



ETHIOPIA

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

18 -25 September 2014

KEY FIGURES

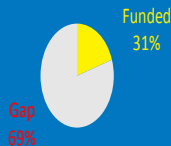
189,343

UNHCR PoC for the situation

FUNDING

USD 210m

requested for the operation



PRIORITIES

- Emergency response to flooding in Leitchuor, Nipnip and Matar
- Search for additional land in view of continued influx
- Implement mitigation measures related to rainy season by strengthening WASH and nutrition interventions and encouraging positive behavioural change

HIGHLIGHTS

- The total number of South Sudanese refugees who have entered Ethiopia since the outbreak of the conflict in mid-December 2013 is now over 189,343 individuals, with the number continuing to increase daily.
- A total of 686 South Sudanese refugees arrived in Ethiopia over the last week through the three entry points of Akobo, Burbiey and Pagak. New arrivals from Akobo and Burbiey were relocated to Matar with assistance from IOM for transport. There are currently 10,923 refugees in Matar waiting for relocation to a camp.
- The average arrival rate of South Sudanese refugees to the Gambella region has dropped to 98 persons with commencement of rains in various locations in region.
- The emergency response activities of UNHCR and its partners have continued, with key achievements including food distribution undertaken with support from WFP as well as distribution of non-food items (NFIs), family tents and soap. Latrine construction is also an ongoing activity.
- However, over the past week, the rains have returned in Gambella. The UNHCR-contracted helicopter was also unable to travel to Dimma on 23 September due to the poor weather conditions, and several of the main roads remain inaccessible, including the road from Gambella to Nyinyang.
- SO Gambella finalized the inter-agency Operations Continuity Plan for the Leitchuor Axis in consultation with partners in key sectors. The objective of the Operations Continuity Plan is to maintain sustained services to affected areas in the face of reduced staffing, closed roads and limited access, while simultaneously empowering the refugees to more actively manage the day-to-day aspects of assistance themselves. The plan is designed not only to provide continued protection and assistance, but also to re-orient the operation to function effectively in this changed environment.
- Joint sensitisation sessions with ARRA on the proposed relocation of refugees in the Leitchuor area to Okugo have been held over the last week. As the road to Leitchuor is still inaccessible due to flooding the relocation movements can only begin after the road is cleared; however, there remain mixed feelings amongst the refugees regarding the possible relocation to Okugo camp.

Population of concern

A total of **189,343** people of concern

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

The total number of South Sudanese refugees who have entered Ethiopia since the outbreak of the conflict in mid-December 2013 is now over 188,800 individuals, with the number continuing to increase daily. The asylum seekers continue to arrive in Ethiopia into the Gambella Regional State, mainly through Burbiey, Pagak and Akobo border-entry points, citing fighting and food insecurity as the main reasons for their flight. The Ethiopian borders remain open to asylum seekers. The South Sudanese refugee population has now become the largest refugee group in Ethiopia, surpassing the Somali refugee population. The rainy season has caused damage in Leitchuor and NipNip Camps and refugees in these camps have moved to higher ground within the camps and the surrounding villages.

