

From Internal to International Displacement in Sudan

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MAP OF SUDAN



Discussion Paper

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I. Introduction¹

In the field of forced migration and refugees studies, forced internal displacement cannot be excluded as an area of interest. Internal displacement is challenging for peace construction, urban development and stability in many countries. The growing number of displaced persons is the reverse side of the international community new strategy, consisting in preventing cross-border displacement, aiming to prevent the regional spreading of instability and reducing the number of refugees. The country with the greatest number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the world is Sudan. It has more than 5 million IDPs, of which about 2 million were recently displaced due to the Darfur crisis. Sudan is a developing country; it ranks 141 out of 177 countries in the Human Development Index ranking. (UNDP, 2004) The low and very unbalanced development among Sudanese regions, combined with recurrent natural disasters and protracted violence and conflicts, has resulted in massive internal and international displacement. Due to economic fragility and insecurity, mobility is very high in the region.

The term displacement refers to the involuntary movement of populations. The most widely used definition is the one given by Francis Deng in the introduction of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: “IDPs are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised State border.”² The two main elements of the definition are: (i) the coercive or otherwise involuntary character of movement: and, (ii) the fact that such movement takes place within national borders.

¹ The author is working for her PhD under the direction of Marie-France Prévôt Schapira. The research focuses on the situation of IDPs in urban areas, comparing the cases of Khartoum in Sudan and Bogotá in Colombia, and trying to understand in which extent forced migrations can be considered as urbanization processes and in which extent they should be dealt with as temporary migrations.

² Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, Introduction, para. 2

In spite of all the studies and research done to reach satisfying definitions, there is often no neat and clear distinction between forced and economic migrants when it comes to a particular situation. For example, in contexts of scarce or unequal access to resources, and protracted crisis, asset depletion often comes before displacement and it becomes hard to tell who is to be considered as a direct victim of the conflict and who is to be considered as an indirect victim. In the same way, the non-voluntary, forced nature of displacement seems to be self-evident: when voluntary migrations form an integral part of households' livelihoods, or the search for better life opportunities, involuntary migration is the principal way of ensuring the physical survival of households subjected to life-threatening situations such as famines and wars. But when it comes to real cases, if there is no physical injury or human loss, the frontier between forced and voluntary migrants is blurred. It is hard to distinguish who has been forced or not, if the threat was objective or not, etc. As it is difficult to distinguish between the two groups, I will not develop a clear distinction between vulnerable economic migrants and forced migrants. In many situations, vulnerable economic migrants are leaving together with forced migrants, and face the same circumstances, even if the human and psychological aspects of their displacement may not be the same.

In this article, I will first compare the main patterns of Sudanese internal and international displacement. In the second part, the main features of internal displacement, combined with urbanization processes, will be explored. In the third part, the current challenges facing the return of displaced Sudanese will be tackled. In the last part, I will present the different issues to be explored if we want to enlighten the links between internal and international displacement.

II. Main Displacement Patterns in Sudan

There are different patterns of internal and international displacement in Sudan. Birth and fluctuations of conflicts, and natural disasters are key events in the history of Sudanese displacement. Over time, the characteristics and destinations of displacements have changed. The long-established tensions between the centre and peripheries are characterised by a chronically unjust division of power, wealth and investment, and by the inability or unwillingness on the part of the central elite to manage the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of the vast country. To identify and quantify changes in the trends of displacement,

censuses are a major tool (1955-56 at the time of independence, 1964-66, 1973, 1983 and 1993). For the current period, we have to rely on estimations, given that the census should be run in 2008. In Sudan, causes of displacement have been varied and complex. For purposes of clarity, we will adopt a chronological approach, combined with a crisis-sensitive typology. For this reason, the first section will explore the displacement entailed by the first phase of the North-South civil war (1956-1972). The second section will examine displacement caused by natural hazards, and more specifically to the drought and the related-famine of the 1980s. The third section will focus on the resumption of civil war between the North and South, until the signature of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005 and up to the present. The last section will consider the Darfur crisis and its impacts on displacement.

First War between North and South Sudan (1956-1972): Short Distance Displacements

Whereas migrations in northern Sudan were mainly due to natural hazards, including nomadic movements, the war in southern Sudan, which began with the independence of the country in 1956 and ended with the Addis Ababa agreement in 1972, has been the main factor of displacement since independence.

During the first civil war between the North and South (1956-1972), the number of civilian casualties was estimated to be 170,000. During the same period, some 800,000 people were internally displaced within the Sudan, according to the government of the Southern Region and 220,000 took refuge in neighbouring countries.³ After the ratification of the Addis Ababa Agreement, most of these dislocated people returned to the South. The Repatriation and Resettlement Commission reported a total of 1 million returnees it had resettled by the end of its operation in April 1974.

