

Overseas Processing Entity

Accra – Ghana

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

Darfur Refugees in Eastern Chad

**14 January 2010 Web conference with the
Cultural Orientation Resource Center, Center for Applied Linguistics**



Overview



- Basic Bio-data Information
- Proposed P2 Group
- The Chad/Sudan Situation
- CO Programming
- Implications for Resettlement
- Reading and Recommendations

FAQs



- Darfur means Land of the Fur. There are three districts: West, North, and South.
- Indigenous languages are Zagarwa, Fur, and Massalit.
- Many individuals speak Arabic.
- Most Darfuris are Muslim.
- Living conditions in both Sudan and Chad are harsh and resources limited.
- Darfuris tend to be nomadic herders with a communal home village.
- Dates of birth and timelines are often unknown with this population.

UNHCR Proposed Group Referral

- Multi-year program proposed to start in 2010 (This P-2 is still under consideration by PRM.)
- Would consist of Darfuri refugees from 12 camps of Eastern Chad
- Arrived between 1 Jan '03 – 31 Dec '04
- Recently completed verification exercise
- Vulnerabilities:
 - Legal/physical protection
 - Survivors of Violence & Torture
 - Women at Risk
 - Medical Needs



About This Group

How is this refugee group unique:

1. This is a “new” refugee group – they fled between 2-6 years ago.
2. Their refuge is in close proximity to their homelands. They may at times return to Sudan, yet they have no secure lifestyle.
3. They have been marginalized in Sudan for decades, are poorly educated, and are not exposed to modern amenities and/or cultures.
4. There is little to no pre-established community in America.

Note: Approximately 300-500 Darfuri refugees have been resettled from Ghana. Their circumstances are slightly different and they do not necessarily have these same distinctions.

Crisis in Darfur

- Conflict in Darfur has led to one of the biggest humanitarian emergencies in recent times.
- The plight of Darfuri refugees has drawn international attention.
- 300,000 people are presumed to have died in the conflict.
- Some 2.7 million people have fled their homes.
- In late 2003, some 2,300 Darfuri villages were destroyed by Janjaweed militia, leading to a mass influx of refugees into eastern Chad.
- Non-Arab Darfuri civilians continue to be the target of deliberate attacks.

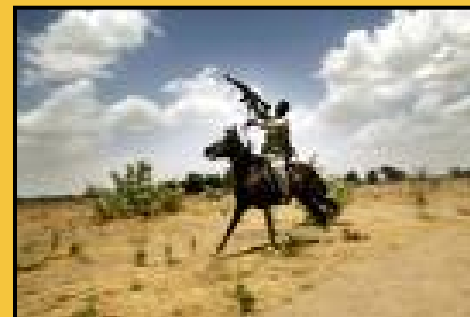


Across Chadian and Sudanese Borders

Nearly half of Africa is covered by the pastoral lands of herding villages, and much of this land has great wealth below and poor people above. They are among the three hundred million Africans who earn less than a dollar a day, and who are often pushed out of the way or killed for such things as oil, water, metal ore, and diamonds. This makes the rise of rebel groups very easy.

Among the rebels are the Sudan Liberation Movement, the Sudan Liberation Army, the Justice and Equality Movement, and several others. There are other groups in Chad, and they travel across the borders as they please. Where they get their guns and money is often a mystery, but Darfur has been filled with automatic weapons from the time when Libya attacked Chad and used Darfur as a staging area.

-Daoud Hari, The Translator



Life in Darfur



While the Darfur provinces have for years been ignored, exploited, and caught in the midst of regional wars, prior to the calculated attacks on Non-Arab Darfuris in 2003, they lived in relative peace. Their lives were steeped in tradition, they had families and homes, trade and work enabled basic self-sufficiency, and they had a community.



Camp Life



Photos taken at the Eastern Chad Refugee Transit Camp

Darfuri Refugees in Eastern Chad

- Over 260,000 Darfuri refugees strung along the Chad/Sudan border in 12 camps.
- Primarily of Zaghawa (44%) Massalit (44%) and Fur (3.4%) ethnic groups.
- Despite the presence of international peacekeepers, refugees are still exposed to daily security threats.
- Competition over natural resources has led to tensions between the host community and refugee populations.
- Mainly farmers but despite efforts to promote self-sufficiency, the refugees continue to be almost entirely dependent on humanitarian assistance to meet all of their needs.



