below). This confirms the findings of previous studies which show that resettlement to a third country such as the United States, Canada, Australia or other Western countries is the optimum goal for Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt (Grabska 2006, Azzam 2006).

Table 11: Answer to question “What is better for you in terms of socioeconomic conditions”

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Stay in Egypt	8	2.7	2.7	2.7
2 return back to Sudan	56	19.1	19.1	21.8
3 resettle in a third country	229	78.2	78.2	100.0
Total	293	100.0	100.0	

With regard to the impact of the number of immediate family members in Sudan on the respondents’ perceptions of what is better for them in terms of socioeconomic conditions, we notice that survey respondents with 5-7 immediate family members in Sudan were more likely to report that it might be better for them in terms of socioeconomic status to return back to Sudan than those without or with 1 to 4 immediate family members back home. This finding was supported in focus group discussions particularly among participants who have nuclear family members in Sudan such as spouses and children. However, neither remaining in Egypt nor resettling to a third country was affected by the number of immediate family members in Sudan.

Table 12: Answer to question “What is better in terms of socioeconomic status?” by number of family members in Sudan

	NOFAM No. of family members in Sudan					Total
	0 No family members	1 1-2 family members	2 3-4 family members	3 5-6 family members	4 7 and more family members	
1 Stay in Egypt	6 5.6%	3 1.0%	8 2.9%	2 .9%	5 4.3%	24 2.4%
2 return back to Sudan	14 13.0%	38 13.2%	36 13.0%	51 22.5%	19 16.2%	158 15.6%
3 resettle in a third country	88 81.5%	247 85.8%	232 84.1%	174 76.7%	93 79.5%	834 82.1%
Total	108 100.0%	288 100.0%	276 100.0%	227 100.0%	117 100.0%	1016 100.0%

Moreover, perceptions of what is better in terms of socioeconomic conditions differed among survey respondents who have different residency status. As Table 10 demonstrates, asylum seekers, refugees, stranded students and those with rejected asylum claims share the idea that that resettling in a third country is better whereas economic migrants reported that returning to Sudan may be better.

Table 13: Answer to question “What is better in terms of socioeconomic conditions?” by Residency Status

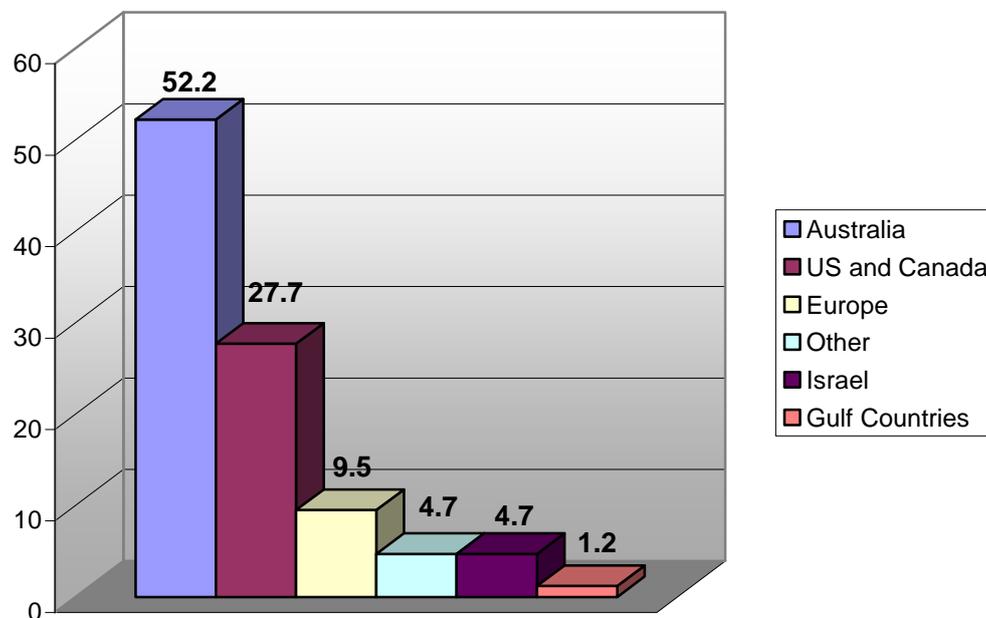
	RESIDSTA Residency Status					Total
	1 Asylum seeker	2 Refugee	3 Rejected CF	4 Economic migrant	5 Stranded student	
1 Stay in Egypt	1 .8%	1 .9%	2 5.1%	3 17.6%	1 20.0%	8 2.7%
2 return back to Sudan	15 12.6%	23 20.4%	9 23.1%	8 47.1%	1 20.0%	56 19.1%
3 resettle in a third country	103 86.6%	89 78.8%	28 71.8%	6 35.3%	3 60.0%	229 78.2%
Total	119 100.0%	113 100.0%	39 100.0%	17 100.0%	5 100.0%	293 100.0%

Similarly, AMERA stresses that the issue of return is a concern that differs from one group to the other and from one individual to the other. It reported that some refugees cannot return due to safety reasons, ie many Darfuris, although the organization has encountered Darfuris who do want to return but are not able to do so due to the lack of financial means. Other groups such as Southern Sudanese may perceive their lives in Egypt as relatively better than they would be in Sudan in terms of access to medical care and education. Individuals and groups who share this view may not wish to return at the moment to a place where even limited access to basic services is unavailable.¹⁴

¹⁴ Mail interview with AMERA, September 7th, 2008.

As for the potential countries of resettlement, as the figure below indicates, Australia came at the top of the list (52.2 percent), followed by US and Canada (27.7 percent), Europe (9.5 percent), other (4.7) and Israel (4.7 percent) and Gulf countries (1.2 percent). An interesting query was to check whether or not the choice of the destination country is affected by relationships with family and friends in the Diaspora, particularly those who send remittances to survey respondents. In other words, we explored if the choice of a country depends on the existence of networks in that country. Results indicate that this hypothesis might hold true in the cases of the US, Canada and Australia. In the former case, out of 25 households that receive remittances from US and Canada, 16 cases reported that they would choose North America as a destination. As for the latter, out of 52 households that receive remittances from Australia, 31 cases claimed that they would select Australia as a destination country.

Figure 2: Preferred Countries of Resettlement



Resettling to a third country is also the hope of the majority of focus group participants. However, they added that it seems to be an unachievable goal at the moment and that they would consider returning to Sudan as their living situation in Egypt does not seem to be improving. Sandra, a 40-year old from Juba who works as a freelance interpreter, reported that returning to Sudan is the last resort for Sudanese refugees, asylum seekers and those with closed asylum claims. She says,

Many of us stayed for many years in Egypt with the hope of resettlement. We either sold or lost our properties in Sudan during the war. I went

back few years ago [to Sudan] and had to stay with relatives as I found that it would be very expensive to rent a place- the cost could reach as high as \$100 a night. People, including children, eat in Juba once a day while their children eat in Egypt 3 times a day. Also, in Juba, we lack health services, sanitation and good food. Returning back to Juba might be very difficult, dangerous and expensive. I have lots of love to my country that's why I consider returning, yet I know that it will be challenging and full of problems... Here at least I freelance as a translator and I established a professional network but there I have nothing.