The present boundaries of Sudan were not drawn until end of the World War I. As it is common in Africa, many of the Sudanese people (namely, the Zaghawa in the west, the Zande in the south, the Nuer in the southeast, the Bani Amir in the northeast and the Nubians in the north) were separated from their kindred by the political boundaries that separate the Sudan from its neighbouring countries. During the first civil war, much of the international displacement took the form of trans-border displacement, people crossing the international border but staying among their ethnic group.

³ J. Akol (1987), "Southern Sudanese refugees: their repatriation and resettlement after the Addis Ababa agreement", in *Refugees: a Third World dilemma*. Rowman and Littlefield ed., pp. 143-157

Considering the following waves of displacement, the insignificance of migration from the three southern provinces to the north and to Khartoum is noteworthy. Those displacements to the neighbouring countries, within the south or to the north up to the “transition area” are hardly explained. For Gamal Mahmoud Hamid (1996), “the long distance between the south and Greater Khartoum, and the civil war conditions between 1955 and 1972, accounted in part for this phenomenon. The main explanation, however, can be attributed to the prevalence of subsistence opportunities in the south, and their accessibility to most of the southern population.” The civil war conditions refer to the lower intensity of the fighting during the first civil war (1 million people displaced from 1956 to 1972 compared to 4 million from 1983 to 1996). During the second civil war, displacement became a deliberate strategy of the armed groups, in a will to occupy or empty territories, to get external support through the concentration of highly vulnerable people, or to empty territories to allow big development schemes, such as oil exploitation.

Drought and Famines (1983-1985): Rural Exodus and Massive Displacement

Major droughts and attendant famines struck the country in the mid 1980’s. Sudan always had to face natural hazards and recurrent droughts and floods. The droughts of 1983 – 85 were long-lasting and particularly wide-spread throughout the country. The dry periods were 1983 and 1984, but their impacts reverberated into 1985. Most famine-affected areas partially recovered after June 1985. It is estimated that 8.4 million people were “severely-affected⁴” in Darfur, Kordofan, central, northern and eastern region, representing about 55% of the total population in those regions. Drought and famines caused dramatic food shortages, impoverishment and asset depletion, massive displacement (about 1.8 million persons), and when households’ coping mechanisms were exhausted, death. These droughts and famines destroyed the rural economy in the affected areas, and the induced displacement can be seen as a rural exodus, forcing people to settle in the cities.

Resumption of War between North and South (1983-2005): Massive Displacements towards the North

During the mid 1980s, the impact of droughts fuelled or exacerbated the endemic tensions and the resumption of civil war. Between 1983 and 1991, close to 3 million people were estimated

⁴ Compilation of data made by some NGOs, endorsed by the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa and the Sudanese government.

to have been displaced from the South. By mid 1991, some 425,000 of them had taken refuge in Uganda and Ethiopia.⁵ The remainder flocked to southern cities, such as Juba and Malakal, and an estimated 2.3 million southerners took refuge in the North, of whom 1.8 million settled in Greater Khartoum. The Destination of displacement clearly shifted to the North and the extent of displacement mushroomed. Several authors explain these evolutions by a change in armed groups and Sudanese government strategies.

“In previous conflicts in Sudan, before 1989, displacement had been a secondary consequence. From the late 1980s the deliberate uprooting of local populations, often by local militia armed by the government, became a strategy for the conduct of war, and a military and economic objective in its own right. Prior to the North-South ceasefire in January 2002 the strategy for mass population displacement involved militia attacks on the ground, burning, looting and the abduction of women and children, coupled with bombardment from the air by Antonov planes and helicopter gunships. It enabled the government to seize and reallocate land and resources, while turning largely self-sufficient village populations into vulnerable and dependent communities deprived of their right to land and permanent shelter, living precariously on the periphery of the capital.”⁶

According to Rick Delhaas,⁷ there are four reasons why the Sudanese government displaced people. First, displacement was used as a counter-insurgency tactic. Second, the war economy needed cheap labour. Third, the Islamization policy after the 1989 coup. And finally, oil exploitation. As asserted by Peter Verney,⁸ furthermore, man-made famine, the destruction of farm and food stocks, and the manipulation of access to aid agencies, meant that food became a weapon and a tool for generating displacement.

Darfur Crisis: Intra-Regional and Trans-Border Displacements

The displacement produced by the Darfur crisis can be distinguished from earlier patterns of displacement by two outstanding features. First, the displacement occurred on a massive scale and is still increasing. Second, few people headed to the central region and Greater Khartoum. Most of the displacement took place within Darfur or toward neighbouring countries, mainly Chad. Tensions in Darfur started much earlier than 2003, when the current violence erupted and spread. Since then, it is estimated that more than 200,000 people died⁹ and more than 2

⁵ United States Committee for Refugees (1990), *World refugee survey: 1989 in review*. Washington, DC: American Council for Nationalities Service.

