Snapshot 25–31 March 2015

**Ukraine:** Fears are growing of a new offensive in Mariupol, as non-government troops appear to be gathering nearby. A recent assessment has found that more than 1.6 million people need humanitarian assistance, nearly 1.1 million of whom are in non-government-controlled areas. 20–30% of IDPs are at risk of losing their status and benefits, due to a new mechanism to verify the addresses of IDPs.

**Nigeria:** Opposition candidate Buhari has been declared winner of the presidential election, but irregularities have been alleged, and there have already been protests in Rivers state. Boko Haram is suspected of attacks in Gombe state, including on polling stations, which killed seven, and there have been attacks on polling stations in Bauchi.

**Yemen:** Saudi-led aerial bombing has reportedly disabled the Houthis’ air force. It has also displaced some 4,500 people to refugee camps in Hajjah. Airstrikes killed 45 people in Mazraq refugee camp, and 25 in Sanaa. The Houthis advance south continued; they and their allies have taken Lahj governorate and Aden airport.

Updated: 31/03/2015. Next update: 08/04/2015
AFRICA

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, INSECURITY

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

26 March: 1,000 more UN peacekeepers will be deployed to protect infrastructure and senior officials in Bangui, bringing the total to 13,000 (Reuters, 26/03/2015).

25 March: Fulani herders who had been trapped in Yaloke for months finally ventured into their town after talks with local leaders (Reuters, 25/03/2015).

23 March: The lean season is due to begin four months early, between March and August. Farmers are in urgent need of seeds and equipment for the next planting season, due to start in April (OCHA, 23/03/2015; FEWSNET, 02/2015).

OVERVIEW

Health, protection, food, and WASH are top priority needs, as continued violence, looting, and displacement cause further deterioration of an already dire humanitarian situation across the country. Violence between Muslim communities, perceived to have links with the ex-Seleka, and Christian communities, aligned with the anti-balaka militias, has resulted in displacement, targeted killings along communal lines, and human rights abuses.

Political Context

In late 2012, Muslim Seleka fighters advanced from the north, taking control of territory on their way to the capital Bangui, where they held power until December 2013. Seleka committed numerous abuses during their advance and rule, and self-defence militias composed of mainly non-Muslims, ‘anti-balaka’, began to carry out revenge attacks in late 2013. The UN Commission of Inquiry into human rights concluded on 8 January that violence towards Muslims by anti-balaka in 2014 constitutes ethnic cleansing (Government, 20/01/2015). Most ex-Seleka members withdrew to the north at the end of 2013, but fighting persisted between ex-Seleka and anti-balaka, Muslim and Christian communities, and pastoralists and farmers.

The African Union had already deployed troops to CAR prior to Seleka’s assumption of power, but was overwhelmed by the severity and scope of the conflict. The African Union forces, MISCA, backed by France were deployed in December 2013 authorised by the UN. In mid-September 2014, the UN peacekeeping force took over operations under the name MINUSCA.

A transitional government was formed in August 2014. There will be no national elections before late 2015, and the long duration of the transitional government risks worsening the crisis (Missionary International Service News Agency, 01/09/2014). The ex-Seleka have rejected the transitional Government, and proclaimed a de facto, independent, secular state in northeastern CAR in July (IRIN 23/09/2014; Government, 24/07/2014).

Security Context

More than 5,000 people have been killed since December 2013 (BBC, 07/01/2015). More than 1,267 security incidents were recorded between January 2014 and 2015, including 31 in 2015 (OCHA, 21/01/2015). The police station in Bangui opened in March with 35 officers (Reuters, 25/03/2015).

Stakeholders

Ex-Seleka: Seleka is an alliance of factions created in 2012 and dissolved by President Djotodia in late 2013. However, many fighters remained active, and were dubbed ‘ex-Seleka’. With the exception of 17,114 confined to three military camps in Bangui, most moved out of the capital and had control of much of central and northern CAR by January 2014 (IRIN, 17/09/2014). Bambari, Ouaka, reportedly became the ex-Seleka headquarters in May. Rival ex-Seleka groups have clashed on several occasions (Jeune Afrique,
27/10/2014). An estimated 12,000 fighters make up the armed ex-Seleka, including Muslims from the northeast, and Sudanese and Chadians (IRIN, 12/01/2015; international media, 30/09/2014).

Anti-balaka: The anti-balaka were formed in order to counter the Seleka; there are around 75,000 militants, though the numbers are contested, and their main leaders and political programme remain unknown (IRIN, 12/01/2015). After the coup and Djotodia’s resignation, many members of the former government army, the FACA, joined the anti-balaka. It is suspected that up to ten anti-balaka factions function in the vicinity of Bangui (IRIN, 12/02/2014). An anti-balaka leader, Rodrigue Ngaibona, was arrested by UN peacekeepers on 17 January (Reuters, 18/01/2015).

LRA: Mbomou and Haut-Mbomou remain most affected by the Lord’s Resistance Army, which increased attacks as the political crisis left a power vacuum (OCHA, 10/11/2014). In January 2015, LRA militant Dominic Ongwen surrendered to US forces (BBC, 07/01/2015), a move that incited an increase in attacks by the LRA.

UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA): MINUSCA officially took over operations on 14 September 2014, under a one-year mandate. In March 2015, the number of peacekeepers was increased by 1,000, to better protect infrastructure and senior officials in Bangui, bringing the total to 13,000 uniformed personnel (Reuters, 26/03/2015).

French forces: Half of the French Sangaris peacekeeping mission of 2,000 is deployed in Bangui. Its mandate expires in April 2015, but troops will stay until late 2015, with a reduced presence of 800 (international media, 14/01/2015). Troops will begin decreasing their presence as MINUSCA increases the number of peacekeepers to 13,000 by late April (USAID, 13/03/2015).

EU forces: On 21 October, the 700-strong EU military operation in CAR (EUFOR-RCA) was extended to March 2015 to protect civilians and provide security for humanitarian operations in the Bangui area (Government, 07/11/2014) but are leaving CAR, less than 12 months after launching their operation (Deutsche Welle, 13/03/2015). The EU launched the EU Military Advisory mission (EUMAM RCA) on 19 January, with the objective of reforming the security sector (Government, 16/03/2015).

US military assistance: The US is providing logistical support, Special Forces, and advisers to African troops operating against the LRA in eastern and southeastern CAR.

Conflict Developments

An increase in security incidents was noted in the first half of February 2015 (IOM, 16/02/2015). Fighting is concentrated around six central and western prefectures: Mambere Kadei, Nana-Grebizi, Nana-Mambere, Ouaka, Ouham, Ouham-Pende, and Sangha-Mbaere (OCHA, 18/03/2015). The Batangafo-Bouca route (Ouham), Mbré (Nana-Grebizi), Kabo (Ouham), Moyen-Sido (Ouham), Ngaoundaye (Ouham-Pende), Bambari (Ouaka), Kouango (Ouaka), and Bangui (3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th districts) are all of concern for protection (UNHCR, 26/03/2015).

Recent Incidents

Conflict Developments

An increase in security incidents was noted in the first half of February 2015 (IOM, 16/02/2015). Fighting is concentrated around six central and western prefectures: Mambere Kadei, Nana-Grebizi, Nana-Mambere, Ouaka, Ouham, Ouham-Pende, and Sangha-Mbaere (OCHA, 18/03/2015). The Batangafo-Bouca route (Ouham), Mbré (Nana-Grebizi), Kabo (Ouham), Moyen-Sido (Ouham), Ngaoundaye (Ouham-Pende), Bambari (Ouaka), Kouango (Ouaka), and Bangui (3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th districts) are all of concern for protection (UNHCR, 26/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

As of February 2015, 2.7 million of 4.6 million people need immediate assistance, half of them children (OCHA, 21/01/2015; 18/02/2015). There are 854,070 people of concern, including IDPs and CAR refugees in neighbouring countries (UNHCR, 05/12/2014).

Access

Security Constraints

Violent attacks, threats against aid workers, and roadblocks hinder the supply of humanitarian assistance outside Bangui, most in need of some sort of assistance (OCHA, 21/01/2015). Organisations delivering food assistance are challenged by road security (USAID, 13/03/2015).

Bangui: Security incidents in Bangui’s PK5 region resulted in teachers fleeing their posts (OCHA, 04/03/2015). A site coordinator held by anti-balaka was released through a MINUSCA intervention in March (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

Kemo: Armed men attacked an INGO’s convoy on 20 February, looting UNICEF goods and personal belongings (OCHA, 04/03/2015).
Ouham: On 18 February, armed men attacked an INGO in Batangafo, resulting in MSF suspending its mobile clinic activities in the region (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

Trapped Communities

At end February, more than 36,000 people, mostly but not exclusively Muslim, were trapped in seven enclaves across CAR (WHO, 28/02/2015). As of 10 December, priority areas included Bangui’s PK5 neighbourhood, Yaloke in Ombella Mpoko, Berberati and Carnot in Mambere Kadei, Boda and Boganangone in Lobaye, and Bouar in Nana-Mambere (USAID, 19/12/2014). They require urgent humanitarian assistance, particularly protection, health, and nutrition (OCHA, 04/12/2014). Trapped Fulani in Yaloke (42 of whom have died since their arrival from other conflict areas in April 2014) travelled into the town for the first time in March following negotiations with local leaders (UNHCR, 23/12/2014; Reuters, 25/03/2015).

Security Incidents Affecting Aid Workers

UN, NGO, and private vehicles are becoming regular targets on main roads (IOM, 02/02/2015). On 9 February, armed men attacked the compound of an international NGO in Ouham (OCHA, 18/02/2015). A female French charity worker was kidnapped in January and released four days later (Reuters, 19/01/2015). The Minister for Youth and Sport, Armel Ningatoloum Sayo, was kidnapped 25 January in Bangui, and released on 11 February (Reuters, 25/01/2015; 11/02/2015). A MINUSCA worker was also temporarily kidnapped. On 26 January, an attempt to kidnap the Minister of Trade failed (IOM, 02/02/2015). 18 humanitarian workers were killed and six wounded in 142 incidents in 2014 (OCHA, 04/12/2014; USAID, 19/12/2014).

Displacement

It was estimated in March 2014 that 80–85% of Bangui’s minority Muslim population had fled or been evacuated.

IDPs

As of March, there are 436,300 IDPs in CAR. Some 177,530 are living in 108 sites countrywide (including Bimbo and Bangui), 225,360 people with host families, and 35,650 people in the forest (OCHA, 07/01/2015; 04/02/2015).

As of 7 January, there were 125,080 people in 74 sites in the Bimbo area, southwest of Bangui (OCHA, 18/03/2015).

Bangui: Relative improvements in the security conditions of some neighbourhoods outside Bangui have brought the number of IDPs in Bangui down to 49,100 in 35 sites, though some suggest this may be due to the poor condition of IDP sites (OCHA, 04/03/2015; IOM, 02/03/2015). The largest camps in Bangui are Aéroport Mpoko, Séminaire St Marc, and Mission Carmel (CCCM, 29/10/2014).

Between 17 February and 2 March, landowners threatened five IDP sites in Bangui with eviction: Complexe Scolaire Adventiste, Fédération des Déplacés, Saint Antoine de Padoue, Paroisse Fatima, and Saint Saveur (IOM, 02/03/2015). Despite its planned closure being overdue, few have left. Some 20,000 IDPs remain in Mpoko and fear returning home (Reuters, 25/03/2015). 42% of households plan to resettle in new areas and 55% want to return to their place of origin, according to a survey of all households (OCHA, 18/02/2015; USAID, 27/03/2015). AVICOM is an alternative site, but does not have adequate services (USAID, 13/03/2015). Priority needs include shelter and NFIs, WASH, and health (IOM, 05/01/2015).

Mborou: Between 29 January and 2 February, 2,500 new IDPs from Rafai fled LRA attacks to Nagbologo Island (OCHA, 04/02/2015).

Mambere-Kadei: An assessment of the Gamboula–Dilapoko route, on the border with Cameroon, reported 450 IDPs in Nassole, 160 IDPs in Korondo, and 800 IDPs in Gamboula. Most live with host families or in abandoned homes (ACF, 19/02/2015). In Amada Gaza, a host and transit site, 800 IDPs arrived between December 2014 and February 2015 due to attacks between Gbambia and the Cameroon border. They need NFIs, better access to water and schooling (Solidarités International, 05/03/2015).

Ouham: A surge in violence in 2015 has resulted in the internal displacement of 30,000 people in Batangafo (UNHCR, 24/02/2015). There is a need for WASH services and access to education in Kabo and Moyen Sido (Solidarités International, 31/01/2015). Due to attacks in neighbouring villages, 1,060 IDPs in Kaboro village, Nana-Bakassa sub-prefecture, are in need of NFIs, food, and access to education (Action contre la Faim, 11/03/2015). Attacks in Ben Zambe over 1–13 February caused 1,215 people to flee toward Gbakanga (ACF, 24/03/2015).

Ouaka: There are 57,000 IDPs in the prefecture at 12 March, 5,000 more than at end February (OCHA, 18/03/2015). During first weeks of March 2015, 3,000–4,000 IDPs have arrived in Grimari, due to ex-Seleka and anti-balaka confrontations. They are in need of food, NFIs, and health assistance (OCHA, 04/03/2015; international organisation, 13/03/2015). Following an attack on Ngakobo IDP site, an estimated 2,500 IDPs sought shelter in a factory in Ngakobo (OCHA, 18/02/2015). There are 600 IDPs from the Grimari route and others from Liho Koutou subprefecture living in the Azengue-Mindou commune in Kouango subprefecture. This is an area that has suffered 17 clashes between ex-Seleka and anti-balaka since June 2014, resulting causing displacement and creating a need for NFIs and WASH (ACTED, 19/03/2015).

Eastern CAR: 26,520 people remain displaced by LRA activity (OCHA, 10/11/2014). 8,100 refugees and asylum seekers are living in CAR (UNHCR, 26/03/2015). A rise in security incidents during the first half of February 2015 prompted 150 DRC nationals to request assistance to return to DRC (IOM, 16/02/2015).