Sandra's narrative mirrors the concerns of many focus group participants we met. Selling property to cover the cost of the journey to Egypt is a common practice among economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and refugees with closed asylum claims. It is considered a major challenge to return for many, as returning means starting their lives in Sudan from scratch. Moreover, Sandra's unsuccessful attempt to return to Sudan is an experience that was shared with some focus group participants. Hearing about or living such an experience renders Sudanese migrants reluctant to return. As a qualified professional in Egypt, Sandra, like many others in the same position, sees little potential in returning to Sudan due to the lack of infrastructure and limited professional opportunities in comparison to Egypt.

On the other hand, migrants who have long resided in Egypt perceive returning to Sudan as a potential solution to escape from some of the problems they encounter in Egypt, particularly unemployment and the inability to cover university fees for children. However, for all of them, returning to Sudan feels like proceeding toward an unknown that is full of barriers and challenges, whereas Egypt is at least a familiar though challenging situation where they know how to negotiate their livelihoods. This was clear in Mona's following quote:

In the past we thought of returning to Sudan... We sent my elder brother to find work and to find us a way there. Unfortunately, the whole plan failed. He stayed there for three years and didn't find a job, so he returned to Egypt. Now the idea of return is no longer in the mind of my family members...

When asked specifically about whether or not household members of survey respondents are planning to return to Sudan, given the conditions in Sudan within the next five years¹⁵, only 38.6 percent of the respondents positively responded whereas 42.7 percent negatively responded and 18.8 percent reported that they do not know. The highest level of education attained for sub-sample 15 years and above, impacted whether or not household members plan to return to Sudan within the next five years (Pearson Chi-Square=0.011). As Table 14 below indicates, households with members who only completed their primary education reported that they do not intend to return to Sudan (45.5 percent). Those who completed their secondary education tended to express an interest in returning. However, the number of those who are interested in returning decreases again for households with members who completed their

¹⁵ Five years was put to refer to mirror the referendum of South Sudan independence, which is expected to take place in 2011 as part of the 2005 Peace Agreement.

university education. Accordingly, we cannot infer that the higher levels of education are directly related to the desire to repatriate,

Table 14: Answer to Question: whether or not household members plan to return to Sudan within the next Five years? By highest level of education attained

	PLANRETU Whether or not household members plan to return			Total
	1 yes	2 no	3 DK	
1 Primary	62 31.0%	91 45.5%	47 23.5%	200 100.0%
2 Secondary	101 45.7%	82 37.1%	38 17.2%	221 100.0%
3 University	36 31.6%	57 50.0%	21 18.4%	114 100.0%
Total	199 37.2%	230 43.0%	106 19.8%	535 100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.323 ^a	2	.016
Likelihood Ratio	8.257	2	.016
Linear-by-Linear Association	.542	1	.462
N of Valid Cases	293		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.27.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.955 ^a	4	.011
Likelihood Ratio	12.815	4	.012
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.376	1	.241
N of Valid Cases	535		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 22.59.

Only 17.6 percent of respondents reported that the peace agreement may lead them to consider returning. AMERA stresses that it is difficult to predict the conditions in Sudan within the next five years and whether the situation will improve or deteriorate. Some Southern Sudanese are aware of outbreaks of violence in their areas of origin. UNHCR reported that there is an interest in return but it would be “premature to make a projection on how the situation will unfold.” In addition, the development of infrastructure (roads, jobs, security, education and housing) could increase the interest of people to return. UNHCR adds, “the main obstacle to return for Southern Sudanese registered with UNHCR is the fact that the South has not developed yet... very few have protection concerns. Those who have protection concerns will not return. People are still making choices.”¹⁶

Unlike the findings of Blitz and Marzano (2005), gender of the head of household had an impact on respondents’ answer to the previous question (Pearson Chi-Square=0.016). The percentage of female heads of households who are planning to return to Sudan is 10 percent more than those who are not interested to return (42.1 percent as opposed to 30.3 percent). Conversely, the percentage of male heads of household who are interested to return is 10 percent less than those who are not interested to return. Two different situations may coexist in the category “female heads of households”: 1) single, divorced and widowed women who would remain single after returning to Sudan, and 2) women whose husband/family is in Sudan and found themselves head of household after migrating to Egypt.

Table 15: Answer to question “Given the conditions in Sudan within the next five years, Are you planning to return to Sudan? by respondent’s Sex

	Sex of Head of Household		Total
	1 Male	2 Female	
1 yes	81 37.3%	32 42.1%	113 38.6%
2 no	102 47.0%	23 30.3%	125 42.7%
3 DK	34 15.7%	21 27.6%	55 18.8%
Total	217 100.0%	76 100.0%	293 100.0%

¹⁶ UNHCR Interview, 13 August, 2008.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.323 ^a	2	.01
Likelihood Ratio	8.257	2	.01
Linear -by- Association	.542	1	.462
N of Valid Cases	293		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.27.

In a focus group discussion for women, participants noted that they would prefer to return to Sudan in stages. In other words, their husbands/partners might initially return to assess the situation in Sudan, find accommodations and settle so that partners and dependents can confidently follow them.

Southern Sudanese respondents were the highest group planning to return (71.4 percent), followed by Eastern Sudanese (62.5 percent), those originating from Nuba Mountains (55 percent), Khartoum (37.7 percent), Darfur (33.3 percent) and Central Sudan (26.8 percent). Those originating from the Blue Nile and Northern Sudan either did not know or reported that they have no intention to return (See table 16 below). This may be a result of the fact that prospects for peace in Sudan are not the same everywhere. For instance, in Darfur, the security situation is far from stable. On the other hand, groups who speak Arabic and practice Islam such as Northern Sudanese may better integrate in Egypt than others and thus may be more reluctant to return.

Table 16: Answer to question “whether or not household members plan to return?” by area of origin.

