Situation overview

Following the political and resulting security crisis which erupted in the Country in Dec 2013, Upper Nile became one of the most affected areas with hundreds of thousands people displaced across the region. Currently there are an estimated 364,357 IDPs (including close to 30,000 IDPs in Malakal PoC) in Upper Nile. Given the relative peace within the region following the revitalized peace agreement signed in 2018 between the South Sudan Government and the main Opposition groups, the region is experiencing a spontaneous refugee returns from neighboring countries and IDPs in various locations intending to voluntarily return to their areas of origin. In recent months, IDPs in Melut displaced mainly from Baliet County, expressed their interest to return to their homes of origin. UNHCR conducted surveys and verification exercises to ascertain the intentions and number of people who intend to return to respective locations. Following the survey and the verification exercise, UNHCR and partners, in close collaboration with Solutions Working Group, supported the return of the IDPs to Baliet, Adong and Riangnom.

The return exercise was conducted between 7 and 28 May 2019, spearheaded the Upper Nile Solutions Working Group led by the Protection Cluster. A total of 3,324 IDPs benefited from this facilitated return from Melut to Baliet County.
Site overview

Figure 2. Returnees ready to leave

Figure 3. Returnees receiving Return Packages upon arrival

Location map
Background and Methodology of the Return Exercise

When the conflict started in 2013, civilians from Baliet County initially fled to Rom in Akoka County where they stayed until 2015. When another conflict between General Olony and the government erupted in 2015, they went from Rom to Melut and have been staying there since then. After the closure of the Melut POC in 2017, IDPs who remained stayed in five settlements: Dingtomal &2, Khor-Adar, Malek and New Paloch. With the positive development of the revitalized peace agreement and due to tensions with the host communities, an official petition to the government was made by IDPs from Dingtomal and Khor-Adar settlements with request to be returned to their places of origin in Baliet County.

Accordingly, the government of Central Upper Nile State conducted a registration of 7,013 IDPs of which almost 99% were originally from Baliet County who expressed their wish to return to their places of origin or to Malakal town despite the fact they were from Baliet. Due to the lack of resources and funding to relocate those IDPs, the government of Central Upper Nile State requested UNHCR to coordinate and facilitate the relocation/return exercise both to Baliet County and Malakal town.

It is worth to highlight that prior to this exercise, the UNHCR had already documented in its field reports from December 2018, February and March 2019 about IDPs expressing their willingness to return to their places of origin such as Baliet and Kor-fulus due to life challenges faced in Melut and different types of alleged mistreatment by the host communities towards them. The issues raised were addressed and discussed in various meetings mainly at Solutions Working Group (SWG), Inter-Agency Working Group (ICWG) and Upper Nile Coordination Forum.

Following the humanitarian principles and its mandate, the UNHCR made its position clear to the government to assist only those IDPs willing to return to their places of origin which is Baliet County and not Malakal to avoid any political factor associated with ongoing issues related to Housing, Land and Property (HLP) especially over Malakal.

A fact-finding mission and verification exercise was undertaken by UNHCR in Melut to verify the initial number provided by the government (7013). During the exercise, the UNHCR could verify and confirm 1,055 HHs with 5,800 individuals through individual interviews who indeed did originate from Adong, Riangnom and Baliet town. UNHCR also established that the decisions made by IDPs to return were voluntary and without any political pressure from the government.

The Upper Nile Solutions Working Group (SWG) developed a collective and comprehensive operations plan with relevant clusters following an enhanced situation assessment and analysis paying special attention to protection needs in areas of return and displacement. As a follow up, consultation and discussions with relevant authorities on modalities and responsibility sharing were undertaken with focus on the long-term effectiveness of efforts.

While UNHCR, Protection and CCCM partners in Melut were responsible for the initial ground work and preparations as well as the logistics of moving the IDPs from Melut, state level Cluster (ICWG) members supported the returnees at the point of reception in Baliet, Adong and Riangnom. This was in line with the anticipated potential needs of the returnees in those locations. Although there were services in the three locations (areas of return), it was felt they will not cover the needs of the host community and the returnees, hence the need to scale up services.

UNHCR, IOM, WFP and UNMISS provided trucks for the movement of the returnees from Melut to Baliet, Adong and Riangnom. UNMISS truck supported the last batch of the returnees and as a last resort through an approved MCDA made by UNHCR. The MCDA request was on a cost recovery modality which UNHCR covered.

