



Humanitarian Action in Southern Sudan Report Week 12, 16 – 22 March 2009

SUMMARY/HIGHLIGHTS

65,000 people vaccinated against Meningitis in Budi County, Eastern Equatoria State (EES)

I. FOCUS ON SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

Western and Central Equatoria States: UNHCR and government authorities are faced with a complicated situation where crossing of the DR Congo – Sudan border does not entail safety and security for refugees. The LRA does not respect borders. As a result, establishing refugee camps becomes extremely difficult. Three refugee settlements have been established in Makpandu and Napue, Western Equatoria State and Lasu in Central Equatoria State. Insecurity has been cited among the reasons why the refugees seem to be reluctant to move into the settlements. LRA attacks are reportedly worsening and humanitarian needs are complex. No long-term solution to the impact of the LRA atrocities seems to be in sight. The withdrawal of Ugandan forces from the tri-country military operation leads to further uncertainty.

Security along the Yambio-Ezo road, particularly from Naandi to Andari has deteriorated due to LRA activities. All movements along this route are restricted.

The 34km road stretch from Yei-Lasu is reported to be in a poor state as well as insecure. Already, the current situation of the road is a major hindrance to programme delivery. The situation could be worse with the coming of the rainy season. UNHCR is mobilizing support from NGO partners and the UNMIS engineering unit to repair the road.

[UNHCR]

II. CURRENT ISSUES

LRA attacks worsen humanitarian situation in Western and Central Equatoria

Latest figures from SSRRC and UNHCR indicate that the three major refugee influx areas Ezo and Yambio (in Western Equatoria State – WES) and Lasu (in Central Equatoria State – CES) now hold a total figure of 17,679 refugees. Most of the refugees are in WES, while about 35% of them are in CES. Overall, 61,206 people are said to have been displaced by the LRA attacks (43,527 IDPs and 17,679 refugees). All estimates of affected populations have been provided initially by SSRRC (as of 06.03.09). UN-led joint assessments have verified numbers in the affected counties.

[UNHCR, SSRRC, OCHA]

III. POPULATION MOVEMENTS

Refugee transfer and verification exercise:

- Of the 11,966 refugees (over 4,615 households) registered in Western Equatoria State, 1,660 are based in the Makpandu Refugee Settlement, according to UNHCR.
- In recent weeks, there have been concerns raised over the lack of basic services at the settlement. Work is ongoing to address the prevailing needs. A total of 43 communal pit latrines and 39 bathrooms have been established throughout the settlement. The refugees have been encouraged to construct their own family pit latrines to reduce pressure on the public latrines. Renovation of old buildings at Makpandu is ongoing. One of them is expected to be completed soon before it can be used as a maternity ward. Children between five and 18 years of age are being registered for school enrolment.
- Plot demarcation is ongoing. A total of 516 plots have been demarcated, of which 504 have been distributed to the refugee households.

- To date, the UNHCR office in Yei has registered 5,713 Congolese refugees in Lasu. Approximately, 3,000 of them have moved from Nyori Primary School to the new settlement. All refugees are expected to have moved to the new settlement by now. Refugees who moved and constructed shelter structures were issued non-food items (NFIs) and a food ration card starting on 10 March.

[UNHCR]

Return and Re-integration of IDPs and Refugees

- Partners in the return and reintegration of IDPs –IOM and SSRRC have determined IDP caseloads for South-South returns in 2009 funded by the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF). The SSRRC reiterated that selection of caseloads should be done based on government priority caseloads. The first phase of organized South –South return will target about 5000 returnees among the prioritized IDPs in Lobone, Kajo-Keji and Nimule. In addition, joint SSRRC/UNMIS-RRR assessments should be undertaken in all major urban centers to determine additional numbers of IDPs willing to return.