CAR Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

As of 6 March, there are 451,400 CAR refugees in neighbouring countries, 191,616 of whom have arrived since December 2013 (UNHCR 06/03/2015). 244,800 are registered in Cameroon, 94,300 in Chad, 88,800 in DRC, and 23,500 in Congo (UNHCR, 06/03/2015).
The Chad–CAR border was officially closed in May 2014, but refugees continue to arrive at a number of border points (UNHCR, 07/2014).

Evacuees

At 8 December, there were 132,414 evacuees from CAR, including third-country nationals and returning migrants (OCHA, 08/12/2014).

Returnees

Over 10,000 IDPs and refugees returned to Batangafo, Ouham Pende, between July 2014 and 31 January (OCHA, 04/02/2015). At the beginning of March, about 1,000 total people were returning to their districts of origin from displacement sites in Bangui, but many believe this is due to the deteriorating situation of IDP sites and not an improved security situation (OCHA, 18/03/2015). Approximately 4,200 other IDPs have returned home from Kabo due to fatigue and lack of farming space.

Food Security

As of 4 March, about 1.5 million people (33% of the total population) are in need of food assistance, the most insecure being households headed by women, displaced people or returnees, and those without financial resources (OCHA, 04/02/2015; 04/03/2015). 210,000 are in Bangui and 1.32 million in rural areas (IPC, 31/10/2014). About 19% of people in rural areas are in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and 12% in Phase 4 (Emergency); food reserves in rural areas are 40–50% lower than average (OCHA, 04/03/2015). At November, the most affected regions were Ouham and most of Nana-Grebizi and Kemo prefectures; Ngakoumdaye, Bocaranga, and Berberati subprefectures in the west; Boda and Bimbo subprefectures in the south; and Obo subprefecture in the east (FAO, 17/11/2014).

Outlook

Most of the population will face IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) conditions, with a minority of households facing IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) conditions until August 2015 (FEWSNET, 13/03/2015). This is worse than the five-year average and a result of insecurity and below-average crop production, food stocks, and household incomes (FEWSNET, 22/01/2015; 13/03/2015).

Agriculture and Markets

Food access is restrained by reduced food production, lack of livelihoods, and high food prices (OCHA, 18/12/2014; FAO, 26/01/2015). Food crop production in 2014 was 58% below average, as a result of insecurity, looting, and the killing of livestock (OCHA, 04/03/2015). Food stocks in rural areas are 40–50% below average due to recurring raids. Fish supply has fallen by 40% and cattle-breeding by 77% compared to pre-crisis levels, and insecurity and poor road conditions have disrupted market linkages and led to significant increases in food prices: prices from March to August 2014 increased 30–70% (FAO, 26/01/2015; OCHA, 18/12/2014).

Farmers are in urgent need of seeds and equipment for the next planting season in April. The lean season is due to start four months earlier than usual this year, between March and August (OCHA, 23/03/2015; FEWSNET, 02/2015).

Health and Nutrition

As of December 2014, two million people need access to health services (OCHA, 19/11/2014; OCHA 22/12/2014). 27% of the health facilities in the country are damaged, and 40% cannot offer health services (WHO, 28/02/2015). Only 25% of those offering services have functioning sources of energy, and 21% have access to water (WHO, 31/12/2014). Many health centres have been out of essential drugs for months due to access constraints (IFRC, 05/12/2014). There is a lack of access to health services in IDP sites (WHO, 31/10/2014).

Mental Health

550,000 children, about 45% of the children affected by the conflict, need psychosocial support (OCHA, 23/09/2014).

Nutrition

Based on a national survey, the country has an SAM prevalence of 6.5% (UNICEF, 08/01/2015). For 2015, 32,350 children under five are projected to suffer from SAM and 78,340 from MAM (OCHA, 04/02/2015). In 2014, 28,000 children were severely malnourished and 75,500 moderately malnourished (OCHA, 04/12/2014; 18/12/2014). 195,790 people are in need of nutritional assistance (OCHA, 22/12/2014).

More than 2% of children are malnourished in seven prefectures, compared to only two in 2012 (UNICEF, 17/02/2015). According to the preliminary results of a SMART survey, there has been a reduction in GAM in Bangui, from 8% in 2012 to around 5% in 2014, likely due to the concentration of humanitarian activities in Bangui (WFP, 23/09/2014).

WASH

In Bondiba, Nana-Mambere, a community of around 1,300, with growing IDP numbers since December 2014, only 29% of functioning latrines are hygienic and the two water sources are poorly maintained (ACF, 13/02/2015). According to an assessment in Nola, Sangha-Mbaere, there are no working hygienic latrines, with the displaced population resorting to open defecation. 83% of those interviewed said they do not have easy access to drinking water (NRC, 06/01/2015).

2.3 million people do not have access to improved safe water or improved sanitation (OCHA, 23/09/2014; 22/12/2014). Western areas as well as Mbomou are most affected (OCHA, 31/10/2014).

Shelter and NFIs

Nearly 442,000 people are in need of emergency shelter, while 703,980 need NFIs and 125,000 need reconstruction support (OCHA, 19/11/2014). 200 new IDPs in Notre-Dame de la Victoire IDP site in Bambari, Ouaka, need shelter and NFI assistance as well as 2,000 households in Nola, Sangha-Mbaere, and Mala, Kemo (OCHA, 18/02/2015; IOM 02/03/2015).
An assessment in Nana-Mambere noted that NFI conditions are worrying for the displaced population in Sabewa village, Bouar subprefecture (ACF, 19/02/2015).

**Education**

Over 1.4 million children are in need of education (OCHA, 22/12/2014). Only 6,000–10,000 children were enrolled in school 2012–2014 (IRIN, 12/01/2015).

In Nola, Sangha Mbaere, 78% of school-aged children are not in school, primarily for security reasons (NRC, 06/01/2015). In Bangui’s PK5 district, teachers are leaving due to insecurity, resulting in 60,000 school-aged children in need of safe learning spaces (USAID, 13/03/2015). 109 attacks against schools were registered between February and November 2014 (UNICEF, 22/12/2014).

**Protection**

Crimes against humanity and war crimes have been, and continued to be, reported. Ex-Seleka are listed for child recruitment, killing, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and attacks on schools and/or hospitals. Anti-balaka are listed for child recruitment, and killing and maiming (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, 04/11/2014).

432 children were killed or maimed by violence in 2014 (OCHA, 04/12/2014). The number of children recruited into armed groups has risen to 6,000–10,000, from 2,500 at the beginning of the crisis (The Guardian, 18/12/2014).

**Updated: 30/03/2015**

**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC, DISPLACEMENT**

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

**27 March:** 16,500 new IDPs were registered in Malemba Nkulu and Pweto territories in Katanga in March (Radio Okapi, 27/03/2015).

**25 March:** LRA threats in Ango territory, Orientale province, resulted in the displacement of 1,620 (Radio Okapi, 25/03/2015).

**23 March:** Since early March, FRPI attacks in Ituri territory, Orientale, have increased with more than 20 attacks, rapes, and killings recorded in the first two weeks (Caritas, 23/03/2015).

**KEY CONCERNS**

- Internal conflict in the eastern provinces of Orientale, North Kivu, South Kivu, and Katanga.

- 6.3 million people need humanitarian assistance (WFP, 06/01/2015).

- 2.7 million IDPs (WFP, 06/01/2015). Katanga is of particular concern, with 551,300 people displaced across the province (OCHA, 19/02/2015).

- Over 2 million children under five are suffering from acute malnutrition (Radio Okapi, 04/11/2014).

- 7.3 million school-aged children are not attending school (Radio Okapi, 10/03/2015).

**OVERVIEW**

Needs are highest in the conflict-affected regions of North Kivu, South Kivu, Katanga, and Orientale, where there is large-scale, repeated displacement. IDPs, host populations, and those unable to flee are all vulnerable, as insecurity poses multiple protection risks and prevents access to basic services. Needs vary according to geographic area and conflict dynamics.

Political violence and inter-communal strife have persisted for decades, influenced by longstanding tensions with DRC’s eastern neighbours. Operations by DRC armed forces and UN peacekeepers, and infighting between armed groups, disrupt security and stability.

**Political Context**

In September 2014, over 2,000 people took to the streets of Kinshasa to protest a bid by President Kabila to modify the constitution so he could stay in power beyond his two-term limit, which should end in 2016 (AFP, 27/09/2014). On 19 January, up to 42 people died in protests in Kinshasa, after a census was proposed, which could also potentially prolong President Joseph Kabila’s term beyond 2016 (AFP, 22/01/2015). Parliament voted against the legislation, but doubts remain regarding when in 2015 the preliminary local, provincial, and senatorial polls will be held (AFP, 25/01/2015).

**Security Context**

At least 40 armed groups are operating in the east of the country (ECHO, 22/10/2014). They range from local militias set up initially as self-defence groups (among them many Mayi-Mayi groups), to secessionist groups, and forces first set up by fighters from Uganda (LRA and ADF/NALU), Rwanda (FDLR) and Burundi (FNL). The UN has a peacekeeping mission, and an EU mission providing assistance to security sector reform (EUSEC) was extended until 30 June 2015 (EU, 25/09/2014).

Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) are mainly Hutu Rwandans who were allegedly linked to the genocide. An estimated 1,400 fighters are active, primarily in the Kivu region (Reuters, 22/03/2015).

Mayi-Mayi: At least 20 Mayi-Mayi groups, formed by local leaders along ethnic lines, are active in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Katanga. The number of fighters can range from 100
Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF/NALU) is a Muslim militant group founded in the 1990s. MONUSCO and the FARDC launched a second operation in North Kivu to neutralise the group in January 2015 (Radio Okapi, 07/01/2015). On 10 January, two camps were taken from the ADF in Beni Territory (Radio Okapi, 10/01/2015). ADF activity decreased in January, but by early February attacks against villages in Beni territory have increased (AFP, 04/02/2015; 20/03/2015).

Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), founded by Joseph Kony in Uganda in 1987, has spread to South Sudan and subsequently to DRC and CAR (IRIN).

National Liberation Forces (FNL) are Burundian militants based in South Kivu (AFP 2013).

The armed forces of the DRC (FARDC) comprise 120,000–130,000 fighters (Defence Web, 2013). Two generals have been accused of human rights abuses, but remain active. As a result, the UN withdrew military support for FARDC operations against FDLR in 2015 (AFP, 05/02/2015). Seven army and police officers were banned from receiving MONUSCO support in March 2015 because they pose a risk of committing human rights violations (Reuters, 11/03/2015).

The UN Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO) is made up of almost 20,000 troops, as well as military observers and police units. The initial mission, MONUC, was established after the signing of the 1999 peace agreement between DRC and five regional states. In March 2014 its mandate was expanded, with the creation of an Intervention Brigade, charged with neutralising armed groups (RFI, 20/10/2014). MONUSCO’s mandate was extended for another year in March 2015, although its force was cut by 2,000 troops. Any further cuts in numbers will depend upon progress against armed opposition forces (Reuters, 26/03/2015; AFP, 26/03/2015).

Conflict Developments

Despite a strong push from the African Union to accept UN military assistance for an offensive against FDLR, the FARDC refused, launching its first attack on 24 February in South Kivu, killing seven and capturing more than 90 fighters, territory, and weapons, and then moving to North Kivu territory, where most FDLR operate (AFP, 23/02/2015, 24/02/2015; 26/02/2015). Between 24 February and 22 March, 182 FDLR militants surrendered, were captured, or killed in North and South Kivu (Reuters, 22/03/2015). Three weeks after beginning this offensive, the majority of the FDLR remain active in North and South Kivu (Reuters, 22/03/2015; Radio Okapi, 17/03/2015).

MONUSCO and FARDC launched an offensive in early January 2015 against FNL militants in South Kivu as well as a renewed attack against the ADF in Beni territory, North Kivu (Radio Okapi, 06/01/2015; 14/01/2015).

North Kivu

Beni territory: The FARDC continue an active offensive against the ADF in North Kivu since early January 2015 (Radio Okapi, 07/01/2015). Reportedly, ADF fighters are no longer present in a number of localities, including Abya, Mavumve, and Pilote and Issa camps (UN, 12/01/2015). Between 2 and 4 February, 23 people were killed and one wounded by ADF militants, in the first attack since mid-December (AFP, 04/02/2015). An ADF attack resulted in four people killed in March (AFP, 20/03/2015).

Masisi: Communities in Masisi territory say they have seen FDLR activity despite the FARDC having pushed them out. Many humanitarians are leaving due to insecurity (Radio Okapi, 27/03/2015).

Walikale: Between 3 and 17 February, the FARDC had five clashes with Raiya Mutomboki (OCHA, 17/02/2015).

South Kivu

Several armed groups continue to operate and trigger displacement. Four attacks by armed groups were reported over 2–3 January in Sange, engaging FARDC (Radio Okapi, 03/01/2015). Since the start of military operations against FNL on 5 January, four of 20 active armed groups in the region, not solely FNL, have been dismantled (Radio Okapi, 13/01/2015).

Orientale

The Front of Patriotic Resistance in Ituri (FRPI), LRA, and Mayi-Mayi Simba are all active in Orientale.

LRA: On 15 January, the LRA kidnapped 12 people in Bili (Radio Okapi, 16/01/2015). They are also accused of killing three people and injuring four others during an attack on 16 February (Radio Okapi, 17/02/2015). Attacks and abductions decreased significantly between the second and third quarters of 2014, although the number of deaths increased from one to 15 (OCHA, 10/11/2014).

FRPI: An attack on an IDP camp during the night of 8–9 March killed 12 and injured others. FARDC and UN peacekeepers were called to protect the population (AFP, 10/03/2015). Further FRPI attacks and human rights abuses occurred in March, including rape and kidnapping, and killing of civilians. On 10 March, the FRPI killed two civilians and raped ten women in Ngao locality; another attack on 8 March injured 12 people (OCHA, 19/03/2015).

Mayi-Mayi: On 17 February, four were killed and 10 injured in an attack on Ezekere village (local media, 19/02/2015).

