



CHAD RED CROSS HUMANITARIAN SERVICE POINTS

Feasibility assessment for the use of cash
as humanitarian assistance modality for migrants
in transit through Chad

Regions: Batha and Ouaddaï | October 2024

Executive summary



Croix-Rouge du Tchad

Chad is a country of origin, transit and destination of migration. Different provinces of Chad, but particularly Batha and Ouaddaï, have become migration routes because of their geographical positions, notably bordering Libya and Sudan.

The Red Cross of Chad, through its provincial committee in Batha has been implementing the “AL-MOUHADJIRINES Project” in Ati, since June 2022. This project aims to contribute to the protection of migrant populations in the Province of Batha through humanitarian assistance and services. The assistance is provided through the model of Humanitarian Service Point¹ (HSP).

Chad is also part of the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Global Route-Based Migration Programme², which aims to save lives and improve the safety and dignity of migrants, refugees, and other displaced people along dangerous and deadly migratory routes.

In a context of increased migration through the routes that cross the Batha and Ouaddaï regions, the Chad Red Cross is exploring opening new HSP along the migratory route in Oum Hadjer and Abeche locations and is considering using cash as assistance modality.

Goal of Feasibility Assessment: Understand if cash is appropriate, feasible and viable to support emergency basic needs as part of Chad Red Cross Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs) for people on the move through the Batha and Ouaddaï regions.

Note: this feasibility assessment focused on services to migrants in transit and does not include Sudanese refugees arriving into East Chad refugee camps since 2023, as they are assisted by different humanitarian programmes delivered by the Red Cross Red Crescent and other humanitarian organisations.

¹ [Humanitarian Service Points](#)

² [IFRC Global Route Based Migration Programme](#)

Context

The country migration profile developed in 2022 by the Government of Chad, with support of IOM, indicates strong presence of nationals of neighbouring countries. Sudan, Cameroon, Nigeria and the Central African Republic represented 84.3% of the foreign population established in Chad in 2022. According to [UNHCR](#) Chad is Africa’s largest refugee host per capita with over 1.4 million refugees and asylum seekers in the country. Since 2023, due to conflict in Sudan, the refugee population in Chad has seen a considerable increase.

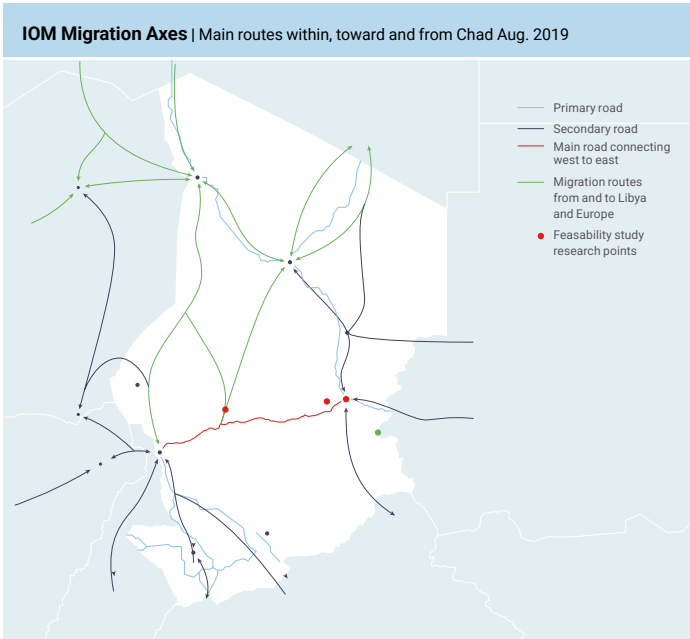
Migration trends highlighted the provinces of Batha and Ouaddaï as key areas of migration. People from Sudan, Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Central Africa represent the largest groups however other nationalities from Central Africa, especially Burkina Faso, and even West Africa are also present.

The migration route towards Sudan through Chad had previously used by people heading to Egypt, Sudan, the Middle East, and Saudi Arabia, has been blocked since the 2023 Sudan conflict started.




Migration Profiles

Those using the migration routes through Chad represent a wide range of profiles and backgrounds, reflecting the complexity of migration flows. People on the move include refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, transhumant groups, seasonal migrant workers, and people crossing the country towards other destinations.

