

## Highlights

- Re-verification and continuing returnee movements to southern Sudan have raised the number of returnees to some 288,000 people.
- Humanitarian actors continue to assess and respond to needs following clashes between security forces and militia groups in Jonglei, Upper Nile and Unity in southern Sudan.
- Two months of intermittent inter-communal clashes in Lakes and Western Equatoria have led to significant population displacement and property destruction in both states.
- Up to 70 per cent of Abyei town residents who were displaced in March may have returned, according to SSRRC.
- Verification of new IDPs in Zamzam and other camps and settlements in Darfur continues.

### 1. North-South population movements

The cumulative total number of southerners that had returned from northern to southern Sudan starting from end of October 2010 reached 287,878 people by 5 April. The pace of returns has remained relatively constant with 5,690 people returning over the past week, about half of which were government-assisted returnees arriving in Juba port from Kosti and the remainder being spontaneous returnees throughout the states. The total number also includes an additional 17,700 returnees identified primarily in Unity State following re-verification exercises. In Unity, insecurity has previously hindered monitoring and verification activities in counties such as Abiemnom and Koch. The potential humanitarian and reintegration needs of returnees and host communities in counties where large returnee populations have now been verified require particular attention, including Abiemnom, Mayendit, Leer and Koch counties. Re-verification exercises are still ongoing in Northern Bahr el Ghazal.

On 5 April, IOM said in a statement that in cooperation with the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC) they had assisted more than 7,000 Southerners Sudanese to return to their homes in southern Sudan from the north. Two IOM convoys of 13 barges each have provided return assistance to returnees who had been stranded for more than three months at the Kosti transit centre on their way to Malakal and Juba.

The first convoy carrying 2,988 people arrived in the Upper Nile capital Malakal in early March. A second convoy of 11 barges destined for Juba left Kosti on 16 March with more than 4,000 returnees on board. As of 5 April, seven barges transporting more than 3,000 returnees had arrived in Juba. The remaining four barges are expected to arrive in Juba later this month.

#### **Kosti way station**

ADRA reported that there are 1,437 people, including 847 children, at the Kosti transit centre. ADRA's Technical Agreement (to continue monitoring) was renewed by the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). SSRRC resumed the registration process after they received part of their outstanding salary from the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs (Government of Southern Sudan). The construction of a strong fence for the way station started by UNHCR through FAR Sudan is expected to be completed by next week. Also, ADRA started the construction of some new shelters, showers and latrines in the new part of the way station located east of the current centre and this is expected to be completed by the end of April.

#### **Returnees overview (Statistical update for 5 April 2011)**

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

Southern Sudan	Southern Kordofan	Abyei Area
287,878	5,210	37,727

### **Southerners in Khartoum State**

An OCHA/UNHCR assessment conducted in March found that approximately 22,425 southerners are living out in the open in some 16 Khartoum IDP sites. Most of them lack access to clean water, sanitation and health services. On 27 March, the Returns Task Force meeting decided to speed up the registration of people in the departure points and the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) agreed to provide initial funds to support the movement of a limited number of persons.

Meanwhile, the Joint Returns Task Force plans to organise the return of some 6,000 people by barge to Upper Nile, Jonglei and Greater Equatoria within the next month. Rail transport is also being considered. This initiative (to be funded by the Government of National Unity) is intended to kick-start the returns process for those in most need.

The Joint Returns Task Force is pressing ahead with registration, referred to as 'rapid verification' of the numbers of returnees already collected and registered by the Chiefs. There is a need to start moving people as soon as possible due to the up-coming rainy season when roads will become impassable in the south.

### **South-North Movements**

According to a recent OCHA/UNHCR/PLAN Sudan/Sudanese Red Crescent Society verification, an increased number of new arrivals have continued to arrive in White Nile State in northern Sudan from Upper Nile State in southern Sudan. They are localised in Al Dub Karya and Al Hudieb in White Nile State. Al Dub Karya locality now has some 5,000 returnees from the south, while Al Hudieb has about 1,750 returnees. Relevant Government agencies and humanitarian partners have provided initial support to these returnees.

An estimated 200 southerners who recently returned to the south have reportedly returned back to the north. ADRA is tracking reverse returns through Kosti. According to some reports, this has been due to insufficient reintegration facilities available in the south. UNHCR is conducting individual follow-up interviews to determine the reasons for these returns.

