

HIGHLIGHTS

- Concerns for safety of civilians as renewed inter-tribal fighting in El Sireaf locality, North Darfur, leaves over 50 people dead.
- About 8,000 people are reported to have fled their homes as a result of fighting in the southern part of Blue Nile State.
- The number of people in need of food assistance in Sudan is estimated at 3.5 million, which is 1 million less than in 2012, according to FAO.



Newly displaced people from Um Gonja in El Salam IDP camp (UN)

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Concern for civilians in El Sireaf, North Darfur

On 25 February the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan, Ali Al-Za'tari, issued a statement expressing profound concern about the safety and well-being of civilians in El Sireaf town, North Darfur. The town is crowded with some 60,000 people who sought refuge there when fighting broke out between Northern Rezeigat tribesmen and the Beni Hussein tribe following a dispute in the Jebel Amir gold mining area in early January. The renewed fighting that erupted on 21 February when Northern Rezeigat tribesmen attacked El Sireaf town highlighted once again the vulnerability of civilians in the area.

Local authorities reported that over 50 people were killed during the fighting on 21 February and that many others were injured. The fighting reportedly subsided following intervention by the Sudanese Government. According to media reports, the Governor of North Darfur, Osman Yousif Kibir, stated that "the armed forces and other regular forces have managed to completely contain the situation at E -Sireaf locality after the regretful incidents which took place during Thursday [21 February] and Saturday [23 February]".

Humanitarian organizations have been coordinating closely with local government authorities and with the UNAMID peacekeeping mission in Darfur to deliver urgently needed surgical supplies and to evacuate seriously wounded people. On 24 February, the United Nations/African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) airlifted 37 wounded civilians, including one woman and two children, from El Sireaf to El Fasher for medical treatment. In addition, UNAMID transported 2.7 metric tonnes of medical and other supplies those affected by the latest fighting.



Governor of North Darfur welcomes support from aid agencies

During a meeting between the Governor of North Darfur, the Commissioner-General of the Sudanese Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator on 20 February, the Governor welcomed the support of humanitarian organisations and outlined measures that are being taken to address the needs of people affected by the recent crisis.

The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator stressed that the United Nations and its humanitarian partners are ready to continue working with the Government to respond to the crisis. So far, over 700 metric tonnes of relief supplies have been delivered. Six more

FIGURES

IDPs in camps in Darfur receiving food aid (WFP)	1,430,000
Refugees in Sudan (UNHCR)	142,000
Sudanese refugees from Blue Nile and South Kordofan in South Sudan (UNHCR)	184,000
Sudanese refugees from Blue Nile in Ethiopia (UNHCR)	32,500

FUNDING

1 billion
requested (US\$)

In total, 10,000 families (an estimated 50,000 people) in El Sireaf have received non-food relief supplies

trucks carrying plastic sheeting, sleeping mats, blankets, medical equipment and animal feed arrived in El Sireaf on 18 February. In addition to the food that has been distributed, an estimated 50,000 people in El Sireaf have received non-food relief supplies.

UNAMID has deployed peacekeepers to establish a temporary operating base in El Sireaf and humanitarian organisations are making arrangements with local authorities to establish a temporary humanitarian hub in El Sireaf. Meanwhile, humanitarian organisations are continuing to provide support to other civilians displaced by the Jebel Amir crisis, in locations such as Kebkabiya, Saraf Omra and Garra Az Zawia.

Assistance is also being provided to displaced people from the Jebel Amir area who arrived in South Darfur in recent weeks. Following an inter-agency assessment, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has distributed non-food relief supplies to about 3,000 people who earlier this month fled from Jebel Amir to Bulbul Abu Jazo. This caseload has been verified by a local NGO. The Government's Water and Environmental Sanitation Department (WES) will provide these people with access to clean drinking water and will construct 300 latrines. WFP will provide a 15-day food ration and the State Ministry of Health (SMoH), in cooperation with the World Health Organisation (WHO), plans to vaccinate the newly displaced people against yellow fever.