The table below presents a categorisation defined during the assessment:



Map: Chad migration axes and research points

By migratory status	Demographic groups	Regarding the length of stay in Chad
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Refugees from neighbouring countries· Chadian returnees· Migrants in transit to other countries/regions· Migrants seeking to settle in Chad· Migrants in need of return assistance to their country of origin· Seasonal workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Men· Women· Young people < 20 years old· Unaccompanied children· Older adults >60 years old· Women headed families· Women/ widows head of household-especially from Nigeria· Women and children families reunited and separated by second migration of man	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· New arrivals: 1 day < 1 week· In transit: 1 week < 6 months· Long Transit: 3 years < 15 years· Settled people

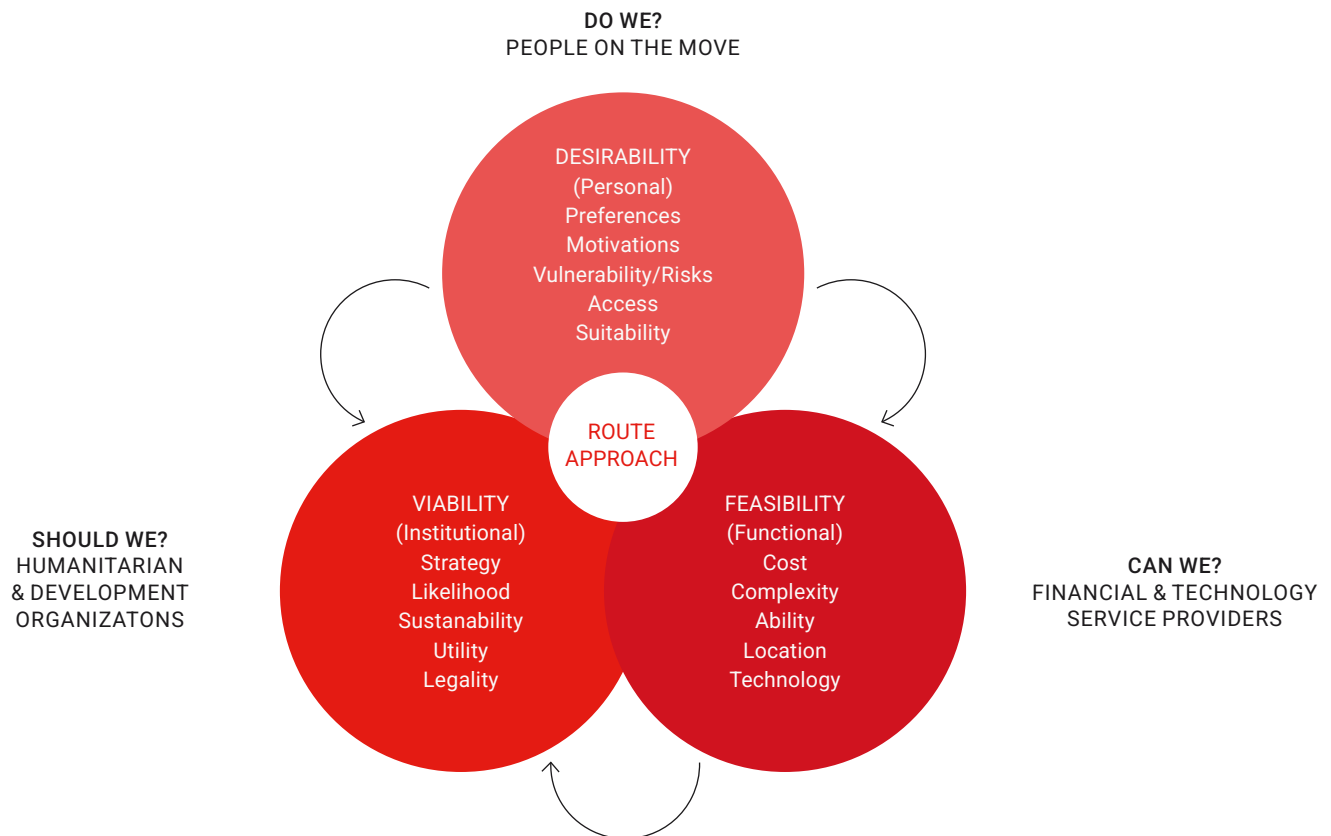
Vulnerability indicators

There are a series of factors that determine the level of vulnerability of people on the move, such as time of arrival, gender, marital status, nationality, etc.