## **2. Southern Sudan**

### **Humanitarian agencies continue to assist newly arrived returnees**

Of the approximately 3,000 returnees who were previously stranded in Kosti and arrived in Juba over the reporting period, those who have chosen to stay in Juba are integrating into the community, while about 1,000 people are hosted at the Juba way station until onward transport to Eastern and Western Equatoria is available. More than 200 people have already been provided with transport to Eastern Equatoria. In other areas across the south, spontaneous returnees have continued to arrive.

Verification activities are ongoing in a number of locations to assist with targeting and implementation of humanitarian response efforts with a particular focus on locations where substantial discrepancies exist between local and IOM-registered numbers of returns. The need for verification of returnee numbers in the Maduany and Udhaba sites in Aweil town in Northern Bahr el Ghazal has been highlighted as an issue of concern as discrepancies in figures are impacting agencies' ability to distribute assistance as well as for planning activities for reintegration and recovery interventions.

Efforts to prepare returnees for the rainy season are also continuing. UNHCR is providing shelter support for up to 20,000 vulnerable returnee households across all 10 states and UNDP has deployed more land surveyors to Northern Bahr el Ghazal at the request of the state authorities to help increase the rate of land allocation.

**Field-level training on the operational guidelines for returns completed in another two states**

Workshops on implementing the Operational Guidelines on Returns produced by the clusters and facilitated by the Emergency Return Sector were held in Wau in Western Bahr el Ghazal on 31 March and 1 April and in Kwajok in Warrap on 4 and 5 April. The workshop was attended by the SSRRC, government line ministries, UN agencies and NGOs. Training was provided on provision of humanitarian assistance to returnees in transit and final destination; procedures for coordination of the return process; tracking, registration and verification of returnees; as well as protection and non-food item (NFI) aspects. These trainings should help to ensure a more coordinated and consistent response to future arrivals.

**Humanitarians continue to assess and respond to the situation in northern Jonglei**

Humanitarian actors continue to assess the humanitarian situation and respond to reported needs in Jonglei. Over March, eight rapid assessments were completed in Canal (Pigi), Ayod and Fangak counties. In addition, other assessments were done in Uror, Nyirol and Akobo counties for returnees or general vulnerability and in Duk County following inter-communal violence.

On 29 March, OCHA was part of a follow-up mission to Phom-el Zeraf and Old Fangak. Initial estimations indicate 3,000 to 4,000 people are displaced in Old Fangak following clashes between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and other armed groups. The displaced are largely sheltering in partially constructed school buildings, though some are sleeping in the open and others have sought shelter with relatives in the area. Indications are that the displaced are in need of food and livelihoods assistance, emergency shelter and NFIs. Water and sanitation is of also of concern with local boreholes already insufficient to meet the needs of the host population.

Further assessment is needed to determine protection needs as well as to register and verify the displaced and clarify needs. WASH services and livelihoods support (seeds, tools and fishing equipment) are reported as urgent ahead of the rainy season as well as NFIs which have not yet been distributed to returnees in the area. An inter-agency assessment to Old Fangak and a second assessment to Canal and Khorfulus towns in Canal (Pigi) County are scheduled to start as soon as security arrangements have been put in place.

In response to reports of newly laid mines in some areas of northern Jonglei, the Mine Action Office has deployed a mine clearing team that will travel to Ayod and start activities shortly. Distribution of food assistance has been completed in Ayod town, while delivery of humanitarian assistance to other sites was delayed by a temporary shortage of fuel in the market.

**Humanitarian agencies are addressing needs in Upper Nile**

Humanitarian response is also ongoing to affected populations in Obel villages and Owachi following the fighting that broke out in early March between the SPLA and other armed groups. On 30 March, World Vision International and SSRRC started food distribution to 3,065 affected people. The distribution took place in Obel 1, finishing on 1 April. In Dolieb Hill, food distribution to 397 people has also taken place. UNICEF and the State Ministry of Physical Infrastructure have mobilised WASH supplies such as water purification tablets, soap, and buckets for dispatch and distribution in Warjok and Owachi.

