

## Key Points

- Blockages in northern Sudan are impeding the flow of commercial traffic from the North to southern Sudan, raising concerns about the impact this may have on the humanitarian situation
- Fighting continues in Jonglei State, resulting in further displacement of civilians
- Tensions are rising in Abyei, with reports of the Joint Integrated Units starting to disband and with four UNMIS Zambian peacekeepers shot and wounded
- Humanitarian actors continue to face restrictions on access to Kalma IDP camp in South Darfur
- Elections take place peacefully in South Kordofan and final results are expected on 15 May

### 1. North-South population movements

The Government of National Unity continues to organise movements of returnees from Khartoum to southern Sudan through the Ministry of Transport and the Joint Return Task Force in Khartoum. The Government Task Force on returns has provided transportation (trains, buses and barges) to 2,544 returnees going to Juba, Aweil, Wad Dakona, Kodok, Malot, Malakal and Kak in southern Sudan.

About 1,700 returnees, according to UNHCR, are out in the open at the South Khartoum Railway Station near Jebel Aulia awaiting trains to southern Sudan. UN agencies and NGO partners are seeking access through government agencies to meet the immediate needs of these returnees.

The Government anticipates that other returnees going to Aweil will have to wait one month until another train becomes available. The next train will likely be destined for Wau (Western Bahr El Ghazal). No date has been set for the registration of those going to Wau, according to UNHCR.

#### **Accelerated returns expected in lead up to secession**

Some 300,000 returnees have arrived in the South since October 2010. Humanitarian actors are preparing for a possible increase in the rate of returns over the coming months, due to the South's upcoming secession and the returns programme supported by the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan.

Returnees continue to face security problems along travel routes. On 7 May, police stopped four buses carrying approximately 150 spontaneous returnees to Northern Bahr el Ghazal between Muglad and Meiram in South Kordofan. The buses eventually had to go back to Khartoum. Humanitarian actors continue working with UNMIS and local security forces to support the safe passage of returnees transiting through insecure areas.

The demarcation of 3,000 plots of residential land was completed in Aweil in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. Registration for plots of land will begin next week, with both returnees and local communities eligible to receive land. Land allocation and movement of returnees to the new site remains an urgent priority in order to alleviate long-standing pressure on overstretched resources in the Maduany and Udhaba transit sites, before seasonal rains begin in earnest.

#### **Kosti transit centre**

As of 9 May, there were 3,316 returnees, including 1,863 children, at the Kosti transit centre awaiting onward transport to southern Sudan, according to ADRA. More empty barges have arrived at the Kosti Way Station wharf and a convoy of barges with 700 returnees destined for Juba is scheduled to depart in the coming days. The water system for the transit centre is currently being upgraded; water will be trucked in for the returnees from 10 May until the upgrade is completed.

### South-North movements

A WFP mission recently visited Al Hudieb and Al Dub Karya in White Nile State to assess the food needs of some 8,000 northern returnees from southern Sudan. The mission report stated that food assistance is urgently needed in Al Hudieb and Al Dub Karya. WFP is also carrying out a vulnerability analysis and mapping in these two locations. Other UN Agencies and NGO partners are providing other required assistance to these communities.

### Returnees overview (Statistical update for 10 May 2011)

According to information from the IOM, ADRA, Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC), the Resident Coordinator's Support Office (RCSO) and WFP, the number of returnees in southern Sudan, South Kordofan and the Abyei area since October 2010 is as follows:

Southern Sudan	South Kordofan	Abyei Area
300,000	5,210	37,727

## 2. Southern Sudan

### Blocked commercial traffic from North to South leads to hikes in prices

Humanitarian actors are concerned about blockages in northern Sudan that are impeding the flow of commercial traffic from the North to southern Sudan, which reportedly began on around 1 May. Reports from the field indicate that the three main transport roads (and some water routes) into the South are closed to commercial traffic travelling southbound. The blockages have already resulted in price hikes of basic commodities, especially in the states along the North-South common boundary line, which are heavily reliant on goods from the North. There is concern that the blockages may lead to social unrest if the limited supply of food, water and fuel continues, and no political solution is found.

### Security situation deteriorates further in Jonglei State

The fragile security situation in many parts of Jonglei is of high concern to humanitarian actors. As a result of the recent clashes between rebel militia groups and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), and the ongoing inter-communal violence, UNDSS raised the security category of seven counties in Jonglei to level 3. All UN humanitarian operations must include UN force protection. In northern Jonglei, an inter-agency mission travelled to Kaldak in Pigi County on 8 May to assess the situation following clashes between rebel militia groups and SPLA on 23 April. Unburied corpses were reported lying on the ground in the village, raising public health risks. Few civilians were noted in the area of the village that was visited. However, the team was unable to access the area of the village further away from the river due to the threat of unexploded ordnance. As a result, it could not be confirmed if civilians affected by the fighting remain in that part of the village or the surrounding bush area. Humanitarian agencies have begun assisting with the disposal of bodies; a water, sanitation and hygiene team is planning to visit the area shortly.