Katanga

Active armed groups in Katanga include the Mayi Mayi Kata Katanga, the Mayi Mayi Gedeon, and the Corak Kata Katanga. Interethnic conflict between Luba and pygmies, and Mayi-Mayi attacks, continue to affect Katanga’s Tanganyika district (Kabalo, Kalemie, Kongolo, Manono, Moba, and Nyunzu territories). Ten people were killed by armed pygmies in a village close to Kalemie in March (Radio Okapi, 11/03/2015). From 17–19 March, Kabumbulu, Kazenga and Kyapeswe in Malemba Nkulu territory were attacked: houses were burned and looted, and some people kidnapped (Radio Okapi,
In February, 45 people were killed in pygmy attacks (Radio Okapi, 20/02/2015; AFP, 25/02/2015). At the end of October, 15,873 incidents had been reported in Katanga in 2014 (UNHCR, 30/10/2014). FARDC offensives were making gains against Mayi-Mayi Kata Katanga of Musumuri as of 5 November (Radio Okapi, 05/11/2014). Since early 2015, Katanga’s triangle of death, composed of Pweto, Manono and Moba territories is experiencing a decrease in Mayi Mayi attacks (Radio Okapi, 17/03/2015).

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

6.3 million people need humanitarian assistance (WFP, 06/01/2015).

**Access**

The mountainous and volcanic terrain, and lack of tarred roads limit access across DRC, and access worsens during the rainy season. In the east, insecurity is a major constraint. 188 incidents involved aid workers in 2014: six aid workers were killed (OCHA, 15/12/2014).

**North Kivu: Humanitarians are leaving areas of Masisi territory due to insecurity (Radio Okapi, 27/03/2015).**

**Katanga:** An important trade route connecting the villages of Kabwela and Kakuyu in Katanga has reopened after being cleared for landmines (Mines Advisory Group, 17/03/2015).

**Security Incidents Affecting Aid Workers**

In 2014, 120 security incidents against humanitarian aid workers were registered in North Kivu, with a concentration in the city of Goma and Masisi territory (OCHA, 27/01/2015). An international NGO in Rutshuru territory, North Kivu, was robbed on 22 March (OCHA, 24/03/2015). On 9 March, four workers from an international NGO were kidnapped in North Kivu (OCHA, 17/03/2015).

**Disasters: Floods in Katanga**

Heavy rains have affected tens of thousands in Katanga: 48,000 people were affected by floods due to heavy rains in January in Malemba Nkulu and Mulono (OCHA, 18/03/2015). More than 5,000 homes were destroyed by rains in Haut Lomami. Roads were blocked and crops damaged (Radio Okapi, 22/01/2015). 30,000 people were left without shelter in Bukama, Kabalo, Kasaji, Kasenga and Malemba Nkulu territories (OCHA, 12/02/2015).

**IDPs**

In 2014, there were 2.7 million IDPs in DRC, including 609,600 displaced in 2014 (WFP, 06/01/2015). 37,800 were displaced between October and December 2014, 45% fewer than in the previous quarter (OCHA, 21/01/2015). 80% of IDPs are hosted by families and communities who are already facing chronic food insecurity and limited access to services and livelihood opportunities (FAO, 20/11/2014).

**North Kivu**

North Kivu hosts 942,000 total IDPs at 24 March, an increase of 3,200 compared to the same time period in 2014 (OCHA, 17/01/2015; 28/02/2015). 41,800 were newly displaced in February 2015 in Beni, Lubero, Masisi, Rutshuru, and Walikale territories (OCHA, 11/03/2015). 78% of IDPs live with host families and 22% in IDP sites, most of which are near Goma, and authorities are moving to close the sites down for security reasons (OCHA, 28/02/2015; AFP, 03/12/2014). The IDP breakdown per region is: 19,300 in Goma city; 172,500 in Beni; 158,500 in Lubero; 238,800 in Masisi; 103,500 in Rutshuru; and 249,800 in Walikale (OCHA, 29/02/2015).

More than 27,000 IDPs, returnees and members of host communities need humanitarian assistance in Masisi and Walikale territories (OCHA, 11/02/2015). Due to the FARDC offensive against the FDLR, young people are fleeing their homes, fearing being forced to carry military equipment (Radio Okapi, 03/03/2015).

**Beni:** The 89,000 people (17,700 families) displaced after attacks in November are thought to be in Bulongo, Kasindi, and Lume localities and need NFIs, shelter, and access to health (OCHA, 11/03/2015; 09/12/2014; UNHCR, 19/12/2014). More than 18,000 IDPs in Mamove and Samboko localities need multisectoral humanitarian assistance, according to an evaluation of 15–20 January (OCHA, 29/01/2015). There are more than 5,500 new IDPs in Beni territory since early March (OCHA, 11/03/2015).

**Lubero:** About 3,000 people from Luhanga and Kalevy localities have been affected by armed group clashes and 1,000 were displaced in southwest Lubero (OCHA, 11/03/2015).

**Masisi:** More than 2,100 IDPs need NFIs, and another 1,000 new IDPs were registered in the territory 17–24 February (OCHA, 04/02/2015; 24/02/2015). Some 3,800 people fled to the bush and other villages Bibwe on 6 March because of the FARDC offensive against FDLR in Kitchanga and (OCHA, 11/03/2015). 1,200 people have fled clashes between FARDC and APCLS (OCHA, 24/03/2015).

**Walikale:** Some 8,400 people were displaced following clashes between FARDC and a faction of Raiya Mutomboki (Radio Okapi, 03/03/2015). Since 10 February, 20,200 people were displaced within Pinga due to tensions between the FDLR and Nduma Defence of Congo (OCHA, 17/03/2015). Another 5,300 IDPs were reported in west Walikale and are living with host families (OCHA, 17/03/2015).

**South Kivu**

618,330 IDPs are in South Kivu (OCHA, 23/01/2015). More than 21,600 IDPs (4,000 families) are in need of assistance in Walungu and Shabunda territories (OCHA, 11/03/2015).
The FARDC offensive against the FDLR displaced more than 20,200. These have primarily been short-term displacements. Another 44,000 people have limited mobility. Poor access and limited humanitarian presence make it difficult to measure the impact of the offensive on the population, especially in Mwenga territory (OCHA, 19/03/2015).

Orientale

During the fourth quarter of 2014, there were 543,700 IDPs in Orientale province as well as 342,000 returnees (OCHA, 19/02/2015). Around 300,000 people are displaced in Ituri, including 60,000 IDPs from North Kivu (OCHA, 23/12/2014). Of the 60,000, 12,600 IDPs in Tchabi, Ituri, are living in poor conditions and in need of medicine; 60% are children who are not receiving education (Radio Okapi, 16/01/2015). 15,000 people displaced to Nyangabi, Geti, Kakado, and Bunia did not have shelter or food in January, and were in dire need of humanitarian assistance (Radio Okapi, 13/01/2015). Some 1,620 people have left two villages in Ango territory due to LRA security threats (Radio Okapi, 25/03/2015).

Katanga

Katanga hosts 551,300 IDPs, including 43,300 displaced in the fourth quarter of 2014 (OCHA, 16/01/2015; 19/02/2015). 80% of IDPs are living with host families. Displacement is triggered by armed attacks and by inter-communal violence.

About 16,500 new IDPs were registered in March in Malemba Nkulu and Pweto territories (Radio Okapi, 27/03/2015). Pweto territory hosted 166,400 IDPs as of 31 December 2014 (OCHA, 18/03/2014).

Maniema

Maniema has 188,500 IDPs (OCHA, 19/02/2015). 30% of IDPs are located in Pangi, 26% in Punia, and 20% in Kasongo (OCHA, 14/11/2014).

DRC hosts 120,567 refugees (UNHCR, 30/10/2014). DRC provincial authorities insist that assistance should only be delivered within camps, making it difficult to support refugees in host communities.

From CAR: As of 26 March, there were 90,900 CAR refugees in DRC, 23,500 of whom had arrived since December 2013 (UNHCR, 26/03/2015; 06/03/2015; 13/02/2015). 30,000 arrived in Equateur province over December 2014 and January 2015 (Radio Okapi, 28/01/2015). Another 2,400 people arrived in Mobayi, Equateur, in mid-February (UNHCR, 24/02/2015; OCHA, 18/02/2015; UNHCR, 13/02/2015). A new refugee camp for 19,000 is being built in Bili, Bosobolo territory (Radio Okapi, 10/02/2015). The transfer of refugees to Bili started on 13 March and is due to last 14 weeks (Radio Okapi, 14/03/2015).

From Rwanda: DRC is hosting 38,800 Rwandan refugees (UNHCR, 30/10/2014; UN 30/12/2014).

From Angola: 28,000 Angolan refugees remain registered in DRC, with thousands having been repatriated (Radio Okapi, 26/11/2014). A second phase of repatriation began on 11 February (Government, 11/02/2015).

From Burundi: At 30 December, 9,000 Burundian refugees were in DRC (UN, 30/12/2014).

Returnees

North Kivu: In January 2014, there were 25,900 returnees to North Kivu (OCHA, 06/02/2015). Some 6,300 people returned to Rutshuru territory in March due to a renewed peace (OCHA, 17/03/2015).

Katanga: During the fourth quarter of 2014, 86,795 new IDP returnees were counted in Katanga (OCHA, 16/01/2015). At 31 December, Pweto territory had 65,700 returnees (OCHA, 18/03/2015). More than 9,000 returnees have arrived in Moba territory since November 2014 and need assistance (OCHA, 12/02/2015).

Orientale: On 8 February, villagers returned to Nakale, Dungu territory, after being displaced by LRA attacks on 15 January (Radio Okapi, 08/02/2015). 3,600 people who returned to Kizabi between May and October 2014 need multisectoral assistance (OCHA, 05/02/2015). Another 3,000 returnees are awaiting registration in Ango territory (OCHA, 24/02/2015).

Returnees from CAR: Around 100 refugees returned to DRC through Ango territory in Orientale end December, due to inter-communal violence in Zemio (Radio Okapi, 24/12/2014).

DRC Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

There are around 442,600 DRC refugees in neighbouring countries, mainly in Uganda (187,800), Rwanda (74,000), Burundi (47,900), Tanzania (55,900), Zambia (8,500), Angola (7,000), Congo (23,400), Kenya (17,300), South Sudan (15,220), and CAR (5,300) (UNHCR, 01/01/2015; 01/11/2014).

Food Security

6.5 million people are facing IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or 4 (Emergency) food insecurity as a result of armed group activity, inter-communal violence, and displacement (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, 28/01/2015). The food security situation in DRC is worsening due to low agricultural productivity, limited access to land, and frequent flooding, with an increase of about 523,000 people in the Emergency phase (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, 28/01/2015).

Seven territories are facing Emergency, including Manono, Mitwaba, and Pweto territories in Katanga province; Punia territory in Maniema province; Shabunda territory in South Kivu; Irumu in Orientale; and Boente territory in Equateur. 61 other territories are facing Crisis (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, 28/01/2015). In Katanga, 1.3 million people are facing food insecurity from December 2014 until June 2015, 11% more than in the previous seasonal cycle (OCHA, 05/02/2015).
Agriculture and Markets

500 hectares of maize, banana, rice, bean, and cowpea crops were destroyed by a locust infestation in Buta, Orientale, in December (Radio Okapi, 27/12/2014). Flooding in November caused up to 80% crop losses in Basoko territory, Orientale province. Prices for basic food products have risen (Radio Okapi, 18/11/2014).

In Nyamilima, North Kivu, farmers are concerned that they cannot sell their products for lack of access to markets. Their crops now rot or are taken to Uganda, for lower profits (Radio Okapi, 18/01/2015).

Health and Nutrition

23,000 people in Masisi territory, North Kivu, do not have access to health services (OCHA, 11/02/2015). The health centre in Beni, North Kivu, has had a shortage of medicine since 23 February due to the rise in the number of IDPs (OCHA, 11/03/2015).

32 children died from anaemia in Equateur province in January and February (Radio Okapi, 11/03/2015).

Access to medicines and tuberculosis vaccines is reportedly limited in Katanga (Radio Okapi, 03/12/2014).

Cholera

By 8 February, 2,955 cases of cholera had been reported, and 22 deaths countrywide, compared to 2,796 cases for the same period in 2014 (UNICEF, 27/02/2015). The high number of cases is partly attributable to poor WASH: fewer than 35% of homes have access to safe drinking water, and only 5% use improved toilets (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

In Katanga, 1,840 cases and 37 deaths were recorded between January and 8 March (OCHA, 18/03/2015). On average 662 cases of cholera are reported per month in South Kivu (OCHA, 04/03/2015). In Beni territory, North Kivu, more than 40 new cases of cholera were recorded 10–17 March (OCHA, 24/03/2015). Between 22 and 27 March, 13 cases of cholera and four deaths were recorded in Ituri territory, Orientale province (Radio Okapi, 27/03/2015).

In 2014, there were 22,200 cases of cholera and 372 deaths, compared to 26,440 cases in 2013 (WHO, 31/12/2014; UNICEF, 24/12/2014). In North Kivu, 7,341 cases of cholera were reported in 2014 compared to 4,393 in 2013 (OCHA, 31/12/2014). Over 7,000 cases including 300 deaths were recorded in Katanga in 2014, compared to 13,726 cases and 348 deaths in 2013 (Radio Okapi, 07/11/2014; OCHA, 30/10/2014).

Meningitis

An estimated 20 cases of meningitis were reported in Aru, Orientale province, in one week in February (OCHA, 11/02/2015).

Nutrition

Over two million children under five suffer from acute malnutrition (Radio Okapi, 04/11/2014). At May 2014, three provinces were above the 10% emergency threshold: Maniema (22.7%), Bas-Congo (11%), and Bandundu (10%). In Maniema, SAM is at 8.6% (Government, 05/2014).

In Katanga, 50 children in Changa-Changa IDP camp died from malnutrition over September–December 2014 (Radio Okapi, 02/01/2015). 108 cases of malnutrition were recorded in Lubumbashi November–December due to shortages of therapeutic food (Radio Okapi, 20/12/2014).

WASH

In Mole refugee camp, people only have access to 11L of water per person per day, significantly below standards (UNHCR, 26/03/2015).

Access to water in Bunia, Orientale province, is limited (Radio Okapi, 25/03/2015).