The table below presents the key indicators that influence the level of vulnerability. These should inform the targeting approach of any future programmes.

INDICATORS	HIGHER VULNERABILITY	MEDIUM VULNERABILITY	MINIMUM/ NO VULNERABILITY	COMMENTS
TIME OF ARRIVAL TO THE TRANSIT SITE	First week of arrival	First month of arrival	Minimum/ No vulnerability	The longer people stay in a place more resources they find to make a living
GENDER	Women head of household with children	Women without children	Men	Related to income opportunities: less access to employment for women, most jobs require physical strength or are traditionally done by men Risk of violence and abuse Time constraints and obligations when raising children alone
AGE	Old people Children	Middle age	Able-bodied Youth	Relates to income opportunities and risk of violence and abuse
MARITAL STATUS	Widows	Divorced	Single	Related to gender > women that are widows or divorced and especially with children in charge
NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN CHARGE	Several people in charge	1 person in charge	None	Higher cost of life and care obligations
NATIONALITY / ETHNIC GROUP	People from countries that do not border Chad	Neighbouring countries	Hausa	This related to the social capital of people. I.e. Hausa group is better represented and organized and thus offers better support Minor groups that are not organized have access to less support, although they are accepted by other communities
PARENTS FAMILIES / HOUSEHOLDS	Single head of household	Couple	Families or groups of friends	Referring to the capacity to support each other
EDUCATION	Illiterate/ no education	Able to read and write	Mid/ Higher education	All migrants have access to the same unskilled jobs but those more educated one have better capacity to find, apply and be successful in getting a job
EMPLOYMENT	Not employed	Irregular jobs/ daily workers i.e. washerman or woodworker	Regular/ constant	Related to economic security and the regularity of incomes
SHELTER	Homeless	Makeshift shelter in transit sites	Rent	Shelter shows some form of economic capacity
HEALTH	Chronic diseases	Sick	Able-bodied Youth	Related with the capacity to work
FOOD CONSUMPTION	1 meal per day	2 meals a day	3 meals a day	Demonstrates economic capacity

2. Feasibility assessment findings



Methodology adapted based on CALP framework in [Mapping a Route-Based Approach to CVA: Feasibility in select contexts in the Americas](#)

2.1. Desirability – Assistance preference and suitability

Preferences

Most of the people reach the transit sites without any form of financial resources or assets, and in many cases have been without any food intake for days and desperately looking for a safe place to rest.

On arrival, the priority is survival and essential needs are food, water, shelter and health assistance followed by information and psychological support. Restoring family links has been also mentioned for cases that are in a situation of extreme vulnerability, usually sickness, and are willing to return to their place of origin.







Once the essential needs are covered migrants consistently expressed their willingness to be autonomous and the need to be able to cover their needs by their own means through income generating activities, either self-employment or working for others, independently of their migration intention. This remained a priority as it allowed them to settle or to continue their journey as planned.

“

The priority needs of a migrant are being in good health, eat well and have a shelter

Focus group Discussion participant

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BASIC NEED			PRIORITIES
			Cover basic needs Income generating activities
Food	Water	Shelter	
			
Health assistance	Information	Psychosocial support	



In relation to the preferred assistance modality, all people interviewed preferred cash as they highlighting that it supported their individual needs and emphasising the importance of being able to manage their own finances. Key informants also promoted the flexibility of cash, in its ability to respond to a wide range of needs.

Interviews evidence the wide range of preferences in terms of food and of needs of individuals.

Markets functionality and suitability of cash assistance

Markets are functional in Ati and Abeche, products and services that people require are available in good quantity and quality as for people's preferences. Migrants purchase products on small markets, local traders in their neighbourhoods and the large traders in main markets. For instance, Ati has a large and modern market with more than 200 shops, in addition to the trucks full of supplies that come from Libya.



Food is usually purchased already prepared since people that have just arrived have no place to cook nor cooking items. There is no space for cooking in the transit sites, only some common open-air areas usually used by women that make their business cooking. Fires are common in sites due to lack of cooking spaces.



Water can be purchased treated through certified vendors. People without resources would use untreated water from wells.



Health services are also available at local private or social clinics that can be paid.



Transport is also accessible with different transportation means (trucks, rickshaw, cars, van, etc.) at different prices.