Misseriya peace conference opens in Ed Daein

A peace conference between the Misseriya clans of Heban, Matanit and Sorour opened in Ed Daein, the capital of East Darfur State, on 22 February to end the intra-tribal violence that erupted on 6 January in El Fula in South Kordofan. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is providing technical and financial support to the peace conference. The conference has brought together more than 300 representatives of the disputing clans, mediators, and negotiators from other tribes in the region.

In early February, HAC reported that more than 11,000 people were displaced from El Fula to Al Sunut, Lagawa and Keilak localities after the fighting erupted between the Misseriya clans over disagreements on grazing rights, land and other disputes.

Preparing for returns in South Kordofan

Over 11,000 returns expected in Dalami locality

On 18 February the Commissioner of Dalami locality in South Kordofan told the local media that the authorities are finalising arrangements to facilitate returns of some 10,000 people from Al Rahad in North Kordofan State and another 1,200 people from Kortala in Habila locality in South Kordofan. The Commissioner said that some 180 people recently arrived in the locality from Hadri, Darri, Tangli, Abri, and Nakru villages (in SPLM-N controlled areas) due to shortages of food, water and medicines in those areas.

Meanwhile, HAC, the Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission (VRRRC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have continued their ongoing exercise of validating returnees in South Kordofan. Over the past week, validation exercises have been completed in Keilak, Delling, Habila and Dalami localities. The results of the exercise are expected to be released in the coming weeks.

Land plots allocated for 200 transitional shelters in Kadugli

On 20 February, the South Kordofan State Government allocated land plots for the construction of the second batch of 200 transitional shelters in Kadugli town. The construction is expected to start in March. This is part of UNHCR's plan to construct 760 transitional shelters in South Kordofan for the most vulnerable conflict-affected people. So far, 130 transitional shelters have been completed.

Blue Nile – some return; some newly displaced

UNHCR and the Sudanese Commission of Refugees (COR) visited Geissan locality, south-east of Ed Damazine in Blue Nile State, to assess the conditions of refugees who

UNHCR is constructing 760 transitional shelters for the most vulnerable conflict-affected persons in South Kordofan

Over 8,000 civilians are reported to have fled their homes after heavy fighting in the southern part of Blue Nile State

have returned from Ethiopia. More details on this will be provided once a report on this visit is received.

The Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) has invited the United Nations and its partners to participate in a joint visit to Blue Nile state to review the humanitarian situation there.

The Sudan Tribune news website reported on 18 February that over 8,000 civilians fled their homes after heavy fighting between the SAF and Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) forces in Muffa village in Blue Nile State. Muffa is about 20km south of Kurmuk near the Ethiopian border. The UN has not had access to this area to verify these reports and to provide assistance to affected civilians.

Returns to Abyei continue

According to humanitarian agencies in Abyei, of the 105,000 people displaced by conflict in Abyei in May 2011, 35,000 people returned to their areas of origin within weeks of the hostilities ending. Agencies in Abyei report that since this time, an additional 14,000 people have returned to their villages or areas of origin in the Abyei area, with 56,000 people remaining in South Sudan and areas south of the Bahr el Arab River/River Kiir.



Returnees coming to Abyei town from South Sudan (UNHCR)

In recent weeks, Misseriya pastoralists have utilized traditional migration routes through the Abyei area, with significant numbers of cattle reported to the north and east of Abyei town. According to the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), tensions between the Misseriya and the Dinka Ngok over grazing and water have been increasing as the two groups come in greater contact. To diffuse tensions, UNISFA peacekeepers are maintaining a buffer zone separating the migration corridors from Abyei town.

Food security improves, FAO report says

The number of people in need of food assistance in Sudan is estimated at 3.5 million, which is 1 million less than in 2012, according to FAO

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported on 15 February that overall food security conditions have improved in Sudan since the harvest in November 2012. Currently, the number of people in need of food assistance is estimated at 3.5 million, which is 1 million people less than a year earlier. The report prepared by FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System states that most food insecure households are concentrated in conflict-affected areas of Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile, where large-scale displacements have affected agricultural production, market access, livelihood strategies and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. According to the report, the total cereal production in 2012 (including irrigated wheat crop, to be harvested in March/April) is estimated at 5.7 million tonnes - almost double the level of the 2011 drought-affected output and slightly above the average for the last five years.