Crosstab

		STATEN State									Total
		1 Blue Nile	2 Central Sudan	3 Darfur	4 Eastern Sudan	5 Khartoum	6 Northern Sudan	7 Nuba Mountains	8 Southern Sudan	9 NA	
PLANRETU Whether household members plan to return	1 yes	Count	11	16	5	58		11	10	2	113
		% within STATEN S	26.8%	33.3%	62.5%	37.7%		55.0%	71.4%	100.0%	38.7%
	2 no	Count	1	22	24	3	64	3	5	2	124
	% within STATEN S	50.0%	53.7%	50.0%	37.5%	41.6%	100.0%	25.0%	14.3%		42.5%
	3 DK	Count	1	8	8		32		4	2	55
	% within STATEN S	50.0%	19.5%	16.7%		20.8%		20.0%	14.3%		18.8%
Total	Count	2	41	48	8	154	3	20	14	2	292
	% within STATEN S	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The interest of Southern Sudanese in returning was also expressed during focus group discussions. Southern Sudanese participants were overwhelmingly interested in the possibility of returning. Moreover, the research team witnessed the return of some Southern Sudanese participants over the course of the fieldwork. They also stressed the need for collaboration between IOM, UN agencies (particularly UNHCR) and the Egyptian government to facilitate their return.

As for the case of Darfuri, with few exceptions, focus group participants were highly concerned about security and protection issues. They noted that they will not consider returning unless these issues are completely solved. However, similar to the survey findings, both AMERA and UNHCR reported that they have come across Darfuri who were interested in returning to other parts of Sudan, such as the North.¹⁷ In order to return, they have to close their files with UNHCR so as to obtain an exit visa, which is not easy due to the security situation in Darfur at the moment. UNHCR, however, does not facilitate, assist or promote the return of Sudanese refugees from Darfur to Sudan.

Concerning places of return, the survey revealed that 25.3 percent reported that they intend to return to their areas of origin, 10.2 percent are planning to settle in Khartoum, 3.1 percent think of settling elsewhere and 2.7 percent are not sure.

Table 17: Places of Return in Sudan

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 return to area of origin	74	25.3	61.2	61.2
	2 settle in Khartoum	30	10.2	24.8	86.0
	3 settle in elsewhere	9	3.1	7.4	93.4
	4 not sure	8	2.7	6.6	100.0
	Total	121	41.3	100.0	
Missing	System	172	58.7		
Total		293	100.0		

Age, religion, highest educational level achieved of the head of household did not impact the respondents' plans of return. However, since surveys were administered with heads of households the impact of age on return needs further investigation through interviewing household members from different age groups.

The majority of respondents (94 percent) follow information on Sudan. Media is the main source of information on Sudan reported by the survey participants (84.3 percent), followed by family (12.5 percent), friends (7.7 percent), NGO/religious institutions (8.1 percent), the Sudanese Embassy (1 percent) and other means (1.7 percent).

AVR Operations: Stakeholders' Involvement

Two organizations interviewed for this study reported that they have been engaged in assisted voluntary return operations over the last few years: the UNHCR and the Nuba Mountains' Association.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (Interviewee Abeer Etefa, Communications Department, UNHCR, 13 August 2008). Following the CPA and the positive development progress in Sudan, UNHCR has been involved in assisted voluntary repatriation for Sudanese refugees (holders of blue cards) and asylum seekers (holders of yellow cards). UNHCR has been facilitating AVR for Sudanese since December 2005; most of those assisted are from the south. According

¹⁷ Interview with UNHCR 13 August 2008.

to the UNHCR, “So far, UNHCR helped more than 100,000 Sudanese refugees to return home from seven neighbouring countries, including 1,000 Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers who returned from Egypt.”¹⁸ It provides individual counselling for those who wish to return during which time information on the intended area of return is provided. UNHCR also facilitates exit formalities for returnees.

UNHCR has also established a practice of weekly community meetings with community members through CBOs in 6th of October, Maadi, al-hay al-‘Asher (10th District), among others. These meetings are open forums for the UNHCR to explain its assisted voluntary repatriation operations and for community members to learn and inquire about AVR procedures assisted by the organisation. UNHCR also partners with an NGO that provides training for highly needed jobs in the south of Sudan such as truck driving among a number of other professions.¹⁹

The Nuba Mountains’ Association (Interviewee al-Sadig Guma’ Kormi, member of Nuba Assisted Voluntary Return Committee and Nuba Mountains’ Association, 13 July 2008): Nuba Mountains Association is a community-based organization established in 2001 to provide support for the Nuba Mountains’ community in Cairo and to develop the area by maintaining good communication channels with community members in North American and Australia. The Nuba Mountains’ AVR project was established in response to the following: 1) the Moustafa Mahmoud’s sit-in, 2) the suspension of RSD procedures by the UNHCR and 3) the increasing number of Sudanese refugees smuggled to Israel. The chief aim of the AVR project implemented by the Nuba Mountains’ Association is to address these issues through encouraging and assisting Sudanese refugees and migrants primarily but not exclusively from the Nuba Mountains to return home. They commenced the project by administrating a survey to the target population to discover if they have an interest in return. Findings of the survey revealed that the majority of Nuba Mountains refugees and migrants interviewed are interested in and willing to return, provided that the living conditions in their area of origin are reasonable. The Association is currently implementing the first stage of the project, which involves the provision of flight tickets, assistance in document issuance and the provision of financial assistance to the Nuba Mountains’ returnees. This phase is primarily funded by the Arab League. In addition, as the association is concerned with the security situation in Nuba Mountains, four of its members are planning to travel to Sudan in order to discuss the issue with the Sudanese national authorities.²⁰

Refuge Egypt (Brief Meeting with Sabry Nasrallah, April, 2008): Refuge Egypt once assisted Sudanese refugees who wished to return through the provision of a modest amount of financial assist to cover transportation cost. However, this activity has been discontinued due to a funding shortage.

The remaining organizations are indirectly involved in AVR operations. Saint Andrews’ school, for instance, issues certificates for pupils that show the highest school year they have completed, upon the parents’ request. According to Elizabeth Gwang, these certificates are provided to those who resettle to a third country and

¹⁸ UNHCR Document “Information on UNHCR assisted voluntary repatriation to the Sudan” provided by UNHCR interviewee in August 2008.

¹⁹ Interview August 13th, 2008.