Everything you
need, you will have
enough.

FGD participant



Access to markets

Products and services are accessible and no physical or social access barriers to markets or services have been identified. The only limitation is economical, due to lack of income.



Access to credit is limited and depends on personal relations between trader and customer.

Risks

Main risks identified are not related to cash assistance but are more general risks that migrants face during their journey. These risks include:

- Road cuts by criminal bands to rob travellers and cars.
- Road accidents, with serious injuries or even death.
- Human trafficking and slavery.
- Kidnaping for ransom.
- To mitigate risks, migrants often sell their phones, because having phones can help kidnappers to contact with their family to ask for a ransom.

The route from Abeche towards Libya, crossing the gold mine area, has been referred as extremely dangerous for women and is rarely used.

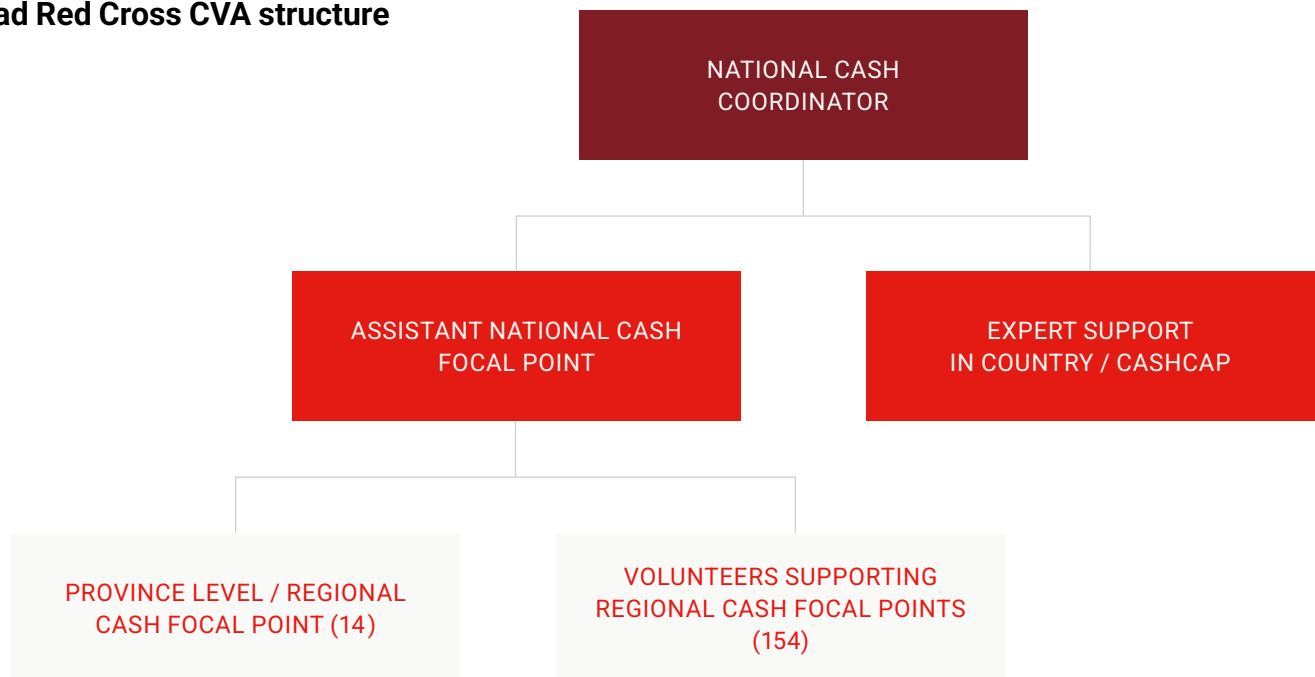
2.2. Viability

Chad Red Cross cash capacity

Chad Red Cross has a long and strong experience of using cash assistance in different contexts within the country. They started their cash preparedness journey in 2020 and since then have used cash and vouchers assistance for relief and sectoral interventions at scale, implementing direct assistance and working with partners such as the UN and the Chad Government.

Chad Red Cross is an active member of the national Cash Working Group in country.