⁶ Peter Verney, Forced Migrations Organization Country Guide: Sudan, <http://www.forcedmigration.org/guides/fmo040/fmo040-1.htm>

⁷ Vigilance Soudan (2006), letter n° 137, <http://www.vigilsd.org/articles/bf137/SOUDAN%20137%20A.pdf>

⁸ Forced Migrations Organization, Country Guide Sudan

⁹ Gérard Prunier, “Darfour, la chronique d’un génocide ambigu”, in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, mars 2007. In this article, Gérard Prunier is putting forward the figure of 400 000 casualties.

million persons were displaced. According to the United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants,¹⁰ Chad received 233,000 Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers. By the end of 2006, furthermore, UNHCR had registered 220,000 Sudanese refugees in the camps located in Eastern Chad. In search of security, displaced people within and outside Darfur have been settling in big camps administered by humanitarian agencies, where relief aid is distributed. Within Darfur, most of the camps are located around the main cities. The future of this population stuck in camps is also a main area of concern. IDPs are becoming a new kind of urban dwellers, getting used to life in camps, artificially supplied by humanitarian agencies. Psycho-social and socio-cultural impacts are still unknown but will certainly lead to deep changes among the Darfur population.

Figures

Figures are presented to give an idea of the extent of internal and international displacement in Sudan. In a context of conflict and high mobility, where censuses have not been carried out since 1993, figures available for the current period are estimations made by the different stakeholders. Figures are a central issue. They are a bone of contention, some stakeholders attempt to underplay the level of displacement (public authorities), whereas others tend to overestimate it (the lobby groups).

Table 1 : Internal Displacement, Figures April 2006¹¹

| Location | IDP Number |
|--|-------------------|
| Khartoum | 2,000,000 |
| Northern | 200,000 |
| Red Sea | 277,000 |
| Kassala | 76,000 |
| Gedaref | 42,000 |
| Sennar | 60,000 |
| Blue Nile (South and North) | 235,000 |
| White Nile | 110,000 |
| Upper Nile (Malakal) | 95,000 |
| West Kordofan | 107,000 |
| South Kordofan | 82,000 |
| Unity | 135,000 |
| Bahr el Ghazal (Wau / Aweil) | 210,000 |
| Eastern Equatoria (Juba / Lafon / Torit / Budi / | 26,000 |

¹⁰ United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, Chad country report 2007, <http://www.refugees.org>

¹¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (August 2006), *Sudan: slow IDP return to the south while Darfur crisis continues unabated*, p.59. (note: All numbers except for the Greater Darfur figures are taken from: "UN Support for Spontaneous Returns 2005/2006 Operational Plan" of 4 July 2005)

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Kapeota) | |
| Western Equatoria* (Ezo/Tambura) | No figures available |
| Jonglei* | No figures available |
| Greater Darfur | 1,800,000 |
| TOTAL | 5,355,000 |

Table 2 : Sudanese Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Neighbouring Countries 2007¹²

| Host country | Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers |
|------------------------------|---|
| Chad | 233,000 |
| Uganda | 215,700 |
| Kenya | 73,600 |
| Ethiopia | 67,000 |
| Egypt | 24,700 |
| Central Africa Republic | 8,300 |
| Democratic Republic of Congo | 6,200 |
| Eritrea | Less than 1,000* |
| Libya | No data available |
| TOTAL (approximation) | 629,500 |

It is worth mentioning Sudanese development projects and land speculation, even though they cannot be seen as a main factor of displacement in Sudan. During the 20th century, the government on several occasions expropriated land of rural populations to implement vast development projects, such as mechanized-agriculture in central and eastern Sudan (such as the Gezira plain, Kassala) and dam construction. Small farmers and nomads lost their land rights and were pushed out of rural areas. More recently, the forced depopulation of oil-rich areas in South Sudan (e.g. Upper Nile region in the 1990s) is an area of concern for many international observers.

III. Consequences of Displacement in Sudan

Displacement in Sudan continues to have a large impact on population distribution nationally. It has accelerated urbanization in Sudan, which has been most dramatic in Khartoum.