Scope of the Return

In total, about 7,013 individual IDPs in Melut expressed their intentions to return to their home areas of origin. The UNHCR was able to verify and confirm 1,055 HHs with 5,800 individuals through individual interviews who indeed did originate from Adong, Riangnom and Baliet town. The rest said they would want to return to Malakal even if they do not belong to Malakal. UNHCR with the support of the Solutions Working Group decided to facilitate movement of those wanting to return to their homes of origin (Baliet, Adong and Riangnom) only.
The relocation was designed in phases given the poor terrain and approaching rainfalls. The team decided to move 3000 in the first phase before the rains intensify. 3,324 individual returnees have reached their villages of origin. The targeted figure was surpassed. Below is the breakdown per age group and gender.

Current population figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Host population</th>
<th>Returnees Population</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baliet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total Pop.</td>
<td>Age group</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>826</td>
<td>0 - 5</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>06 - 17</td>
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<td>06 - 17</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18 - 59</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>18 - 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baliet Center</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>870</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adong</td>
<td>2446</td>
<td>0 - 05</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>18 - 59</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18 - 59</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adong Sub Total</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>1599</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rianghnom</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>0 - 05</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>06 - 17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rianghnom Sub Total</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1374</td>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disclaimer: Kindly note that Host community population figures are not disaggregated by sex and age.

**Humanitarian access**

**Physical access**

The main road connecting Melut, Malakal to Baliet is passable during the dry season with maximum speed of 60km/hr. The 2nd last convoy return to Melut following heavy rainfall around Malakal town. This delayed the process for a day. Besides at Rianghnom, the trucks could not continue to Adong following some rainfall in the area, which caused yet another delay. Baliet could as well be accessed by river from Melut. Unfortunately, due to a variety of factors river movement was found not to be a viable transport option.

There is telecommunication system in Melut but not in Baliet. Certain sections along the road are not connected thus the use of Thuraya and radio communication gadgets to rely information to the base on the convoy movement.

**Humanitarian access**

UNMAS was on ground in Baliet to ensure that the return locations are safe enough and free of mines for the population. Besides, they provided mine education to the returnees after arrival. The road through which the convoy travelled as well as the return areas were assessed by UNMAS and confirmed free of land mines. The local authorities ensured that there were no checkpoints along the road. Therefore, the convoy route was safe throughout the entire exercise. The local authorities also ensured safety of all the returnees in Melut, along the road and in Baliet, Adong and Rianghnom which was confirmed through a letter of Assurance prior to the exercise.
Best practices

- The most important best practice is that it was a truly joint exercise though the solutions WG involving all humanitarian actors, UNMISS and the government (see table above for division of labour at the end). This also helped minimize the cost. Through the cluster approach a combined efforts of involved actors including the government have significantly contributed to the exercise with different areas of expertise as well as financial and human resources including logistics support. This joint exercise demonstrated a joint effort that brought all parties together to succeed in achieving a common objective and goal of assisting IDPs to return to their places of origin. This approach also helped minimized the cost of this exercise. The government played a crucial role in this exercise particularly by ensuring the safety and security of the civilian population throughout the entire process was very much appreciated. The details of the various contributions made by all partners and government can be seen in the table below. Thanks to the emphasis on resilience-building activities in Baliet, the link to development beyond emergency response was made. This decreased dependency on humanitarian aid.

- Operational plan stipulating roles and responsibilities of partners involved, as well as timeline for exercise, was developed and approved by Solutions Working Group (SWG) and Inter-Cluster Working Group (ICWG). This allowed to save time and resources and to attribute accountability to Clusters, UNMISS and government. The actors communicated timely among each other about convoy movement etc and action was taken in a timely manner by all involved.

- The SWG/ ICWG decided to facilitate return to only three locations (Adong, Baliet town and Riangnom) which are their places of origin. This avoided land issues and causing harm. In addition, in those three locations there were basic services available such as WASH, health, education as well as access to livelihood opportunities (fishing, agriculture etc) and to natural resources such as wood, grass and water. Other components such as presence of functional local authorities and traditional leaders were important. The fact that the host communities and returnees share the same background and experience will ease the returnees’ reintegration.