Chad Red Cross CVA structure



Legal context

In Chad there are no restrictions in using cash assistance to support migrants. The Chadian government, in collaboration with humanitarian organizations, has developed guidelines to ensure the effective and secure distribution of cash assistance. The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) outlines strategies for providing emergency assistance, including cash and voucher programs, to address immediate needs. Since the conflict in Sudan began in April 2023 UNHCR, along with partners, has provided food and cash assistance to refugees and host populations across various provinces. IOM has implemented cash-based interventions, including multi-purpose cash distributions, to assist internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and migrants with their basic needs. Moreover, the Adaptive Social Safety Nets Project also aims to provide emergency cash transfers to help people cope with various shocks, such as climate-related events and large influxes of refugees.

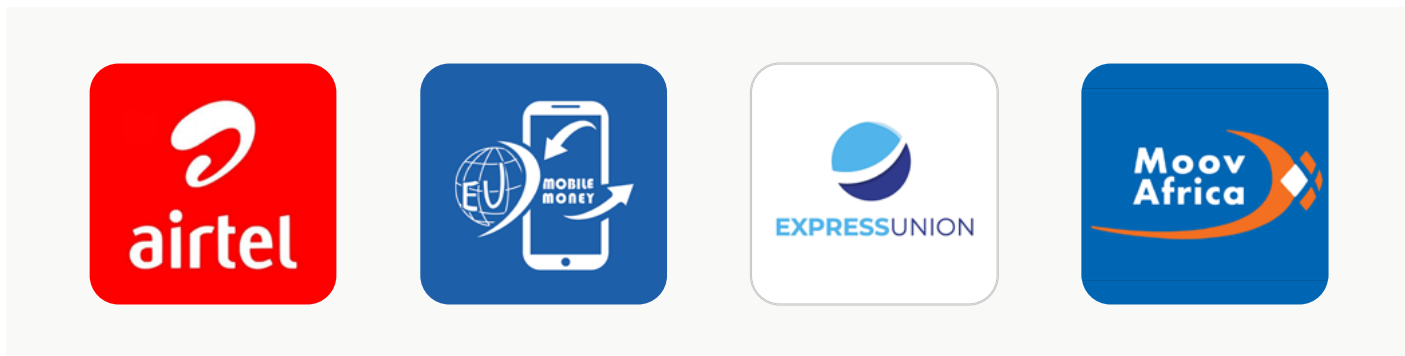
Besides, the relevant Government departments engage with the National Cash Working Group to ensure coordination and alignment with the Government's policies and standards.

Social context and acceptance

In the context of Chad, host communities are the first support for migrants. Providing humanitarian assistance to migrants is widely accepted and no conflicts or competition for resources have been identified.

2.3. Feasibility

Financial Services available



Mobile money, remittance and microcredit companies are operating in the main urban crossroads areas.



- + Phone network coverage is limited outside urban areas.
- + Mobile payment points are sufficiently available in all urban areas.
- + Access to remote areas is feasible for remittance companies but requires logistics and security.
- + In some cases, migrants have sold their mobile phone on the way to cover needs.



	CASH DIRECT VIA FSP	CASH IN HAND AT RED CROSS BRANCHES	MOBILE MONEY	VOUCHER (ELECTRONIC/ PAPER)
NEEDS	Can be used to meet all priority needs	Can be used to meet all priority needs	Can be used to meet all priority needs	Can be used only with partner vendors.
MIGRANT'S PREFERENCES	Migrants' No. 1 Choice	Migrants' No. 1 Choice Cash hard currency is the most common modality used by all and the preferred one.	Migrants' Choice No. 2	Not known & not considered by migrants
NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITY	Requires the signature of a framework contract with an FSP (Express Union/Western Union etc...)	No SOP in place for this mechanism. Also, holding cash at the branch level can generate security risks.	A framework contract already in place between CRC NS and AIRTEL. However, it requires an update.	Expensive and time-consuming to set up. No SOP in place for this mechanism.
ACCESSIBILITY FOR MIGRANTS	Can be used without official identity documents. People from Nigeria use the Hawala method.	Can be used without official identity documents	Can be used without official identity documents. Migrants have a very low rate of phone ownership but do possess SIM cards and use other people's devices to make calls.	Can be used without official identity documents
FAMILIAR TO MIGRANTS	Remittance / withdrawal options are known by some, especially people from Cameroun and Central African Republic.	Very familiar as the main payment method	Not familiar but used by some entities. Awareness needed but some peer support possible. People from Sudan are used to mobile money as in their country Bankak app is widely used.	Not familiar. Awareness and training are necessary for recipients and vendors.
COSTS	Relatively low costs (at scale) since payments don't require travels beyond location.	Very low costs since this mechanism does not involve any FSP.	Relatively low costs (at scale). Since the payment instruments are given free of charge by the PSF	High costs expected (hardware, software, staff time)