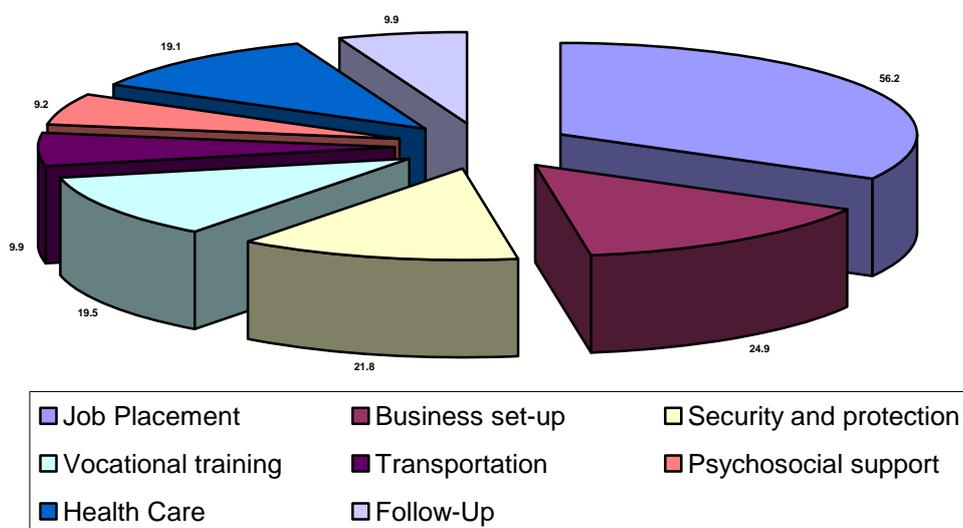
²⁰ July 13th, 2008.

those who return to Sudan. However, the level of credibility that these certificates hold in Sudan is unknown. The African Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA), meanwhile, provides legal assistance and psycho-social support to refugees in Egypt, including Sudanese. Although AMERA does not have AVR activities, it advocates for services and assists refugees to access services through Caritas, CBOs and others involved in the provision of vocational training and education opportunities for refugees.

Interest in and Components of Reinsertion Programme

With regard to participants' interest in a reinsertion programme, 41.3 percent of the total percentage of survey participants expressed an interest in reinsertion programmes. As for the programme's components, as the figure below indicates, job placement came at the top of the list (56.2 percent), followed by business set-up (24.9 percent), security and protection (21.8 percent), vocational training (19.5 percent), health care (19.1 percent), transportation coverage (9.9 percent), follow-up programme in Sudan (9.9 percent) and psychosocial support (9.2 percent). All components were perceived by survey respondents as extremely important, except psychosocial support which was considered a priority.

Figure 3: Components of Reinsertion Programme



Overall, the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews support survey findings below. With regard to further assistance, survey respondents prioritized buying a house (65.3 percent), followed by owning a land (45.5 percent), grants to continue education (43.8 percent), micro-loan schemes (43.8 percent), financial support to meet basic needs (38 percent) and further assistance (1.7). In what follows, a more detailed account is provided.

Job Placement

Sudanese migrants' absence from the labour market in Sudan for years is challenging. As mentioned earlier, many Sudanese migrants in Egypt perform low-skilled low-wage economic activities, such as domestic work, which often do not match their

education credentials. They also claimed that they cannot compete in the labour market in Sudan as they lack the skills currently required. In focus group discussions, professional development came as a high priority as it would enable participants to be placed in suitable jobs. James, a community leader from Southern Sudan commented on this issue in the following lines:

I am an engineer, but since I came here I never do my work. It is just cleaning, washing... 17 years just nothing. There are people in Sudan with new skills, from Kenya and from Uganda. Now people are using computers. What about me?

Similar to James, Eliz used to work as a psychologist in Sudan before fleeing to Egypt. She would like to refresh her memory and enhance her skills in the field in order to be able to occupy a suitable position. From the examples above, it could be arguably said that while Sudanese migrants are over-skilled for their actual employment in Egypt and they may be under-skilled for their prospected employment in Sudan.

Transportation and Relocation Cost

Transportation costs were the first thing that participants inquired about during the discussion surrounding AVR activities. In all focus group discussions, participants argued that transportation costs should also include relocation costs such as compensatory payment for parents whose child or children were born in Egypt and have to pay to the Ministry of Interior when leaving Egypt. Many complained about the modest amount provided by the UNHCR for transportation cost and reported that the amount should cover the airfare from the residency area in Egypt to the area of origin in Sudan. Also, many claimed that custom charges on devices bought in Egypt should be waived for returnees.

Vocational Training

Both focus group participants and interviewees reported that vocational and professional training is a key component of the reinsertion programme. Southern Sudanese men reported that the job market is strong but the majority of demand is for skills that they do not possess. They added that many of these new jobs are occupied by Ugandans and Kenyans because they have acquired these skills. Accordingly, studying the market demand and providing corresponding vocational training could encourage a lot of people to return. School teacher Elizabeth Gwang also mentioned that youth who are not interested in reintegrating in schools could participate in these trainings and pursue their careers in Sudan.

The women who participated in the focus group discussions were overwhelmingly interested in opportunities to participate in vocational training. The president of Maadi Women's Union reported that based on one workshop they held, many women working in the domestic sector in Egypt are keen to acquire new skills before returning to Sudan. Trainings proposed include: nursing, midwifery, first aid and primary medical care, secretarial skills, catering, cooking, hotel management, hairdressing, handcrafts, photography and video. They added that the training component should be linked to micro-credit schemes so that they are able to purchase the necessary equipment for small projects.

Business Set-Up

Assistance in setting up a business was perceived as a high priority by all research participants, in particular by those interested in establishing a private business or engaging in other income generating activity. Establishing one's own business is considered a means to securing an income upon return in the event that job placement is difficult. Focus group participants note that buying and/or renting property and equipment would be necessary to establish business activities. Establishing micro-lending schemes could be an effective way to address this need. In one of the focus group discussions, men commented that this would be the most important aspect of an AVR programme. One man explained, "I am a carpenter, but I do not have any equipment so when I go back, what I shall do?" Joyce, a thirty-year-old focus group participant from Nuba Mountains, added that business set-up could also be useful for many women who are engaged in handicraft production in Egypt. In addition, trainings on how to conduct a feasibility study could prove useful.

Security and Protection

"How can we make sure that we are secure?" and "how can you protect us?" are questions that we often encountered during focus group discussions. Perceived insecurity is a major barrier for many to return. As aforementioned, the situation in the South as well as other parts of Sudan is not completely safe and thus a protection system should be applied for those who are fearful. Kamal, a focus group participant from Khartoum suggested establishing a reporting system through a hotline.

Psychosocial Support

Psychosocial support is particularly relevant to those who are returning to areas where they have experienced persecution and violence. As mentioned in the literature review, many migrants have a romanticised their countries and may be traumatized upon return. Psychosocial rehabilitation is also relevant to those who have lost their loved ones during their migration journeys. However, in one of the focus groups, one participant questioned how we can develop psychosocial programmes in areas that totally lack this type of service. He stressed the need to create psychosocial programmes in Sudan and to train psychologists and social workers in order to maintain these programmes. Another participant emphasized the need for ongoing support after return.

Health Care

Despite the fact that migrants suffer from limited access to health services in Egypt, many do have access to basic and primary health services in church-based clinics, Caritas and other contracted hospitals. In Sudan, however, and particularly the South, the infrastructure is not yet developed and many focus group participants reported that they are scared to return because of the perceived complete lack of health care and services. Zachary, a Southern Sudanese community leader, commented that health care schemes should be tailored by area of origin as the system is not uniform. Concerning children, one mother suggested that proof of vaccinations and other health records for children born in Egypt be issued so that parents could follow-up their health status in Sudan. This could also be applicable to adults with health needs.

