

22 September 2011

## Highlights:

- The response to households in and around Agok affected by flash floods continued over the week. Emergency shelter kits were distributed and some food airlifted to feed the most vulnerable in Agok.
- Humanitarian assistance to people displaced from Southern Kordofan and the northernmost part of Unity State has focused on providing food as levels of malnutrition among new arrivals are increasing.
- The number of South Sudanese who have returned from Sudan since last autumn now stands at over 342,000. An influx of some 2,900 new arrivals brings key transit site in Renk to full capacity.

## I. Situation Overview

The security situation in parts of South Sudan continued to be tense during the week, with reports of impending attacks from rebel militia groups in Jonglei and Upper Nile, coupled with persistent rumours of inter-communal attacks on the horizon in Jonglei and a civilian disarmament exercise underway in Lakes, Warrap and Western Equatoria. Humanitarian partners continued to focus on assessing the impact of flash floods in the Agok area, and responding to persons displaced into South Sudan by conflict in Southern Kordofan in Sudan. Response efforts also continued to be concentrated on returnees arriving and transiting within South Sudan, with the transit point in Renk reaching full capacity.

In political developments, a border security agreement was signed by South Sudan and Sudan on 18 September to monitor shared borders and open crossing points between the two countries. However, the identification of mutually agreed locations for the crossings was deferred.

## II. Humanitarian challenges: needs and response

### Assessing the flood-affected population in the Agok area remains difficult

Humanitarian partners continue to respond to the situation in and around Agok affected by flash-floods early September. The localized flooding has compounded an already difficult situation for people displaced by conflict in Abyei in May this year. Local authorities estimate that thousands of people were affected by the floods, but a full scale humanitarian assessment remains pending as the affected area is largely inaccessible. While many of those displaced by the floods in and around Agok town have reportedly returned to where they were prior to the flooding, the surrounding areas outside the town are still restricted due to the rains. Food insecurity of the affected households continued to be of concern as the people displaced from Abyei are largely dependent on food assistance. Food relief lasted until the end of August. Partners have relocated two metric tons of food from Wunrok in Warrap to feed the most vulnerable people in Agok. The relocated supplies, which are roughly enough food to feed 500 people for a week, are scheduled to be distributed on 22 September. Emergency shelter kits were distributed to 324 households in Agok over the week. The distribution of 100 cartons of water purification tablets and bars of soap to the affected population is ongoing. Partners have also completed the construction of 14 communal latrines in Agok and Juljok. Two additional latrines are under construction and 50 further latrines are planned to be installed in the coming weeks.

Following a security assessment on 15 September after advocacy by humanitarian partners, UN staff are now allowed to stay overnight in INGO compounds in Agok. The development will improve access to Agok, and strengthen ongoing humanitarian operations to persons affected by the flash flooding including those displaced by the crisis in Abyei. UN security in Abyei, in consultation with UNISFA, has advised that regular UNHAS flights to Agok can commence. However, humanitarian partners continue to advocate for blanket clearance as the current arrangement slows down humanitarian movements.

### Discussions ongoing with displaced community from Southern Kordofan on relocation from border area

Leaders from the community of displaced persons from Southern Kordofan continue to discuss with humanitarian agencies a possible relocation away from the remote area they now reside in. Safety concerns as well as difficult access to the present location make such a move important according to the UN refugee agency who reports that three way stations will provide support to those who have decided to relocate. These are being set up along the way from the northern-most part of Unity State towards a location further south.

Presently, around 9,200 people have been registered as being displaced from Southern Kordofan and the northernmost part of Unity State. Levels of malnutrition among new arrivals are increasing. Humanitarian assistance therefore focuses on providing food, inclusive of therapeutic feeding, when needed. Water and hygiene remain problematic, with women and children having to wait up to one hour for their turn to get water. Alternative sources of water supply are being explored (shallow wells and rain water collection). Additional emergency latrines have been dug to reach a total of 27 but not all have slabs. Informal schooling for 890 children and youth takes place in temporary structures by community teachers.

UNHCR continues the registration of people from the Nuba Mountains who either fled to Juba recently, or came to the capital prior to the violence in Southern Kordofan, but are unable to return now. The number of registered persons in Juba now stands at 1,495.

#### **Response continues to population displaced in Jonglei State amid insecurity**

The response to the displaced in Uror County in Jonglei continues following the large scale inter-communal attack in mid-August, despite persistent rumours of looming attacks. On 19 September, two NGO staff members from Pagil and two from Jiech were temporarily relocated to Bor due to reported insecurity. Over 21,600 persons have been verified following the attack in mid-August and have received food aid, with final verified numbers of people displaced scheduled to be completed in coming days. However, further relief efforts including the urgent transportation of approximately 150 metric tons of food (enough food to feed about 19,000 people for 15 days) have been hampered by the lack of road access to the area. Humanitarian partners are discussing the possibility of conducting airdrops in the area as a way of reaching people in need. Distribution of non-food items (NFIs) to bring the number to over 2,200 persons in Yuai payam took place on 20 September. Additional NFI distributions are planned for Motot in the coming week. Some social workers arrived in Yuai on 20 September to provide psycho-social support, counselling, registration of abducted, missing and unaccompanied children as well as family tracing and reunification. Protection and health support also continued to be provided to affected persons. Reports of further displaced in Pieri, Payai and Karam are being followed up

#### **Tensions remain regarding rebel militia group movements across the country**

Humanitarian partners remain concerned about the potential humanitarian impacts of the movement of rebel militia groups in various parts of South Sudan. The 500-600 armed rebel militia forces formerly aligned with renegade General Peter Gatdet, who were en route from Lakes to Western Bahr el Ghazal for integration into the national army, reportedly arrived in Mapel in Western Bahr el Ghazal between 17 and 18 September. No security incidents were reported to have occurred en route. Access enabling the registration of children associated with the armed forces has not yet been granted. In Unity, mounting tensions have been reported in Mayom town because of the convergence of non armed rebel militia forces previously aligned to Peter Gatdet, who are said to be disgruntled because the government is not integrating them into the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

#### **Humanitarian actors monitor reports of seasonal flooding**

In addition to the flash floods in Agok earlier this month, localized flooding and rising waters have also been reported from Lakes and Northern Bahr el Ghazal states. In Lakes, the affected areas include Wullu, Rumbek East and Rumbek North counties and an estimated 676 households are in need of humanitarian assistance. A meeting to respond to reported needs will be convened early next week.