The response continues for the 2,700 IDPs who were reportedly displaced from Kaldak to Doleib Hill and Obel villages in Upper Nile as a result of armed clashes. The provision of non-food items (NFIs) to Obel was to begin on 12 May by Medair and World Vision International; additional food and NFI distributions will occur after verification of the estimated 1,900 persons in Doleib Hill. The agencies will also distribute NFIs to people displaced to Khorfulus town in Jonglei during fighting in March between SPLA and General George Athor forces.

Elsewhere in Jonglei, tensions remain high between the Lou Nuer and Murle communities, with a reported attack on the Murle village of Jom-Jom by the Lou Nuer on 5-6 May. Local authorities expect additional persons displaced by the continued fighting to arrive to Pibor town in the coming days. However, the number of displaced is not yet clear. The displaced will add to some 5,000 other previously reported displaced people in Pibor town, some of whom are reported to have integrated into the community and others who may have returned to their homes.

### **Ongoing humanitarian assessments in Unity State**

The security situation in Unity State remains fragile with clashes between SPLA and rebel militia groups continuing in Mayom County. On 3 May, clashes were reported in Wichok Payam and on 8-9 May, fighting reportedly resumed in Pup Payam. This follows a period of intense fighting in mid-April between rebel militias affiliated to General Peter Gatdet and SPLA. On 3 May, an inter-agency assessment to Mankien town in Mayom County registered approximately 1,500 displaced persons, most of whom remain hiding in the bush outside Mankien town. Local authorities reported that 752 people have recently arrived in Abiemnhom, in addition to some 500 IDPs estimated by local authorities to have arrived previously in the area. Humanitarian actors plan to return to Abiemnhom and Mayom towns in the coming week to verify the number of displaced and people in need of humanitarian assistance. However, it is thought that large numbers of affected civilians are staying in inaccessible areas outside the main towns, because of the ongoing insecurity.

According to UNDSS reports on 13 May, three commercial vehicles (one fuel and two water tankers) hit landmines along the Bentiu-Tharjat road, close to the Guit junction (about 17km south of Bentiu in Unity State). Two more people stepped on landmines while trying to rescue the wounded drivers. As a result, the road from Bentiu to Tharjat has been declared a 'no go' area by UNDSS, raising further concerns about increasing access problems in Bentiu. The humanitarian community is considering new steps to engage rebel militia groups on humanitarian access issues.

### **Advocacy for humanitarian access continues**

Efforts by the humanitarian community to advocate for humanitarian access continue. Several senior Government officials have reconfirmed their commitment to ensure the freedom of movement and security of humanitarian personnel and assets. The Governor of Lakes State, on behalf of the Lakes State Government, committed to reimburse WFP the cost of the humanitarian food supplies which were lost when its truck was commandeered by SPLA troops. Also, the Chairperson of the SSRRC at the most recent Humanitarian Coordination Forum, strongly condemned the recent attacks on aid workers and their assets. UNMIS and UNDSS have secured the release of one of two missing IOM-contracted drivers, who were recently abducted following the commandeering of their vehicles on 19 April in Lakes. The whereabouts of the remaining driver is still unconfirmed. In response to this and other recent violations to humanitarian space and security of personnel, several humanitarian organisations continue to restrict their activities and movements in Unity, Lakes and parts of Jonglei.

## **3. Three Protocol Areas**

### **Abyei**

Following recent clashes in Goli and Todach (about 17 km north of Abyei town) and in Um Khariet in the Abyei area on 6 May, there have been reports that the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) in Abyei have started to disband, with soldiers returning to their original units. There is growing concern over the potential for an escalation of violence in light of recent political posturing between the North and South over the status of Abyei.

On 10 May, unknown armed assailants shot and wounded four UNMIS Zambian peacekeepers in Goli, while on patrol in Abyei. The peacekeepers, including one who is in a serious condition, are receiving medical treatment. UNMIS strongly condemned the attack and launched an investigation into the incident.

The attack came after the Abyei Joint Technical Committee (JTC), under the chair of the UNMIS Force Commander, held its first meeting on 8 May to discuss the issues of JIUs and other forces in the Abyei area. The JTC agreed that only JIUs should deploy in the Abyei area, and that all unauthorised forces should withdraw, from 10 May. The JTC will meet in Abyei on 12 May to assess progress, and will reconvene on 17 May to confirm and ensure the completion of the exercise. The meeting agreed that both parties should de-escalate tensions by speaking to their respective communities on the ground regarding the implementation of the Kadugli Agreements, and ensuring freedom of access for UNMIS. The JTC was established on 13 April to oversee the implementation of the Kadugli Agreements of 13 and 17 January and the Abyei Agreement of 4 March.