Desolated Regions and Destroyed Economies

The first consequence of displacement, both internal and international, is the dramatic emptying of regions from its population. Displacement affects in a bigger extent rural areas, where fighting and violence during war times are more acute, and protection more difficult to

¹² United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, country reports of the related countries (2007), *except for Eritrea (data of 2004)

bring. Displacement means, in a lot of situations, disintegration of rural economies and changes in access to resources. Massive departure of population in regions of scarce and unequal access to resources has a major impact on economy. In Darfur, some nomadic tribes are currently benefiting from sedentary population displacement toward cities, which allows them a better access to pastures and wells. Displacement also leads to a decrease in farming production, in food self-reliance and an increase in external dependency. In the case of Darfur, international aid is trying to fill the gaps, and in the case of South Sudan, the government of this region is calling the population to come back, from the North or from the neighbouring countries, to rebuild the region. Both farmers and skilled population are needed to reach food self-sufficiency and provide services.

Urbanization and Greater Khartoum Urban Growth

As stated above, recent population displacement within Darfur resulted in rapid urbanization, while surrounding urban areas became swollen with camp settlements. Historically, internal displacement fed urban growth in the South during the two civil wars. The natural disasters of the mid-1980s combined with the second civil war in South accelerated urbanization and urban growth in Khartoum. Whereas migration to Khartoum before 1983 could principally be read as rural exodus and normal economic migration, forced migrations converging to Greater Khartoum after 1983 put a sudden overload on its facilities, and worsened dramatically the urban crisis. Table 3 presents figures for Greater Khartoum's urban growth. Greater Khartoum is composed of three cities: Omdurman, Khartoum and Khartoum North.

Table 3 : Population Change in the Capital Region (1983-1990)

| | 1983 | 1990 | % Change |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Omdurman Urban | 526,186 | 1,125,549 | +114 |
| Omdurman Rural | 122,131 | 204,135 | +67 |
| Khartoum Urban | 475,966 | 796,969 | +67 |
| Khartoum Rural | 82,791 | 181,640 | +119 |
| Khartoum North | 341,146 | 605,856 | +78 |
| East of Nile Rural | 255,002 | 295,591 | +16 |
| <u>Displaced camps:</u> | | | |
| Omdurman | | 108,226 | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Khartoum | | 169,060 | |
| Khartoum North | | 125,472 | |
| Totals : | | | |
| Omdurman | 648,317 | 1,437,950 | +122 |
| Khartoum | 558,757 | 1,147,669 | +99 |
| Khartoum North | 594,776 | 1,026,919 | +73 |
| Capital region total | 1,801,850 | 3,612,538 | +100 |

Source : H.R.J. Davies (1991), « Population change in the capital region », in *The future of Sudan's capital region: a study in development and change*, M.E. Abu Sin and H.R.J. Davies, Khartoum Press University, p. 132-141

Whereas Khartoum could be seen as a symbol of the oppression in the context of the internal conflicts striking Sudan, the capital city has been attracting and is still attracting a lot of forced migrants, pushed out by conflict and violence. This could be seen as contradictory. However, the developmental gap between the centre (Khartoum) and the peripheries in Sudan helps to explain this pulling force. The Capital city, as centre of the government, also represents potential access to better protection and better opportunities.

This urbanization process resulted in an expansion of Greater Khartoum, with newcomers settling in the fringes of the city or being relocated in the four official IDP camps created in 1991 around Khartoum. Public facilities have in no way been able to meet the demands of the rapid population influxes, although the government has attempted to control this population by using authoritarian measures to exert control over these incomers and by planning squatter areas and even IDP camps.

IV. Situations of IDPs in Khartoum

IDP Settlements

IDPs in Khartoum make up 40 percent of the capital's current population; they also represent half of Sudan's displaced population.¹³ An estimated 315,000 IDPs are settled in the four official camps, out of 2 million IDPs settled in Greater Khartoum. The others are living in squatter settlements, in relocation areas or in planned areas. Those living in planned areas benefit from or can hope for a slow improvement of their living conditions (water and electricity supply, road construction, health and education facilities), and generally own their

¹³ Munzoul Assal (2006), *Whose right counts? National and international responses to the rights of IDPs in the Sudan*, Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, p. 15

plots of land. Still, overall service provision is far from sufficient. The construction of electricity and water networks is a huge challenge, which the government has not yet been able to meet in large areas of the city. Moreover, in Khartoum growth's history, the provision of services has often been left to private initiatives, with citizens coming together in order to find a solution to their common issues.¹⁴ In the case of poor suburbs, the question of services is much more difficult to solve on a private basis (private refers here to a collective initiative of neighbours, sharing common interests). For education and health matters, government action is also too weak, and the provision of services is mainly left to NGOs in outlying areas. In squatter areas and in IDP camps, electricity exists only on a private basis (generators), and is almost nonexistent. Water is mostly supplied by wells that were drilled by NGOs or International Organisations, and equipped with water yards, and are now managed by Community-Based Organisations. Water is sold at water points or can be purchased from itinerant vendors equipped with donkey carts. It is a scarce resource and a big expense for the household. Concerning housing, auto-construction is highly prevailing, with some households still living under temporary shelters made of plastic sheets, cardboard, or wood.