Achievements

Protection

Achievements and Impact

- Continuous registration is ongoing in Kule camp following the conclusion of the Level 2 registration exercise last week. Registration of absentees who did not attend the Level 2 registration exercise has commenced as part of the continuous registration activities, following consultations with ARRA.
- The nationality screening exercise is on-going in Leitchuor and Tierkidi camps with approximately 9,791 persons screened so far. In Tierkidi camp, the screening exercise of 264 households suspected to be nationals has commenced. 160 households have so far been screened and their ration cards retrieved. The UNHCR protection team is following up on the screening with the zonal authorities to ensure an appeal process is put in place.
- Harmonisation of data related to unaccompanied minors and separated children as captured by UNHCR's implementing partners Save the Children and PLAN International has commenced in Kule, Tierkidi and Leitchuor camps in coordination with UNHCR.
- Although the neighbouring counties of Pibor and Pochalla in South Sudan appear relatively stable, asylum seekers continue to arrive at Raad entry point and Okugo camp. This week a total of 16 new arrivals of Murle ethnic group and 1 new arrival of Nuer ethnic group arrived at Okugo. The new arrivals cited impending insecurity, fragility of the peace, human right abuses and disruption of livelihoods as well as lack of basic services as their reasons for flight. The total population of Okugo refugee camp as registered in UNHCR's *proGres* database is 6,027 individuals, of which 3,855 individuals arrived before 15 December 2013 and 2,172 individuals arrived after 15 December 2013.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR is concerned that registration remains suspended in Pagak and continues to advocate with the Government for its resumption.

Education

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR's implementing partners Save the Children International and Plan International are registering students for Grades 1-4 for the new Academic Year 2014/15 in Kule and Tierkidi camps. Aiming for an additional joint intake of approximately 9000 pupils, this would, if achieved, bring the total of enrolled 1-4 graders in the two camps to 22,000 students.
- In a parallel effort, World Vision International has registered approximately 2,100 students for their new 5-8 grade classes in Kule camp. Since there have not been any Upper Primary service in any of the camps thus far, this intervention is addressing a serious gap.

- UNHCR's Education and WASH staff in Gambella have initiated collaboration between the two sectors through enhanced information exchange and discussions on areas of joint interest. A joint mapping is being carried out to ensure that WASH facilities in all learning centers will make the transition from the emergency phase to the permanent phase by March 2015.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Less than 20% of the students recently registered for the new Upper Primary classes are female and recruitment of new female teachers also remains low as compared to recruitment of male teachers. UNHCR and partners are advocating for a more proactive approach to address this issue.



Health

Achievements and Impact

- Refugees and other persons of concern continued to receive regular health services from UNHCR's health partners in Leitchuor, NipNip, Kule, Tierkidi, Pamdong, Pagak, Itang, Akobo and Matar.
- In Tierkidi, ARRA and MSF-H continue to provide health services at an average rate of 174 and 212 consultations per day respectively. In Kule, MSF-Holland provides an average of 401 consultations per day while in Leitchuor and Matar, MSF-F provides an average of 202 and 72 consultations per day respectively. In NipNip, Save the Children provides an average of 47 consultations per day, with emergency referrals undertaken by boat to Matar or helicopter to Leitchuor.
- Four emergency drug kits (EDKs) were distributed to health centres and health posts in Leitchuor, Nip Nip and Matar by UNICEF.
- The Polio immunization campaign was completed in most locations in the Leitchuor axis.
- A cross sectional survey by MSF-F is ongoing to determine the actual coverage of the recently completed Oral Cholera Vaccination (OCV), with results to be shared when available. MSF-F is also preparing for the third and final round of the Cholera vaccination in the Leitchuor axis, to commence shortly.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Malaria is still one of the main causes of morbidity in all the sites. Malaria prevention and control activities are ongoing through the Community Outreach Agents (COAs), including the distribution of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs), environmental management, and community awareness, with bed net distribution completed in Zones C and D of Tierkidi over the last week.
- A suspected case of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) was reported by MSF-H in Kule. A subsequent investigation was undertaken by the Rapid Response Team (RRT) and a sample sent to Addis Ababa for testing.



Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- Routine health and nutrition services are being provided in Kule, Tierkidi and Leitchuor, and at entry points including Pagak, Matar and Pamdong transit site.
- Support was provided during the week for the Outpatient therapeutic program (OTP), Targeted Supplementary Feeding Program (TSFP) and Blanket Supplementary Feeding Program (BSFP). Recommendations were made with regards to the triage and management of cases at the entry points in view of the longer stay at the entry and transit sites.
- Focus group discussions were conducted in Pagak and Pamdong on nutritional service provision as many beneficiaries did not fully understand their entitlements. These discussions resulted in a recommendation for partners to conduct orientation sessions on available nutrition services, while Community Outreach Agents (COAs) will be recruited in Pamdong to support active screening, referral and follow up.

