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DEMOBILIZATION OF CHILD SOLDIERS

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement makes provision for the demobilization or removal of all child soldiers associated with the Armed Forces and groups. The definition of "Children associated with armed forces and groups" includes all children below the age of 18 who are part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers, and those accompanying such groups, other than purely as family members. It includes girls recruited for sexual purposes and forced marriage. It does not, therefore, only refer to a child who is carrying or has carried arms.

As a preparatory step for demobilization of children, the SPLM in July 2004 began an audit of children in the SPLA. The information gathering lasted until January 2005 because of security and logistical constraints. The audit sought to identify the number of children in each unit, ages of children, number of boys and girls, and the number of children who can go home easily and the number of children who cannot, and may need significant logistical and family tracing. The audits yielded that majority of children are in the age group 16-17, followed by children aged 13-15. There are a few children aged 12 and below. It was noted that the very young children below the age of 13 are concentrated in a few units in the Aweil, Torit, Kapoeta, the Nuba Mountains and Bor, of which more than half (170) are in Bor. The other units have no children in the age brackets below 13. It was concluded that there is a wide specter of circumstances and vulnerability amongst children in the SPLA. It appeared that two frequently vulnerable groups amongst children in armed forces, girls and separated children, are concentrated in Upper Nile and Nuba Mountains. These areas have the highest number of children in total, and also have the

highest proportion of children who cannot go home easily and the highest proportion of girls.

The demobilization or removal of children associated with armed forces and groups commenced in December 2005 with the training of Regional Child DDR Officers in Child DDR and Family Tracing and Reunification who in turn would train the IVTs (Implementation and Verification Teams) members who would be involved in the removal of children and their reunification.

The South Sudan Interim DDR Authority commenced the child demobilization program in February 2006 in Nuba Mountains and Unity State with the technical support of UNICEF & UN DDR Unit. In contrast, the North Sudan Interim DDR Authority has not advanced significantly in the preparation of a child demobilization programme for OAGs associated with the SAF.

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THIS ISSUE'S HIGHLIGHTS:

- OVERVIEW OF THE FIRST RETURNS SEASON
- CHILD SOLDIERS AND DEMOBILISATION
- INFORMATION FAIR CELEBRATION AT MAYO IDP CAMP
- EGELAND ADDRESSES THE SECURITY COUNCIL
- OVERVIEW OF SOUTHERN SUDAN

Welcome to the sixth issue of Sudan Humanitarian Overview 2006. Produced by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in collaboration with other UN agencies and partner NGOs, the SHO aims to provide an overview of humanitarian trends and activities in Sudan, as well as to focus on particular issues of interest. Send comments and contributions to sho@unsudanig.org



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After conducting sensitization meetings with military and civilian authorities and community leaders, the South Sudan Interim DDR Authority demobilized 142 children in Unity State, of whom 141 were successfully re-united. The Malakal Child Demobilization exercise kicked off with a show of drills from the 'former' child-soldiers, with each one wearing the SPLA military uniform or a piece of it, and a number of them carrying guns. To mark the actual disarmament, the children laid down a total of 34 AK-47 assault rifles which were immediately handed over to the SPLA officials. They then took off the SPLA military uniform and similarly handed it back to their commanders. This marked their disengagement from the army and re-admission into civilian status. A total of 532 children have demobilized from various SPLA units in Sector III since February this year. This brings the total demobilized child soldiers from the SPLA and Other Armed Groups to 1013 across Southern Sudan including the transition areas.

RETURNS SEASON IS OVER

The returns season is now well and truly over. Many roads are now impassable, there is no grass to build shelters with and it will soon be too late in the planting season for people returning now to sow.

The 05-06 returns season went relatively smoothly. The vast majority of returns have been spontaneous and while there are no exact figures, the numbers are estimated in the hundreds of thousands. Southern Kordofan experienced the greatest number of returnees, approximately 175,000. Northern Bahr El Ghazal and Upper Nile state have also seen large numbers of returns.

There are, however, some areas of concern, which have received very large numbers of returnees. Of particular concern is Northern Bahr El Ghazal, where returns were significantly higher than the UN planning figure of 27,000. Because this area suffers from chronic food insecurity and water shortages, monitoring during the next few months will be a priority so that possible problems can be identified quickly, and a response mounted.