- The Protection Cluster led an Inter-Cluster assessment mission to the three agreed locations of return prior to the exercise. The general security situation in the area of return was assessed as a conducive environment. Key protection concerns were taken into consideration and gaps have been followed up by relevant humanitarian actors on the ground for further support and response.

- Clear messaging and sharing information on the situation in the three selected areas of return with modalities of movement of IDPs was delivered by UNHCR and CCCM in close collaboration with the local authorities.

- IOM/DTM conducted the de-registration exercise while UNHCR managed verification/ manifest and provided the wristbands with serial numbers according to which a person could easily identify his/her luggage and receive it upon arrival.

- Governments and local authorities’ involvement was paramount and a best practice given its primary role in achieving durable solutions. Government involvement also allowed to share responsibilities, provide capacity building and economize resources. We obtained a letter from government which states that gvt coordinates with all security organs on the way and that trucks are acceptable means of transport. Local police officers conducted luggage search in Melut. In Baliet, the local authorities assisted in managing the reception sites and provided warehouse facilities free of charge for temporary storage NFI, WASH items, dignity kits etc. A letter was obtained previously though OCHA whereby the local authorities confirmed that the warehouses will be free of charge.
• Proper transit points to receive IDP returnees were established through a joint effort by DRC, NFI/S Cluster, UNHCR/ HDC, IOM, WV, UNMAS and Health Link in close cooperation with the local authorities in Baliet. The returnees were able to stay for a short time during which they were able to join their relatives and neighbors. They were also able to set up temporary shelters with NFI and shelter materials provided by UNHCR and the Shelter Cluster until permanent shelters were built and some yet to be constructed.

• The host communities along with community leaders played a crucial role in dealing with crowd control as well in receiving IDP returnees in Baliet county to make sure that each beneficiary/ PSN received due attention and was assisted in a proper manner.

• Integrated solutions approach: The exercise benefited from the graduates of the vocational skills training on carpentry funded by UNHCR and trained by the UNMISS British Engineering Team prior to the exercise. Those trainees were then incorporated into the team that constructed the reception sites. The trainees empowered with these practical skills will be better able to find employment and become self-reliant.

• Exercise preparations included: security plan based on Security Risk assessment provided by UNDSS and UNMAS. As a confidence-building measure, UNMISS established long-range patrols to the locations of return to secure the areas while UNMISS Civil Affairs will provide activities to strengthen alternative justice mechanism in the communities.

• Joint post monitoring exercise is conducted to assess situation of the returnees and take follow-up action together with the government.

• Standard messages for the targeted Melut communities were developed by PC/ UNHCR and agreed on with all Clusters, government signed those as well to ensure same messages are spread.

• Phased approach to allow people to be absorbed and to build temporary shelter on receiving end: Started with Adong, then Baliet and then to Riangnom. Then repeated again.

• There was always trained staff from partners on the ground that was hired from the local communities both in Melut and in Baliet. This allowed us to directly monitor all steps of the exercise and to build confidence among the returnees, host communities and local authorities. The monitoring included that all reception arrangements are done prior to arrival of each convoy.

Key Clusters Response Activities

Cluster 1 Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM)

• A team of IOM Mobile CCCM Response arrived in Melut on 04 May 2019 to facilitate meetings with community leaders, support IOM DTM to deregister IDPs from sites in Melut, support loading of luggage aboard trucks, messaging on key aspects of the relocation exercise, and moving the first convoy of 3 luggage trucks, 2 passenger trucks and 2 mobile escorts to Adong on 07 May. CCCM worked with SSNPS who facilitated the screening of luggage and passengers for safety of the convoy. CCCM disseminated messages on time and location of registration, loading and boarding time, type of luggage allowed, and departure times.

• At arrival points in Adong, Baliet Town and Riangnom, CCCM assisted partners and local authorities in disseminating key information to returnees on provision of hot meals and drinking water; one-off assorted food assistance for the months of May and June and thereafter inclusion in the GFD until September 2019; provision of shelter and NFI’s; and available health, nutrition and WASH services. Additionally, CCCM continuously engaged local authorities on their obligations to allocate land to returnees with the aim of emptying the transit sites before the arrival of new convoys.