- A costed nutrition work plan has been developed, and is to be discussed with partners based on the existing nutrition survey food security action plan. This is geared towards the reduction of the current high levels of acute malnutrition.
- 2 mobile nutrition clinics, one at Nyinyang and one at Nipnip village, continue to provide nutrition services to refugees in locations in the Leitchuor axis, while two additional mobile clinics which had been set up in Nyinyang market and the Baptist church have been flooded. UNHCR is currently discussing with its partners the need to provide food for longer periods, and to engage closely with the host community, Regional Health Bureau and Woreda staff to provide services when access is limited.
- WFP has hired 7 boats to support the transportation of food for beneficiaries in the Leitchuor axis and is currently pre-positioning food in liaison with ARRA for the October distribution cycle. Discussions are underway on the possibility of providing a 2 months' ration instead of 1 month due to accessibility constraints caused by the rains and bursting of river banks.
- Food distribution was completed in all camps, including Kule and Tierkidi. Observations were made on selling of food rations, especially sorghum, to mitigate other basic needs such as sugar, salt, vegetables and clothing. WFP, UNHCR and ARRA are now planning a joint assessment on the current food situation and the way forward.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Accessibility to several locations due to flooding caused by rains and bursting of river banks remains the key challenge for the provision of mobile nutrition services.
- Due to gaps in capacity for the implementation of the treatment protocol for the nutrition programs, UNHCR and partners are working on a capacity enhancement plan for on Community Management of Acute Malnutrition, outreach activities and Infant Young Child Feeding.
- WFP, UNHCR and ARRA are following up on complaints raised by refugees in Pagak and Pamdong regarding the quality and palatability of the maize meal. Focus group discussion guides have been developed to discuss this issue further.
- A food security meeting was conducted at WFP, and attended by UNHCR and ARRA, during which post-distribution monitoring for the August distribution cycle was discussed. The main findings indicated that only 46% of beneficiaries reported that they received their monthly ration in a timely fashion, 64% received their ration correctly and 23% reported that vulnerable groups were prioritized during the distribution. More than 50% reported long waiting times, long queues and poor crowd control. Lack of adequate fuel for food preparation was also widely reported, and 62% reported selling part of their food ration to raise money for grinding, and over 40% reported selling their ration to purchase other food items. The beneficiaries have initiated several coping mechanisms to cope with their shortages, including restriction of consumption by adults, reduction of meals and sale of firewood, charcoal and grass. The meeting also agreed that the issue of distribution chutes remains outstanding and will be followed up immediately between UNHCR, ARRA and WFP.
- A joint UNHCR, ARRA, MSF-H and Goal mortality audit was undertaken for a malnourished child who died in the Stabilization Centre in Kule camp, with gaps identified in the criteria for referral into the Stabilisation Centre. Discussions are ongoing for capacity building for partners on Community Management of Acute Malnutrition and Infant Young Child Feeding.



Water and Sanitation

Achievements and Impact

- Over the last week, UNHCR and WASH partners have continued to focus on the flood response in Leitchuor, NipNip and Matar, along with Hepatitis E prevention activities and monitoring in Tierkidi, Kule, Matar and Pagak, including responding to the water access level reduction in Kule and Tierkidi.
- UNHCR's WASH partners in Leitchuor and NipNip concentrated their efforts over the last week in constructing latrines where the refugees have relocated. Currently, there are 250 latrines in operation in the two locations.
- Water purification chemicals were also distributed, with over 90% utilization rate observed in Kule, Leitchuor and NipNip, with 28,240 sachets of the chemicals distributed to 559 households within the Leitchuor Axis.