Shelter

In Katanga, approximately 104,000 people lost their homes to natural disasters in 2014 (OCHA, 12/02/2015).

Education

7.3 million children aged 5–17 – 28% of the school-aged population – are not attending school (Radio Okapi, 10/03/2015).

Only 40% of school-aged children are attending school in Equateur (Radio Okapi, 07/02/2015). In Katanga, 3,600 students in Malemba Nkulu have not had access to school since 15 January due to insecurity (OCHA, 12/02/2015). Attacks on schools in North Kivu in February are affecting education (OCHA, 24/02/2015). In Rutshuru territory, confrontations between the FARDC and the FLDR are compromising school activity (OCHA, 24/03/2015). In South Kivu, 35 primary schools in Shabunda territory were shut down due to insecurity in January, affecting 6,800 students (OCHA, 28/01/2015).

Protection

Military, militias, and other armed groups are all accused of repeated abuses against civilians, including arbitrary arrests, extortion, looting, child conscription, sexual violence, and executions. In Orientale, for example, 12,300 protection incidents against civilians were reported in 2014, compared to 4,800 in 2013 (OCHA, 04/02/2015). In Ituri territory, more than 360 protection cases were reported against civilians between 3 and 7 February (OCHA, 11/02/2015).

At least 300 people remain illegally detained following protests against electoral law changes during the week of 19 January (OHCHR, 06/02/2015).

Kidnapping

Between 8 and 17 March, 26 kidnappings were reported in North Kivu, including four INGO staff (OCHA, 17/03/2015).
Child Protection

4,500 child solders left armed groups to be reintegrated into society in 2014 (Radio Okapi, 03/03/2015). In Orientale province, 450 children are still active in armed groups (OCHA, 24/02/2015).

SGBV

In Orientale, FRPI are using sexual violence. In Bunia, Irumu and Mambasa territories, 42 cases of sexual violence were reported in February 2015 (OCHA, 19/03/2015). Approximately 100 minors were raped in January 2015 in Kalemie, Moba, and Pweto in Katanga province (Radio Okapi, 19/02/2015). In the past year and a half, rapes of young children and babies have been reported (AFP, 19/03/2015).

Between 25 September and 30 December 2014, 61 cases of sexual violence in conflict were reported (UN, 30/12/2014).

1,680 SGBV cases were reported in 2014 in Katanga and 840 in Kasai-Occidental (OCHA, 05/02/2015; Radio Okapi, 11/02/2015). 2,012 were reported in Orientale province, and 1,125 in Bas-Congo (OCHA, 10/12/2014, 03/12/2014; Radio Okapi, 27/11/2014).

Updated: 30/03/2015

NIGERIA CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

31 March: Opposition leader Buhari won the presidential election with 54% against incumbent Jonathan who received 42% of the votes (local media, 31/03/2015).

28–31 March: Voting was extended from 28 to 29 March due to technical problems. Irregularities have been alleged, so final results may be contested. There have already been protests in Rivers state by opposition supporters (Reuters, 30/03/2015; Guardian, 31/03/2015).

28 March: BH was suspected of killing at least seven people in attacks in Gombe state, including at polling stations. Polling stations were attacked and election materials destroyed in Bauchi state (Reuters, 28/03/2015; AFP, 29/03/2015).

27 March: 23 people were beheaded in in Buratai, Borno state (AFP, /03/2015).

27 March: 1,759 cases of cholera have been reported since January, with 73 deaths and a 4.2% case fatality rate. 903 cases were reported in Rivers state over 1–8 March (UNICEF 27/03/2015).

KEY CONCERNS

- Over 2014, 7,711 deaths due to Boko Haram-related violence were reported by media sources, representing over half of BH-related deaths in the country since May 2011 (ACLED, 11/01/2014).
- 1.2 million IDPs (IOM, 02/2015).
- 4.6 million people are moderately food insecure (OCHA, 04/03/2014). Conflict-affected households will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of food insecurity until at least September. Most IDPs continue to need food assistance (FEWSNET, 07/01/2015).
- As of February 2015, 461,000 children under five suffer from severe acute malnutrition (OCHA, 10/02/2015). 1.5 million people are in need of nutrition assistance
- 2.2 million people are in need of WASH assistance; 1.9 million in need of Shelter and NFI assistance; 2.2 million in need of Protection; and 3.5 million people are in need of Healthcare (OCHA, 03/2015).
- 35,996 cholera cases and 753 deaths were reported in 2014 (UNICEF, 10/02/2015). Since January 2015, 1,759 cases have been reported, with 73 deaths and a 4.2% case fatality rate. 903 cases were reported in Rivers state over 1–8 March (UNICEF 27/03/2015).

OVERVIEW

5.6 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. Violence has internally displaced more than 1.2 million people, restricted movement, disrupted food supply, seriously hindered access to basic services, and limited agricultural activities. People affected by violence in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe, and neighbouring Bauchi, Taraba, and Gombe states are in urgent need of protection, shelter, food, and access to health services and education.

Political Context

The postponed election will take place on 28 March (BBC, 08/02/2015). Estimates suggest up to 1.8 million people are likely to be affected by election-related violence (OCHA, 04/03/2015). President Goodluck Jonathan is standing, although, according to the opposition, his re-election would violate the unwritten rule that governance should rotate between the Muslim north and the Christian south every two terms. The candidate for the main opposition All Progressives Congress (APC) is former president and military ruler Muhammadu Buhari, who comes from the north (AFP, 11/12/2014). IDPs in camps are reportedly able to vote (AFP, 16/03/2015).

Voting was extended from 28 into 29 March due to technical. As of 31 March, Buhari is in the lead. Irregularities have been alleged, so final results may be contested. There have been protests in Rivers state by opposition supporters (Reuters, 30/03/2015; Guardian, 31/03/2015).

Under Nigeria’s constitution, a candidate must win a majority of over 50% and 25% of votes cast in two-thirds of the country.
Security Context

The frequency and fatality of attacks are at their highest levels since the state of emergency (SoE) was imposed in 2013. ACLED estimates Boko Haram (BH) fatalities may be over 1,000 per month over 2015–2016 (ACLED, 12/01/2015). In 2014, 7,711 deaths due to BH-related violence were reported by media sources, representing over half of BH-related deaths in the country since May 2011 (ACLED, 11/01/2014).

Fighting and attacks have intensified with the elections. Boko Haram has vowed to impede the elections. On 28 March, BH was suspected of killing at least seven people in attacks in Gombe state, including at polling stations. Polling stations were attacked and election materials destroyed in Bauchi state (Reuters, 28/03/2015; AFP, 29/03/2015).

Over 9–15 February, 58 people were killed in political violence related to the elections, according to the National Human Rights Commission (AFP, 17/02/2015).

Inter-communal Violence

The Middle Belt area (Benue, Kaduna, Plateau, Nassarawa, and Taraba states) is home to a number of minority groups, divided between the Islamic north and the more secular Christian/animist south. Intermunicipal clashes fuelled by ethnic and religious tensions, as well as competition between farmers and pastoralists, flare regularly throughout the region (IDMC, 12/2014). Over 2014, around 1,700 people died in inter-communal violence (ACLED, 2014; ICG, 01/10/2014). Over 14–15 March, 82 people were killed and at least 25 people injured in an attack on Egba village by suspected Fulani herdsmen (AFP, 17/03/2015). 500 houses were burned. 36 people were killed as seven villages were overrun by suspected Fulani in a clash between gunmen and farmers, just days after assailants attacked Ikpele and Okpopolo communities in Benue, killing seven farmers and displacing over 6,000 inhabitants (ECHO, 17/03/2015).

Stakeholders

Boko Haram

The insurgent group dubbed Boko Haram (Western education is forbidden) was founded in Maiduguri, Borno state, and has been leading an insurgency to create an Islamic state in the predominantly Muslim regions of northeastern Nigeria. The Nigerian authorities have been fighting BH since 2009, with the insurgents using increasingly aggressive tactics. According to US intelligence reports, BH has a core of 4,000–6,000 fighters (Reuters, 06/02/2015). On 7 March, Boko Haram pledged allegiance to Islamic State (AFP, 07/03/2015).

Regional Involvement

The conflict has gained an increasingly regional dimension. Towns in the Far North region of Cameroon have repeatedly been attacked. More recently, Boko Haram has launched cross-border attacks into Diffa region, Niger. Chad provides military support for the fight against BH since January 2015, while Cameroon has been fighting BH within its territory since BH started cross-border attacks.

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) was expanded to 10,000 military and civilian personnel including larger contingents from Chad, Cameroon, Niger in addition to Nigeria and Benin (UNHCR, 26/03/2015). Nigerian troops are also supported by foreign private military contractors (AFP, 20/03/2015). About 2,500 Chadian troops withdrew from Nigerian territory in mid-March, with indications they would be redeployed for fresh offensives elsewhere (AFP, 12/03/2015). A BH attack on the previously liberated town of Gamboru, Borno state, suggests that the lack of troops owed a problem in coordination between the allies (AFP, 20/03/2015).

Conflict Developments

In August 2014, BH began to seize control of more territory and towns and villages, with rural communities, markets, schools, and highways remaining common BH targets. Some reports indicated that BH had taken control of 40%, or even 70%, of Borno state, though it is difficult to verify (US Institute of Peace, 09/01/2015). By early February, Nigerian security forces had launched new offensives against BH, supported mainly by Chadian forces and civil militias. Joint military offensives have succeeded in recapturing a number of positions from Boko Haram, particularly in Borno state. 36 towns have been recaptured (AFP, 17/03/2015). In the past, Nigerian soldiers at times reportedly refused to deploy because of inadequate equipment, or fled from operations (AFP, 22/08/2014). According to the Nigerian army, only Gwoza in Borno, and Goneri and Guja in Yobe state, are still under BH control (UNHCR, 17/03/2015).

Over 24 February–2 March, at least 86 people were killed in explosions blamed on Boko Haram insurgents in Borno, Yobe, and Gombe and in the north-central state of Plateau. There have been more attacks in urban areas (OCHA, 02/03/2015). Security analysts have warned that the military offensives will prompt BH to revert to guerrilla tactics of bombings and suicide attacks. It is feared that IDPs could be increasingly targeted (AFP, 23/03/2015).

Residents and military officers reported that BH is carrying out reprisal attacks against Arabic speakers in the northeast, accusing them of aiding Chad’s army, causing displacement to Cameroon (Reuters, 12/03/2015).

Recent Incidents

Borno state: On 27 March, 23 people were beheaded in Buratai, Borno state (AFP, 28/03/2015). On 21 March, Chadian forces returned to Gamboru. The town had been liberated earlier in March, but after Chadian troops left, BH returned and killed 11 civilians (AFP, 21/03/2015). BH reportedly kidnapped over 400 women and children from Damasak before retreating from the town in early March. Other reports cite about 500 children under 11 were taken (BBC, 24/03/2015). At least 70 bodies were found in a mass grave (Al Jazeera, 21/03/2015; Reuters, 24/03/2015).

On 16 March, troops recaptured Bama, Borno’s second main city, according to the Nigerian army (AFP, 17/03/2015). BH carried out mass killings, set fire to homes and forced hundreds of residents to flee towards Maiduguri as troops advanced on the
town (AFP, 15/03/2015). On 5 March, BH razed the village of Njaba, killing 68 residents (AFP, 05/03/2015). On 14 March, two home-made bombs were found in an IDP camp in Maiduguri (AFP, 14/03/2015). Bomb attacks in Maiduguri in early March killed 58 and wounded 139 people (AFP, 07/03/2015). 82 people were killed in a large-scale attack on Maiduguri on 1 February; BH was ultimately repelled by Nigerian security forces and civil militia (OCHA, 03/02/2015).

As of 7 March, BH-related violence has caused over 4,000 deaths since the beginning of 2015, according to ACLED (ACLED, 10/03/2015). Over 2014, more than 4,400 BH-related deaths were recorded by media sources, around half of them civilians (ACLED, 22/01/2015).

Yobe state: Over February, three suicide attacks in Potiskum killed 17 people and wounded 39 people (AFP, 01/02/2015; 17/02/2015; 22/02/2015). More than 150 people had been killed in an attack on the town in December (international media, 01/12/2014; 03/12/2014). Over 2014, 508 BH-related deaths were reported by media sources in Yobe (ACLED, 22/01/2014).

Adamawa state: 547 BH-related deaths were recorded by media sources in Adamawa over 2014, around 200 of them civilians (ACLED, 22/01/2015).

Gombe state: On 28 March, BH was suspected of killing at least seven people in separate attacks in Gombe state, including at polling stations (Reuters, 28/03/2015). The Nigerian military repelled an attack on Gombe by BH on 14 February (local media, 14/02/2015). On 2 February, a bomb blast occurred near an electoral campaign rally being held by President Jonathan (AFP, 02/02/2015).

Kano state: Suicide attacks at a market in Kano city killed at least four people on 10 December (AFP, 10/12/2014; 11/12/2014). On 28 November, at least 120 people were killed and 270 other wounded by two suicide bombers and gunmen at the Grand Mosque (AFP, 28/11/2014).

Plateau state: Over January–November 2014, 442 deaths due to BH-related violence were reported by media sources in Plateau (CFR, 15/12/2014). Most were killed in Jos and Bachi.

Humanitarian Context and Needs

According to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), nine million people in the northeast have been affected by the conflict, with three million people in acute need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 08/10/2014). Humanitarian needs are high, particularly as very few international actors are operating in the northeast (OCHA, 01/07/2014; 31/08/2014).

Access

Updated information on the humanitarian situation in the northeast is minimal because of access constraints. Humanitarian access is impeded by insecurity, poor infrastructure, and limited openings for dialogue with non-state actors (OCHA, 05/2014). There is also a lack of coordinated needs assessments in the northeast (PI, 01/2015). News reporting on the security and political situation is equally restricted, and media access has often been prohibited.

Boko Haram has destroyed communication and media infrastructure (Reporters without Borders, 05/02/2015). In Borno state, most routes to affected areas are inaccessible. The road from Damaturu, Yobe state, is the only route for bringing food and other basic commodities to Maiduguri and northern Borno state (ECHO, 13/01/2015). Maiduguri airport is closed to commercial flights.