[UNMIS/RRR]

IV. SITUATION, NEEDS AND RESPONSE BY SECTOR

Health

- *Meningitis*: 65,000 people were vaccinated during a Mass Vaccination Campaign that was completed in Budi County, Eastern Equatoria State (EES). Six Meningitis cases have been confirmed in Macii II, Kapoeta South County, EES. This brings the total cases seen in greater Kapoeta to 149 with 9 deaths since the onset of the outbreak in January. Between 10th and 19th March 2009, 14 suspected meningitis cases were reported in Pariang County at Biu Primary Health Care Centre (PHCC), Unity State by the State Ministry of Health. Two samples were collected and sent to Juba for laboratory tests.
- *Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD/Cholera)*: cases continue to be reported in various parts of Aweil East. Out of five samples collected from that area, one tested positive for *vibrio cholerae*. Hygiene promotion is ongoing within the community as well as distribution of chlorine based water purification tablets.
- UNOCHA is trying to identify NGOs who would be willing to assist with further construction of latrines in Aweil. This issue as well as cholera preparedness and response will be further discussed at the WASH subcommittee meeting. The subcommittee will be taking directives and reporting to the EP&R taskforce.
- *Measles*: MSF Spain plans to carry out a mass measles campaign in Yambio, Western Equatoria State. The 6,700 doses of vaccines required will be provided by UNICEF.
- The Accelerated Child Survival Initiative was officially launched by the Ministry of Health in Hiyalla, Torit County, Eastern Equatoria State. ACSI jump-start implementation activities started on 15 February 2009 in the County. They targeted approximately 170,000 children under the age of five and 180,000 women of child-bearing age with a comprehensive package of immunization, bed nets, Vitamin supplementation, de-worming, health and nutrition education messages as well as hand-washing.

[UNICEF]

Food Aid

- WFP assisted 68,650 beneficiaries with 1,200mt of food in South Sudan during the reporting week. These included 5,011 IDPs in Pibor, Jonglei State. The IDPs received a three-month food ration in a distribution carried out between 21 and 22 March. The UNHCR and Handicap International provided non-food items. Consultations were ongoing to reach a further 400 IDPs consisting mainly of elderly people in Likuango where the fighting took place, and interventions are scheduled for the coming week. The IDPs were displaced by inter-tribal fighting. In Western Equatoria, 6,800 LRA-affected IDPs in Naandi and Ezo locations in Ezo County were assisted with 110mt of food in the ongoing interventions, following an inter-agency verification and registration in the previous week

- A WFP partner, WVI, assisted 4,486 children under five-years of age with 32mt of one-month food rations through an ongoing Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme in Aweil East in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. A further 14mt was distributed to 824 beneficiaries to ensure the BSFP was not used as a family ration. Meanwhile, a food security monitoring exercise is scheduled in the coming weeks in preparation for an exit strategy for the programme, following a Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurement carried out on the beneficiaries in Rialdit and Rumrol locations in early February, which revealed a relatively (99.7 percent) satisfactory nutritional status.

[WFP]

Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods

- In collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), state ministries of agriculture and the implementing partners, FAO is currently undertaking the recollection of locally preferred seeds (805 MT of assorted seeds) and hand tools (locally manufactured 20,000 pieces of Maloda - spades) in preparation for this planting season.

[FAO]

Protection

- Totto Chan and UNICEF are providing psychosocial support, counseling, medical redress and family tracing for four children (1 girl and 3 boys) brought from Yambio, Western Equatoria State to be reunified with their families in EES & CES.
- 43 unaccompanied Congolese minors are under the care of ICRC in Yambio and SRCS provides support to them. ICRC plans to hand them over to UNHCR in Yambio for a possible foster care programme at Makpandu Refugee Camp.
- During the last one month, UNICEF has supported the tracing and reunification of a total of 28 children (15 girls and 13 boys), out of which 21 are Sudanese, 6 Congolese and one Ugandan. Ten of the Sudanese were brought to Juba for further tracing and reunification. Another 10, including 2 babies, were reunified with the families within Western Equatoria.

[UNICEF]

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

- In Warrap, follow-up visits were undertaken to three former Children Associated with Armed Forces (CAAF) that were demobilized from Unity State. The children are at home with their caregivers and were willing to go to school as soon as the new school year starts.

[UNICEF]

Education

- Distribution of educational materials in KajoKeji County in Central Equatoria was completed for 80 schools benefiting a total of 9,243 girls and 9,229 boys with 180,000 exercise books, 271 student kits, 271 teacher kits and 41 blackboards.
- In Uror County, Jonglei State, 44 schools benefiting a total of 7,784 girls and 15,291 boys received 172,800 exercise books, 311 student kits, 311 teacher kits, 44 recreational kits and 44 blackboards.
- A further 58 schools benefiting a total of 13,869 boys and 8,375 girls in Torit County of Eastern Equatoria were assisted with 187,200 exercise books, 310 student kits, 310 teacher kits, 58 recreational kits and 58 blackboards.

[UNICEF]

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