The UN is also concerned on how informed the choices of return have been. While the UN understands and supports IDPs and refugees' desires to return home, they need to be making that decision based on solid information on 1) the conditions in their areas of return, 2) what assistance is available in the areas of return and 3) what transportation is available to their location of return.

Assistance offered to returnees and resident communities during the past season usually includes:

- Food: WFP provides food assistance to all returnees.
- Non-Food items: NFIs are distributed according to the needs of the community. Some IDPs/returnees arrive in the locations of resettlement well-equipped with bicycles, iron beds, etc, while the inhabitants of the community do not have any of these commodities.
- Water: this is improving for communities due to the installation of new boreholes, drilling rigs etc.
- Seeds and Tools: distributed by FAO, to help returnees be self-sufficient as soon as possible after return.
- Transportation: for organized returns, transportation is being offered from area of displacement to home area.

There were two major UN organised return movements during this past return season (Dec-May): the Bor Dinka returning to Jonglei state from Western Equatoria and IDPs in South Darfur returning to Northern Bahr el Ghazal. Both populations were prioritised for organised return based on the conditions of insecurity where they were living.

Bor Dinka

This population was made up of 34 cattle camps with a population of approximately 12,000. The UN provided assistance to 4,000 vulnerables, mainly women and children, in the form of shelter, food, water, sanitation, health and transportation to Jonglei state. Transportation assistance was provided from: Western Equatoria to Juba by truck, then from Juba to Bor by barge by IOM, and onward from Bor to home payams by UNHCR.

In Yei town, IDPs living in conditions of insecurity are currently being provided similar assistance, primarily to Jonglei state. Due to the increasing tensions in Yei town, the UN will organise a return of some of these IDPs during the rainy season.

Southern Darfur IDPs

Around 9,700 vulnerable IDPs were assisted in returning to Northern Bahr El Ghazal from South Darfur. The organized return was completed mid-May.

State governments, have also organised returns, including Warrap, Northern Bahr El Ghazal, Unity and Southern Kordofan. Unfortunately, these movements were undertaken without the consultation of the UN.

The UN is now working with local authorities to ensure that efforts are conducted jointly next season. As already announced, the GOSS plans to allocate \$24 million for the return of 150,000 people, mainly from Khartoum. While some of this budget may be used to purchase trucks for the transport section of the operation, the UN has been advocating with the GOSS to invest the bulk of resource into reintegration in home communities rather than on return routes.

Whilst the returns process gets the most attention, reintegration is by far the more important and challenging aspect of the operation. The stand of the UN is not to discourage return but to make sure that people are able to remain in the locations of return by ensuring services such as water, healthcare, education, food etc are made available to the returning populations.

The UN has requested US\$80 million for returns and has so far received an estimated US\$19 million from the international community. UN was able to achieve much this past season but will need more funds for the next returns season. Far greater amounts in the hundreds of millions of dollars (eg. \$800 million for food assistance alone) is required for massive reintegration efforts to ensure returns are sustainable.

Lastly, a word of caution to those still planning to return now that the rains have started. They should be sure to know how they will be sheltered during the rains, given the lack of grass; how they will harvest or access food, given the lateness in the planting season, and; exactly how they plan to complete their journey home, given the difficulties in road transport. If these three questions cannot be answered then they should consider postponing their return until next season.



EGELAND ADDRESSING THE SECURITY COUNCIL:

- **Worldwide number of Refugees fell to 8.4 million in 2005**
- **Worldwide number of displaced persons is over 20 million**
- **Prospects for return are improving in a number of countries including south Sudan.**

New York, 28 June 2006: Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Egeland, delivered an important statement to the open meeting of the UN Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts. He began his statement with a positive note saying that there were signs of progress to better protect civilians caught in conflicts. He then outlined three areas of progress:

Firstly, while there are over 20 million displaced persons of concern to the UNHCR worldwide, the High Commissioner documents that the overall number of refugees fell to 8.4 million in 2005, the lowest figure since the 1960s and half the number of a decade ago. Secondly, in a number of countries, including in Southern Sudan and Burundi, the prospects for return for the displaced are improving a positive development. Thirdly, with a reduction in the number of armed conflicts, according to the Human Security Report, most of us are living in a safer world. Conflicts have been resolved and displacement brought to an end in, for example, Angola, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.