■ Feasible
 ■ Requires some adjustments
 ■ Challenging

The lack of valid identify documents is a major barrier to access cash assistance. While there are ways to overcome this, the scale of a pilot project also is a challenge when negotiating conditions with service providers. Nevertheless, the country context itself provides solutions, and some recommendations have been identified and summarized in the table below.

 CHALLENGE	 SOLUTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Lack of identity documents: Migrants often lack official documentation, making identification and access to financial services difficult. A Chadian ID card is required for using financial services and purchasing a SIM card. + Pilot project scale: The limited scale of the pilot project restricts investment prospects for both Financial Service Providers (FSPs) and the Chadian Red Cross in the initial phase, potentially making transaction costs less competitive. However, a pilot will help better dimension the program and deepen understanding of options and negotiations with FSPs. + Ownership of mobile phones is low among migrants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Beneficiaries' cards as alternative to identity documents. + The Chadian Government allows humanitarian actors to produce beneficiary cards for individuals without formal identification. These cards contain essential information and are used to facilitate access to assistance. + Beneficiary cards produced by partners enable undocumented individuals to access credit and remittance companies and electronic payment instruments (SIM cards and Mobile Money accounts). + In Chad this transfer mechanism has been successfully tested by the PARCA project (Support Project for Refugees and Host Communities). + Use a holistic approach when negotiate with FSPs may help. The pilot project using cash usually is not a standalone activity but one of the many activities the National Society implement using CVA so negotiations should be not limited to the pilot but this to be integrate in broader framework agreements. + Migrants often have SIM cards, and they don't need a full phone to encash the transfer. + Payment points have phones available where they insert the SIM to allow for the money to be transferred. + It is common for people to borrow or pay to use other' phones to make calls or transfers.

3. Conclusion

This study concludes that cash transfers are a feasible modality of emergency assistance to meet basic needs (such as food, water, shelter, and medicines) for migrants en route through urban areas of Batha and Ouaddai regions.

Desirability	Viability	Feasibility
There is a clear preference of people for cash assistance as modality. Products and services needed are available and accessible on local markets and the only barrier is lack of incomes or financial capacity.	The Chad Red Cross has the appropriate capacity, including data management and FSP agreements in place, and experience to implement cash assistance. In Chad socio-political context accepts cash as a form of assistance for migrants.	Appropriate and secure solutions for cash distributing are available and accessible to people on the move. The main challenge is the lack of identity documents, which can be solved using beneficiaries' cards (a common practice in country).

Pilot project (to be implemented January - April 2025)

Objective of the pilot project: Support migrants in transit through Chad to meet their emergency basic needs.

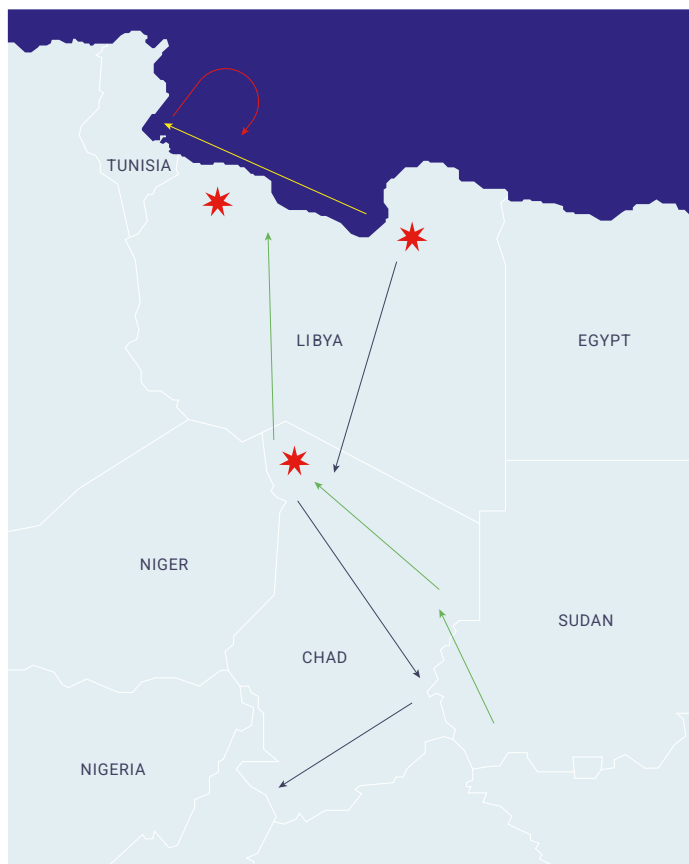
<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Direct cash via FSP. Recipients will use their beneficiary card to encash the assistance at the FSP+ Value vouchers to be used to pay for health services. The service provider will redeem the voucher at the FSP	DELIVERY MECHANISM <ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Financial Service Provider: Express Union.
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Examples of migrants' journeys in and through Chad

