

**Migrants, Refugees Flee to Chad**  
**By Joe DeCapua, Voice of America**  
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Migrants and refugees are entering Chad from the north, east and south, as they flee violence and instability in neighboring countries. The International Organization for Migration is appealing for three and a half million dollars for emergency humanitarian assistance.

On Chad's eastern border, migrants and refugees are escaping fighting in Sudan's Darfur region. Two Arab tribes are battling for control of gold mines.



IOM Chief of Mission in Chad, Qasim Sufi, said the latest influx from Darfur began three weeks ago.

“There are more Chadians returning to Chad, who were doing some work in Sudan, than the refugees. So around 9,000 refugees and almost 17,000 Chadian migrants, who came back.”

They're crossing into Chad at the Sahara Desert border town of Tissi.

“At the moment it's very, very hot in this place. The temperature is around 45 (Celsius) and they have to walk for so many days before they reach a safe place along the border in Chad,” he said.

The latest arrivals are in addition to about 3,000 Chadian gold mine workers, who fled the fighting earlier. They crossed the border at the town of Adre.

On Chad's northern border, about 1,600 Chadian migrants have arrived from Libya since February. Sufi said they crossed into the Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti regions.

“We started to receive a group of migrants actually in very, very deplorable condition. They have nothing. And all are men. And it seems that these people are people that were in detention centers on the other side and now have been released and sent back home because they were told they don't have the right documents.”

Sufi said that some were beyond help when they arrived.

“People are in very, very serious condition because we had several migrants who died upon their arrival or immediately left for the hospital,” he said.

Meanwhile, on the southern border with Central African Republic about 6,000 refugees have crossed into Chad. That follows the military advances of the Seleka rebels in CAR.

But Sufi warned that a much bigger problem may arise. He says there may be hundreds of thousands of Chadian migrant workers in CAR. If they decide to flee that country, it could create a huge humanitarian crisis.

“That will need a big effort from the international community to accompany the government of Chad to deal with it,” he said.

Sufi said that many of the migrants returning to Chad had been the breadwinners for their families. So, the loss of their jobs will create hardships for many people. He added there could be tension between the new arrivals and the host communities.

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