• Prior to the start of the returns operation, CCCM Cluster and partners (DTM and DRC) participated in an inter cluster assessment of the areas of return.
Lesson Learned

- Prior engagement with authorities at points of departure and arrival to ensure consistent messaging about future exercises.
- Appropriate mobilization of resources consistent with the size of relocation operations, particularly transportation capacity. Also the need for backup capacity to fill gaps in the event of a breakdown or other emergencies during operations.
- Need for joint support to mobilization of resources by humanitarian actors, UNMISS and local governments.
- Need for sufficient preparation and completion of reception facilities prior to the arrival of returnees- latrines, bathing shelters and nearby water points.
- Ensure there is consistent communication between respective government counterparts in both departure and arrivals sites.
- Respective stakeholders involved in the exercise to conduct their own internal reviews.

Challenges

- Bad weather conditions led to a deterioration of road conditions and subsequently a slowdown in movement of convoys.
- Hesitation of some IDPs to return since the start of the operation given initial lack of awareness on services at return locations.
- Delayed movement of convoys owing to limited number or occasional breakdown of trucks or light vehicles, as well as the sequencing of activities prior to departure days.

Proposed plans

- Ensure outreach to returnees in Riangnom, Adong and Baliet Town using mobile CCCM response mechanisms.
- Engage stakeholders through the Solutions Working Group in appropriate planning to support future Requests for returns within Upper Nile during the next dry season, November 2019 – May 2020.

Cluster 2. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Water Supply:

- All three locations have functional water systems with one new water system installed in Riangnom and two (2) systems rehabilitated in Baliet and Adong.

Sanitation:

- Three (3) blocks with two (2) stances each of emergency latrines constructed at the three (3) transit sites to cater for the sanitation needs of the returnees. Ongoing construction of 170 single household latrines within three (3)host community locations.

Hygiene Promotion:

- three (3) Hygiene promoters one in each location have been deployed for conducting regular hygiene awareness messaging within the communities.

WASH NFIs

- 2000 individuals received WASH NFIs in both locations. Distribution is still on going for the remaining returnees who haven’t received at the time of reporting.

Lessons learnt.

- Provision of clean and safe water in two locations was a challenge as the transit sites were sited and located further away from the existing water points. Hygiene Promoters disseminated key messages on safe water usage and storage at the transit sites.
Proposed plans:
- Plans underway to extend the water supply to education institutions and further inland within the three (3) locations to ensure that more people receive clean and safe water within short distances.
- Once off WASH NFIS would be distributed to the host communities
- Expand the sanitation intervention to widen the coverage taking into consideration the recent returns.

Cluster 3 Food Security and Livelihood (FSL)

Fleet:
- WFP provided dedicated four trucks to support the return exercise from Melut to Baliet. Two (2) of the trucks joined other UN Agencies (IOM, UNHCR) fleet to move IDPs from Melut to Baliet County while the other two (2) trucks remained in Malakal to deliver food from the warehouse to Beliet, Adong and Riangnom on each day the returnees arrived at the three (3) locations.

Food distributions to returnees
- WFP/WVI provided two-month family rations to all households at the destination points, where about 124.9 MT of assorted food commodities were distributed to 3,324 people (total number of returnees) including under five years served with CSB++.
- Some food was given out to be prepared as hot meal for the returnees upon arrival in the three (3) locations.

Challenges
- Heavy rains and bad road conditions-delay movement and consume fuel.
- Continuous changes in passenger manifests and convoy movements affected food dispatches, resulting in some returnees not getting food rations on time.
- Operational logistics became a challenge as resources were being pulled out for the response more frequently for few caseloads, same resources that can be used for once off bigger caseloads. WVSS seconded a vehicle and staff for almost 1 month, resulting in disruption of operations elsewhere.

Proposed plans
- Preparing to provide agriculture seeds and tools as well as fishing gears to enable returnees to cultivate and produce their own food and become self-reliant. This kind of assistance will empower families and ease pressure on the humanitarian agencies for general food distribution/assistance.
- The movement of returnees to be planned earlier at the beginning of dry season.
- Plan for food distributions with the host community in July 2019
- Expansion of existing school meal activities to cater for the new caseloads in Adong, Baliet and Riangnom

Cluster 4 Shelter and Non Food Item (S/NFIs)
- The distribution was conducted based on the manifest from Melut in Adong, Baliet and Riangnom.
- Considerations were given to the vulnerable people who came with wrist bands from Melut. In addition, more PSNs were identified by UNHCR with support of Health Link and community leader on the ground and all were given the first priority.
- Messages were disseminated to the beneficiaries prior to distribution and repeated during the distribution days.
- Care takers of children with specific needs received NFIs on their behalf.
- NFIs were stored in three locations close to the reception sites. Volunteers from the community assisted the humanitarian actors in the entire response.
- The kitchen set was given out in full despite original plan of giving out a set for two families. UNHCR had to chip in to ensure all received the full kit.

