

# NEWSLETTER

## PLAN INTERNATIONAL EGYPT RESPONDS TO THE INFLUX FROM SUDAN TO EGYPT

War was never a condition that anyone wishes a person to get involved in. It is a catastrophic situation for all humanity, whether the country at war or the neighboring countries; this is exactly what our neighbor Sudan has been encountered with. No matter how hard we try to reflect on the situation and present what the Sudanese refugees are exposed to during the conflict, still, the actual tribulation and anguish lack the proper description and do not fulfill their rights.

As of June 1st, more than 164K families and children have fled to Egypt, as a result of the conflict that broke out in Sudan on the 15th of April, seeking immediate humanitarian support and safety from violence. In the belief that all humans are equal, Plan International Egypt swiftly responded to the Sudan Crisis as one of the first international organizations and the one that has an officially registered office in Aswan governorate, committed to working under the guidance of the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS), in coordination with UN agencies and civil society organizations to provide humanitarian support to Sudanese refugee families in different interventions corresponding to their needs.

Plan International Egypt, in coordination with the UNHCR, work on the crisis with a special focus on protection programs as an initial stage. The situation continues to be serious with its gradual increase of refugee influx from Sudan into Egypt, and Plan Egypt provided capacity development for the community development association (CDA) in Aswan. They received Safeguarding and an inclusive orientation about Plan International policies through the HR support. As well, the volunteers received orientation session, in coordination with the UNHCR, on international humanitarian concepts. The session tackled specific topics like the definition of refugees and their rights as well as the available services for refugees in Aswan.

The majority of arrivals from Sudan are women and children, leaving behind their houses and belongings, thus carrying few items to Egypt. During the discussion and assessing their needs, it was clear that basic needs; food and shelter are dire needs and they flagged how the prices are impacting them as they cannot afford to rent rooms on their own. Children are upset about leaving their friends and they worry about lagging behind in education.

Plan International Egypt emergency response team has succeeded in reaching out and mobilizing around **400 Sudanese families and individuals** to support them with multipurpose cash, dignity kits, and hygiene kits to help families coming from our neighboring country feed into their basic needs; ensuring children, youth, and their parents are able to cope with the daily requirements. However, after carrying out the "Vulnerability Assessment Tool" and carefully assessing the vulnerability status, it turned out that **274 Sudanese refugees** needed multipurpose cash, where **174 households (HH)** were granted the vouchers. As for the kits, 200 Sudanese men were given hygiene kits, and 246 women, adolescents, and youth were given dignity kits.





# CHILDREN IN NEED

Thousands of Sudanese children who have been surviving the gunfire, air strikes, and the ongoing killings that forced them to leave their homes and flee to neighboring countries caused severe trauma and sensitive mental conditions, thus leaving them with the minimal possibility of bypassing this tragic state. Now, family members are shattered; each one goes in different directions seeking life.

Children witnessed their friends, relatives, and neighbors brutally shot in front of their eyes causing them to suffer from anxiety and stress disorders. Refugee families, especially children, and women, need psychological support to push them to survive the disaster they have been exposed to. Accordingly, in the coming period, it is planned that the Emergency Response Team will deliver "Rapid Gender Assessment Tool" to identify the gaps and the needed solutions to carry-over and the next steps advised to be taken to provide a helping hand to the Sudanese in need.



## EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM IN ACTION

In light of the situation, Plan Egypt conducted a Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) with the aim of gaining a comprehensive understanding of the needs of Sudanese families who have sought refuge within Egyptian borders. The RNA took place in Aswan beginning of May and employed a robust methodology including key informant interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions. This approach enabled us to gather vital information from various stakeholders including Sudanese refugees, local community members, government representatives, community-based organizations (CBOs), and peer organizations ending with creating the Emergency Response Plan. The team's efforts included communicating with governmental entities, and relevant stakeholders to assist with the situation in Aswan and at the borders as well. Additionally, they selected volunteers from the CDA to handle the logistical matters. Moreover, the team mapped Sudanese families' locations and conducted field visits to mobilize families and assist urgent needs. They have also organized volunteers to support in the mobilization, kits distribution and provide cash assessment as the action continues.

On the first implementation day in Aswan, Sunday May 28th, Plan Egypt team started the actual on-ground implementation with a couple of tasks to ensure the facilitation and proper handling of the critical situation. Initially, Egypt team mobilized 10 volunteers from the CDA and they cascaded roles and responsibilities to them accordingly.







## VOLUNTEERS HAND IN HAND

The volunteers were divided into two teams: one team leading the registration of the Sudanese families and distribution of the kits to keep track of the correct amount numbers; while the other team was responsible for mobilizing the maximum number of Refugees from Sudan who were in dire need of support.

In addition, Egypt emergency response team was responsible for preparing the warehouse and packing the kits that were distributed among the refugee families. Moreover, the team managed the preparation of the coffee break packages for the ongoing awareness sessions on protection and safeguarding which included water, juice, and dry food.