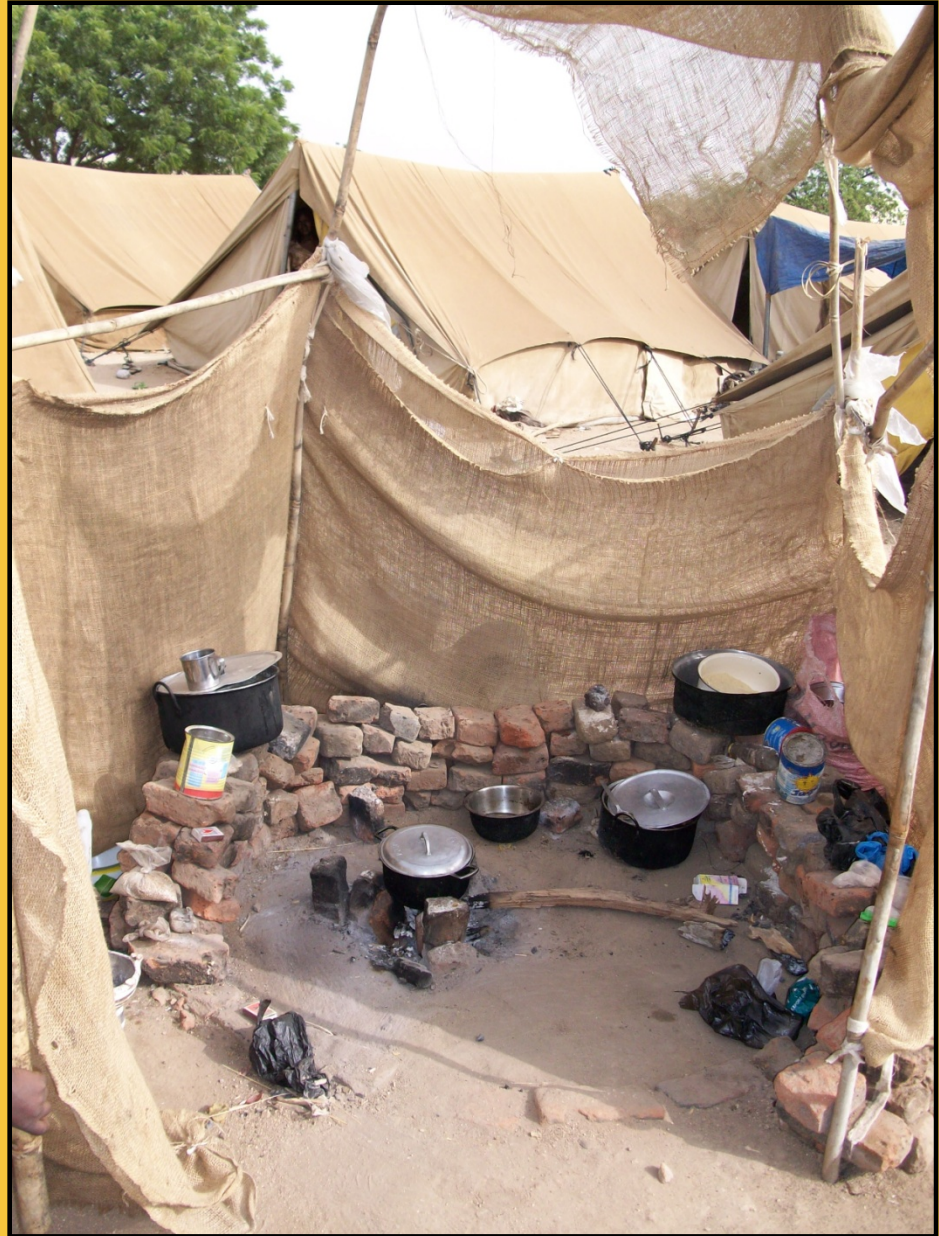
Cooking

Camp kitchens are ad hoc; women make use of any available resources and often share spaces and duties.

Meals consist of a grain base and are at times accompanied by mentionable amounts of meat or fresh vegetables.

Tea is a staple in the community.

Firewood is quite hard to come by and often requires refugees to leave the safe confines of the camp, thereby putting women and children at risk of attack.



