



Humanitarian Action in Southern Sudan Report Week 14, 30 March – 05 April 2009

SUMMARY/HIGHLIGHTS

- ✚ Humanitarian situation gets more complex as LRA attacks continue in Western and Central Equatoria State
- ✚ Early rains begin in some parts of Southern Sudan, road access feared to worsen

I. FOCUS ON SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

Update on Western and Central Equatoria State

- The Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels continue to attack, kill and abduct people in parts of Western and Central Equatoria States adjacent to the border with DR Congo, according to state authorities. Since December 2008, the LRA activities have displaced around 55,000 people. Of these, about 37,000 are internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 17,695 are refugees. About 90% of the IDPs and 70% of the refugees are in Western Equatoria State. These figures have been verified by UN facilitated interagency assessments in collaboration with the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC).
- Security for the IDPs, refugees and returnees in Western Equatoria State is a big concern due to the continued LRA attacks. Beginning this year the affected communities in some cases have put up self-defense mechanisms to repel the LRA. State authorities have confirmed the emergence of community militia men dubbed "Arrow Boys" in Western Equatoria State.
- Humanitarian access remains challenging with many roads requiring armed escort. The challenges in arranging escorts have caused delays in humanitarian delivery. Most of the access roads to areas with many IDPs like Ezo are in bad state.

[OCHA, UNHCR]

II. CURRENT ISSUES

Inter-clan/tribal fights

- *Pibor County, Jonglei State:* State authorities consider civilian disarmament to be the only solution to prevent future conflict in Jonglei State. Voluntary disarmament will be attempted again before compulsory disarmament may be considered. In mid-March the Nuer and Murle tribesmen were involved in armed fighting, which displaced over 5,000 people and killed hundreds along with several abductions of women and children. The prevailing insecurity in the area is causing County Commissioners to restrict movement of vehicles thereby limiting humanitarian access.
- *Unity State:* According to the SSRRC, nomadic Misseriya pastoralists recently moved southwards into Unity State. Clashes broke out along their route killing five people. The movement of the Misseriya may cause more fighting and displacement, hence more humanitarian needs. The humanitarian community is monitoring the situation.
- The dry season in Southern Sudan – November to April/May, is usually characterized by combative fights between different tribes, clans and sometimes their sub-groups. The clashes are usually caused by seasonal migration of pastoralists in search of pasture and water resources. Revenge attacks and the seasonal migratory pattern account for the recurrence of the conflicts. Spates of cattle raids, displacements, abductions of especially children and killings are reported during this period.

[SSRRC, OCHA, RCSO]

III. POPULATION MOVEMENTS

Return and Re-integration of IDPs and Refugees

- During the reporting period, 1,298 refugees returned home through organized means from Uganda.

[UNHCR]

IV. SITUATION, NEEDS AND RESPONSE BY SECTOR

Common Services and Coordination

- As the LRA related humanitarian situation gets more complex, OCHA is consistently coordinating with other UN agencies and NGOs to undertake weekly analysis to identify gaps and share them with operational partners that may address them.

[OCHA]

Disease Outbreaks

During Week 13, the following outbreaks were reported;

- Meningitis: 18 new cases. Eleven (11) were reported from Unity State. No deaths were reported. Mop-up Meningitis vaccination campaign was done in Khormachi II, where about 55,682 people were vaccinated. Mass vaccination campaign in Budi County, Eastern Equatoria State was completed with coverage of 76.6% (65,000 persons).
- Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) / Cholera: 1,313 cases of AWD were reported from 33 counties. Lakes State has the 61.3% of the cases (804 cases), 226 were from Awerial, 161 from Rumbek Central and 153 from Cuibet.
- Malaria: 2,301 cases were reported from 33 counties across Southern Sudan. The majority of cases are from Lakes State (838) and Unity (806).