At Plan Egypt, we are deeply committed to alleviating the suffering of those affected by the Sudan crisis and to empowering vulnerable communities. Through this assessment, we have gained invaluable insights into the needs and priorities of both Sudanese refugees and the host communities. This knowledge will guide our interventions as we strive to provide life-saving assistance, protection, and essential services to those who need it most.

We have been listening to stories and reading reports on gender-based violence, including sexual violence, from the Sudanese families which drew Plan International Egypt emergency response team to provide protection and safeguarding awareness sessions tackling the topics of self-defense, the know-how of mingling with different cultures and how to place boundaries with other people.



## PROTECTION AWARENESS SESSIONS

Having a child living within the context of the latest Sudanese crisis, will inevitably expose them to many difficulties and risks, especially with regards to Safeguarding and child protection.

Based on these risks, PiE presented an awareness session on Safeguarding and child protection in emergencies which will help the displaced Sudanese families to protect their children and youth from all forms of violence: bullying, abuse, harassment and exploitation.

Role plays were carried out to better help the beneficiaries visualize the context and react to it. Mobilizing 100 Sudanese per day - thus reaching a total of 417 women, men, and children in four days- is quite an achievement, but still, more support is needed.

The Sudanese families were interactive and discussed some possible risks they may face as a result of the exceptional circumstances resulting from the outbreak of war. They also requested some engaging sessions to be tailored specially for children and presented in the upcoming activities in the CDA.



# FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

On the other hand, M&E team conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) during the first days of the interventions to achieve total rounds of 11 FGDs for the beneficiaries with a total number of 52 attendee (44 female and 8 males). The main objective of the FGDs is to gather feedback and perceptions in order to better comprehend the participants' opinions, and experiences regarding the project's implementation, distribution process, and the effectiveness of the provided assistance. Moreover, FGDs help uncover any challenges or barriers faced by the beneficiaries during the distribution of kits and cash vouchers. Participants can share their difficulties, such as logistical issues, communication barriers, or any cultural or social factors affecting the distribution process. Also, they enhance transparency and accountability in the project's implementation. By involving beneficiaries in discussions, create a space for them to voice their concerns, suggestions, and any grievances they might have.

The feedback and response mechanism for the new project in Aswan for the Sudanese crisis, as gathered through the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), provided valuable insights and key findings. The participants' perspectives shed light on various aspects of the project, including the effectiveness of the sessions and the distribution of hygiene kits. Here are the main conclusions drawn from the analysis:

**1.Relevance and Coverage of the sessions:** The sessions were perceived as relevant and informative by the participants. They appreciated the topics covered, such as health, education and hygiene practices. However, there were suggestions to expand the scope of the sessions to include other relevant areas such as university education, job opportunities.

**2.Satisfaction with Hygiene Kits:** Overall, the participants expressed satisfaction with the hygiene kits distributed. They acknowledged the usefulness of the kits and appreciated the inclusion of essential items. However, there were suggestions for additional items, particularly food supplies, to better meet their immediate needs.

**3.Challenges in Attending Sessions:** The participants reported minimal challenges in attending the sessions. The location and timing of the sessions were generally deemed suitable and accessible. However, some participants mentioned the need for clearer directions to the venue, especially for newcomers.

**4.Reception of Feedback and Concerns:** The project team was highly praised for their responsiveness and communication during the sessions and distribution process. Participants felt that their feedback and concerns were well received and addressed by the team. The clarity of answers and the inclusion of suggestion boxes were particularly appreciated.

**5.Suggestions and Recommendations for Enhancement:** The participants provided valuable suggestions and recommendations to enhance the project's effectiveness. These suggestions included the provision of food assistance, financial support for rent, income-generating projects, improved access to healthcare, enhanced education support, integration and employment opportunities, and additional support for children.

In conclusion, the feedback and response mechanism employed in the new project in Aswan for the Sudanese crisis proved to be effective in capturing the participants' perspectives and suggestions. The sessions and distribution of hygiene kits were generally well-received, with participants expressing satisfaction and appreciation for the efforts made by the project team. The suggestions and recommendations provided by the participants offer valuable guidance for further enhancing the project's outcomes and addressing the specific needs of the Sudanese community in Aswan.

By incorporating these suggestions into future project planning and implementation, the project team can work towards maximizing the positive impact on the lives of the participants and creating a more comprehensive support system. Overall, the FGDs served as a valuable platform for gathering feedback, understanding the participants' experiences, and driving continuous improvement in the project's approach.





Hail to Plan Egypt staff who have been relentlessly working around the clock to ensure Sudan families are safe, protected, and well-equipped in a country they are still not familiar with. However, we still need much more support to provide the required assistance to the Sudanese in need and alleviate their suffering.