Movement in BH-controlled areas is reportedly restricted, and the use of vehicles is forbidden, most likely to prevent residents from leaving (IFRC, 23/01/2015).

Displacement

IDPs

There are more than 1.2 million IDPs in Nigeria, most of them in the northeast (IOM, 06/03/2015). The majority of the current IDP population was displaced in 2014 (79%). As of February, NEMA/IOM report 1,188,018 IDPs in the northeast: 672,714 in Borno; 135,810 in Yobe; 220,159 in Adamawa; 74,125 in Taraba; 60,555 in Bauchi; 24,655 in Gombe. Another 47,276 IDPs (5,910 households) were identified in Plateau, Nasarawa, Abuja, Kano, and Kaduna states.

The IDPs come mainly from Borno (62%), Adamawa (18%), and Yobe (13%). 56% of IDPs are children, of which more than half are under five. 87% of IDPs live with host families while 13% live in camps (IOM/NEMA, 02/2015).

Maiduguri, Borno state capital, hosts 432,785 IDPs. There are 120,872 individuals (13,658 households) living in 15 displacement sites in Borno. The majority of sites are located in Maiduguri (ten displacement sites), four sites are situated in Jere and one site is located in Biu (IOM/NEMA, 02/2015). Attacks on Baga and neighbouring villages displaced 150,000 people in January (OCHA/SEMA, 14/01/2015).

27,612 individuals (4,381 households) are living in 18 displacement sites in Adamawa. 41,275 IDPs are located in Yola South (six sites) and 38,495 in Girei (five sites), and 35,293 in Yola North (one site), (IOM/NEMA, 02/2015).

Some IDPs have reportedly started to leave Maiduguri for Damaturu, Gombe and other parts of Adamawa state, which they consider safer (OCHA, 06/02/2015).

The insurgency is the main factor of displacement in Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe. In Taraba, the majority of IDPs identified (80%) have been displaced by communal clashes, mainly in Wukari and Ibbi. Most are in Gassol (bordering Wukari), Jalingo, Takum and Gashaka. In Bauchi, 55% of IDPs have been displaced by the insurgency while 45% have been displaced by communal clashes, mainly resulting from the arrival of people displaced by inter-communal clashes elsewhere (IOM/NEMA, 31/12/2014; 02/2015).

At end March, it was reported that Kano state government had closed a camp for IDPs from Mubi after a BH militant was identified (AFP, 23/03/2015).
The displaced are apprehensive about returning to their communities, even those that have been recaptured by security forces (IFRC, 23/01/2015). In an assessment of IDPs in Adamawa state, lack of information about the security situation in places of origin was cited as a challenge to returning (IOM/NEMA, 31/12/2014). IDPs in host communities are in urgent need of shelter and non-food items. Food, health, protection, and WASH are all priority needs in host communities (OCHA, 02/10/2014).

**Nigerian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries**

At least 153,000 refugees have fled to Cameroon, Niger, or Chad (WFP, 22/01/2015). Temporary refugee status has been granted to those Nigerians fleeing Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe. UNHCR has advised against forced returns to northern areas.

**Niger:** 19,000 people have fled to Niger in 2015 (UNHCR, 16/01/2015). 100,000 returnees and refugees are in Niger and 50,000 people have been internally displaced (UNHCR, 04/03/2015). Concentrated in the Diffa region, most refugees are staying with local communities, and food and water resources are limited (UNHCR, 15/06/2014). Niger authorities have lifted a ban on refugee camps, given the large influx of new refugees in 2015. The Boko Haram attacks in Niger since 6 February have also led to internal displacement of a yet unspecified number of people (OCHA, 20/02/2015).

**Cameroon:** 66,000 Nigerians have fled to northern Cameroon since May 2013 (UNHCR, 10/03/2015) and 73,000 people are internally displaced due to the BH insurgency (UNHCR, 04/03/2015). Around 70% of new arrivals are women and children who need immediate assistance. 16,000 people reportedly fled from northeast Nigeria to Cameroon over 28 February–1 March (UNHCR, 03/03/2015).

**Chad:** Some 27,000 people have fled to western Chad, most of whom have arrived since early January (UNHCR, 10/03/2015).

**Food Security**

4.8 million people are food insecure across 11 states in northern Nigeria (OCHA, 30/09/2014; IRIN, 29/11/2014).

Southern and eastern Borno, southern Yobe, and northern Adamawa will remain in at least Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity through to the main harvest in October. Households in northern Borno, central and northern Yobe, and central and southern Adamawa are relatively less affected by conflict but under increasing threat of attack, and still experience disrupted market activity and declining income opportunities, contributing to limited food access and availability. Many of these areas, currently Stressed (IPC Phase 2), will move to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) from April (FEWSNET, 02/2015). Most IDPs continue to need assistance to meet their food needs (FEWSNET, 07/01/2015). Assessments conducted in IDP camps in Adamawa found that 20% reported never receiving food distributions. 0.75% of IDPs living in the sites were found to have a source of income (IOM/NEMA, 31/12/2014). Persistent attacks on market and transportation infrastructure will continue to threaten market activity in the northeast. Livelihoods are also impacted, with significantly below-average dry season harvests and seasonal incomes expected for households in areas highly impacted by conflict and for IDPs (FEWSNET, 02/2015).

According to government officials, the violence has affected 273,000 farmers and led to the destruction of 550,000 metric tons of crops in Adamawa state, as farmland has been abandoned (local media, 24/01/2015). Off-season farming and fishing in the first half of 2015 are also expected to be reduced (FEWSNET, 07/01/2015).

**Health and Nutrition**

3.5 million people need health assistance. There is a need to pre-position more emergency supplies in IDP camps and host communities, especially in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states, as the population increases with continued attacks (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

3,000 health facilities in the northeast are closed or have been partially destroyed (OCHA, 08/10/2014). In March 2014, a multi-sector assessment covering Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states indicated that only 37% of health facilities are functioning, leaving residents to seek medical attention across the border. Mortality rates are increasing and vaccination programmes are severely hit. Polio vaccination campaigns are now limited to the Maiduguri metropolis.

Most IDPs in host communities have limited access to health services due to various constraints such as lack of information on services and transportation costs (OCHA, 02/10/2014).

**Cholera**

Since January 2015, 1,759 cases have been reported, with 73 deaths and a 4.2% case fatality rate. 903 cases were reported in Rivers state over 1–8 March (UNICEF 27/03/2015). There has been a resurgence of cases in Kano and Kaduna states, and there is a risk the outbreak could spread further (UNICEF, 10/02/2015). 35,996 cholera cases, including 753 deaths (2.1% case fatality rate) were reported in 2014.

**Meningitis**

479 cases of meningitis, with 38 fatalities (7.9% case fatality rate) were reported at 22 February in four areas in Kebbi and Sokoto states, northwest Nigeria. Out of these, 300 new cases were recorded over one week in late February. Aleiro in Kebbi and Gudu in Sokoto are in epidemic phase due to very high attack rates, and Jega and Gwandu in Kebbi are in alert phase (WHO, 22/02/2015).

**Nutrition**

1.5 million malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women are in need of nutrition assistance (OCHA, 04/03/2015). As of February 2015, 461,000 children under five suffer from severe acute malnutrition (OCHA, 10/02/2015). In the absence of humanitarian support, it is expected that up to three million people will face food consumption gaps in Nigeria by July 2015 (FEWSNET, 07/01/2015). In the northeast, GAM is 12% (UNICEF, 13/01/2015).

Severe acute malnutrition is responsible for more than a third of all child deaths in Nigeria; 350,000 children die from malnutrition every year (ECHO, 08/2014).
A severe acute malnutrition rate of 8.7% was detected among children in Maiduguri and Jere in Borno state; and 27.8% were found to be moderately malnourished. The nutritional situation of the displaced as well as the host communities is rapidly deteriorating (ECHO, 14/03/2015).

### Polio

In 2014, 30 cases of vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) were reported, and six cases of wild poliovirus type 1. Kano is the only state to have reported cases of WPV since April (Global Polio Eradication Initiative, 14/01/2015). In 2013, 53 cases were reported, and 102 cases in 2012 (GPEI, UNICEF). 72% of cases in 2013 were recorded in Borno, Yobe, and Kano states.

### WASH

2.2 million people are in need of WASH assistance (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

WASH conditions in IDP host communities are of critical concern, with reports of inadequate latrines and lack of access to safe water. The need for hygiene promotion activities and provision of hygiene kits is critical (OCHA, 02/10/2014). In the northeast, only 46% of the population have access to improved sources of drinking water and 21% to latrines (UNICEF, 13/01/2015).

### Shelter and NFIs

1.9 million people are in need of shelter and non-food items (NFIs), such as kitchen kits, hygiene kits, appropriate water containers, mattresses, mats, blankets, and solar lamps. There is a need for housing for vulnerable people in conflict-affected areas whose homes were damaged (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

### Education

10.5 million children are out of school in Nigeria, more than half of them girls. 60% of these children are in the northern part of the country: one in every three primary school children and one in every four secondary school children are out of school in the northeast (UNICEF, 01/2015).

In March 2014, all state-funded education facilities were closed in Borno state (UNICEF, 23/06/2014). 500 educational institutions in the northeast have been destroyed by the insurgency (OCHA, 08/10/2014). Borno state authorities announced that 176 teachers have been killed by Boko Haram in Borno state since 2011 (UNICEF cited by OCHA, 07/2014).

### Protection

2.2 million people are in need of protection assistance (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

Maintaining the civilian nature of places of asylum or displacement is of concern. There is an urgent need for emergency protection, including for unaccompanied and separated children (OCHA, 06/2014).

In a report in September, Amnesty International said Nigeria’s police and military routinely torture women, men, and children (BBC, 18/09/2014).

Kidnappings of groups of women and girls by BH continue. In March, BH kidnapped 400-500 women and children (Reuters, 25/03/2015; BBC, 25/03/2015). More than 200 schoolgirls are still being held captive. Young men are being forcibly recruited. Human Rights Watch estimates that Boko Haram has abducted at least 500 women and girls since 2009, from more than a dozen towns and villages in Borno and Yobe states. Women and girls have reported abuse such as forced labour, including forced participation in military operations; forced marriage to their captors; and sexual abuse including rape. While some women and girls seem to have been taken at random, the majority appeared to have been targeted – notably students and Christians.

### Sierra Leone

#### Food Insecurity, Epidemic

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

**21 March**: 11,829 cumulative Ebola cases have been reported in Sierra Leone, including 3,742 deaths (WHO, 23/03/2015).

**20 March**: Waste from Ebola facilities is being dumped in waste collection sites and posing a risk to public health (PI).

**18 March**: The Government of Sierra Leone is planning another three-day shutdown from 29–29 March (international media).

**KEY CONCERNS**

- The cumulative number of reported Ebola cases across the region has reached 24,842, including 10,299 deaths (WHO, 23/03/2015). The numbers of registered cases and deaths are largely inaccurate.

- Between February and March 2015, 770,000 people (10% of the population) are in Phase 3, or Crisis, food insecurity. 1.32 million are in Phase 2. This is projected to increase to 1.1 million in Phase 3 and 1.69 million in Phase 2 by the June-August lean season (Cadre Harmonisé, 01/03/2015).

- The national public health system is overstretched and struggling to deliver non-EVD care (UNMEER, 16/11/2014).

For more information on the Ebola crisis in West Africa, visit the ACAPS Ebola Needs Analysis Project page.

**Political Context**
Unrest and Resistance to Ebola Response

Strikes and tensions related to pay and incentives continue to be reported across the country (UNMEER, 01/02/2015). More than 500 health workers from Kenema Government Hospital held peaceful protests on 3 February for non-payment of risk allowances since October 2014 (local media, 12/02/2015).

Community resistance to Ebola response is still reported (WHO, 18/02/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

The supply of food, water, and adequate sanitation facilities to quarantined areas has become challenging (UNMEER, 04/03/2015). This is exacerbated by poor coordination between agencies and road access issues, particularly in rural areas, which can render it impossible to reach quarantined communities within 24 hours of being placed under quarantine (UNMEER, 16/03/2015). In addition, poor mobile phone coverage is impeding disease surveillance in Koinadugu, Kailahun, and Pujehun (UNMEER, 01/02/2015).

Displacement

There was report in 2014 of fear of Ebola triggering displacement, but this does not seem to have taken place on a large-scale, although information on the exact number of displaced is lacking. Reports suggest that some Ebola survivors have had to relocate because of stigmatisation (DWHH, 06/10/2014).

Food Security

Between February and March 2015, 770,000 people (10% of the population) are in Phase 3, or Crisis, food insecurity. 1.32 million are in Phase 2. This is projected to increase to 1.1 million in Phase 3 and 1.69 million in Phase 2 in the June–August lean season (Cadre Harmonisé, 01/03/2015). About 76% of Ebola-related food-insecure individuals live in rural areas (FAO, 17/12/2014; WFP, 05/01/2015). The poorest households used more coping strategies in February than in January, and mostly in the districts of Bombali, Koinadugu, and Tonkolili in the north (WFP, 28/02/2015).

Agriculture and Markets

Following the opening of the border with Liberia, there are signs that markets and trade are recovering across Sierra Leone. However high staple food prices and low wages are still hampering food access in northern areas (WFP, 28/02/2015). According to the mVAM survey from WFP, markets are the main source of food (FAO, 11/12/2014; WFP 09/2014).

Livelihoods

Poverty could rise from 13.8% to 14.1% during 2014–2015 (UNDG, 11/03/2015). An estimated 179,000 people have stopped working outside the agriculture sector, though there are no clear numbers of the affect of Ebola on agricultural employment (World Bank, 12/01/2015).

Economic growth was 4% in 2014, compared to an expected 11.3% before the Ebola outbreak (World Bank, 20/01/2015). Many businesses are reporting an average 40% decrease in revenue since July/August 2014 (UNMEER, 18/01/2015).

