



Southern Sudan News Bulletin

An Overview of UN Activities in Southern Sudan Published by the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS)

Vol. 3 Issue No.7

October 2008

Highlights:

- Congolese refugees flee to Southern Sudan
- Southern Sudan holds referendum debate
- Polio vaccination targets over two million children
- Swedish Agency to clear Abyei of Explosive Remains ahead of expected return
- Plans finalized for distribution of DDR campaign radios

Sector I - Juba

Congolese refugees flee to Southern Sudan

A renewed influx of Congolese refugees was reported in Western Equatoria State (WES), following new attacks by the LRA in Duru, DRC in mid-October. Out of five locations in Western Equatoria State, where new Congolese refugees have settled, UNHCR has completed verification of 3,131 in Sakure (562), Gangura (1,742), Ukou (390) and Madebe (437).

Verification has not yet been carried out in James Diko due to the LRA proximity and extremely difficult access. The verification in Yambio town was suspended as the majority of Congolese there are believed to be long-term businessmen. A 15-day food ration has been distributed to the refugees in Sakure, Gangura and Madebe and the distribution of non-food items is also complete. The Congolese influx into WES has so far been managed by the deployment of an emergency team, in collaboration with the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC),

UNICEF, Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) and World Vision.

Southern Sudan holds referendum debate

The first ever public forum about Sudan's 2011 referendum - on whether Southern Sudan should secede or continue in one country with the north - was held at the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly in Juba on 27 October. Organized by the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) Ministry of Presidential Affairs, the high-profile event was attended by representatives of the GoSS and Government of National Unity, the UN, southern political parties, and civil society.

In his opening remarks, President of Southern Sudan Salva Kiir called the event a "historic step" in preparing for the referendum. "It (the referendum) is what other generations have talked about, some of whom are no longer with us now," he said. Topics covered in the discussions included international experience

with referendums, challenges and opportunities, conducting the referendum and post-referendum challenges.

Flooding continues to displace people in Maban

Preliminary findings of a joint rapid assessment have revealed that at least 44,700 people (8,840 households) have been affected by floods in Maban county. The assessment was carried out from 25 to 31 October by the SSRRC, Oxfam GB, Medair, World Food Programme (WFP) and UNICEF, with Coordination support from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The most affected areas are Bounj, Banasowa, Khor El Ahmar, Ginkuota and Ginmagda Payams. However the number of affected people could be much higher, as the assessment team could not access other areas due to the floods and security considerations.

An emergency planning team of UN organizations, NGOs and government agencies is working hard to deliver humanitarian assistance to the affected people as quickly as possible.

Swedish agency to clear Abyei of explosives ahead of returns

At the request of UNMAO, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency (SRSA) has sent a four-person Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team to conduct a series of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) spot tasks in Abyei. The team will remain in the area until the end of 2008, in support of humanitarian activities for the return and reintegration of IDPs affected by the fighting. The Mine Action Committee, coordinated through the UNMIS, Abyei, will compile all requests for work and define the priorities.

The Swedish EOD team will start by clearing ERW that have been reported at the UNICEF and UNDP compounds. They will also work on

various NGOs and government compounds, as well as on Abyei's secondary schools and Return, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (RRR) centres for IDPs.

JiUs undergo CPA awareness training

UNMIS Public Information Office conducted a two-day CPA awareness workshop for 50 senior officers of the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) in Juba on 28 and 29 October.

Discussions covered a range of issues, including elections, human rights, protection of civilians, mine awareness and the role of UN Military Observers.

The workshop was opened by JIU Chief of Operations Maj. Gen. Joseph Mayen Akon. Commander Akon advised participants to share knowledge gained from the workshop with other JIUs not present at the meeting.

PIO also made a presentation on CPA awareness in Nimule, Eastern Equatoria State. The workshop was organized by a Catholic Church. Over 40 participants, including religious leaders, chiefs, payam administrators, youth and women's groups participated. Participants appealed to UNMIS to hold more CPA awareness workshops.

Polio vaccination targets over two million children

The 4th round of polio National Immunization Days (NIDs) took place in all 10 states of Southern Sudan, targeting approximately 2.9 million children under five years. State NIDs also took place in Upper Nile, Jonglei and parts of Unity and Eastern Equatoria States in response to recent polio outbreaks.

Sector II

Peace Conference reconciles warring communities

A peace conference aimed at reconciling warring communities in Warrap State was held in Tonj town from 22 to 26 September.

The conference discussed hostilities among three Dinka sub-tribes who have traditionally been at logger heads (Apuk-Kuac-Agouk). Outstanding issues were thrashed and the communities reconciled.

At the end of the four-day conference, a 15-member body of executive chiefs was established to ensure that the reconciliation holds. The committee was also tasked with sensitizing the community about the reconciliation. State authorities are confident that this initiative, if sufficiently supported, may bring an end to the loss of life and property that has plagued Warrap State in the recent past.

Lack of judges leads to increase in remand detainees

On 7 October, UNMIS Human Rights section visited the Court of Appeal in Lakes State and met with the Acting President, Alexander Muludyang Jada. They discussed issues related to human rights, increase of remandees in prison, the impact of prolonged absence of judges, challenges faced by the judges in their work and possible human rights training for the judges. Judge Jada acknowledged that the limited number of judges in the state is a contributing factor to the increased number of remandees in prisons.

Efforts made to demobilize children in Wunyik

Follow-up efforts on the pending demobilization of Children Associated with Armed Forces (CAAFs) presently in Wunyiik barracks continued during the reporting period, with no further progress. As a result, the Southern Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (SSDDRC) State Coordinator Bona Makuac has requested the SSDDRC authority in Juba to intervene for a

speedy resolution of the situation. He has also called on other partners, including UNMIS DDR and UNICEF, to assist in putting pressure on the commanders to ensure that the children are released as soon as possible.