Then he highlighted the importance of coherent and systematic action by the international community to tackle humanitarian issues. He stated that “more systematic engagement by the Security Council in more crisis areas; more comprehensive peacekeeping; enhanced humanitarian response; and more mediation and effective judicial recourse offered in more places have contributed to stronger protection and the reduction of conflict related civilian deaths.”

As a sign of fundamental progress in this regard, Egeland praised the adoption of UNSC resolution 1674 saying that it represented a strengthening of the existing resolutions: 1265 and 1296. Together they provide a principled framework to ensure better protection for all civilians in situations of conflict. This new resolution details how peacekeeping missions can better provide physical protection for civilians. However, it still fails to ensure a predictable response to the massive suffering of vulnerable civilians.

Activation of this new resolution (1674) was also a key point in Egeland's statement to the Security Council. He urged the Security Council to have a crucial role in defining and facilitating the role and the capacity of the peacekeepers. He then suggested concrete steps in this direction: first, peace-keeping missions must be equipped with better, more comprehensive mandates and the means to fulfill them; second, new creative approaches to peacekeeping are required and the composition of missions amended; third, the Security Council must make every effort to ensure that access is granted and respected; fourth, conflict mediation and the timely and effective use of good offices; fifth, without political solutions, tragically, civilians continue to suffer and the humanitarians are left to deal with intractable conflict and open-ended displacement; sixth, targeted sanctions and embargoes are also yet to be used optimally, despite of the efforts to develop guidance for their effective use and, finally, joint planning is essential where all

key actors need to work jointly in a collaborative spirit to ensure better provision for the protection of civilians.

Egeland also cautioned that the world, in spite of the collectively achieved progress, is still a death trap for too many defenseless civilians, men, women and children. For example, In Iraq, Sudan, Uganda, Somalia, Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, civilians continue to bear the full brunt of armed conflict and terror. Despite all the efforts, women are still raped and violated as a matter of course, children are still forcibly recruited, and defenseless civilians continue to be killed in violation of the most basic principles enshrined in centuries of international lawmaking.

Addressing the Darfur tragedy, he said: In Darfur, the African Union reports that 69 people were killed in the month immediately following the signing of the Darfur Peace Accord. We know that the real figures are much higher and that general mortality is once again on the rise among the hundreds and thousands of people in Darfur to whom there is limited or no humanitarian access.

He added: in Darfur and eastern Chad, attacks against civilians continue to be undertaken by the Janjaweed, other militia groups, elements of the SPLA, and by Government forces. In late May, militia attacks around Mukjar in West Darfur killed over 25 civilians, displacing scores more. In North Darfur, intra-rebel fighting prior to and after the signing of the Darfur Peace Accord has displaced thousands and included horrific acts of violence. Janjaweed incursions moving further into Chad have brought fear and significantly threatened the civilian nature of refugee camps. Between 12 and 14 April, 118 people were shot or brutally hacked to death in a massacre in Djawara and three other villages 70 kilometers east of the Sudanese border. Recent analysis from human rights colleagues of the UN Mission indicate that this may be the beginning of a new phase of violence in which armed groups, militias, rebel groups and the army are intensifying their targeting of the civilian population.

Egeland, however, concluded his statement with a positive note saying: I sincerely believe that progress to ensure better protection for civilians has been made just not enough. The numbers of innocent civilians who continue to be killed and live with the constant threat of violence is still unacceptable. We must work together at all levels and using every tool at our disposal to provide adequate protection for those living in the midst of conflict around the world.



Egeland meeting with officials in Bor during his latest mission to Sudan



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DARFUR

Population refusing assistance: It was reported early June that populations of West Darfur refused to accept seed and tools as they were afraid of having their food rations cut. This indicates that populations have become dependent on the aid but they see food particularly as a tool they can manipulate in order to attain their own goals.

Return: Local authorities continue to promote return. However, discussions between the IDPs and the international community seem to indicate no desire of returning until security, land and provision of services issues are addressed.