[WHO/GoSS-MoH]

Health

- Between 29th March and 2nd April, UNHCR assessed the general health situation of the refugees in Lasu Refugee Settlement, Central Equatoria State to identify existing gaps and make recommendations in areas that need further support. A meeting was held with MSF-B, UNHCR and Malteser International representatives at Yei Diocese hospital to discuss reports of confirmed and suspected TB cases at the camp. A referral system for proper case management was agreed.
- UNICEF provided 7,000 doses of BCG vaccines to State Ministry of Health, Western Equatoria State. They are expected to benefit and protect about 6,000 children under one year against Tuberculoses.
- Polio National Immunization Days (NIDS) Round III was completed in Unity and Jonglei States. However, the immunization campaign in Upper Nile State was not as well coordinated as in the other states due to in-security in the areas. The coverage will be soon compiled to identify the gaps.
- Medical supplies (64 PHCU kits, 12 cartons of bandage of 240 rolls/each and 1,920 tubes of Benzoic acid + acetylicyclic 40 grams) were delivered to partner NGO, International Medical Corps (IMC), operating two PHCC and 4PHCUs in Malakal County, Upper Nile State. At least 10,000 women and children are expected to benefit from the support.

[UNICEF]

Nutrition

- In Upper Nile State, UNICEF supported 96 malnourished children that were admitted at the Malakal Therapeutic Feeding Center (TFC). Of these, 30 were discharged (after completion of the treatment), 34 are still admitted and 16 died since January 2009. The other 16 dropped out due to the fighting incident in Malakal on 24th February. Renk TFC in the same state admitted 134 malnourished children, of which 16 were discharged and 4 dropped out.

[UNHCR, UNICEF]

Food Aid

- WFP assisted 9,830 beneficiaries with 220mt of food in Southern Sudan, including 1,110 returnees, during the reporting period
- The dozen WFP contracted trucks from Uganda destined for north of DRC held in Yambio by local authorities for several weeks were released during the reporting week following intensive negotiations between WFP and the local authorities. The trucks were transporting 100mt of WFP relief food to the northern parts of DRC through Western Equatoria without Southern Sudan authorization, creating fears that the food could land in the hands of LRA. WFP offloaded the food in Yambio on loan basis from the WFP DRC.
- WFP delivered 200mt of food from Bor in Jonglei and Lokichoggio in Kenya to Lankien and Pieri in Pochalla County in Jonglei State during the reporting week. The MSF-Holland and SSRRC are implementing partners mainly in health and nutritional programmes in the two locations, in which air delivery was carried out during the 2008 rainy season due to inaccessibility. Fears were rife that the pre-positioning exercise would be interrupted in the state after five trucks with over 50mt of food could not cross a river 20km to Pochalla following rains. WFP plans to preposition some 970mt of food in Pochalla.
- The eleventh convoy comprising 1,085 returning IDPs from Juba to Lobonok location in Central Equatoria received a three-month reintegration food ration during the reporting week. This was the last convoy of the organized return process for an initially estimated 4,580 IDPs implemented by the GoSS Ministry of Presidential Affairs in partnership with WFP, IOM and SSRRC. WFP assisted 6,050 returning IDPs with 294mt of a three-month reintegration food ration since the operation started in December.

[WFP]

Non-Food Items (NFIs) & Emergency Shelter

- Jonglei State: In Akobo, 1,000 NFI kits and kitchen sets dispatched by UNICEF arrived on 1 April. Distributions by Nile Hope will begin shortly to support households displaced by conflict in the area.
- Upper Nile State: World Vision Sudan and Medair offices have reopened in Malakal after having been relocated following fighting in the area. As yet, official numbers on households affected by the conflict are unconfirmed.
- Western Equatoria State: In Ezo, distributions of 800 IOM NFI kits by WVS to support households displaced by LRA activity began on 1 April at the same time as WFP food distributions. The distributions are expected to be completed shortly.

[UNJLC]

Protection

- A rapid assessment was undertaken by UNICEF in Pibor County, Jonglei State and 133 children and 20 women were registered as missing after the recent fighting between Murle and Nuer. SC-UK reported 21 children and 5 women to have been abducted in Akobo, Nyirol and Wuror Counties, Jonglei State. SCUUK is working through local committees to trace the children. UNICEF is working with the partners to support the return of all of the children back to their families.
- Six children who recently escaped from the LRA have been brought to Yambio. A teenage boy among them is currently being detained for questioning by the authorities.

[UNICEF, RCSO]

V. ASSESSEMENTS AND MISSIONS

- Inter-agency assessment reports may be obtained from OCHA EP&R – tedd@un.org.

END

Disclaimer: The information in this report is consolidated from OCHA field reports, UN agencies, RCO at state level, NGOs, and other humanitarian partners. The report is subject to availability of data and does not claim to be exhaustive or fully verified. If you have inputs for the next edition, or questions/comments to the current issue, please contact: maputseni@un.org