**Impact of inter-communal violence in Lakes and Western Equatoria is being assessed**

Sporadic attacks and counter attacks have been ongoing for the past two months stretching across at least three counties (Yirol West, Yirol East and Awerial) in Lakes and in Mvolo County in Western Equatoria. The inter-communal fighting has killed more than 60 people since 9 February according to reports by local authorities and assessment teams and has created significant population displacement in both states. According to an inter-agency assessment conducted on 23-25 March in Mapuordit, Anuol, in Yirol West County and in Makundi in Wulu County in Lakes, the newly displaced population is estimated at 25,680 individuals; around 1,500 huts were burnt and villages were abandoned during the fighting.

The rapid assessment indicated that that the most urgent needs resulting from recent conflict include food for the displaced households, provision of NFIs such as plastic sheeting, water containers, sanitary kits, cooking utensils, mosquito nets and blankets. There is a fear that the agricultural season will be disrupted if the displaced people are not able to go back to their homes soon to cultivate. UNMIS has reported they will deploy an ongoing

presence on both sides of the inter-state border in the coming week to provide reassurance to the local population. Additional clashes have been reported on 30 March and 5 April in Bahr el Grindi Payam in Western Equatoria. Humanitarian assessments to the area have been planned to continue assessing the impact of the ongoing fighting.

### **Humanitarian partners are assessing and responding to needs in Unity**

On 28 March, an inter-agency mission went to Mayom County in Unity to assess the security, humanitarian and protection of civilians situation following the fighting between the SPLA and militia groups in Riak on 17-18 March. The Mayom County Commissioner told the team that relative calm had returned to the area although a number of displaced persons still lived in fear as some of the scattered militias are still roaming in the bush. According to information provided by the SSRRC, approximately 3,200 people were displaced in the county. Food and shelter assistance was reported as most urgent needs. A health screening will be carried out by MSF-H with visiting mobile health services to affected areas of Riak, Wangkai, Buoth and Wichok. Provision of seeds and tools at payam level was also recommended.

## **3. Protocol areas**

### **Abyei**

According to the SSRRC, up to 70 per cent of Abyei town residents who were displaced in March have returned to the town.

WFP reached 67 per cent (80,261 people) of the estimated total population within the Abyei Area (120,000 people) between January and March through their general food distributions, food for recovery, food for education, food for training and institutional feeding programs. WFP will also provide 57 per cent of the returnees to Abyei town and the surrounding villages of Amenabak and Wundop (21,387 people) with an additional three-months food rations between April and June, mainly due to their displacement and the fact that there are no ongoing recovery activities in place.

UNHCR distributed NFI start-up kits to over 20,000 people in Abyei and will continue to distribute NFIs/Emergency Shelter (ES) based on vulnerability assessments. Along with Mercy Corps, UNHCR is starting a transitional shelter project to support 2,500 people by targeting the most vulnerable groups such as female-headed households and the elderly, and areas with the highest returns.

## **4. Darfur**

### **Zamzam and other IDP camps**

The number of initially verified IDPs who came to Zamzam camp in North Darfur over the past few months following clashes between Government forces and armed movements stands at 44,129 people as of end of March, according to IOM. In addition to that, an estimated 18,871 people are said to have arrived in Zamzam camp but are yet to be verified. In Dar el Salam IDP camp, the number of initially verified new arrivals was 1,800 people, ICRC reported.

In addition to the new arrivals in Zamzam camp, based on reports from NCA, WFP-LCU and inter-agency assessments, the number of initially verified new arrivals in various IDP camps and settlements in South Darfur was 11,433 people by late March.

### **Inter-agency mission to Hashaba**

A one-day inter-agency technical assessment mission visited Hashaba, an area of IDP return, on 5 April. The mission noted a lack of basic services in Hashaba. In Waranga (3km from Hashaba) basic services such as a health clinic, school building and water sources were observed, however, they need improvement in terms of infrastructure, rehabilitation and supplies. Road access between Waranga and Hashaba will be impossible during the rainy season when the river-bed between them becomes full of water.

**Security improves in West Darfur**

According to UNDSS, the police reported an improvement in security in West Darfur compared to two years ago. They reported that in El Geneina 12 vehicles and 150 policemen are deployed daily to guard the premises of international NGOs and UN agencies every night, in addition to police patrols, military patrols and contracted police guarding WFP facilities. The police stated their commitment to continue securing the facilities of international organizations.