Challenges and lessons learnt:
- Some extremely vulnerable persons from the host community also came to the reception centers but were not considered for the NFIs.
- The weather condition delayed the exercise due to physical inaccessibility. Some sections of the road were messed up by the rains
- Distribution got delayed further due to lack of consensus on offloading incentives/wages.
Some vulnerable host community members appeared to the reception sites with hopes of receiving some items. Unfortunately this could not happen as they were not part of the plan.

**Recommendations**
- A more general assessment/verification needs to be carried out to determine the number and scale of vulnerability among the host community in the three (3) locations.
- Early preparations to support returnees is very crucial and the exercise should be done prior to the onset of rains.
- It is appropriate to grade the road for easy access of the locations of return.

**Success Story**
- One of the ladies expressed her happiness after receiving the S/NFI saying that it is six years ago when she was displaced from Baliet as a girl. She got married while in Melut and has two children now who do not know Baliet. In deed she is happy to return home and resettle as mother to take care of her children in her home area.

**Cluster 5 Health**
- The health and nutrition responses for returnees in Baliet County that started on 07th May 2019 followed humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, and non-discrimination and ensured that services were undertaken in a manner that upheld the safety and dignity of the returnees.
- Health Link South Sudan (HLSS)-Malakal as the health partner in Baliet County deployed a team of four (4) staff per location (Adong, Baliet and Riangnom) to respond to the health and nutrition needs of the returnees prior to integration into the community.
- From Melut, GOAL provided medical services in each convoy.
- A total of 820 cases were seen and treated at the three transit locations in Baliet County. At least 450 of the 820 cases were children <5 yrs and 370 > 5yrs and above with Malaria being highest followed by Respiratory Tract Infection (RTI) Gastro Enteritis, Bacterial conjunctivitis and skin diseases.
- The number of children screened for malnutrition in Adong, Baliet and Riangnom was 734 where 04 Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) cases (01 SAM case in Adong and 03 in Baliet).

**Challenges:**
- The timing of the activity was on short notice.
- Accessibility to the locations was difficult due to the onset of the rains.
- There was no budget allocated for the response.

**Recommendation:**
- In future preparedness plan should start early to give ample time for the response.
- Timing of the activity should be during dry season.
- Mobilization of resources should be done first before actual response.

**Cluster 6 Nutrition**
- During the relocation nutrition cluster distributed high energy Biscuit to all children under-five years old and to pregnant and lactating women.
- All children who are in nutrition program were given referral slip so that they can be admit immediately in any of the OTP sites in Baliet or Adong.
There are existing OTP/TSFP sites in both Baliet and Adong run by HLSS. All the children during the relocation were supplement with Vitamin A and Dewormed.

**Proposed plans:**
- Continue with admission of children under-five years old to OTP/TSFP program in the existing health facilities
- Strengthening outreach activities and conduct screening and referral
- Strengthening of Mother to mother support activities at community level

**Cluster 7 Protection – GBV Sub-cluster**

**General Protection**
- Community mobilization
- Facilitation of transport (trucks, drivers, fuel and mechanics)
- Accompanying the convoys from departure point to final destinations
- Provision of NFI
- Assistance and provision of materials for establishment of transit centers at the receiving point and involvement of IDPs benefited from UNHCR vocational skills trainings on carpentry who supported during the construction process with the help of the local population
- Community mobilization and development of joint messages on the return modalities and process
- Identification of the most vulnerable who cannot be transported in trucks and provision of a separate transportation for them.
- Preparation of manifests of IDPs travelling from Melut and provision of wristbands with serial numbers for ease of identification to receive luggage and humanitarian assistance upon arrival.