In another development, Mr. Macau encouraged SSDDRC Child DDR Officers assigned to Warrap and Northern Bahr El Ghazal States to maintain contact with parents or families of the children who have been traced to assure them that final preparations are underway for child-parent reunification.

UNMIS DDR Unit provides capacity training for new staff

UNMIS DDR has continued to provide capacity building support to the Southern Sudan DDR Commission's newly recruited staff in Aweil and Western Bahr El Ghazal States. The current session concluded discussions on basic concepts of DDR programmes globally and in Sudan.

The teams were taken through various stages of the DDR programme and various implementation scenarios and challenges relevant to Sector II.

PIO conducts CPA awareness workshop for ministers in Warrap State

UNMIS Public Information Office in Wau conducted a CPA awareness workshop in Kwajok, Warrap State for cabinet ministers and other senior government officials.

PIO also joined Wau Head of Office and representatives of other substantive units during a courtesy call on the Governor of Warrap State.

Peace and reconciliation campaign continues in Warrap

On 23 October, UNMIS Civil Affairs Unit visited Kuajok in Warrap State and met with various stakeholders. It was learned that the 'Peace

Campaign' launched in the state in support of the 'Kal Kuel Covenant', signed by the executive chiefs at the 'Traditional Leaders Peace Conference' in Tonj was proceeding successfully.

As part of the Campaign, the Governor and chiefs, amongst others, have been traveling to talk to various communities. According to the Executive Director of the State Ministry of Local Government, they have already visited six areas of Gogrial West County since the Campaign kicked off on 3 October. He said they were now proceeding to areas in Gogrial East County. He further noted that the campaign had been well received and supported by the communities, who assured them that they had committed themselves to fully abide by and support the peace agreement.

Rapid assessment for flood victims carried out

UNMIS RRR participated in an interagency rapid assessment of flood-affected victims in Uldum and Maduany, Aweil West County. A total of 2,507 individual victims were identified.

Verification will be carried out once assistance is guaranteed. However, it was reported that some victims had lost their animals and the crops they had harvested, and those not harvested may not be accessible when ready. These might undermine sustainable reintegration of affected areas and could prolong dependence on relief.

Five people killed and several injured in inter-clan fighting

UNMIS Protection of Civilians Unit learned that four people were killed and unknown number of others injured in separate instances of inter-clan fighting in Warawa, Rumbek East County. It was reported that one case of fighting resulted from the theft of a cow belonging to the Panyar-Machor clan by a Panyar-Apin youth.

In a separate incident on the night of 23 October, two persons were reportedly shot and killed in what appeared to be revenge killings between two Dinka clans.

According to UN Security, a member of the Dinka Panyon tribe was shot dead close to a residential area in the east of Rumbek town. It is widely believed that this killing was in revenge for a previous murder committed in 2004. A few hours later that night, a member of the Dinka Dhei clan was shot and killed close to Pacong, Rumbek East in what was almost certainly another revenge killing. Police were deployed to the area to prevent further escalation of hostilities.

SSPS conduct a two-day community awareness workshop

On 19 October, the Southern Sudan Police Service (SSSPS), with the assistance of the Sector II UN Police training unit, conducted a two-day community awareness workshop. Approximately 60 taxi drivers from Wau participated in the workshop, which covered traffic laws, regulations and safety. The workshop was an SSPS-led initiative with UN Police assisting with venue and teaching aids.

This community outreach program is a significant component of community policing. The program targets not only drivers but also the community by increasing traffic safety and fostering a positive image of the police.

Sector III

UNMIS donates books to Upper Nile University

On 2 October, UNMIS Human Rights section in Malakal donated 32 human rights books on different human rights areas to Upper Nile University, Malakal campus. The books will be placed in the university's Library.

Provision of the books is aimed to supplement ongoing human rights lectures at the university and enhance the understanding of human rights among the university community. The donation was initiated as a result of recommendations made by students of the university and the university administration. The books were handed over to Wani Antony, the Acting Vice-Chancellor of the university.

International human rights lectures resume

UNMIS Human Rights Malakal resumed its lecture programme on International Human Rights Law at Upper Nile University, with a lecture on the Normative Framework of International Human Rights Law. The lecture covered the establishment of the UN and human rights protection mechanisms that derive from the UN Charter. It also explained the development of treaty-based protection in the global arena. Finally, the lecture briefly considered the regional human rights systems in Europe and the Americas, before focusing on the African system of human rights.

Protection training workshop held in Upper Nile

A two-day protection training workshop organized by the (SSRRC) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was conducted in Upper Nile state.

The workshop was attended by two SSRRC representatives from each of the 12 counties in the state as well as representatives from the line ministries and NGOs in Upper Nile State. UNMIS RRR and UNHCR representatives who participated in the workshop agreed that the output of the protection group discussions during would be presented at the Protection Working Group meeting for discussion and possible endorsement for the protection component of the state reintegration strategy.

Training workshop on annual needs and livelihood assessment carried out

The WFP conducted a three-day workshop on annual needs and livelihood assessment for data collection in Unity State. Some 31 participants were involved in the training program.

Following the completion of the training, participants were deployed to selected sites for two weeks.

The sites are composed of two clusters: northern cluster; which comprises Mayom, Abiemnom, Pariang, Rubkona and Guit Counties; while the southern cluster comprises Koch, Leer, Mayendit and Panyijar Counties. Four teams are involved in the operation.

For more information contact:

Antonette Miday
miday@un.org, +256477123138

Felix Leju
leju@un.org, +249 121853365

Visit us at www.unmis.org