Security: The month of June witnessed several security incidents involving humanitarian staff, including AU personnel. Two UN guards were shot at and wounded in Geneina and Garsila in West Darfur. NGO staff were threatened with their lives by IDPs in Hassa Hissa camp (Zalingei), forcing the organization to minimize its activities. An IOM mission was abducted in North Darfur, and released after one day, following an intervention by the AU and UNDSS. Once again, an NGO car was hijacked in broad daylight, just north of Geneina. In North Darfur, the SLA held an AU convoy captive for a day. The security situation in sizeable areas of this state continues to be volatile. General insecurity in the Geneina IDP camps has forced the humanitarian community to set up new safety procedures.

On the positive side there were reports of returns to villages that were attacked during the previous months. Inhabitants of Dito (5,200 people, attacked on 22 April) and Joghana (27,000 people, attacked on 23 April), both in South Darfur, are returning to their villages. OCHA has also been informed that some 9,000 Gimir IDPs in Kass are willing to return to their villages of origin, if some basic humanitarian services are made available.

Ban on UNMIS: Effects on the ban on UNMIS operations in Darfur, following the declaration of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on 24 June varied from State to State. On 25 June, in Nyala, UN agencies were prevented movements outside town, and NS prevented non-WFP and non-UNICEF staff to fly on WFP-Has flights. The situation went back to normal on 26 June. UN agencies continued working as normal in North Darfur. West Darfur was the most affected state of the three. On 25 June, the Wali called a meeting with UN Agencies to inform the humanitarian community of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decree of suspension of operation. He stated that UN agencies and UNMIS are to suspend their activities including meetings, gatherings, and field visits, with the exception of WFP and UNICEF. The NGOs are to operate as normal.

Protection:

North Darfur: It was reported that 7 families have newly arrived in Al-Salaam IDP camp from Korma. Nonetheless, no major population movement appears to have occurred following the re-taking of the town by SLA (AW) forces from SLA (MM) forces on 14 June. Once food distributions resume in Korma, it will be possible to estimate the extent of displacement from the area. Furthermore, 5 new families arrived from Hillat Fasher (Shereia, SD) to ZamZam camp last week.

South Darfur: On 26 June the Nyala Commissioner called a meeting to discuss Kalma camp arrangements with AUI, Police and Military representatives, HAC, UNDSS, UNMIS Protection, OCHA and NRC. The AU CivPol informed that 3-times/week firewood patrols resumed on 26 June (AU activities in Kalma camp were suspended on 8 May). The Nyala Commissioner and

the police requested for more AU police stations around the camp. It was further agreed that the joint GoS-AU patrol will be carried out around the camp.

IDPs in Duma (16 km N Nyala, tot IDP pop. 5,000) reported increased harassment by Armed Arab militias.

West Darfur: New arrivals reported in Foro Baranga from Chad. These arrivals stem from the attacks on the villages on 20 June. It is impossible for the UN to verify this information as agencies have suspended operations as per the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decree issued on 23 June.

Humanitarian issues:

North Darfur: MSF-Belgium has resumed daily missions to Korma, since it withdrew on 14 June following insecurity in the area. Other agencies are sending missions to decide on possible resumption of activities.

Also, Sudanese Red Crescent has started registration activities in Tawilla, despite initial reticence on the part of the IDPs to be registered.

Findings of an initial assessment mission to the north-eastern part of Jebel Marra indicate that humanitarian assistance is needed, particularly in the water sector.

South Darfur: Following reports of 6,000-7000 IDPs in Kass town willing to return to their villages of origin (Moro, Al Khriwa, Lima, Tawfito plus others), IOM traveled to the area, where IDPs and Sheikhs in Kass interviewed indicated that at this stage they do not want to return. They are also concerned about land occupation issues and compensation.

On 26 June Sheikhs indicated that Dito is receiving a large influx of returnees on a daily basis. No further information available. The attacks on Dito left a gap in water, health services and education. The issue is being investigated.

West Darfur: Sheikhs from Abu Zaar camp approached OCHA on 24 June requesting NFI to reconstruct the 16-24 shelters that burnt last Friday. The issue will be investigated once UN can resume activities.

Solidarite has completed a 12 room school in Nertiti South Camp. They have also built a teacher's office. The Ministry of Education will provide the teachers and the community will select people to be volunteer teachers. These will then be paid by the communities. The pupils will be from both the host and IDP population.