Healthcare provision: Clinical trials for an Ebola vaccine started in Sierra Leone on 11 March, (Reuters, 11/03/2015). The study aims to enrol 6,000 front-line workers, targeted in four highly affected districts: Western Area, Bombali, Port Loko, and Tonkolili (UNMEER, 18/02/2015). Trials are to be extended to approximately 800,000 people in Kambia in June, and smaller groups in late April/May) (PI, 13/03/2015).

Seven of 50 (14%) assessed Ebola health facilities in February did not meet minimum standards for infection prevention and control (WHO, 18/02/2015).

Health and Nutrition

The national public health system is overstretched and struggling to deliver non-Ebola care, leading to an increase in non-Ebola-related morbidity and mortality (UNMEER, 16/11/2014). Between May and October 2014, the median number of admissions dropped by 70%. The health ministry estimates a 39% drop in children coming to clinics to be treated for malaria and a 21% drop in child immunisation (Save the Children, 05/02/2015). Primary health units (PHUs) observed a 66% decline in admissions between July and September 2014 in Western Area, and 25% in Moyamba district. Inpatient facilities in these districts registered a 90% and 100% decline, respectively. Over October –December, the number of PHU admissions increased to the level reported for the same period in 2013 (ACF, 17/03/2015). In Port Loko, people have reported being scared of returning to health facilities (WHO, 12/02/2015).
This has led to a greater level of mobility (IFRC, 06/03/2015). Movement of suspected cases across district and chiefdom borders is impeding effective surveillance (UNMEER, 01/02/2015; 09/02/2015). Complacency has grown with the relaxation of movement restrictions and many still deny the existence of Ebola (IFRC, 06/03/2015).

Unsafe burials, late reporting, and a lack of isolation continue to be the major factors in the high rates of transmission. A total of 16 unsafe burials were reported in the week prior 25 February (WHO, 04/03/2015). CDC staff note challenges in identifying and documenting all non-household contacts of new EVD cases in Kambia (04/03/2015). In the week to 15 March, six cases were confirmed post-mortem in the community (WHO, 18/03/2015). Severe shortage of burial space remains an issue in the Western Urban Area (UNMEER, 16/03/2015).

The Government is planning another three-day shutdown, over 27–29 March. There are conflicting reports on where it will be applied: some sources say it will be nationwide, and others in Western Area, Bombali, and Port Loko. The purpose is to find hidden Ebola cases, remind people how to protect themselves from EVD, and control further transmission (international media, 18/03/2015). As of early March, 1,845 households, approximately 10,886 individuals, are under quarantine in Sierra Leone (NERC, 08/03/2015). An outbreak in Aberdeen near Freetown led to outbreaks in other districts, notably Bombali and Port Loko, and resulted in entire villages being quarantined (IFRC, 06/03/2015; WHO, 04/03/2015). The cases were thought to be linked to a man who escaped quarantine in Freetown (international media, 27/02/2015). More than 45 people were infected in Bombali after a woman came back from Aberdeen with her son’s body (DERC, 04/02/2015). More than 20 children were quarantined in an orphanage after one of its staff was diagnosed with Ebola (international media, 23/02/2015).

As of early March, no public transportation carrying goods is allowed in Freetown after 18.00 and boats are not allowed to operate at night. The number of passengers will be restricted on all means of public transportation (Government, 02/03/2015). The Government lifted nationwide travel bans in January and eased restrictions on trading hours (AFP, 23/01/2015).

In August, legislation was passed imposing a jail term of up to two years for anyone concealing an Ebola-infected patient, and of up to six months for anyone entering or leaving Ebola-affected areas without medical authorisation (AFP, 22/08/2014; international media, 30/08/2014). Sierra Leone closed its borders with Guinea and Liberia, and closed schools, cinemas, and nightclubs in border areas in June (OCHA, 07/2014). On 22 February, the Liberian Government officially reopened its borders with Sierra Leone and Guinea (UNMEER, 23/02/2015).

Regional Outbreak

The cumulative number of reported Ebola cases across the region has reached 24,842, including 10,299 deaths (WHO, 23/03/2015).

Maternal Health

Women are reluctant to access maternal and reproductive health services including ANC, emergency obstetric and neonatal care, and contraceptives because of the EVD epidemic (UNDP, 12/2014). Health staff have been reluctant to attend to pregnant women, as common symptoms such as fever and bleeding are also symptoms of Ebola (UNMEER, 01/02/2015). The number of women attending hospitals and health centres to give birth dropped by 23% in September 2014, compared to May the same year (UNICEF, 05/12/2014). The number of PNC visits within 48 hours of delivery decreased by 21% over the same period, from 1,923 in May to 1,512 in July (CDC, 02/01/2015). Health facilities have ceased providing family planning services (IRIN, 04/02/2015).

Measles

864 suspected measles cases were reported in six districts: Bo, Bombali, Koinadugu, Port Loko, Tonkolili, and Western Area. There is an urgent need for precautionary measures to prevent further spread of the disease (PI, 06/03/2015). Vaccination rates for measles dropped from 99% in January 2014 to 76% in July, as mass vaccination campaigns were suspended (UNICEF, 03/11/2014).

Mental Health

There is a high need for grief counseling as a recent Knowledge, Attitude and Practice survey found that at least 50% of respondents knew someone who had died from Ebola, (UNMEER, 15/02/2015). According to a recent assessment, reduced access to community support systems and normal coping strategies means that trauma due to the Ebola crisis is putting people at risk of mental health problems (International Medical Corps, 09/01/2015).

Nutrition

It is predicted that, compared to observed trends from 1992 to 2012, the prevalence of undernourishment during 2014–2016 could increase by 1.30–1.39% (UNDG, 11/03/2015).

WASH

UNICEF assessed 121 Ebola centres and found that 35% facilities have inadequate water supply during the dry season (UNICEF 29/01/2015). About a third of the population live without latrines (UNMEER, 20/11/2014).

More than half of all schools indicated in a survey that they did not have sufficient access to water throughout the year (PI, 11/03/2015).

Concerns have been raised about waste from Ebola facilities being dumped in waste collection sites. This poses a risk for health, especially to waste pickers (PI, 20/03/2015).

Education
1.8 million children have been out of school since the start of the Ebola crisis. The reopening of schools is planned for 30 March, though meeting this date seems increasingly doubtful (IFRC, 20/02/2015: PI, 06/03/2015). There are concerns about the infection prevention control preparedness of schools to reopen give the prevalence of measles in six districts (PI, 06/03/2015). Visibly pregnant girls will not be allowed to return to school when they reopen, in an announcement by the ministry of education (Ebola Deeply, 14/03/2015).

Protection

There are reports of contacts being forcibly quarantined in their homes by authorities and, at times, experiencing shortages of food or water. Fear of these measures can discourage families from seeking early treatment (MSF, 26/01/2015). Health authorities have raised concerns about patients abandoned by their families at hospitals, even after testing negative for Ebola (international media, 05/01/2015). Discrimination and stigmatisation of survivors is still widely reported (IFRC, 06/03/2015) There are reports that male survivors in northern districts are being publicly persecuted (UNMEER, 18/01/2015). According to a survey conducted by UNICEF, 96% of Ebola survivors in Sierra Leone have experienced some sort of discrimination, and more than three-quarters of respondents said they would not welcome back an Ebola survivor into their community (IRIN, 31/10/2014).

Sexual and Gender-based Violence

Stigmatisation and discrimination have resulted in abuse and mistreatment of especially women. Many female survivors reported being afraid of experiencing gender-based violence as a result of EVD (Ministry of Social Welfare, Oxfam, UN Women, 27/02/2015).

According to the Government, gender-based violence and sexual assault has dramatically increased within the last year (international media, 09/01/2015; IRIN 04/02/2015). Many sexual assault and domestic violence clinics have been closed during the epidemic, and there is a lack of doctors. Consequently, there is almost no treatment and counselling available, or expertise to provide evidence for trial (IRIN, 04/02/2015).

Child Protection

More than 2,000 cases of sexual abuse against children were recorded in 2014 – a record high. Many more cases have likely gone unreported (Ebola Deeply, 14/03/2015).

According to UNICEF, as of 10 March, 8,440 children have lost one or both parents to Ebola and 739 are unaccompanied or separated from their caregiver (UNICEF, 11/03/2015; 09/03/2015). Other sources report as many as 12,023 registered orphans, with Port Loko the most affected district (Street Child, 02/2015).

As children are not attending school, UNICEF warns of an increase in vulnerability, leading to a potential increase in child labour and teen pregnancy (UNICEF, 16/10/2014). Due to limited household resources, children are predisposed and sometime forced to engage in income-generating activities. Long-term consequences include possible school drop-outs (Ministry of Social Welfare, Oxfam, UN Women, 27/02/2015).
Political Context

Somalia suffers from a chronic fragility of state institutions as a result of two decades of civil war. Infighting between presidents and prime ministers is a recurrent problem. Vision 2016, the Federal Government’s policy covering constitutional revision, the establishment of regional administrations, and transition to multiparty democracy, is opposed by key figures in the state (UNSC, 25/09/2014; ICG, 01/11/2014).

Security Context

UNICEF reported in January that the security situation in south-central Somalia significantly deteriorated during December 2014, with attacks on UN convoys and an AMISOM base near Mogadishu International Airport (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).

The Somali National Armed Forces (SNAF) and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) launched its military offensive against Al Shabaab-held areas in March 2014. Over 2,200 conflict incidents with humanitarian impact were reported in the first nine months of 2014, including military operations, active hostilities, and other forms of violence against civilians (OCHA, 17/10/2014). The number of attacks and fatalities had decreased between 2010 and 2013.

Al Shabaab

Al Shabaab, a militant Islamist group linked to Al Qaeda, took over most of southern Somalia in 2006, seeking to establish an Islamic state. Numbering 7,000–9,000 militants, Al Shabaab typically targets Somali government officials, AMISOM forces, and perceived government allies. Attacks in urban centres and along transport axes are common. Defeated by Ethiopian and Somali forces in 2007, Al Shabaab was forced out of Mogadishu in 2011 and Kismayo in 2012, and lost Barawe, Lower Shabelle, in October 2014. On 27 December, Al Shabaab intelligence chief Zakariya Ismail Ahmed Hersi surrendered to AU forces. Experts suggest that the surrender follows splits within Al Shabaab (AFP, 27/12/2014).

On 12 March, Al Shabaab attacked a fortified area in the central town of Baidoa, where a number of regional government headquarters and a United Nations compound and airport are located (AFP, 12/03/2015).

On 13 March, the alleged leader of the Westgate mall attack in Kenya was killed by a US drone strike (international media, 13/03/2015). Al Shabaab carried out several attacks in Mandera and Wajir, Kenya, in the following days, which left nine dead and ten injured (Reuters, 18/03/2015; AFP, 13/03/2015; AP, 15/03/2015). The Kenyan military launched two operations on Al Shabaab camps in Somalia, reportedly killing 115 militants, in response to attacks in Kenya in November and December (BBC, The Guardian, 24/11/2014; BBC, 02/12/2014).

Mogadishu: In January, Al Shabaab carried out two attacks, killing six, including the mayor of Afgoi district (local media, 19/01/2015; AFP, 22/01/2015; PI, 22/01/2015). Throughout February, 41 people were killed, including a member of parliament, four civil servants, and ten soldiers (BBC 09/02/2015; local media, 16/02/2015; Reuters, 16/02/2015). On 11 March, a car bomb at a hotel in Mogadishu killed one person (AFP, 11/03/2015). On 27 March, an attack on a hotel killed 14 and injured 13, including the Somali ambassador to Switzerland (BBC, AFP, 28/03/2015).

SNAF-AMISOM Offensive

In November 2013, the AMISOM force was increased to 22,000 from 17,600. Its mandate has been extended until 30 November 2015 (UNSC, 25/09/2014). The first SNF-AMISOM offensive was launched in early March 2014 to recover Al Shabaab-controlled areas of southern and central Somalia: Bakool, Gedo, Lower Shabelle, Hiraan, Bay, Banadir, and Lower Juba regions (OCHA, 05/2014). The second phase of the offensive began in late August. About 1.5 million people live in areas that could be directly affected by the offensive (OCHA, 19/09/2014). A drone strike in southwestern Somalia on 2 February, targeting an Al Qaeda base affiliated with Al Shabaab, killed several, including at least four civilians (AFP, 01/02/2015). On 28 February, AMISOM forces attacked Al Shabaab bases in El Bar, in Bakool region. 11 people were reported killed, although details of the attack are still unclear (local media, 28/02/2015).

Inter-communal Violence

On 21 March, gunfire between Hawadle and Surre tribes in Deefow district, in Beledweyne, left 12 people dead and dozens injured. The conflict began last year, over land (local media, 31/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

Outside Mogadishu, insecurity on the main roads to newly recovered areas makes needs assessment, delivery of humanitarian supplies, and response monitoring difficult (OCHA, 21/11/2014). In late November, OCHA reported that Al Shabaab was blocking strategic roads connecting Beletweyne, Hudur, and Elbarde. The Logistics Cluster reported in late November that roads in Bulo Burde, Baidoa, and Wajid also remain extremely unstable (WFP, 30/11/2014). Even in areas where there has been no active conflict, illegal checkpoints, banditry, and demands for bribes are common (OCHA, 17/10/2014).

The indefinite closure of Bosaso Airport, Puntland, for renovation, has severely constrained humanitarian operations (PI, 08/01/2015).

Security Incidents Involving Aid Workers

Aid workers have reportedly been targeted by armed groups for arrest and detention in Bakool, Bay, Gedo, and Lower and Middle Juba. On 3 December, a car bomb was detonated in the vicinity of a UN convoy travelling near Mogadishu International Airport. Al Shabaab claimed responsibility (AMISOM, 03/12/2014; AFP, 03/12/2014). As of September, 32 aid workers had been attacked in Somalia in 2014, with four humanitarian workers killed (USAID, 30/09/2014; OCHA, 17/11/2014). In May 2014, a 400-strong UN military unit was deployed in Mogadishu with a mandate to protect aid workers (UN).