**GBV**
- IMC committed to distribute dignity kits on behalf of the GBV working group to a total of 277 women and girls. Demonstration and clear explanation on the use of the content of the kit was done to all the recipients.
- Since there were some kits available in Malakal that could be used to reach these returning women and girls, IMC handed over the remaining kits to HDC who have presence in the area. HDC transported the kits on behalf of the WG and provided accommodation to IMC staff on the ground.

The below table shows the breakdown of dignity kits and other materials distributed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>To Who</th>
<th>How many</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dignity kit</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>1 Set of reusable pad, 3 under wears, 1 T-shirt, 1 pair of slippers, 4 pieces of soap, 1 piece of bedsheet, 1 solar torch all in a reusable water proof back pad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Other kit</td>
<td>Elderly women</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1 T-shirt, 2 under wears, 1 Lawo, 1 dress all in one cloth bag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are still a number of women and girls who were listed but have not received. IMC is planning to complete the distribution for those who were at least in the listing.

**MHPSS**
- “The population in Baliet have established social support system, they believe in supporting one another when faced with certain problems. Thus reducing the amount of stress on individual that could lead to some psychological problems”. community leader in Riangnom village.
- There is need to increase the capacity of the families, community leaders and structures to address psychosocial issues, which will translate to the capacity of the population in dealing with their stressors and traumas

**Challenges**
• No GBV working group member could go to Melut to identify and document the actual women and girls between 14 to 49 for the distribution
• Limited staff for the distribution of the kits (IMC could only give one staff for this distribution)
• A lot more women and girls between the ages of 14 to 49 did not receive kits because they were not captured in the listing. The age group in the returnees listing was below 5, 5-17 Years, 18-59 and 60+. It was difficult to capture the girls 14 – 17 or women 18 – 49 from these groups. The female head of this group were the only ones listed for distribution.

Lessons Learnt
• Such a complex exercise requires long-term planning and constant communication with all involved parties (as mentioned above) as well as with the communities. Owing to the fact that the lists from the government were received on a short notice (April 2019), it was increasingly difficult to plan well the return exercise before the rainy season. On the one hand, the humanitarian organizations had to follow all principles and policies for this exercise. On the other hand, all organizations felt the pressure to complete everything before the rainy season that was quickly approaching in the month of May. Due to the beginning of the rainy season, a number of IDPs who expressed their willingness to return were not able to be assisted. Lesson learnt: comprehensive planning and advance preparations to be done during the rainy season and to be initiated at the beginning of the dry season.
• Have the government sign any commitment to the return process and messages to the communities to ensure they do not deviate from agreed-up messages.
• Communication needed to be improved initially. Lesson learnt: With deteriorated weather conditions (rains), communication with focal points along the route from Melut to Baiet was established through phones/SAT to check the road condition and possibility for convoy movement. Where connection was not feasible, an advance team with technicians on board was sent for road assessment. Based on the first-hand information received, the convoy was communicated whether the movement can take place.
• The distribution did not cover the first and last convoy due to communication
• RRC in Baiet complained that the distribution of the kits should not continue since they were not enough for all the women.
• There is no capacity and no activities taking place on MHPSS in Baiet and its surrounding.
• There are opportunities given that the communities have come back to settle, the government are receptive and supportive and given the current peace processes in the county

Future plan/recommendation
• The GBV working group members need to dedicate staff to such initiative as it is overwhelming for a single person.
• Better to identify beneficiaries for dignity kits distribution prior to returnees’ arrival to avoid leaving people out of the listing.
• Kits to be mobilized in advance and prepositioned in all locations for distribution
• It was a good experience for IMC to participate in supporting the returnees and will always be ready to participate and contribute.
• A post distribution monitoring will be conducted and a report will be shared.
• There is need to jumpstart psychosocial activities to promote psychosocial wellbeing of communities in Baiet.

Cluster 8 Logistics
• Logistics Cluster supported with 3 trucks of 25MT in the relocation exercise to transport beneficiaries materials.

Lessons learnt
• It was difficult to determine weather patterns and some time the convoy would delay or loading interrupted due to rains.

Challenges faced
• Trucks getting stuck in the mud due to the rains.
• Items were distributed from the trucks which should not be the case. Cargo need to be offloaded at a specific place especially NFI’s and allow the truck to come back to Malakal. This was observed from arrival points.