KHARTOUM, EAST AND TRANSITIONAL AREAS:

Khartoum: On 19 June, in Soba Aradi, a mission reported shortages of water in the area with broken down of three water yards out of six. The three water yards underwent frequent damages and repairs during the last two weeks. This pushed the price of 16 liters/jerrican to jump from SD15 to SD25. With the current situation and with arrival of rains, the price is expected to reach a range between SD30 - SD35. The NGO Triangle is progressing with sanitation activities in Wad el Bashir and el Salam camps in Omdurman, where some 510 slabs were produced and 407 lined slabs since the beginning of the project.

Agencies working at Al Fateh are engaged in watery diarrhea task force. The Department of public health has prepared detailed plan, which will be shared with agencies. WHO and State Ministry of Health identified improved sanitation and disease control as high priority needs. Key issues are focus on surveillance, diagnosis, watery diarrhea case management, and emergency preparedness.



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On 27 June, a mission comprising of UNICEF, OCHA, SC-UK and Khartoum State Water Corporation visited both Al Fateh and Soba Aradi areas, to familiarize Amy Louise Robbins, UNICEF testimonial, on the situation of IDPs in Khartoum. The mission visited the reception area of block 89 and the slab production center in Al Fateh, and also met in Soba Aradi with Women Venture Association.

East: The eastern region is characterized by chronic underdevelopment, widespread poverty and marginalization of large strata of the population. The nutritional status of the population, support to the most vulnerable, and access for health care, especially for women and children are matter of concern. The State Government and humanitarian/development agencies have taken steps to define priorities and common planning, within the framework of the work plan.

Access:

Since the completion of food distribution, around mid-June, local authorities started again with restriction of UN travel. Food distribution was immediately suspended, pre-positioning in camps where storage space exist (i.e. only refugee camps) continues. It is to be noted that during the rainy season most of the camps became inaccessible; this means that unless food is propositioned there in the coming two weeks, the beneficiaries (approx 50,000 people) will not receive food assistance, even if access is granted. Other Agencies also continue to be affected by restriction of movements and this seriously impacts on the delivery of humanitarian services to the population in need, including:

- Approval/implementation of QIPs has been halted due the impossibility for the QIP Committee to monitor the implementation of the projects;
- Impossibility for UNMIS protection to verify the allegations of abuses by Sudanese Border police against Rashaida tribes;
- UNHCR has not been able to visit the refugee camps for

the past two months (rumor of Eritrean authorities preventing a/s from crossing the border);

- FAO has not carried out the evaluation of seeds and tools 2005;
- WHO is highly concerned that with the arrival of the rainy season and the increase of communicable diseases, mechanisms of prevention have not been put in place due to lack of access.

Blue Nile: The RC office and FAO visited Blue Nile State on 11-14 June to discuss with UN and NGOs a template for assisting the state in its 18-month recovery plan. The plan was later presented to government representatives. The 18-month area based recovery plan for Blue Nile State (BNS) is expected to be completed by the end of July.

UNICEF staff have been stopped by the authorities of Kurmuk and prevented from traveling without a travel permit. The head of the local intelligence office (SPLM) threatened the UN staff that next time he will jail them if they disobeyed his instructions.

On 20 June, following an agreement between SMOH, Samaritan Purse and GOAL, SMOH sent a consignment of 5,000 anti-malaria kits which were donated by UNICEF. UNMIS Damazine regional office provided helicopter for transporting the drugs to Kurmuk. UNDP, Save the Children-Sweden and Islamic Relief Worldwide visited BNS on 17-21 June to start-up an integrated project (construction of 40 classrooms, 5 health centers, 160 latrines and 100 water points in addition to training of community committees) in several locations in the state.

Red Sea: Access is also an issue in the Red Sea State. According to field staff, no official communication on access restriction exists with local authorities. Despite all the promises of a quick solution to the access issues, most of UN Agencies staff remains confined to their offices. UNHCR staff had to be "rescued" by UNMIS in order to travel from Showak to Kassala is just an example of the seriousness of the problem. The UN is



IDPs returning home on a barge

Photo credit: SAMAJA/OCHA/2006



losing the battle in the East and its credibility has been seriously affected by the lack of a coordinated response to Government authorities. While the lack of implementation of SOFA is not only affecting the East, nowhere else in all Sudan the situation has been so serious and for so long. The forced inactivity of UN Agencies on the ground has resulted in the waste of financial and human resources.