Livelihoods

Livelihood for IDPs is a key challenge. Life in the camp, however, temporarily cushions IDPs from sustaining themselves with externally provided food and other services providing a minimum and artificial satisfaction of basic needs, while at the same time fuelling their dependency on assistance.

“Following the halt of relief distribution in 1998 and with most international NGOs from Al Salam camp leaving in 2003, the livelihoods of IDPs were put under stress. Previously, IDPs received free food rations that were enough to feed people, and therefore the need for getting a job was not considered a priority for the majority of people in the camp. Until 1998, there were few men who work in building and construction sites in Khartoum, while women engaged in informal activities. According to the omda of Dinka Aweil, ‘When relief was cut, 90 percent of men depended on women who work either as housemaids in Khartoum or brewing aragi [local alcoholic drink]. When some sultans and other IDPs were recruited in the Popular Police Forces, unemployment was reduced’.¹⁵

Women generally adapt faster to the urban environment, and even if earning money from informal activities most of the time (such as retailing, house cleaning, tea selling, and alcohol

¹⁴ Gamal M. Hamid, “Local Level Authorities and Local Action in Greater Khartoum, Sudan” in *The Arab World Geographer*, Vol 3, No 4, 2000.

¹⁵ Munzoul Assal (2006), *Whose right counts? National and international responses to the rights of IDPs in the Sudan*, Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, p. 21-22

brewing), they are often the ones providing food for the household on a regular basis. Men can find opportunities as daily workers. The household livelihood remains highly vulnerable, and the distance between their place of living and job opportunities undermines much of their earnings due to transportation time and costs. In an assessment made in 2004 by several NGOs in Khartoum IDP camps, only 39% of the heads of households surveyed reported that they had a regular source of income.¹⁶ In a lot of families, children are also asked to participate in income generating activities, to the detriment of school attendance.

Urban Planning

For decades, the government has been using the same urban planning methods: demolition of housing, selling of land plots and relocation of the inhabitants unable to pay. This is a way of legalizing land ownership, and of evicting the poorest population to further peripheries of the town. The rationale for urban planning is also the provision of basic services such as water, electricity, education and health.¹⁷ If the first part of the urban planning is run efficiently – people are moved out of the area under planning, houses are demolished by security forces, and plots are sold by local authorities to the ones who can pay for it - service provision remains unachieved. It takes decades for the government to provide basic services, and those are supplied on an insufficient basis. In Haj Youssef, previously a squatter area planned in the 1990s, electricity and water provision, public health and education facilities are still largely insufficient. In the case of IDP camps, IDPs were given temporary usufructary access to land, while in the squatter areas, the land is usually invaded and illegally subdivided. Nevertheless, means and methods used by the government for urban planning are nowadays the same in both types of areas. The intensity of demolition and planning has dramatically risen since 2003. "At least 665,000 IDPs have had their homes demolished and have been relocated at some point over the past 16 years, and at least 15 IDP camps and squatter areas have been demolished since 1989, more than half of which have been demolished since 2004." (OCHA, September 2005)

There is also a clear government strategy to relocate people on the North West suburbs of the town (in Omdurman), where soils are less fertile and the water table deeper than in Khartoum and Khartoum Bahri. Due to urban spreading, IDP camps located in the outskirts of Khartoum

¹⁶ FAR, IOM, Medair, War Child, IRC, OCHA, NRC, World Vision (December 2004), *Khartoum State Interagency Rapid Assessment Report*, p. 16

¹⁷ On urban planning history in Greater Khartoum, see Sharaf El Din Ibrahim Bannaga, *The Displaced and Peace Opportunities in Sudan*, Khartoum, 2001, 353p.

in the past are now integrating into the urban fabric (except in the case of Jebel Aulia, 40 km South of Khartoum). Relocation sites are always further in the desert. El Fath, for example, is located 40 km North West of Omdurman, in the middle of the desert. There was no water and no facility of any kind when people started to be moved there. Now, some scarce water points have been established. The NGO *Enfant du Monde Droit de l'Homme* is running the only health centre in the area (a mobile clinic for primary care). This relocation site is expanding quickly, according to the successive demolition and planning activities in Khartoum. It now has more than 260,000 persons. Nevertheless, the situation is different between el Fath 1, the first settlement site, which is not only populated by relocated IDPs, and el Fath 3, the reception area and recent relocation site.

Urban planning in Greater Khartoum is, therefore, associated with recurrent violations of human rights. IDPs in most cases submit to the urban planning decision, in the hope of getting land ownership in the subsequent plot allocation. Planning should, in principle, lead to better living conditions and integration to urban life. The immediate impact, however, is the deterioration and the destruction of housing, latrines and facilities (education, health, water). Moreover, plot allocation is left to local authorities and is highly prone to corruption.