- Two hand pumps that were rehabilitated in the NipNip host community areas will cut walking distance to collect water by over half, while water pumping to 26 water points within Leitchuor camp is also ongoing. Chlorinated water is also trucked to Matar Waystation on a daily basis.
- Continued poor road access in Kule has challenged the provision of water above 10 litres per person per day (lpppd). However, the installation of two emergency water treatment kits in Kule has assisted with the provision of water in Zones E, F and G, as the kit has the capacity to treat and supply more than 40,000 litres per day. This has complemented water trucking and the water access level in Kule has now increased from 8 to 11 lpppd.
- Soap Distribution for September started in all camps, with supplementary Soap Distribution by WASH partners expected to end with the rains. Approximately 210,000 pieces of soap will be distributed over this period.
- UNHCR and its WASH partners have drafted a six-week action plan with the objective of meeting minimum WASH standards by the end of October 2014.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Inaccessible inter-camp roads in Kule have challenged water trucking, with only 15 out of 21 water points currently accessible.
- With the rains slowing down progress in WASH activities in all locations, risks associated with flooding remain major concerns, as does the high-filling rate of communal latrines as compared to the progress on latrine construction.

Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- In Tierkidi, UNHCR's partner NRC has met its target for 2000 superstructures. 826 tukuls have been completed with mud-plastering, and barrels and pick-axes supplied for the mud-plastering exercise.
- In Kule camp, NRC has supported beneficiaries to complete 135 tukuls with mud-plastering. 50 tukuls are ready for refugees to move into, and the remainder is still drying. A number of items including 40 wheelbarrows, 20 pick-axes and 50 shovels have been distributed to support the work.
- Also in Kule, IOM has completed 280 superstructures, with 40 tukuls thatched and 40 tukuls ready for mud-plastering.
- In Leitchuor and Nipnip, plastic sheeting has been distributed in tandem with NFI distribution. The remainder of the timber frames for the construction of emergency "bajaj" shelter will be distributed this week by NRC.
- Refugees have started salvaging materials from the collapsed tukuls in Leitchuor camp. UNHCR is following up to ensure that such materials are salvaged and shared fairly.
- UNHCR and ARRA have finalized the distribution of NFIs in the Leitchuor axis, including plastic sheets, sleeping mats, blankets, plastic buckets (15 litres), Jerry-cans (20 and 10 litres) and mosquito nets.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

Achievements and Impact

- Following the initial flooding caused by the rains, water from the Baro River has further flooded both Leitchuor and Nipnip camps, displacing some members of the host community and refugees. Refugees continue to self-relocate to higher ground and other locations in the host community.
- Mapping of Kule and Tierkidi is ongoing to update the layout and identify constraints and options for expansion and planning.
- Minor road interventions in critical locations have been undertaken to facilitate movement through Kule and Tierkidi.
- A total of eight blocks have been cleared in Dimma, of which six have been demarcated. Tents have been erected in over three blocks, with the remainder to be erected when the refugees are en route. Latrines have been completed in three blocks.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Road access to several locations continues to be a challenge. Flooding water has cut across the main road to NipNip which has challenged interventions including water trucking and food and NFI distribution. UNHCR's partners in Nipnip are currently using a tractor for accessibility.
- The floods also submerged the entire area designated for the helicopter landing in NipNip, and the helicopter is now landing on the road.

Working in partnership

- UNHCR continues to coordinate the refugee response in Gambella and a number of donors and partners continue to visit the operation. In Addis Ababa, the Refugee Task Force remains an important coordination body while several consultative meetings have been held with partners, donors and UN agencies on the flooding response.
- The Emergency Response Task Forces in Gambella have continued to convene regularly to address challenges and to strategize the response in both Leitchuor and Gambella.
- In Addis Ababa, UNHCR met partners to discuss the possibility of scaling up their services in Okugo camp and how this can be done in the most cost-effective manner.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 65.7 million**, against **US\$ 210 million** requested for the situation.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.