Examples of different migration journeys are outlined below; these were documented to understand the risks in different routes and to identify potential points for cash assistance delivery. These journeys exemplify the some of the profiles that could approach an HSP to request assistance.

**These examples are not meant to be an exhaustive list of profiles.*



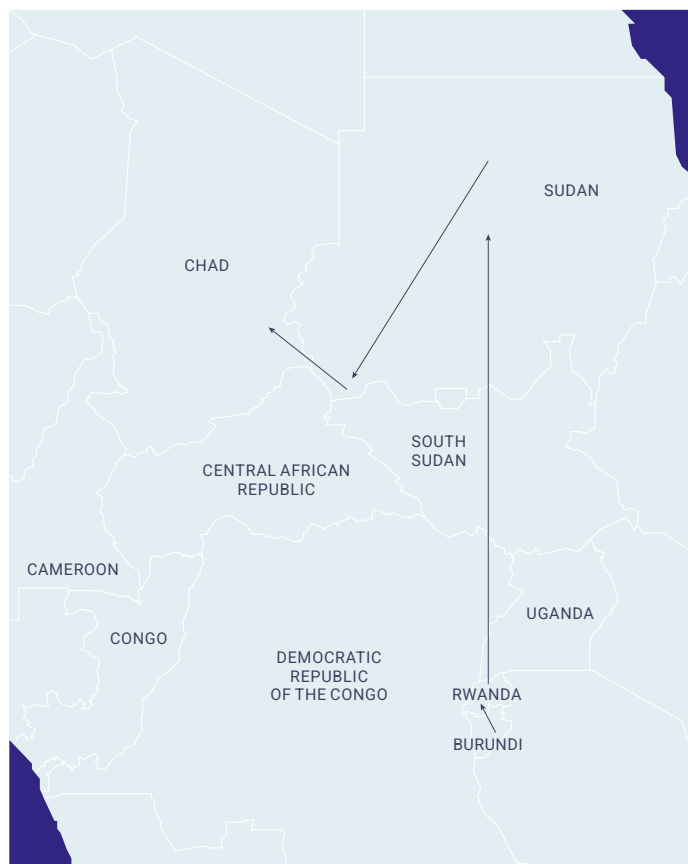
Man, age 23 (estimated)
Nationality/origin: Sudan
ID: no documents

2019 - Sudan, Nyala (origine)
 2019 - Chad, Zuoar (gold mining)
 2020, March- Libya. Ajdabiya
 2021: Libya, Benghazi
 Dec. 2021: Libya, Sabratha, first attempt to cross to Europe
 2023: Tunis, second attempt to cross to Europe
 2023: Libya, detention
 Dec. 2023: Libya, return assistance to Chad decided due to lack of documentation, and Sudan in conflict
 2024: Chad, Zouar