Follow-up

Establishing a follow-up system in collaboration with IOM Sudan is another key component suggested by all research participants. Many recalled previous return and repatriation projects in which people were left on their own once they return. They pointed out the importance of ‘follow-up’ to monitor the well-being of people, the progress of the activities and the identification of areas of improvement. To ensure proper follow-up, the research team also suggests developing monitoring and evaluation tools prior to the implementation of the AVR programme. A pilot could be implemented in one area of Sudan and then replicate the programme in other areas.

Family tracing

Participants pointed out that family tracing services would be essential for some Sudanese who lost contact with their immediate family members during the war. They expressed interest and concern with regard to what might happen if an individual wanted to return, but the whereabouts of his or her family member/s were unknown.

Housing and Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure in several areas in Sudan, particularly the south, is still under-developed. Many potential returnees are afraid that they may lack access to basic services (health, housing, sanitation) upon their return. On that matter, Marguerite, a fifty year old physician from South Sudan reported:

“Sudan is at peace now; nothing will be of more pleasant than being at home. However, it’s getting very expensive in Sudan, although social life might be better in Sudan, there is no infrastructure, housing, not even shelter.”

Access to housing is an issue that was largely discussed in all focus group discussions. It is a major challenge that migrants are afraid to encounter upon return. As we mentioned earlier, many migrants sold their houses before leaving to cover their travel expenses whereas others lost them during the war. Many mentioned that it will be difficult to rent a place as the prices are very high due to inflation. Also, staying with immediate family members may not be easy as houses are overcrowded and living expenses are very high.

To secure housing, two ideas were proposed by focus group participants. In one focus group, it was proposed to offer a 6-month housing loan for returnees that would enable them to cover renting cost. In another focus group, it was suggested to build modest housing units for returnees so that they have a place to stay until they find a job and have the necessary financial resources to rent their own space.

Education

As mentioned earlier, access to education is a catalyst for many families to return to Sudan. We also learned that Saint Andrews issues certificate for returnees. However, whether or not these certificates are acknowledged in Sudan is still unanswered. Mothers school aged-children who participated in focus group discussions reported that children should sit for a placement test upon return in order to reintegrate in the suitable grade. Moreover, it was also suggested to have one classroom schools for returnees who are in different age groups but are academically in the same grade. This could be implemented in collaboration with the Sudanese Ministry of Education.

Special Components for Vulnerable Groups

Unaccompanied minors were perceived as a vulnerable group by three focus group discussions. Some came from Sudan alone whereas others were left in Egypt after the resettlement of their parents elsewhere. Some of these children are neither registered with the UNHCR nor the Egyptian government. They will encounter many challenges to exit Egypt and to reintegrate in Sudan. These minors would need a special programme that may include: individual counselling, family tracing, psychosocial rehabilitation, shelter, etc. Other groups such as single mothers, widows, the elderly and other vulnerable groups should be further studied in order to identify their special needs.

Conclusion

This study looked at the prospects of assisted voluntary return among Sudanese migrants in Greater Cairo, examining whether or not different migrant groups are interested in returning as well as how best to deliver AVR operations in case of return. Through a standardised survey, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, field visits as well as stakeholder semi-structured in-depth interviews, this study examined how different groups perceive the issue of return, elements affecting these perceptions, whether or not they are interested in a reinsertion programme and if so, which components would be required. Findings revealed that a considerable percentage of Sudanese migrants are interested in returning to Sudan, given that political and socioeconomic conditions are stable. However, their interest in returning differed according to gender, residency status, area of origin and number of immediate family members in Sudan. Furthermore, migrants were more likely to express an interest in return than refugees, asylum seekers and those with rejected asylum claims. This might be due to the fact the latter group still has some hope of resettlement through formal or informal channels. Moreover, 41.3 percent of the total percentage of expressed an interest in a reinsertion programme that would include: job placement, vocation training, and access to health care, psychosocial support, child education, business set-up, family tracing, and special components for vulnerable groups. Security and protection, transportation as well as housing and infrastructure development came at the top list of all research participants. Interviews of stakeholders supported these findings, while emphasising that the lack of access to basic services and the poor infrastructure in some areas may hamper the desire to return. While it would have been interesting to discuss thoroughly the need of highly-skilled and qualified national returnees, it was difficult to reach this population as most were not actively engaged in the CBOs or other community networks utilized during this study.

This study concludes that a close collaboration between different stakeholders from the national authorities, civil society organizations and international organizations is needed in order to implement an integrated programme that would include all the components mentioned above. Moreover, a substantial reinsertion package should be developed in order to ensure that the return is sustainable and to work towards the stabilization and recovery of Sudan. As we have discussed earlier, this package should include structural and individual factors of reintegration. Structural factors may involve working towards general socioeconomic development and political stabilisation; while individual factors may include: securing employment opportunities for returnees, providing individual counselling for returnees considering variables such as age, gender and number of children and addressing the psychosocial aspect of returnees before and after returning especially for those who fled war and persecution in order to ensure a sustainable emotional return. Setting indicators to measure the economic, social and emotional sustainability through monitoring and evaluation schemes is crucial to successful AVR operations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, we have compiled a list of recommendations to design a successful reinsertion programme for Sudanese migrants who may be interested in returning, as they were the primary focus of this research.

To the Government of Egypt

- Facilitating exit procedures and other formalities, in collaboration with UNHCR.
- Exempting returnees from all types of taxes, exit-based expenses and custom charges.
- Appointing government officials as focal points for return operations. They will act as facilitators in other issues as needed.

To the Government of Sudan

- Facilitating entrance procedures and exempting returnees from all types of entrance fees.
- Introducing and maintaining an efficient security system in post-conflict areas.
- Developing a housing scheme in collaboration with investors and other key stakeholders for those who lost their homes before fleeing or during their stay in Egypt,
- Establishing a network of international, non-governmental, community-based organisation and community leaders that would advocate for and promote structural factors leading to the sustainability of return.
- Raising funds, in collaboration with other stakeholders, from the Sudanese Diaspora to implement development projects that would secure employment opportunities for returnees.
- Encouraging investment and other developmental projects by facilitating bureaucratic procedures and other related formalities.
- Identifying training areas that could match the economic sector in the Sudan.
- Ensuring adequate and easy access to social services, particularly in the areas of health and education.