#### **Emergency telecommunication cluster launched**

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster was officially established on 16 September, following an agreement by IASC Principals and Global Cluster Lead Agencies. The cluster sets out to provide emergency security telecommunications, communications centres and information technology services that will allow humanitarian partners and the government to better coordinate assessment, rescue and relief operations. One of its key activities will be to provide an extended reliable VHF/HF radio network independent from public infrastructure to provide voice communications services for the safety and security of humanitarian workers. WFP will lead the new cluster in support of the Ministry of Telecommunications, who will act as the government lead.

### **III. Returns to South Sudan**

#### **South Sudanese continue to return, mostly through Renk in Upper Nile**

During the week, some 820 people previously residing in Sudan arrived at their final destination points across the country. In addition, government-organized buses carrying approximately 2,900 South Sudanese from Khartoum to Renk in Upper Nile arrived on 16 September. IOM provided onward transport to 371 people during the week by

road and river. On 18 September, an IOM-supported barge left Kosti for Juba, carrying some 1,700 people. It is anticipated that the journey will take two weeks. Information has been received by IOM that another barge, supported by the government, also left Khartoum during the week bound for Juba. The number of people on the barge is unconfirmed. The cumulative number of returnees since last autumn now stands at 342,200.

Returnee Overview by State*											
State:	Upper Nile	Unity	Warrap	Northern Bahr el Ghazal	Western Bahr el Ghazal	Lakes	Jonglei	Western Equatoria	Central Equatoria	Eastern Equatoria	Total
New arrivals in final destination 14- 20 September	543	0	118	17	136	0	6	0	0	0	<b>820</b>
Previous arrivals (adjustments)	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>12</b>
Previous total	56,251	83,851	31,866	66,128	19,006	17,332	19,812	1,223	35,969	9,930	<b>341,368</b>
<b>Updated total</b>	<b>56,794</b>	<b>83,851</b>	<b>31,984</b>	<b>66,157</b>	<b>19,142</b>	<b>17,332</b>	<b>19,818</b>	<b>1,223</b>	<b>35,969</b>	<b>9,930</b>	<b>342,200</b>
Type of Returnee											
Government assisted	24,529	32,080	16,770	21,550	7,568	15,627	16,090	707	21,717	8,491	165,129
Spontaneous	16,572	51,771	5,839	43,187	11,438	1,435	3,692	467	14,252	1,439	150,092
Unspecified	15,150	0	9,257	1,391	0	270	30	49	0	0	26,147

\*since 30 October 2010. Contains only verified IOM data unless otherwise noted. Figures are as of 20 September 2011.

### Influx of new arrivals brings key transit site in Renk to full capacity

Humanitarian partners reported that the arrival of 2,900 returnees from Khartoum on 16 September has brought the Mina transit site in Renk to full capacity. The number of returnees at the three sites in Renk remains fluid. At present the estimated number of returnees at each site is: 7,500 people in Mina; 10,000 in Abayok; and 620 in Agany. The lack of barges and increased price of hiring barges continues to hamper decongestion efforts in Renk and assisting returnees moving to final destination points. While humanitarian partners continued to work on decongesting the existing three sites in Renk through improved onward transport and land allocation, negotiations with local authorities are underway for the potential of setting up an additional transit site to deal with the continuing new arrivals. The group of 2,900 arrivals is being monitored by humanitarian partners, however, they are reportedly well equipped and no immediate humanitarian needs have been identified. The situation could deteriorate in Renk if registration stops in Kosti and a closure of the transit centre is confirmed as indicated by authorities. In that case, returnees would be redirected to Renk.

### Medical needs of returnees being met in Renk

Medical services continue to returnees, with the Medair health clinic at the Mina transit site treating approximately 1,100 people each week. Medical staff have seen a decrease in the number of malaria cases in children, which is likely to be attributed to the distribution of mosquito nets to nursing and pregnant women, and children under five years. Malaria patients make up almost one in three patients treated at the clinics, which is expected for this time of the year. Further to previous unconfirmed reports regarding malnutrition at the sites, initial findings of a nutrition assessment that begun 11 September in Mina and Abayok indicated that levels of severe and moderate malnutrition are not abnormal for South Sudan. Partners on the ground have reported that many of the patients recently being treated at the clinics are from the Renk host community. Other humanitarian support continued to be provided in Renk, including the construction of 40 latrines at the Mina site and 33 at the Abayok site. Water treatment, trucking and hygiene promotion activities and nutrition screening are also ongoing.

### Land allocation underway in Northern Bahr el Ghazal

In Northern Bahr el Ghazal, progress has been made in ongoing negotiations regarding land allocation at the Apada site in Aweil. In the past week chiefs have agreed to move to the new site, where 150 plots have been allocated for returnees. The process remains ongoing and it is anticipated it will be several weeks before transition to the new site takes place.

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