**Proposed plans**
• Need to have mechanic as part of the team with capacity to maintain trucks and light vehicles during relocation.
• Contingency fuel need to be prepositioned in both locations.
• Drivers need to be provided with sleeping items gear.

**Cluster 8 Education**
• Education cluster was not actively involved in the actual moment of the returnees from Melut all the way to Baliet. However, the cluster earlier made preparation assessment Baliet prior to the arrival of the returnees to ensure educational facilities and supplies in place to support and accommodate the new children who will join the school.
• The cluster met with the local education actors including the teachers with empathy on preparation and readiness to be able to receive and accommodate the new learners into the existing learning structure as there will be new separate education facilities for them and the returnees.
• With support from UNICEF, the cluster facilitated prepositioning of supplies from Malakal to Baliet in preparation for the arrival of the returnees’ children
• An assessment of schools’ structures was also conducted to ensure the existing structures allows the new student to reintegrate and this is where the cluster realized though that the need for more classes and resources remains high in Baliet in particular.

**Scholastic materials prepositioned to Baliet:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Qty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tapelines ( plastic sheet )</td>
<td>Double sheets</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pupils’ kits</td>
<td>cartons</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>cartons</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>School bags</td>
<td>cartons</td>
<td>20 + 10 pcs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mats</td>
<td>Pieces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Blackboard</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total number of school children registered on arrival**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATIONS</th>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
<th>REMARK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riangnhom</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adong</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>271</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baliet</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lessons learnt**
• Prior to the arrival of the returnees to Baliet, there was no preparation in place for the ‘Secondary School Children’ who finished their primary in Malut a year before and those who have been in secondary school before. Though the basic responsible of opening secondary schools remains solely with the government, the cluster regret that there was no better preparation in place as to this regard and this is indeed a big lesson learnt for education cluster.

**Challenges faced:**
• As mentioned above, lack of enough learning space was a major finding and the cluster may need to do more rehabilitation work and establishment of new learning space
• Lack of enough financial resources to scale up education invention in Baliet in respond to the arrival of the returnees and meeting the educational needs of both the returnees’ children and those who have already been there.

**Proposed plans**
• Push for more financial support from through the national education cluster to scale respond in Baliet
- Continue with the registration and enrollment of returnees children in Baliet and provide any need available support including learning materials.

**Cluster 7 Protection – Mental Health (MHPSS) Sub-cluster**

**Next steps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Priority actions</th>
<th>Human and material resources needed</th>
<th>Responsible entity</th>
<th>By when</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCCM</td>
<td>Monitoring and supporting community structures and complaints mechanisms</td>
<td>CCCM Cluster partners</td>
<td>CCCM</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Extend water services to Schools and inland to those with no access to water, distribute WASH NFIs and increase sanitations services and intensify hygiene promotion</td>
<td>WASH Cluster Partners, WASH NFIs, Supplies &amp; Sanitation materials</td>
<td>WASH Cluster &amp; Min. of PI</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSL</td>
<td>Distribute two months assorted food rations in July and in September 2019. Distribute agricultural inputs (seeds &amp; tools) and fishing gear</td>
<td>FSL Cluster partners, Assorted Food Items, Tools and Seeds and Fishing gear</td>
<td>FSL Cluster &amp; Min. of Agriculture</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/NFIs</td>
<td>Conduct Gen assessment of the host community and verify the scale of vulnerability.</td>
<td>S/NFIs cluster &amp; Partners, Assorted NFIs Supplies</td>
<td>S/NFIs Cluster</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Increase medical supplies on the ground</td>
<td>Health Cluster and Partners; Medicines</td>
<td>Health Cluster &amp; Min. of Health</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>Admit children &lt;5yrs into the OTP/TSFP program Increase outreach program and screening and referrals and strengthen mother to mother support</td>
<td>Nutrition cluster and partners</td>
<td>Nutrition cluster</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection</strong></td>
<td>Post Return and Post Distribution Monitoring, Prepositioning of GBV Kits, HDC to extend its individual shelter support to PSNs to the returnees in need</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Logistic</strong></td>
<td>Convoys to have a mechanic, prepositioning of Fuel, sleeping gear and incentives for drivers; communication equipment for each vehicle.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>Solicit more funding for Baliet Education cluster &amp; Min. of Education, materials education cluster lead &amp; partners Continuous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>