After the massive demolitions in 2003 up to 2005, donors and UN agencies gathered to put pressure on the Khartoum government to continue the urban planning process, but to make it acceptable in terms of human rights. It resulted in a "Road Map for Relocation," signed between the UN and Khartoum State in 2007, that set minimum standards for the planning and relocation process. The Khartoum State government theoretically committed itself to respect these standards

V. Discrimination

Social marginalization follows geographical marginalization. As stated before, unemployment is high among IDPs and they are mainly recruited for low qualified jobs. Education levels are also lower among people from the South than among Northerners partly resulting in social marginalization. Discrimination is also high against black southern Sudanese people in Khartoum. IDPs, who are mostly Southerners (of which the Dinka are the largest group), can easily be recognized by their physical features. (The riots caused by John Garang's death in

August 2005 revealed the latent tensions that exist between Northerners and Southerners.) Moreover, the *Shari'a* law has been a problematic issue between the North and South since its implementation in 1983. *Sharia* law was largely debated during the peace talks and several articles are dedicated to it in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, theoretically limiting its geographical and social coverage. Southern Sudanese settled in Khartoum, however, continue to be covered under Islamic law. For example, Southern women brewing and selling alcohol around Khartoum are severely repressed and many women are in Omdurman prison and unable to pay for bail.

VI. Socio-Cultural Changes

Socio-cultural and identity changes are crucial issues in decision making processes of IDPs. Forced migration, on the top of psycho-social trauma, led the displaced Sudanese to live in a new environment requiring new livelihood strategies - for the majority a shift from rural to urban life. Traditional leadership, moreover, within the social group and within the household has been challenged:¹⁸ new sultans have emerged; new forms of authority prevail (state institutions); women and children get emancipated and men have in many cases lost their role as bread winners and, in part, their authority. People in the South speak Sudanese dialects, English or juba Arabic. They have to learn Arabic when arriving in Khartoum. Most of the children study in Arabic, and can no longer write or speak their mother tongue. For IDPs living in Khartoum, it is far from assimilation into North Sudanese identity. It is, rather, the creation of a new identity of “Southerners living in the North;” an identity different from Northerners’ as well as from their fathers’ identity. A study conducted by Catherine Miller and Al Alim Abu Manga demonstrates this change. Miller and Abu Manga worked in the late 1980s in el Takamol, at this time a squatter area in Haj Youssef (Khartoum North). They studied language acquisition and language use among migrant adults and children. In regards to linguistic change (the marker of a broader socio-cultural and identity change), their study shows that a very clear difference appears between adult and children migrants acquiring new languages when adults and children are born in town.

“The real change may happen with migrant children. They represent the second generation, mostly born in town and mostly Arabicized. Whatever the future of their

¹⁸ Marc Lavergne (1999), « De la cuvette du Haut-Nil aux faubourgs de Khartoum : les déplacés du Sud-Soudan entre traumatisme et recomposition identitaires », in *Déplacés et réfugiés, la mobilité sous la contrainte*, Véronique Lassailly-Jacob, Jean-Yves Marchal et André Quesnel (dir.), Editions de l'IRD, Paris, p. 109-136

parents may be, they are likely to become permanent townspeople and to form the future urban population. [...] The children born in Khartoum are mainly monolingual in Arabic (79%) and have a tendency to use a variety of Arabic approximant to Khartoum Colloquial Arabic, irrespective of their parents' linguistic competence. The fact that these children stay in a dominantly non-Arab settlement and are rarely educated raises many questions about channels of language transmission.”¹⁹

This socio-cultural and identity change is not only a random consequence of the new circumstances, it has also been used as a tool for building a “New Sudan.” The seizure of power by the Islamist junta in 1989 introduced a coherent and systematic policy of social engineering. The regime's ‘Civilisation Project’ actively sought to destroy the cultural roots of the displaced populations, with the establishment of camps known as ‘Peace Villages (*Dar es Salam*),’ initially in the Nuba Mountains area of South Kordofan. On the top of the Arabization process, conversion to Islam, genuine or opportunistic, has also been observed.