Kassala/Port Sudan: Lack of humanitarian presence outside Kassala and Port Sudan towns is of particular concern, especially in view of a possible protection crisis. To monitor the situation, guarantee continuation of programmes and adequacy of humanitarian response should a conflict erupt, it is imperative that free, unimpeded access is guaranteed for humanitarian actors immediately to all areas in the East, including the Hamesh Koreib enclave.

Speaking of the HK enclave, SPLA has completed its withdrawal from the enclave in June. Therefore, UNMIS mandate according to CPA ended, thus UNMOs left the area early July. This would mean that even the little monitoring system currently in place will disappear. Potential consequences, as no humanitarian agencies have so far been able to operate in the enclave, are serious.

While Hamesh Koreib town is reportedly quiet, there is no information available on the situation in other areas of the enclave. GNU and the Eastern Front started peace talks in Asmara in mid-June, and will resume 17 July. Negotiations are still at the early stage and the impact can not be fully appreciated. Should insecurity increase, access and provision of assistance will be impossible, and the potential for further displacement in Kassala and Red Sea states exist.



Soldiers being disarmed as part of the DDR programme

SOUTHERN SUDAN

The situation in the ten states of Southern Sudan remained relatively stable with the exception of some pockets of insecurity. No LRA incidents affecting humanitarian agencies have been reported during the month. However, a number of attacks took place near Juba mainly in Kumbo, 10 Km south east of Juba, and Mongala.

As part of the GoSS sponsored peace talks, an LRA delegation has been in Juba for the past month and has met informally with a delegation from the Ugandan security organs in Juba. Although any negotiations with the LRA are inevitably complicated by the ICC arrest warrants, the talks have stopped the activities of the LRA in Western Equatoria. Meanwhile, the Ugandan government is identifying members of the delegation who will be travelling to Juba for the negotiations. President Salva Kiir, at a press conference stated that agreement had been reached on how the talks would proceed and talks are expected to start in early July.

The **murder of the Deputy County Health (CHD) Officer** in Yei at the end of May created an immediate ethnic schism in the town between the indigenous Equatorians and the Dinka. Street protests were held including one inside the OCHA compound involving over 100 people. Many civilians in Yei started carrying weapons and the Dinka soldiers stayed within the barracks. However, the security situation in Yei town has improved with the move of the SPLA soldiers to Lainya and the establishment of police patrols.

During the month, several humanitarian and commercial trucks were commandeered by ill disciplined SPLA soldiers and items such as fuel, food were confiscated/looted. Commandeering of vehicles caused contractors to suspend and or slow down their activities namely, JB Drilling, a contractor hired by UNICEF to drill boreholes in Aluakluak and Akot in Lakes State and civil works by CIVCON, a WFP road construction company. In other developments, a WFP food distribution site was looted Wunchuei, Warrap State. Of concern was the lack of response from the Payam Administrators. As a result of the looting the area was declared level 4.

Inter-ethnic conflict in parts of Southern Sudan has continued to affect access to some locations by humanitarian agencies as well as the overall humanitarian situation. This conflict has so far displaced more than 4,000 people. This has already disrupted humanitarian activities and access as well as the food security situation of the population.

SPLA disarmament of illegal groups in Jonglei has continued. The situation appears to have escalated with the break-away of several White Army and or SSDF elements out of the immediate Yuai area.

The SPLA began to disarm the civilian population and Other Armed Groups in northern Jonglei State as part of the Juba Declaration of the 9 January 2006. The first major clash between the armed groups and the SPLA occurred in late February around Yuai. Since then the disarmament has



continued with regular conflict between the SPLA and the armed local population. Reportedly residents of approximately 17 villages were affected and there were over 100 casualties. Though the SPLA has claimed that the armed groups known as the White Army has been disarmed the situation remains tense.