Water Storage

Drinking and bathing water is supplied by the camp.

Water is in high demand and in short supply in Chad; hence, refugees may go days without new rations or wait for hours in line.

There is no indoor plumbing in Darfur (aside from for the very few wealthy) or the camps.



Cleaning and Chores

Cooking, cleaning, fetching water, and caring for children falls upon the shoulders of women and girls.

Traditionally, men would care for livestock and oversee community life and/or issues. However, many of these responsibilities cease to be needed in camp settings and the men spend much of the day socializing.

During the dry seasons, it is a never-ending task to keep the dust out and items clean. The rainy season then presents its own problems of drying clothes, keeping rain out of the tent, and avoiding mold.



Home

Each family is provided a tent and assigned a residential zone.

Mosquito nets are provided ; however, as you can see, the stifling heat forces everyone to rest as best they can.

Belongings are kept close and consist of only the most basic items.



Education & Employment

There has been no consistent, standardized schooling in Darfur for, arguably, the past thirty years. Most older applicants thus far have only attended Koranic schools.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and Refugee camps have a commitment to provide primary education; attendance and homework are optional.

Girls are less likely than boys to complete an education and/or attend school.

Darfuri men, women, and children are generally experienced in farming, cattle rearing, trading, and various skilled trades (carpentry, sewing, etc.)



Community Life and Roles

Tribal leadership and the support of the community is at the center of social life. In Chad, although restricted to the camps, these same general social systems remain in place.

While there are distinguishable lines between male and female activities, all partake in the daily and lifelong activities of a family and community.

Football, prayer, mediations, births, deaths, and so on will bring a group together for hours or days at a time.



Cultural Orientation



OPE Accra administers a 3-day CO program for all approved applicants 15 and over.

Emphasis is placed on Self-Sufficiency, Employment, Time Management, and Cultural Adjustment.

CO is essential to inform traveling refugees about what services and expectations they should have about their new lives in America.

CO for Chad

- Pictorially based
- Initiates conversation
- Visual cues
- Practical activities

Activity based classes for Children ages 7-14 were introduced



How CO is Changing



Concentrated Curriculum

Extended Schedule

Key Words

Pictorial PowerPoints/Videos

Elective programming for groups such as: children, women, the elderly, etc.

CO tailored to the cultural nuances of the group (e.g. women and men will self-segregate)

Finance: Key Words

Money – Paycheck – Budget – Account – Cash - Savings

Applying the CO Continuum

Information Campaigns

-amongst aid workers

-with camp leaders

Dialogue with Refugees

Working together with
partners at the

International

Organization for

Migration (IOM) and

UNHCR

Extended CO

Pre-Departure CO

Arrival CO and VOLAG
feedback/stories

Primary Implications on Resettlement

- Language
- Medical & Psycho-social Needs
- Polygamy
- Role of women/children
- Lack of exposure to western culture and/or modern amenities

Things to Consider

Questions for Affiliates to ask themselves:

1. What employment opportunities are the Darfuris qualified for/available?
2. What discussions need to take place around employment?
3. How will we encourage the women to work?
4. How will we engage with the women and children?
5. What kind of parenting programs do we have?
6. What are our communication methods?
7. How will health and hygiene be addressed?
8. What transportation methods do we have available?
9. How will we create a community for them to thrive?

Suggestions

Extensive planning, sponsorship, and volunteerism will be required for each newly arriving refugee family in order to establish a solid base.

ESOL and “on-site, active” acculturation is encouraged.

Create a community.

Be prepared and ahead of the game. They are an absolutely lovely community. However, the Darfuri people will have lots of questions, obstacles to overcome, and social nuances to become accustomed to...nothing new to all of you!!!

Why feedback is crucial ...

As with any new group, feedback from those on the domestic side is crucial.

Sudanese groups cannot be defined by the previous experiences of the Lost Boys nor are they necessarily similar to other groups from the Horn of Africa.

CO trainers overseas will benefit from correspondence following Darfuri arrivals. Refugee's experiences feed back into CO and information campaigns.



References and Recommended Reading

- Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide - Gerard Punier
- The Translator – Daoud Hari
- Darfur: A New History of a Long War – Julie Flint
- Darfur: The Culture and the People
<http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/students/darfur/documents/darfur-culture-guide.pdf>