Displacement
An estimated 1.1 million Somalis were IDPs by February 2015, 893,000 in the south-central region, 130,000 in Puntland, and 85,000 in Somaliland. 369,000 IDPs live in makeshift camps in Mogadishu (UNHCR, 02/2015). Figures show little to no changes in the past year. 80,000 were displaced due to the SNAF-AMISOM offensive in 2014 (OCHA, 04/12/2014).

As of August 2014, a significant and increasing number of rural families were moving to Mogadishu, fleeing conflict or food insecurity (UNICEF, 20/08/2014).

Returnees

The Tripartite Agreement between the Kenyan and Somali Governments and UNHCR, signed in November 2013, establishes a legal framework for those Somali refugees wishing to return home (UNHCR 15/08/2014). Three areas have been designated to receive returnees: Luuq, Baidoa, and Kismayo. Only 3,000 refugees have registered to return, compared to the original target of 10,000. (UNHCR, 08/12/2014). Somali refugees in Kenya cite insecurity and lack of earning opportunities as their main uncertainties regarding a return to Somalia (UNHCR, East African, 02/08/2014; UNHCR, 11/08/2014). As of 22 March, 2,049 returnees had arrived; 1,497 in Kismayo, 513 in Baidoa, and 39 in Luuq (UNHCR, 22/03/2015).

Refugees in Somalia

As of December 2015, there are 2,540 refugees in Somalia (OCHA, 01/12/2014).

961,397 Somalis are refugees in neighbouring countries: 423,510 in Kenya, 245,346 in Ethiopia, and 236,803 in Yemen, 24,040 in Uganda, 19,745 in Djibouti, 3,049 in Eritrea, and 150 in Tanzania. 2,216 new Somali refugees were registered in 2015 (UNHCR, 20/02/2015, 01/03/2015).

Food Security

An estimated 731,000 people are in Crisis and Emergency (IPC Phase 3 and 4) food insecurity and nearly 2.3 million additional people are classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2) until June 2015 (OCHA, 28/02/2015). About 76% of those who face acute food insecurity are IDPs, 12% live in rural areas, and 12% are the urban poor (FSNAU, 05/03/2015). Urgent lifesaving assistance and livelihood support is required for populations in IPC Phases 3 and 4 between now and June 2015 to help meet immediate food needs (FAO, 05/03/2015).

Urban communities in southern Somalia (Xudur and Waajid in Bakool, and Bulo Burde in Hiraan) have been affected by trade disruptions and face acute security. Southern agropastoral communities in Juba and pastoralists in coastal areas of northeastern, central, and southern Somalia face acute food security (FSNAU, 05/03/2015). In these areas, household food security will continue to deteriorate until the start of gu rains in April (FSNAU, 05/03/2015).

In riverine areas of Middle and Lower Juba affected by floods during the deyr season, food security will continue to deteriorate until the late (off-season) harvest becomes available in March.

The number of food insecure people shows an improvement from 2014, when 1 million people were in Crisis and Emergency (IPC Phase 3 and 4). Humanitarian actors on the ground have warned that the small reduction in numbers is part of the usual season variations and does not indicate a reversal in needs (OCHA, 05/03/2015).

Agriculture and Markets

Gu rains, the prime cropping season in the country which starts in March/April and ends in May, are expected to be within normal levels. However, there is increased likelihood below-normal rains (FAO, 09/03/2015).

Trade restrictions stemming from inter-clan conflicts and obstruction by Al Shabaab in rural areas of the south have impeded market flows, inflating food prices and increasing unemployment in Bakool, Gedo, Hiraan, and Lower Shabelle (USAID, 30/09/2014).

Although cereal prices started to decline in January 2015, they remain high in most markets (FAO, 09/01/2015). Cereal production has fallen 30% below the five-year average (FAO, 31/10/2014).

Livelihoods

A number of banks in the US, UK and Australia have broken ties with money transfer operators in Somalia in February, following concerns that the funds could be finding their way into the hands of Al Shabaab militants (Inter Press, 06/02/2015). USD 1.3 billion in annual remittances, representing 25–45% of Somalia’s GDP, will stop entering the country (OXFAM, 19/02/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Approximately 3 million people are in need of emergency health services (OCHA, 12/03/2015). Due to lack of funding to humanitarian actors on the ground, as of November, 1.5 million people in parts of south-central Somalia no longer have access to primary health services, and 300,000 children under five no longer have access to primary health services and free immunisation (UNICEF, 31/10/2014).

Nutrition

Current GAM levels are 12% and SAM 1.9%, a decrease from previous levels (which were 14.9% and 2.6%, respectively) (FAO, 05/03/2015). A survey conducted October–December 2014 indicates that 203,000 children under five are acutely malnourished. 38,000 of these are severely acutely malnourished, a slight decrease from previous surveys (OCHA, 19/02/2015). The number of acutely and severely malnourished children has declined by 7% and 13%, respectively, since July 2014 (UNICEF, 31/01/2015). This is thought to be a normal seasonal variation.

1.3 million people are in need of nutritional support (OCHA, 12/03/2015). The areas with
the highest critical malnutrition rates are pastoral, agropastoral, and riverine livelihood areas in North and South Gedo regions, agropastoral livelihood areas and Baidoa IDPs in Bay region, Beletweyne and Mataban districts in Hiraan region, Bosaso IDPs in Bari region, Garowe IDPs in Nugal region, and Galkayo IDPs in Mudug region (FEWSNET, FSNAU, 29/01/2015). The food insecurity situation among IDPs in Dolow is classified as Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Populations in the remaining 12 IDP settlements are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) (FSNAU, 05/03/2015).

Measles

10,279 measles cases were recorded in 2014, double the number recorded in 2013 (OCHA, 24/11/2014, 19/02/2015). Most cases were reported in Banadir, Lower Shabelle, and Middle Shabelle (UNICEF, 31/01/2015). Only 30% of the population is vaccinated against measles (OCHA, 12/03/2015).

Polio

Somalia has been polio-free since August 2014, although humanitarian actors on the ground state that vaccination campaigns must continue as risk remains (WHO, 19/02/2015). 199 polio cases were confirmed throughout 2014 (WHO, 19/02/2015). 74% of cases were reported in children under five (UNICEF, 31/01/2015). 600,000 children are vulnerable to the disease, according to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

Education

1.7 million children are out of school. Children of displaced families remain the most vulnerable and neglected in access to education. 78% of children in south-central Somalia have no access to education. (OCHA, 12/03/2015).

WASH

2.75 million people need safe water (OCHA, 12/03/2015). Access to water remain a major need in Bakool, Bay, Bari, Gedo, Galgaduud, Hiraan, Mudug, Nugaal, Sanaag and Sool. Populations displaced by the AMISOM offensive in Bay, Bakool, Galgaduud, Gedo, and Hiraan require emergency interventions (OCHA, 27/01/2014).

On 24 March, ECHO reported that Bay, Bakool, Hiraan, and Middle Shabelle are experiencing unusual water shortages due to reduced rainfall and lack of wells. This has led to displacement. Ten children have died of dehydration in Yagley village in Middle Shabelle. The price of drinking water continues to rise in Burdhoobo and Burur-Hakaba towns, affeting families’ coping mechanisms (ECHO, 24/03/2015).

Protection

The major protection issues in Somalia are physical insecurity during the SNAF-AMISOM offensive; SGBV, including cases of sexual violence during interclan conflict; child protection violations; killing of civilians (including children); separation of children; and forced/secondary eviction. The areas most affected are Middle and Lower Shabelle and Lower Juba (UNHCR Protection Cluster, 10/2014).

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

**24 March:** The South Sudanese parliament voted to extend President Kiir’s term by three years (AFP, 24/03/2015).

**24 March:** A container filled with ammunition exploded in the village of Gayiel, Leer county, Unity state killing seven people and injuring one. The container held ordnance left over from heavy fighting between government and opposition forces (VoA, 25/03/2015).
KEY CONCERNS

- 50,000 estimated killed in violence since December 2013 (International Crisis Group, 15/11/2014).
- 6.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in 2015; 4.1 million people to be assisted by the end of 2015 (OCHA, 08/01/2015).
- 2.5 million people expected to be in Crisis or Emergency food insecurity January–March 2015, including nearly half of the population of Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile (IPC, 02/2015).
- 1.5 million IDPs since December 2013 (OCHA, 02/2015). Almost 112,000 are in UNMISS bases (UNMISS, 02/02/2014). 68% of IDPs are estimated to live in flood-prone areas (OCHA, 08/2014).
- 249,000 refugees in South Sudan (mainly from Sudan, DRC, Ethiopia, and CAR).
- 515,000 South Sudanese refugees since December 2013 (UNHCR 03/2015).

OVERVIEW

Jonglei, Upper Nile, and Unity are priority states, and the priority sectors are food security and livelihoods, health, NFIs and shelter, nutrition, and WASH. Insecurity is hampering the delivery of assistance. The UN reports widespread violation of human rights and targeted violence against civilians.

Violence has spread across eastern South Sudan since December 2013. Fighting is most intense in the oil-rich northeastern states. Strife has progressively adopted the characteristics of an inter-communal conflict between the Dinka tribe allied to South Sudan President Kiir and government forces, and the Nuer loosely allied with former South Sudan Vice President Riek Machar.

Political Context

Sudan–South Sudan

Relations between Sudan and South Sudan have been poor since South Sudan gained independence in 2011. The violence in South Sudan since December 2013 has exacerbated tensions, with additional concerns in Khartoum regarding an influx of refugees and arms, as well as disruption of oil flow. Sudan has accused South Sudan of using Sudanese militia groups to fight insurgents. South Sudan has made similar accusations.

National Context

Since violence broke out in December 2013, President Kiir’s government forces (SPLA), who are predominantly Dinka and backed by Ugandan troops, are pitted against a loose alliance of military defectors loyal to former Vice President Riek Machar (SPLM-in-Opposition, or SPLM-IO), along with ethnic Nuer militia forces. Despite a significant reduction in intensity from January 2014, violence persists.

Peace talks, mediated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), an East African regional bloc, collapsed on 5 March, as two parties failed to meet a deadline for an agreement on power sharing and security issues in the final round of peace talks held in Addis Ababa (international media, 6/03/2015). IGAD said it plans to resume talks between the two parties in April (local media, 11/03/2015). Just before the deadline, on 3 March, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution setting out criteria for targeted sanctions on individuals or entities threatening security and stability in South Sudan (UN, 03/2015).

On 24 March, the South Sudanese parliament voted to extend President Kiir’s term by three years, thereby cancelling elections scheduled for June 2015 (AFP, 24/03/2015).

Following a 60% drop in oil production and widespread inflation, the central bank of South Sudan is allegedly printing money to meet a budget shortfall. The UN has warned of hyperinflation in the coming months (AP, 22/03/2015).

New Insurgent Groups

According to reports, part of the South Sudan Democratic Movement (SSDM) Cobra faction, based in Pibor, Jonglei, has splintered from SSDM and allied with SPLM-in-Opposition. However, a senior member of the Greater Pibor Area Administration denied these reports (local media, 15/02/2015).

South Sudan Resistance Movement/Army

Brigadier General Lul Ruai Koang, former military spokesperson for the SPLM-in-Opposition, left SPLM-IO and announced the formation of the South Sudan Resistance Movement/Army, consisting of members from the Lou-Nuer ethnic group. He declared a unilateral ceasefire with the government forces. According to local media, all three commissioners of counties in Greater Akobo, a Lou-Nuer territory, have dismissed his claims of a new movement (local media, 08/03/2015).

REMNASA

On 29 January, the South Sudanese Government acknowledged the formation of a new armed opposition movement, the Revolutionary Movement for National Salvation (REMNASA), in Western Equatoria state. REMNASA is estimated to have 100–200 soldiers (local media, 29/01/2015).

Security Context

Most violence is occurring in the oil-rich northeastern states of Unity, Upper Nile, and Jonglei, violence between government and opposition forces escalated in Unity and Upper Nile states in April–May 2014. It calmed during the rainy season, then recommenced at the start of the dry season, at the end of October, as mobility increased.
At least 50,000 may have died since December 2013, although access restrictions make numbers hard to verify (International Crisis Group, 15/11/2014). On 3 April 2014, according to local media, representatives of the Nuer community stated that over 17,000 Nuer had been killed by pro-government forces since December.

International Military Presence

The UN Security Council voted in December 2013 to increase the number of peacekeepers in the country from 10,000 to 12,500.

Clashes between the Government and SPLM-in-Opposition

Jonglei

Heavy fighting and artillery shelling was reported in Canal/Pigi county in March 2015 (OCHA, 19/03/2015). Canal/Pigi and Fangak counties saw heavy fighting and displacement of tens of thousands in November and December 2014 (OCHA, 07/11/2014).

Unity

Renewed heavy fighting between government and opposition forces has been reported in Bentiu and Rubkona since the end of the rainy season in late October (AFP, 10/11/2014; Reuters, 04/01/2014; OCHA, 12/02/2015). In mid-March, fighting was reported north of the Bentiu PoC site (OCHA, 19/03/2015). On 31 January, clashes were reported in Mayom county (local media, 02/02/2015). Mayom county is an SPLA stronghold and provides strategic access to routes in Warrap state (Small Arms Survey, 29/01/2015).

On 24 March, a container filled with ammunition exploded in the village of Gayiel, Leer county, Unity state killing seven people and injuring one. The container held ordnance left over from heavy fighting between government and opposition forces (VoA, 25/03/2015).

Upper Nile

Since 5 March, heavy fighting, including heavy shelling, between government and opposition forces has been reported in Duk Duk, Renk county and Manyo county. SPLA ground troops took control of Wadakona town, Manyo county, on 9 March, killing five people and trapping many civilians (OCHA, 06/03/2015; local media, 09/03/2015). Shelling between government and opposition forces in Renk county in mid-February had destroyed 18 buildings and forced hundreds to flee, according to UNMISS (USAID, 27/02/2015). A member of SPLM-IO claimed that opposition fighters bombed a ferry used by pro-government forces in their offensives (local media, 14/03/2015).