June 2024- Chad, Ndjamen

Objective:
 Libya or Europe

Current situation:
 Hosted by a Chadian family

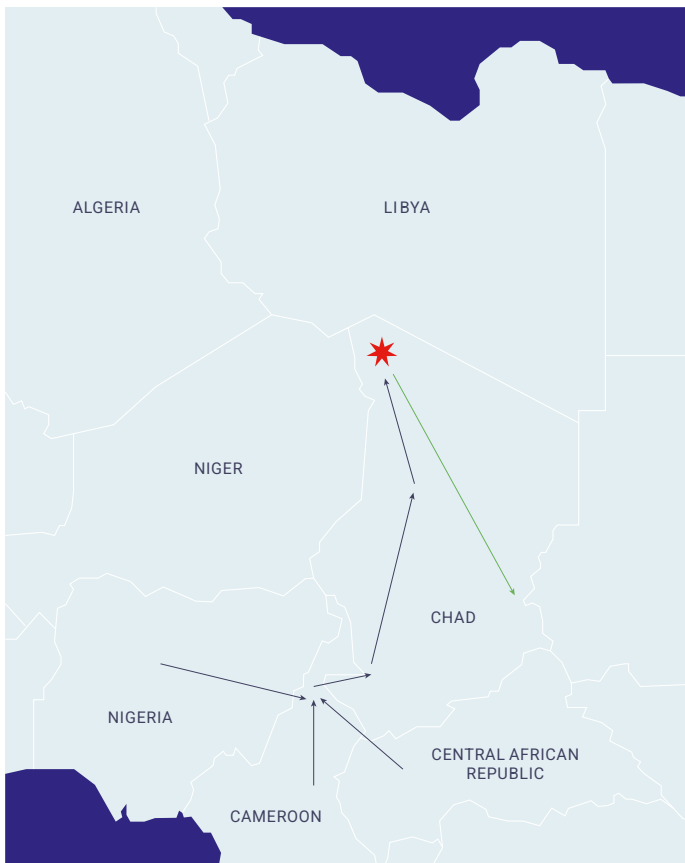


Man, age 25
Nationality/origin: Burundi
ID: Sudan

2015, Burundi - Conflict
 · Seeks refugee to Rwanda (minor)
 2016, Rwanda to Sudan (minor)
 2023 Sudan, Khartoum - conflict started - displaced to Darfur
 2024 Sudan, El Geneina - reached by conflict - refugee to Chad, Abeche

Objective:
 Return to Sudan / move to Canada

Current situation:
 Humanitarian and health assistance provided by Chad Red Cross
 Pending status by UNHCR



Group of 5 people

Nationality: Car. **Origine:** different refugees camps

Age: 20-25 years old

ID: UNHCR refugee status in Cameroon & Nigeria

Objective: Europe

Route:

June 2024: Cameroon, Garoua Boulay (meeting point)

July: Chad, Zouarke (robbed / 2 group members murdered)

Sept. 2024: Chad, Abeche

Objective:

Europe

Current situation:

Humanitarian and health assistance provided by Chad Red Cross

Pending status and return assistance by UNHCR/IOM

There are two main groups of migrants that are likely to approach an HSP searching assistance:

- + One group are women, from Nigeria or Sudan that look for a place to settle in Chad in the Ouaddaï region, or they are from Cameroon and are looking to settle in Batha. Often, women from Nigeria have left the country due to Boko Haram violence and are single or widow women with children in charge. Regarding Sudan the situation has changed since the conflict and there is a massive influx of people settling in camps. Prior to the conflict, it was common to find women of young age from neighbouring regions in Sudan looking for job opportunities in Chad.
- + Another group are migrants in transit through Batha and Ouaddaï in their way to Libya or Sudan. The Sudan route was used by people looking to go to Egypt, Middle East or Saudi Arabia, but remains blocked since the start of the conflict in Sudan in 2023. The route towards Libya is mainly used for people looking for work opportunities in Libya, and second with intention to cross the Mediterranean into Europe. These are of diverse nationalities and mostly men, as it was reported that this route is extremely dangerous for women and not used.

Social and humanitarian actors assisting migrants

Migrants in need rely first on support from other migrants and host communities as their main coping strategies. There are no organizations that provide regular humanitarian assistance for migrants in transit apart from the Red Cross.

MAIN ACTORS SUPPORTING MIGRANTS	ASSISTANCE PROVIDED
Host community	Food Donation of clothes Work opportunities Acceptance
<i>Communaute de race</i> / Host Families	Housing Food Reference to Chad Red Cross for health care
Religious entities (mosques and churches)	Housing Food Reference to CRT Reference to ethnic group leaders
Red Cross	RFL Referrals to IOM and UNHCR Health Care Food Information/ Awareness
Red Cross	RFL Referrals to IOM and UNHCR Health Care Food Information/ Awareness
UNHCR	Protection
OIM	Return assistance

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