VII. Return Process

Since the end of the war and the signature of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005, return movements either occurred on a spontaneous basis or were organised by international agencies and Sudanese authorities. Returns from neighbouring countries are mainly organized by UNHCR. More than 57,000 refugees have been assisted in returning home by UNHCR in air and road movements from five neighbouring countries through eleven different corridors. Repatriation operations, furthermore, from the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo have been completed and operations closed.²⁰

¹⁹ Catherine Miller, Al Alim Abu-Manga (1992), *Language change and national integration, Rural migrants in Khartoum*, Khartoum University Press, Khartoum, p. 56 and 59

²⁰ UNMIS RRR Quarterly Report April— June 2007, p. 2

Table 4 : Refugee Return Statistics²¹

| Asylum Country | ORGANIZED REPATRIATION ^{1/} | | | | Cumulative Assisted Self-Repatriation ^{2/} | Cumulative Spontaneous Return ^{3/} | GRAND TOTAL | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|---|---------------|----------------|
| | 2005-6 | 2007 | | | | | | Total |
| | | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Sub-total | | | | |
| C.A.R. | 3,262 | 4,345 | 809 | 5,154 | 8,416 | 1,326 | 9,556 | 19,298 |
| D.R.C. | 5,550 | - | 936 | 936 | 6,486 | 1,842 | 33,496 | 41,824 |
| Egypt | 43 | - | - | 0 | 43 | 1,714 | 102 | 1,859 |
| Eritrea | - | - | 3 | 3 | 3 | - | 212 | 215 |
| Ethiopia | 4,625 | 7,689 | 8,715 | 16,404 | 21,029 | 3,203 | 10,706 | 34,938 |
| Kenya | 1,940 | 2,075 | 1,277 | 3,352 | 5,292 | 405 | 20,061 | 25,758 |
| Uganda | 5,780 | 3,247 | 6,709 | 9,956 | 15,736 | 286 | 16,383 | 32,405 |
| Others | 8 | 191 | - | 191 | 199 | 3 | - | 202 |
| TOTAL | 21,208 | 17,547 | 18,449 | 35,996 | 57,204 | 8,779 | 90,516 | 156,499 |

^{1/} Registered refugees receive transportation and return packages containing non-food items and food provided by WFP.

^{2/} Registered refugees who opt to return by their own means and receive return packages upon arrival in Sudan.

^{3/} Based on estimates provided by countries of asylum.

Organized returns of IDPs, within southern regions or from North (mainly Greater Khartoum) to South, are a joint operation of the Government of National Unity (central government), Government of South Sudan, IOM (as leading agency) and UN agencies. They jointly planned for the return of 150,000 persons for 2007, but only 43,000 IDPs had been assisted in returning to their homes in southern Sudan, Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan by June 2007.²² The return process stopped during the rainy season and is due to start again in November. Whilst most of these returnees had been displaced to the Khartoum area, five other operations under the Joint Plan involved movements of people between other states or even within states. In parallel to those organized plans, spontaneous returns also occurred.

Internal organized returns are far below the numbers expected, and many difficulties appeared during this first joint plan. For one, there lacked an emphasis on the reintegration process as well as work with recipient communities. Some returnees, furthermore, remained stuck in the regional cities in the South, unable to return to their place of origin, creating a new congestion around the cities and in the camps. The most worrying trend is that, reportedly, some returnees have already come back to Khartoum, which would mean that Southern Sudan does not yet meet the required conditions for dignified and successful returns. Political pressure is put on IDPs either to stay where they are or return. The international community has to monitor this issue to assure a free and voluntary return.

²¹ idem p. 9

²² idem

Socio-cultural and identity changes provide a challenge to massive and successful return in the South. For one, there is the linguistic challenge. Children have been studying in Arabic in Khartoum, whereas in the South, English is the prevailing teaching medium. Access to services, furthermore, is another challenge of successful return. In spite of the dire living conditions of IDPs in Khartoum, access to services there is far better than in the South where basic infrastructure is lacking. Having one's children in school in Khartoum is another decisive criterion in the decision-making process to return. Land ownership or the hope to obtain it is also an important factor. In the end, socio-cultural and identity changes complicate the reintegration process for both returnees and the receiving community. Returnees are often considered as traitors, even more when coming back from the north capital. They are accused of being Arabicized and Islamicized, and supportive of the northern government. In these conditions, strengthening the reintegration process is vital for stability as well as for peace between the North and South.

VIII. Issues to be Explored

Is there a Link between Internal and International Displacements in Sudan?

In this last section, a few issues concerning the connections between internal and international displacements will be raised, including issues that need to be further explored and studied.