To International Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and Community-Based Organisations in Egypt

- Conducting awareness sessions on the prospects of return.
- Providing returnee-sensitive psychosocial health care services to Sudanese migrants and reporting on cases that would need extensive follow-up to NGOs/CBOs in Sudan.
- Conducting training of trainers for returning community leaders so that they could initiate further trainings upon their return.
- In coordination with the Government of Sudan and CBOs, increasing the level of inclusion and trust of the Sudanese vis-à-vis Sudanese government.
- Providing vocational and on-the-job trainings for returnees, particularly women and craftspeople, in the areas suggested earlier in the report.
- Advocating with relevant stakeholders to include returnee-focused activities in their projects.
- Organising a file for each family/individual that includes information on: health history, education in Egypt, employment in Egypt, trainings undertaken

and attach relevant documents (i.e. medical reports, school certificates, etc) when available.

- Setting-up a placement test for student returnees so that they could be smoothly reinserted in schools.

To International Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and Community-Based Organisations in Sudan

- Engaging community leaders who are already involved in assisted voluntary return programmes such as representatives of the Nuba Mountains Associations, Refuge Egypt and Sakakini Church.
- Recruiting old returnees to Sudan to assist new returnees in adaptation to the new life.
- Developing special programmes for vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors.
- Providing individual counselling in order to tailor a suitable and relevant programme for each returnee and following-up cases at risk, in collaboration with Egypt-based NGOs.
- Establishing contact with organisations in Egypt to learn about the general situation of returnees and to explore potential collaboration.
- Conducting an employment mapping and ensure that the skills and experiences of returnees match employment gaps through trainings.
- Contributing towards ensuring an adequate health system for returnees through establishing a network of formal and informal health care service providers.
- Monitoring, evaluating and contributing to children schooling, possibly through the establishment of one classroom schools suitable to the needs of returnees.

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Appendix 1 Survey Questionnaire

Informed Consent

Introduction

Hello, My name is I am working in a joint research project between the Forced Migration and Refugee Studies Program (AUC) and the International Organization for Migration. The project aims to identify the main characteristics of the Sudanese population in Egypt (both migrants and refugees) and to discuss the elements affecting their migration choices (staying in Egypt, voluntarily returning to Sudan or resettling in a third country). Moreover, as the avian influenza (AI) is representing a serious threat to the world, part of this questionnaire will be dedicated to discuss the vulnerability of the Sudanese migrant population to pandemics as such in order to ensure their coping capacity in the event of this pandemic or any other crisis.

I will take approximately one hour and a half of your time. All information given will be treated strictly confidential.

..... I agree to participate in your research.

..... I disagree to participate in your research.

Interviewer	
Governorate (office use)	
Residential area in Egypt	
ID NO. Housing Unit (filled by office)	
Visit NO.(1 first visit, 2 second visit)	
Date of filling Questionnaire	Day/Month/Year
Time for start of interview	... a.m.p.m.
Time for end of interviewa.m.p.m.
Result of interview	Interview Completed
	Partly completed
	Housing unit does not exist
	No eligible person
	Refusal to conduct the interview

ID N0. Housing Unit	
Q1 Accomodation (Check only ONE)	Rented Appartment
	Shared appartment with other family members
	Collective accomodation
	University Campus
	Other, specify..
Q2 Monthly Rent	
Q3 No. of rooms (excluding kitchen and bathrooms)	
Q4 Items owned by the Household (identify what is owned by interviewee and what is owned by landlord). Owned by Landlord= LL , Owned by interviewer leave BLANK . Enter NUMBER of Equipments i.e. 1 refrigerator, 2 Mobile Phones etc.	Refrigerator
	Gas/Electric Oven
	Electric Washing Machine
	Television
	Satellite antenna
	Video/DVD Player
	Telephone land line
	Personal Computer
	Internet Connection
	Mobile Phone
Private Car	

ID N0. Housing Unit				
<i>Part IV: Remittances from and to Sudan</i>				
Q37 Have you received financial assistance from relatives/friends to support your stay in Egypt over the last three months? 1=yes (go to Q38) 2=no (go to Q40)	Q38 specify country & relationship	Q39 How do you receive this financial assistance 1= bank transfer 2= traders 3= family or acquaintances 4= money transfer agent	Q40 Do you send financial assistance to relatives/friends to support their stay in Sudan? 1=yes, relationship (go to Q41) 2=no (go to Q42)	Q41 How do you send this financial assistance? 1= bank transfer 2= traders 3= family or acquaintances 4= money transfer agent

Part V: Assistance and Access to full/partial Services

Q42 Does your household have access to the following basic services in Egypt? (Check all that applies) and list service provider when applicable (1= yes, 2= no, 3=sometimes).

Service	1= Yes, 2=No, 3=sometimes	NAME of Service Provider/s (institution/s)	NAME of Service Provider/s (individual/s)
Housing			
Water			
Electricity			
Sanitation			
Food			
Education			
Health care and services			
Psychosocial care			
Legal assistance			
Other, please specify:			

ID N0. Housing Unit			
Part VI: Prospects of Voluntary Return			
Q43 Which is better for you in terms of living conditions and the general economic and social situation?	1=stay in Egypt	2= to return back to Sudan	3= to resettle in a third country, specify COUNTRY
Q44 Given the conditions in Sudan within the next five years, are you planning to return to Sudan?	1= yes	2= no	3=don't know
Q45 Have you ever heard of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)?	1= yes	2= no (go to Q47)	
Q46 What IOM activities have you heard of ?	1= Referral System	2= Provision services while in Sudan	3= Provision of services while in Egypt
been beneficiary for?	1= Referral System	2= Provision services while in Sudan	3= Provision of services while in Egypt 4= other, specify
Q47 If a programme was created to assist Sudanese in Cairo/Egypt to voluntary return and reintegrate in Sudan (pre-departure and transport in Sudan (pre-departure and transport assistance as well as job placement/integration assistance), would you be interested in such a programme?			1= yes (go to Q48) 4= no (go to Q53)
Q48 What type of reinsertion and/or reintegration assistance would require if you decided to return to Sudan? (check all that applies)	1= job placement 5= access to health care	2= buisness set up assistance 6= follow-up program in sudan	3= vocational training 7= security and protection 4= psychosocial support 8=transportation
Q49 Please rank the assistance would you require upon your return to Sudan? (1=not important at all; 2=slightly important, 3=important, 4= extremely important)	1= job placement () 5= access to health care ()	2= buisness set up assistance () 6= follow-up program in sudan ()	3= vocational training () 7= security and protection () 4= psychosocial support () 8= transportation ()
Q50 What type of further assistance would you require? (check all that applies)		1=own land 4=buy house	2=Grant to continue education 5= financial support to meet basic needs 3= micro-loans schemes 6=other, specify
Q51 Please rank the further required assistance? (1=not important at all; 2=slightly important, 3=important, 4= extremely important).		1=own land () 4= buy house ()	2=Grant to continue education () 5= financial support to meet basic needs () 3= micro-credit schemes () 6=other, specify ()
Q52 If you return to Sudan would you?	1= return to area of origin	2= settle in khartoum	3= settle elsewhere, specify PLACE 4=not sure