In the context of the recent security incidents and mounting tensions, effective monitoring remains a priority in the Abyei area. Humanitarian agencies have been pre-positioning humanitarian aid in and around Abyei as part of the

contingency planning process. With the rainy season imminent, and no repairs made to the Abyei-Agok road, the main link between Abyei area and the South, it could pose a serious impediment to humanitarian access during the rainy season.

### **South Kordofan**

The post-election period in South Kordofan has been peaceful. Polling stations completed ballot counting on 8 May and the announcement of the results of the state assembly and gubernatorial elections are expected on 15 May. However, access in the Al Muglad area (western South Kordofan State) remains restricted for the humanitarian community due to ongoing inter-tribal fighting in Balila-Abu Likri, reported from 6 May. Due to ongoing insecurity, the Kharassana to Higlig, and the Al Muglad to Meiram roads to southern Sudan are still blocked, which will restrict movement of returnees to the South.

The 350 households displaced by the 13 April attack in Al Fyad locality have reportedly refused to return to their homes citing insecurity. Humanitarian agencies have suspended plans to support the rebuilding of damaged homes and disrupted livelihoods until further notice.

### **Blue Nile**

UNHCR has facilitated the return of 242 IDPs from Kurmuk in Blue Nile State to Upper Nile between 29 April and 5 May. Meanwhile, UNMIS has received information from security forces that a number of Southerners have arrived in Bout, Guli and Wadabouk in Blue Nile due to recent fighting in Upper Nile State. However, there was no further confirmation about the arrivals from the authorities. Despite recent improvements in water access, there continue to be lines at water points in Kurmuk.

## **4. Darfur**

### **Restrictions of access to Kalma camp**

Humanitarian actors have reported being denied access to Kalma IDP camp in South Darfur over the past week. While an OCHA-led inter-agency mission was able to access the camp on 7 May, humanitarian agencies reported that staff members were not allowed through a government checkpoint located just before the camp on 8 May. The issue of access to Kalma was then raised at an ad-hoc Safety and Security Sub-Committee meeting on 9 May. However, humanitarian agencies were not allowed through the checkpoint between 10-11 May, despite gaining prior permission from HAC and NISS authorities in Nyala.

### **Update on returns**

On 8 May, an inter-agency assessment mission travelled to Sani Daliba in South Darfur to assess the needs of returnees. A total of 327 people have returned from Sakale IDP camp in Nyala to Sani Daliba over the previous month. However, about 290 potential returnees remained in Sakale after reports from returnees in Sani Daliba of insufficient support, in terms of food, shelter, seeds and tools and water.

Humanitarian actors in North Darfur received reports of an estimated 1,150 people located in Aramba village near Kebkabiya willing to return to Sehjanna village in Kutum locality. These people were displaced in 2003 and the IDP leaders stated that they would like to return to their places of origin. IOM have held several meetings with the group and confirmed their willingness to return. HAC stated it will cover the transportation cost of the caseload. The IDP leaders requested support from other humanitarian agencies in terms of water, education and healthcare services. An inter-agency mission to the area was scheduled to take place on 8 May, but was postponed for 12 May due to inclement weather.

It was reported at a recent Inter-Agency Coordination Meeting held in Ed Deain in South Darfur that many Dinka IDPs in the area are eager to return to southern Sudan, but lack the resources. There are an estimated 30,000 Dinka IDPs scattered in various camps of Khor Omer, Elferdos, Asalaja, Abu Jabura, Abu Matarig and Adila in Ed Deain. This information was shared with UNHCR who have taken over from IOM as the focal point for the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM), which monitors returns in Darfur.

**Non-food and emergency shelter assistance update**

WFP-Logistics Coordination Unit reported that 7,261 households were supported with NFIs and Emergency Shelter (ES) from the NFI Common Pipeline in Darfur in April. Of those who received NFI and ES assistance, approximately 80.8 percent were newly displaced; 9 per cent were spontaneous returnees; 8.6 percent were disaster-affected populations; and 1.6 percent organised returnees. North Darfur received 36 percent of April distributions; West Darfur 35 percent; and South Darfur received 29 percent.

**5. Sudanese returnees from Libya**

As of 10 May, IOM and UNHCR have facilitated the transportation of 14,600 Sudanese returnees from Libya via Tunisia, and 45 returnees via Algeria to Khartoum by air. IOM and UNHCR are now arranging transportation for those Sudanese nationals arriving in Egypt (Al Sallum) from Benghazi, eastern Libya. However, flights to Khartoum from Tunisia have been suspended until further notice as the Civil Aviation Authority has refused landing permission following incidents of violence among the returnees and damage to the airport over the missing or delayed arrival of their baggage.

**CORRIGENDUM:** It was reported in last week's humanitarian bulletin that no NGOs were present in Ein Siro in North Darfur. In fact, GOAL Sudan has clarified that it has been and continues supports a clinic in Ein Siro.