Results from an **inter-agency rapid needs assessment** in the affected areas of Motot, Phulchoul, Pieri, Walgak and Kaikhuiny of Waat, Diror and Wuror Counties of northern Jonglei indicate that food insecurity in the area has been further aggravated by the recent armed conflict. Furthermore, tukuls were burnt causing displacement and loss of assets and livelihoods. Agencies working in the area also relocated due security concerns and at the request of the SPLA. This caused a vacuum in the delivery of basic social services. Agencies are now preparing response based on the assessment team report.

The **rainy season** is now fully underway and as a result approximately one third of the airstrips in Southern Sudan have become inaccessible for fixed wing aircraft mainly in Bahr el Ghazal, Jonglei and parts of Upper Nile States. As a result of the rains there has been a significant slowing down of the return movement to the south - both spontaneous and organised - including those organised by the GoSS. The rains have effectively terminated the returns from southern Darfur to northern Bahr el Ghazal due to the deterioration of road conditions.

In June **IOM started to move IDPs from Yei back to Jonglei**. To date over 700 have been transported to Juba where they are temporarily hosted and assisted in the Lologo way station while conditions are being improved for their final transportation to Bor and onwards to their final destinations. In June UNHCR assisted over 1,000 returnees mainly from Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

With the main return season drawing to a close, a strategic and operational review has been initiated by the RRR unit and all main agencies involved in returns, to identify achievements and constraints, to formulate policy changes where needed, and to start operational planning for the next season.

The cumulative number of **cholera cases** reported in Southern Sudan so far stands at 16,889 and 502 deaths, with a case fatality rate of 2.97%. While the number of cholera cases being reported is decreasing in many areas, it remains a major concern in two States-Unity and Northern Bahr el Ghazal. No new cases of Meningitis were reported in the last month. Tearfund is preparing to vaccinate 118,000 persons in Aweil against Meningitis.

In June the GoSS MoH together with UNICEF and WHO **vaccinated against measles** the millionth child in Bentiu, Unity State on the 16 June. Also in June over 200,000 children were vaccinated against the disease. This brings the total number of children vaccinated to 1,268,750. Fourteen counties have now been covered, and the immunization of Lakes State is now complete. The campaign is on target for immunizing 4.5 million children between the age of six months and 15 years by 2007 and achieving its final goal of eradicating the disease in Southern Sudan.

The **construction of 125 new schools** (UNICEF 100 and WFP 25) has started. In addition, building equipment and supplies have been pre-positioned. The Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces (RALS) exercise designed to quickly collect and analyze data on schools and learning spaces is progressing well.

Mine action received \$36m additional funding for their activities in Sudan. It is believed that a substantial amount is likely to cover activities in Southern Sudan. This will assist the mine action teams to increase to 10 from 4. The DDR sector also received additional funds during the month to the June of \$47m.

Lack of funding for maintenance of roads has caused the emergency access roads to deteriorate rapidly during the rainy season. It is therefore crucial that additional funding is secured. Meanwhile, WFP's strategy of pre-positioning food, particularly to food insecure areas such as Northern Bahr el Ghazal, has reduced the delays of transporting food due to bad road conditions. Due to road improvements, 87% of food was transported by road compared to 20% in the past years resulting in a dramatic reduction of cost.

Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) - The allocation process for the second tranche of CHF is underway and sectors are now prioritising projects for consideration. Four priority sectors are earmarked to receive the second allocation of CHF. A multi sector component in support of reintegration activities is also earmarked for funding. This component will cover four priority States of Warrap, Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei and Northern Bahr el Ghazal.

In other developments, on 26 June **GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit** issued a presidential decree appointing Commissioners to the 14 Southern Sudan Commissions. Of significance to the humanitarian community is the appointment of the Commissioner for the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation (SSRRC) Commission.



Photo credit: SAMAJA/OCHA

Medical attention given to IDPs



Soccer, Theatre, and Food For Thought: UNICEF and Partners organise Information Fair at Mayo IDP Camp

Saturday morning on June 17th, UNICEF staff and partner agencies left their offices to take the Sudan Information Campaign for Returns directly to the people with an information fair in Mayo Mandela IDP camp on the outskirts of Khartoum city. The event provided the humanitarian community with the opportunity to engage with and share first hand experiences with IDPs about their hopes, their fears and expectations following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The message of the fair was about being informed about conditions in various locations in the South to help IDPS make informed choices about when and whether to return. The highlight of the day was a soccer match between humanitarian workers and a team from the IDP community composed mostly of South Sudanese. The match ended in a 4-0 rout by the IDP side, to wide applause from the approximately 2000 people who participated at the event.