ID N0. Housing Unit		
Part IX: AHI Pandemic Preparedness, Knowledge, Behavior and Attitudes		
Q75 In your neighborhood, is it common to rear poultry or any other type of birds?	1=yes	2=no 3=don't know
Q76 Do you buy live poultry for consumption?	1= yes	2= no
Q77 Do you keep live poultry/birds at home?	1= yes(go to Q78)	2= no (go to Q82)
Q78 Who takes care of the poultry at your home?		
Q79 What poultry do you keep?	1= Chicken 3= Geese 5=Pigeons	2= Ducks 4=Turkey 6=other,specify
Q80 For what reason/s do you keep poultry?	1=consumption 3=prestige/wealth	2=sales or trade 4=other, specify
Q81 Where do you keep your poultry?	1=on the roof 3=in the house	2=backyard 4=other, specify
Q82 Do you wear protective clothing or footwear when handling poultry and poultry-by-products (eggs)?	1=yes	2=no 3=sometimes
Q83 Why don't you use protective clothing or footwear?		
Q84 Do you eat poultry or poultry-by- products?	1= yes	2= no
Q85 Over the last month, what did you eat more?	1= Meat 3=Fish and sea food	2= Poultry 4= vegetarian food 5=other,specify
Q86 Where do you buy your poultry from?	1=tradition poultry store 3=Restaurants	2= supermarket 4= open market (souk) 5=other, specify
Q87 Do you wash your hands before or after touching slaughtered poultry?	1=yes	2=no 3=sometimes
Q88 Do you usually wash poultry and/or eggs before cooking?	1= yes	2=no 3=sometimes

ID Housing Unit

Part IX (2)

Q89 What do you think should be done where there is a sick or dead poultry in your neighborhood?	1= get a veterinary officer	2= slaughter and eat poultry	3= sell to inspecting customers	4= burn or bury diseased/sick poultry	5=other, specify
Q90 Do you know where to report poultry and wild birds' deaths?	1=yes	2=no (go to Q92)			
Q91 I could report to:	1= government official	2=health unit in the neighborhood	3= family head	4= other, specify	
Q92 Do you believe it is safe to eat poultry and poultry products?	1=yes	2=no	3= don't know		
Q93 Have you heard about the Bird Flu?	1=yes	2=no			
Q94 From what sources was knowledge on AHI/Bird Flu acquired? (check all that apply)	1= Radio	2= TV	3= newspapers	4= neighbors	5=church/mosque
		6=traditional leader	7=animal/health worker	8= poster/pamphlet/handout	9=other, specify
Q95 Do you know that a bird has influenza?	1= I know, explain how			2= don't know	
Q96 Are there any bird flu cases in your neighborhood?	1=yes	2=no	3= don't know		
Q97 Do you know how do people get infected with bird flu?	1= I know, explain how			2= don't know	
Q98 Do you know what are the symptoms of bird flu in humans? (check all that apply)	1=dizziness	2=high fever	3=running nose	4=other,specify	5= don't know
Q99 Did you attend any training session on bird's flu?	1=yes	2=no			
Q100 Have you heard of any AHI in your neighborhood?	1=yes	2=no			

ID Housing Unit Part X(3)			
Q101 Do you think that you or your family is at high risk of being affected with AHI?	1=yes	2=no	
Q102 Which of the following communicable diseases you percieve as a bigger threat (from least = (1) to more important (4)) (1,2,3,4)	1= HIV aids ()	2= Hepatitis C ()	3= AHI Pandemic () 4= other, specify ()
Q103 Who is most at risk of AHI in your household? (check only ONE)	1= HH	2= husband or wife	3= son or daughter 4=child of husband or wife
	5= grandson or ganddaughter	6= mother or father	7= mother in law or father in law 8= brother or sister 9= no one
Q104 Do you protect yourself and your household from bird flu and other similar disease?	1= yes, how		2= no, explain
Q 105 Have you hear the word "pandemic" before?	1=yes	2=no (go to Q108)	
Q106 Do you know anything about it?	1= yes, specify		2= no
Q107 Could you give me examples of pandemics?	1=yes, state examples		2= no
Q108 did you take any training on how to prepare for a pandemic or other crisis?	1=yes	2=no	
Q109 Would you be interested to learn more about how to prepare for a pandemic?	1=yes	2=no	3=not sure
Q110 In case of pandemic, where will you go first to get info/services?	1=health provider, specify	2=church/mosque/NGO, specify	3=local leader, specify 4=Egyptian authorities, specify 5=other, specify
Q111 What types of services do you think you should be provided with?			
Q112 How do you communicate with people from your community? (checl all that apply)	1=mobile phone	2= Landline phone	3=meeting in church/mosque/NGO 4= meeting in houses 5=other, specify
Q113 Is there someone you consider your community leader?	1=yes	Name of CL:	Would you seek his/her help? 2= no
Q114 Do you stock up non-perishable food at home?	1=yes, indicate quantity		2= no,why
THANK YOU NOTE!			
Q115 Name of two contacts:			
Name 1:	Phone	Address:	
Name 2:	Phone:	Address:	

Part X(3)

Q101 Do you think that you or your family is at high risk of being affected with AHI?	1=yes	2=no		
Q102 Which of the following communicable diseases you perceive as a bigger threat (from least = (1) to more important (4)) (1,2,3,4)	1= HIV aids ()	2= Hepatitis C ()	3= AHI Pandemic ()	4= other, specify ()
Q103 Who is most at risk of AHI in your household? (check only ONE)	1= HH	2= husband or wife	3= son or daughter	4=child of husband or wife
	5= grandson or granddaughter	6= mother or father	7= mother in law or father in law	8= brother or sister 9= no one
Q104 Do you protect yourself and your household from bird flu and other similar disease?	1= yes, how	2= no, explain		
Q 105 Have you hear the word "pandemic" before?	1=yes	2=no (go to Q108)		
Q106 Do you know anything about it?	1= yes, specify	2= no		
Q107 Could you give me examples of pandemics?	1=yes, state examples	2= no		
Q108 did you take any training on how to prepare for a pandemic or other crisis?	1=yes	2=no		
Q109 Would you be interested to learn more about how to prepare for a pandemic?	1=yes	2=no	3=not sure	
Q110 In case of pandemic, where will you go first to get info/services?	1=health provider, specify	2=church/mosque/NGO, specify	3=local leader, specify	4=Egyptian authorities, specify
				5=other, specify
Q111 What types of services do you think you should be provided with?				
Q112 How do you communicate with people from your community? (check all that apply)	1=mobile phone	2= Landline phone	3=meeting in church/mosque/NGO	4= meeting in houses
				5=other, specify
Q113 Is there someone you consider your community leader?	1=yes	Name of CL:	Would you seek his/her help?	2= no
Q114 Do you stock up non-perishable food at home?	1=yes, indicate quantity	2= no,why		
THANK YOU NOTE!				
Q115 Name of two contacts:				
Name 1:	Phone	Address:		
Name 2:	Phone:	Address:		

Appendix 2

Focus Group Discussion Guide Migration Choices among the Sudanese Population in Egypt: Potentials and Challenges of Return

The overall objective of this focus group is to explore the elements affecting the migration choices of the Sudanese population in Egypt, both refugees and migrants. It specifically focuses on: their perceptions and opinions regarding voluntary return; whether or not they are planning to return; and under which circumstances. The researcher should be aware that most of the refugees and migrants are sensitive regarding the issue of return. Therefore, it should be clear for the participants that we are discussing "voluntary" return not forced return.