1. Dire living conditions in Khartoum can be a push factor, encouraging IDPs to carry on their migration.

The study, *Living on the Margins: The Analysis of the Livelihood Strategies of Sudanese Refugees with Closed Files in Egypt*, conducted by Katarzyna Grabska in 2005, demonstrates how IDPs can be encouraged to carry on their migration outside the borders of their homeland. According to Grabska:

“The majority of our respondents who originate from the south of Sudan tend to come to Egypt from their temporary or long term residence in the north, usually Khartoum, where they lived in displaced camps. The deteriorating situation in these camps caused by the closure of church and school facilities in 1998 and frequent demolitions of housing, heightened fear of security controls, army recruitment drives, and worsening economic conditions had influenced the decision of southern Sudanese to leave for Egypt. [...] The relatively cheap and suitable transport links between Egypt and Sudan

through Wadi Halfa and an easy access to Sudanese passports, exit visas and Egyptian entry visas provided an alternative for Sudanese to seek refuge in Egypt (Sperl 2001). The longstanding relationships between the two countries and the relatively large Sudanese residing in Egypt facilitate the flow of Sudanese into Egypt in search of asylum. [...] In addition, the presence of Sudanese opposition groups and their well-established position in Cairo play an important role in the choice of destination for refugees, especially for the politically active.”

Nevertheless, it seems that Sudanese refugees arriving in Cairo are not the most vulnerable in Khartoum:

“Among our Sudanese respondents, the majority was relatively well educated, with nearly half having finished secondary school, one fifth having graduated from university, and only 10 percent being illiterate. Most of the illiterate refugees came from the south of Sudan, whereas the best educated ones came from the north.”

These figures do not reflect the overall education level in Khartoum, nor do they reflect the education level in IDP camps around Khartoum, as this level is much lower. In a study made in 2003 in Khartoum by CARE and IOM, it was found that 44% of all IDPs of all age groups have no education.²³ This point suggests that the IDPs leaving to Egypt mainly belong to the better-off among Khartoum IDPs. In this case, is this new displacement a forced one? Given the living conditions in Khartoum, we can argue it is a new forced displacement, produced by discrimination, relocation and housing demolitions led by the government in the framework of an urban planning campaign, as well as a lack of life opportunities in Khartoum.

Unfortunately, it is easier to study the situation and living conditions of the displaced after their migration. By definition, forced migration is involuntary and, by the same way at the same time, partly unpredictable. In light of the living conditions in Khartoum, however, it would certainly be valuable to study the dynamics of departure and new displacement, if possible, in the place of living before the cross-border displacement. For example, given that churches act as mechanisms of support for southern Sudanese IDPs, it is likely that they can serve as bases of knowledge in Khartoum for contacting IDPs before their departure to another country.

²³ “Between 0 – 5 years old, 11% are in preschool and 83% have yet to start any education. Between 6 – 18 years old, 67.6% have attended Primary, 5.9% Secondary education and only 0.2% University; whereas, 20% of this age group have had no education. Between 19 and 25 years, 38.7% have been to primary school, 20.7% Secondary school, but only 6.9% have attended University. Between 26 and 50 years 25% have been to primary, 12.7% Secondary schooling and 4.2% University. In all age groups, less than 1% has had Vocational or Technical training. Over 50 years old, only 11.3% have attended only Primary education, less than 10% have attended either Secondary or University education and 65.5% of the IDPs have received no education at all”.

2. Socio-cultural and identity changes experienced through internal displacement can be an incentive for further migration.

In adjusting to urban environments, IDPs learn how to deal with public authorities, with international organizations, and may also be more able to obtain opportunities to move to other countries. According to Grabska:

“One of the main factors pulling people [in reference to Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers] to Egypt as opposed to other places to seek asylum was the existence of the resettlement program in Cairo. Over 65 percent of our respondents had relatives and friends living abroad, almost all of whom had been resettled, mainly in Canada, Australia, and the USA. Over half of the refugee households interviewed admitted that they knew about UNHCR before coming, and were aware of the possibilities of migrating to the West. It was logical that those Sudanese who already had relatives and friends resettled to western countries through Cairo would have high expectations for the possibilities of resettlement.”

This shows that most of the Sudanese asylum seekers are used to international agencies and their activities. It is both a result of the first displacement and an incentive for new displacement. As stated before, in many cases, forced displacement means becoming dependent on external aid for a period of time. The international community is increasingly trying to protect IDPs, as well as refugees, even if no agency has a clear mandate to do so and the national government can argue that IDPs are under its own authority. In Greater Khartoum, the government is trying to undermine international access to IDPs and its activities. Some international agencies, often working through national NGOs, are both trying to meet IDPs basic needs and offer them protection. The international community is committed in terms of funding and of lobbying, though this may fluctuate depending on when relocations and planning activities of the Khartoum State Government occur. Relations are tense between the Sudanese government and the international community on these issues. IDPs settled in Khartoum are familiar with the work of international agencies' and are sometimes confused in terms of responsibility, holding international agencies responsible for their destitution and requiring an increased support from them, instead of questioning the government's lack of commitment. These elements suggest that IDPs, who have become accustomed to certain forms of dependency in the camps or squatter settlements, and who have been living alongside humanitarian staff, could develop knowledge of international community activities and as a result exploit the services of international agencies.

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