“We understand the complexities of the returns process and the difficulties faced by many IDPs as they make the decision to return the South after so many years of being displaced”, said Ted Chaiban, the UNICEF Representative, and one of the players of the day. “It is critical that IDPs base their decisions on accurate and solid information, this event is intended to show our commitment and solidarity with them”, he added.

At a time when IDPs in northern Sudan are receiving mixed messages about life and conditions in the South, UNICEF and partners involved in the Sudan Information Campaign for Returns (SICR) like the International Organization for Migration

(IOM) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), are employing creative strategies to reach an audience that is often young, semi-literate and potentially misinformed.

Other highlights of the day included a children's choir, a drumming and dancing troupe, outdoor theatre, information market. After the soccer match, many of the IDPs who came to watch the game and live music used the opportunity to visit the information booths offering question and answers and displaying snapshots of services in different Southern states as well as public service information sheets on topics like preventing diseases.

Other SICR partners who participated in the day Save the Children UK, WHO, UNHCR, Friends for Peace and Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DeD) and their national NGO partners Gendrecenter, Sasco and Abra who work with handicapped and landmine victims.

Donations for the event were also received from the Dahl

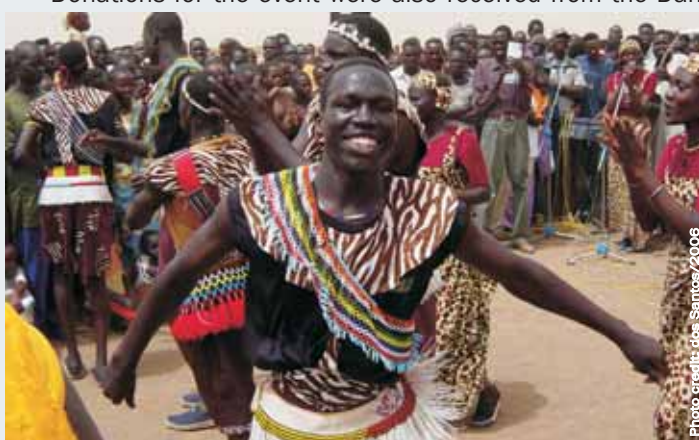


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UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS OF NOTE IN JULY

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 JULY	2 JULY 12:00 Return and Reintegration Working Group Meeting, OCHA	3 JULY	4 JULY 14:00 Sudan Public Information Campaign on Mine Awareness, UNDP	5 JULY 08:30 UN Security Briefing for NGOs	6 JULY	7 JULY 15:00 Information Exchange Meeting, Juba
8 JULY	9 JULY 12:00 Return and Reintegration Working Group Meeting, OCHA	10 JULY 13:00 UN Sector Coordinators RoS, UNDP 14:00 UN Sector Coordinators Darfur, UNDP 15:15 UN/Donor Briefing, UNDP 16:30 Interagency Coordination, UNDP	11 JULY 14:00 World Population Day - Gezira State, Wad Medani Stadium.	12 JULY 08:30 UN Security Briefing for NGOs 14:00 Information and Advocacy WG, OCHA	13 JULY	14 JULY
15 JULY	16 JULY 12:00 Return and Reintegration Working Group Meeting, OCHA	17 JULY TBC Joint North/South UNCT Meeting, Khartoum	18 JULY	19 JULY 08:30 UN Security Briefing for NGOs	20 JULY	21 JULY
22 JULY	23 JULY 12:00 Return and Reintegration Working Group Meeting, OCHA	24 JULY 13:00 UN Sector Coordinators RoS, UNDP 14:00 UN Sector Coordinators, Darfur 15:15 UN/Donor Briefing, UNDP 16:30 Interagency Coordination, UNDP	25 JULY	26 JULY 08:30 UN Security Briefing for NGOs 14:00 Information and Advocacy WG, OCHA	27 JULY	28 JULY
29 JULY	30 JULY 12:00 Return and Reintegration Working Group Meeting, OCHA	31 JULY				