Targeted Group: 8 to 12 persons who are members of the Sudanese migrant and refugee population in Egypt. Variables such as legal status, age, gender, religion, duration of stay in Egypt, family situation, socioeconomic conditions, and ethnicity will be considered while selecting focus group participants. Participants will be approached through several organizations and groups that closely deal with the Sudanese refugee and migrant community in Egypt such as: STAR (Student Action for Refugees), CCIP (community interpreters program), AMERA and *Tadamon*. A flyer that includes a brief description of the project will be distributed through these venues to invite Sudanese to participate in the focus group discussion. Each participant will receive an incentive to mainly cover his/her transportation cost. Incentives will be given to participants on individual basis after the completion of the discussion.

Logistics: The researcher will need: 1) a room that may accommodate 20 persons; 2) refreshments for 15 persons (Coffee, tea and a light snack); 3) a board, a flipchart and a marker; a digital recorder that will be used upon participants' agreement.

Research team: 1 facilitator (main researcher)

1 assistant (minutes taker). In case of non-English and non-Arabic speaker focus group participants, the assistant will also act as a translator.

Steps of Implementation:

- **Introductions:** facilitator (lead researcher) introduces herself, other members of the research team in the room and the project to the group. Research participants introduce themselves through an ice-breaking game. However, participants' names will remain confidential and will only be used inside the room for facilitating the discussion. The researcher will mention that the discussion will take approximately two hours, with a five minute break in the middle. She will also mention that refreshments will be served throughout the session. She will give participants the option of whether or not they like the discussion to be audio-recorded using a digital recorder

- **Prompting the discussion with throwing the following questions:** The facilitator will then raise questions that aim to cover the following aspects:
 - 1) What is better for you in terms of socioeconomic and living conditions: (staying in Egypt, returning to Sudan, settling in a third country) and why?
 - 2) What is the probability that you stay in Egypt?
 - 3) What is the probability that you resettle in a third country?
 - 4) Have you ever thought about returning to Sudan generally and your place of origin specifically?
 - 5) Did you take any concrete steps regarding: return, staying in Egypt (integration) and resettlement?
 - 6) What do you know about Sudan now?
 - 7) How do you know that?
 - 8) Do you have any property, investment, immediate family members in Sudan now?
 - 9) From what you hear, what do you think are the challenges of returning? For this question, issues related to financial means, transportation, security in Sudan generally and in place of origin specifically, employment in Sudan, social reintegration, and children education and future should be covered. The facilitator should make sure to expand this list in order to cover all the concerns of the research participants.
 - 10) If a program was created to assist you returning (providing job placement, financial assistance for transportation and other settling expenses, etc) would you be interested to explore this option at all?
 - 11) What exactly would you like this program to include?
 - 12) What alternatives are you thinking of if you decided not to return to Sudan?
 - 13) What are your plans for that?

- **Thank you note:** The facilitator will thank the focus group participants for their participation and would disburse the incentives.

Appendix 3 Semi-Structured Questionnaire

NOTE: This questionnaire was sometimes modified depending on what organisations were interviewed.

Questionnaire for Service Providers and Community, National and International Organisations on the issue of Assisted Voluntary Return among the Sudanese Migrants in Greater Cairo

GENERAL INFORMATION QUESTIONS

- 1) **Please give some details about your organisation:**
 - What is the objective of your organisation?
 - When was your organisation formed?
 - Are there any activities at your organisation to assist Sudanese migrants to return to Sudan? *How? When? Where? (If yes, please describe any specific activities, partners (if any)? Funding? Any specific women and children programmes?*
 - **Do you have any programmes/projects/activities that aim at enhancing the capacities of Sudanese men, women and children in Egypt such as vocational trainings, child education, etc?** *(If yes, please describe any specific activities, partners (if any)? Funding? Any specific women and children programmes?*
- 2) **What nationalities do you see and what are the number of refugees / migrants you see on a daily, monthly, yearly basis?** *(Remember to get specific information about Sudanese, if the organisation being interviewed is not Sudanese specific.)*
- 3) Do you see women? (if so what are the number of clients?)
- 4) Do you see children? (if so what are the number of clients?)

ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN QUESTIONS

- 1) **Based on your experience, what are the views of Sudanese migrants and refugees' vis-à-vis the alternatives available for them (staying in Egypt, resettling in a third country or returning to Sudan?**

- 2) **In your opinion, given the conditions in Sudan within the next five years, do you think that Sudanese migrants and refugees are generally interested to return back to Sudan now? Why or why not?**

- 3) **Do you think there are any differences regarding the prospects of return between migrants (traders, businessmen), qualified professionals (physicians, engineers) and refugees? Explain**

- 4) **Do you think that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) would increase the potential of return among the Sudanese migrants?**

- 5) **If the answer to question 1 is yes, do you think there are groups who are more likely to return than others (i.e. southern Sudanese)? Why?**

- 5) **Do you think there are any specific and pressuring challenges (security, child education, transportation costs, inflation, hopes for resettling**

elsewhere, legal barriers) that may hamper the return of Sudanese migrants/refugees? Explain

- 6) Have you come across any individuals or families who are planning to return? If yes, what steps are they taking to achieve their goal?
- 7) If a programme was created to assist Sudanese migrants to return to Sudan, do you think that this will encourage Sudanese to return? Why or why not?
- 8) What components do you think should be included in that program?
- 9) What other services do you think should be in place to ensure that the Sudanese community reintegrate smoothly in their area of origin?

SPECIFIC STEPS AND PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- 1) What do you think would be the best ways to facilitate the return of Sudanese men, women and children to Sudan? Please give us specific suggestions about the following:
 - a) Security and Protection;
 - b) Transportation;
 - c) Housing;
 - d) Employment;
 - e) Education for children attending unaccredited church-based schools;
 - f) Public health services.
 - g) Psychosocial Services
- 2) Do you think there are specific needs for women and children vis-à-vis the question of return?
- 3) Would you like to add any other comments on the issue of assisted voluntary return among Sudanese migrants and refugees?