On 3 March, mortar shelling was heard across the Sobat River in Nasir. Nasir town had reportedly been largely deserted following recent attacks (OCHA, 06/03/2015). On 10 February, SPLA accused opposition forces of shelling in Malakal and Nasir counties (local media, 11/02/2015; OCHA, 12/02/2015). Shelling was also reported in Nasir county in January, along with small arms, rocket-propelled grenade, and indirect fire (OCHA, 31/01/2015; 01/01/2015). On 8 January, according to the SPLA spokesperson, 2,000 opposition fighters attacked SPLA bases and positions in an area northeast of Malakal (VoA, 15/01/2015). In March, heavy fighting was reported in GulGuk, on the border with Longochuk county, with reports of local populations fleeing the area.

Inter-communal Violence

Inter-clan animosity stems from competition over water resources and grazing land. Deaths from inter-communal fighting have increased since the second Sudanese civil war (1983–2005), as have attacks, abductions, and population displacement.

Lakes

Inter-communal violence has been reported in counties across Lakes state since September 2014. In March, more than 100 people were reportedly killed and 36 wounded, as more than 1,400 cattle were looted from six cattle camps in Rumbek Centre and Rumbek East counties (OCHA, 19/03/2015). At the end of December, fighting in Rumbek East reportedly led to 44 fatalities (local media, 27/12/2014).

Upper Nile

Clashes were reported between refugees and the host population in Gendrassa refugee camp in Maban county in early February. Two people were reported killed and four injured (OCHA, 09/02/2015).

Jonglei

On 3 February, a cattle raid in Jalle Payam, Bor South county, killed five people (local media, 03/02/2015).

Other Incidents

Western Bahr el-Ghazal

On 26 January, 11 people, including four journalists working for state media, were killed in an ambush in Raga county. Several armed groups are known to operate in the area, although no group has yet taken responsibility for the attack (AFP, 26/01/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

6.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in 2015 (OCHA, 08/01/2015). The delivery of aid is restricted by heavy fighting, logistical constraints, and administrative impediments.

Administrative Constraints

In March, the South Sudan Government announced it would implement routine searches of UN and relief organisation convoys, claiming it had intercepted arms and ammunition in UNMISS-contracted vehicles in Rumbek, Lakes state (UNHCR, 21/03/2014).
The establishment of a humanitarian corridor between South Sudan and Sudan has been approved by both Governments and will enable the delivery of food assistance by WFP (UN, 26/08/2014).

As of 27 March, WFP reported that road access was impossible between Leer (Unity) and Maper (Lakes). Roads have dried up and are now passable (OCHA, 12/02/2015).

Security Constraints

Incidents against humanitarian personnel and assets reported in January and February 2015 included assault, burglary, harassment, arrest, and detention. Most of the cases were reported in Juba, Upper Nile and Bentiu (Unity) (OCHA, 18/03/2015). On 17 February, a British aid worker was shot in Juba (international media, 18/02/2015). Increased insecurity in Lakes led to suspension of activities by humanitarian organisations for several weeks from October, and in February the state reported eight access incidents related to insecurity (OCHA, 20/10/2014; 18/03/2015). A WFP staff member and one UNMISS contractor are still being held after abduction in Malakal in October (UNMISS 17/10/2014; WFP, 17/10/2014).

Disasters

Displacement

As of 31 December 2014, over 1.5 million South Sudanese had been displaced internally and over 506,000 South Sudanese refugees had moved across borders since December 2013 (OCHA, 02/03/2014). Fluid displacement patterns and limited access to rural areas make numbers difficult to verify (UNHCR 11/07/2014).

IDPs

As of 19 March 2015, 1.5 million people were displaced in South Sudan: 609,000 in Jonglei, 366,000 in Unity, 264,000 in Upper Nile, and 130,800 in Lakes (OCHA, 12/02/2015). An estimated 802,120 IDPs are under 18 (UNICEF, 26/03/2015). Displacement patterns remain fluid, driven by violence, floods, and the search for emergency assistance (IOM, 03/09/2014).

Since January 2015, an estimated but unverified 13,800 people have been displaced due to inter-communal violence in Lakes state (OCHA, 19/03/2015). By January, heavy fighting since early November in Canal/Pigi and Fangak counties, Jonglei state, had displaced approximately 100,000 people in northern Jonglei, primarily in Ayod county and New Fangak areas (USAID, 05/01/2015). In early December, an estimated 25,000 were displaced from New Fangak and Canal/Pigi and another 43,200 people displaced in Old Fangak town (OCHA 12/12/2014). An escalation of conflict in Jamman and Renk, Upper Nile, has reportedly displaced people in Maban, Kilo 10 (Melut), and Renk (OCHA, 23/01/2014).

112,000 IDPs are sheltering in ten Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites on UNMISS bases: 52,900 in Bentiu, 34,000 in Juba UN House, 21,000 in Malakal, and 2,600 in Bor (UNMISS 02/03/2015). Between 19 and 25 January, 9,000 new IDPs were registered at Bentiu PoC site (IOM, 31/01/2015). The Bentiu PoC site is being expanded to shelter up to 60,000 IDPs (UNMISS, 24/02/2015).

Refugees in South Sudan

258,383 refugees are in South Sudan: 235,000 from Sudan, 15,500 from DRC, 4,900 from Ethiopia, and 2,040 from CAR. Over 133,000 refugees are based in Upper Nile and around 93,000 in Unity (UNHCR, 29/03/2015). Most of the Sudanese refugees in Upper Nile state reside in four refugee camps in Maban county (OCHA, 03/04/2014).

Between 23 December 2014 and 14 February 2015, more than 5,000 refugees from South Kordofan and Blue Nile states arrived in Yida town, Unity state (UNHCR, 19/02/2015). Arrival rates exceed 500 people per week, double the rate during the same period a year ago. Of the new arrivals in Yida between 20 and 26 February, 65% were women and children (OCHA, 21/02/2015). Refugees cited aerial bombardments, ground attacks and lack of livelihood and education opportunities as reasons for leaving (UNHCR, 30/01/2015).

The South Sudanese Government wants to close Yida camp by June 2015 and relocate refugees to other camps. The South Sudan Government and UNHCR have agreed to expand Ajuong Thok refugee camp to accommodate up to 40,000 people. Pamyr, a new site 8km from Yida, has been identified as a potential refugee camp (UNHCR, 19/02/2015).

Returnees

As of 28 August, 186,000 people have returned since the beginning of the crisis: 70,000 in Jonglei, 109,000 in Unity, and 5,000 in Northern Bahr el Ghazal (OCHA, 28/08/2014). This is a downward revision from 227,000 returnees reported in July (OCHA, 29/07/2014).

Earlier reports indicated a total of 1.9 million returnees from Sudan since 2007.

South Sudan Refugees in Other Countries

515,000 South Sudanese have sought refuge in neighbouring countries since the onset of the conflict (UNHCR, 23/03/2015).

Sudan: 127,000 South Sudanese nationals have arrived in Sudan since 15 December 2013 (UNHCR, 19/03/2015). In December, more than 2,000 were registered per week but since mid-January the numbers have increased less drastically (UNHCR, 29/01/2015). A new spike of more than 5,000 new refugees was reported between 8 and 13 March. These new arrivals were most likely fleeing the fighting in Manyo county, Upper Nile state (OCHA, 15/03/2015).

As of late March, the Sudanese Government has refused to recognise South Sudanese nationals as refugees and instead considers them to be Sudanese citizens (UNHCR, 03/04/2014). UNHCR has declared that this constitutes an obstacle to access to humanitarian assistance.

Ethiopia: 197,000 South Sudanese refugees (UNHCR, 20/03/2015). The rate of arrival saw a sharp decline in the rainy season, from an average of 2,000 per day in May to 92 in the first week of October (WFP, 10/10/2014).
**Uganda:** 144,000 refugees (UNHCR, 26/03/2015).

**Kenya:** 45,000 refugees (UNHCR, 02/03/2015).

**Food Security**

Renewed conflict and displacement in early 2015 will limit the coping capacity of households in conflict-affected areas. An estimated 90,000 people are in need of food assistance in Unity state (12/02/2015).

From January to March 2015, 2.5 million people will be in Crisis or Emergency food insecurity, 60% of whom are in the states of Upper Nile, Unity, and Jonglei (IPC, 02/2015). 890,000 will be in Phase 4 and 1.63 million in Phase 3 (IPC, 09/2014). 515,000 people will be in Phase 3 or 4 in Jonglei; 525,000 in Unity; 530,000 in Upper Nile; 320,000 in Northern Bahr el Ghazal; 200,000 in Lakes; 145,000 in Warrap; 80,000 in Eastern Equatoria; 20,000 in Western Bahr el Ghazal, 180,000 in central Equatoria (IPC, 09/2014). Food security is expected to deteriorate to Emergency (IPC Phase 4) in several counties in Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile state in April (FEWSNET, 23/02/2015). An early onset of the lean season is expected, and an estimated 3.5 million people will be in Crisis and Emergency food insecurity in May and June (FEWSNET, 04/03/2015).

The food security situation has worsened in Warrap and Lakes states, as they experienced above-normal flooding in 2014, which affected crop harvests, livestock migration, and disease patterns. In Lakes state, increased inter-clan fighting and cattle raiding has affected the stability of livelihoods (IPC, 02/2015). According to WFP’s Vulnerability Analysis Mapping, 15% of households in Warrap state are severely food insecure, the highest percentage in South Sudan (WFP, 12/2014).

Livestock are moving into agricultural areas, rather than conflict-affected pastoral zones. This has destroyed crops, heightens the risk of livestock disease transmission, increases competition for natural resources, and is likely to have an impact on local power structures (FAO, 12/2014). Conflict has also affected trade flows and market infrastructure, and weakened financial systems (WFP, 02/2015). The country depends on food imports, and a de facto devaluation of the national currency between 2011 and 2013, the reduction in oil exports, and the increase in imports, all have a negative impact on households’ purchasing power.

**Health and Nutrition**

5.8 million people need health assistance. Waterborne diseases in flooded areas, as well as kala azar (visceral leishmaniasis) in Jonglei, are the most pressing health concerns (WHO, 10/2014). Malaria, acute respiratory infections (ARI), acute watery diarrhoea (AWD), and acute bloody diarrhoea (ABD) are the main causes of illness among the IDPs (WHO, 15/02/2015).

**Cholera**

A cholera outbreak in Nakoringole, Ikots county, Eastern Equatoria state has claimed 43 cases, including three deaths (case fatality rate, or CFR, 7%), since 11 February (WHO, 15/02/2015). No new cholera cases had been reported as of mid-March (WHO, 17/03/2015).

29 hepatitis E cases have been reported in Bentiu since mid-December. The cumulative caseload in Mingkaman IDP settlement is 135, including six deaths (CFR 4.6%) (WHO, 15/02/2015).

**Measles**

An estimated 10% of new refugees arriving in Yida suffer from measles (UNHCR, 30/01/2015).

**Nutrition**

The screening of over 600,000 children across the country in 2014 found an SAM rate of 6.7% and an MAM rate of 12.6% (UNICEF, 19/08/2014).

448,000 children were estimated to be moderately malnourished and 235,000 severely malnourished in mid-2014 (OCHA, 29/07/2014). Twice as many needed treatment for SAM in 2014 than in 2013 (UNICEF 15/07/2014).

Malnutrition screening of 22,917 children in January and February in the three conflict-affected states found GAM levels above the emergency threshold of 15% in Upper Nile (17.2%), Unity (18.9%) and Jonglei (26%) (UNICEF, 26/03/2015). In the traditionally high burdened states in the non-conflict affected areas, the GAM rates were highest in Warrap (17.2%) and Northern Bahr el Ghazal (14.6%) (WFP, 12/2014). The highest rates GAM were recorded in Leer county (34.1%) and Panyijar (32.8%), Unity state; Akobo East, Jonglei State (31.8%) and Uror (27%), Jonglei; and Aweil South, Northern Bahr el Ghazal (26.1%) (UNICEF, 20/11/2014).

In Bentiu PoC site, a screening of 12,018 children revealed a proxy GAM rate of 12.5%, an improvement since the previous screening in December (proxy GAM rate of 18.8%) (OCHA, 06/03/2015).

Visceral leishmaniasis

1,025 cases of visceral leishmaniasis, including 31 deaths (case fatality rate 3.02%), have been reported in Lankien, Ulang, Walgak, and Chuil (Jonglei) since the beginning of 2015. Of these, 837 were new cases, 188 were relapses, and 18 did not complete treatment (WHO, 15/02/2015; 17/03/2015).

7,204 cases and 199 deaths were recorded in 2014, compared to 2,992 cases and 88 deaths for all 2013 (WHO, 08/01/2015). Most cases were reported in Jonglei (OCHA, 30/10/2014). Kala azar is a chronic and potentially fatal parasitic disease transmitted by the bite of infected sandflies (Sudan Tribune, 07/09/2014).

**WASH**

New arrivals in Ajoung Thok camp, Unity state, lack WASH facilities. The rate of new latrine construction is insufficient to meet the needs of the refugees being relocated to the
Water supplies were reportedly insufficient in a quarter of displacement sites. Health partners have reported an over 5% increase in diarrhoeal diseases due to the disruption of sanitation and hygiene campaigns in PoC sites (OCHA, 14/11/2014). Water access in Bentiu PoC site was 10.1 L per person per day and there were 93 persons per latrine as of March 2015 (IOM, 20/03/2015). In 40% of sites, IDPs rely on unimproved or surface water sources (IOM 15/07/2014).

Education

1.7 million children and adolescents are in need of emergency education, including 400,000 who have dropped out of school (UNICEF, 16/01/2015).

Children are not attending school in 70% of IDP sites (CCCM, 17/04/2014). The inability to pay teachers’ wages has limited education activities in displacement areas (OCHA, 26/10/2014). 83 schools are occupied by armed groups or IDPs (OCHA, 27/03/2014). Many schools remain closed in Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile. Rising insecurity has disrupted education in remote villages in Lakes state: Yirol West, Cueibet, Rumbek North, Rumbek East and Rumbek Central counties are most affected. The state ministry of education has relocated 19 primary schools from remote areas into Rumbek town for safety reasons (local media, 20/03/2015).

Protection

Children

A new report by the UN Security Council suggests that all parties to the conflict since December 2013 are responsible for grave violations against children in 2014, including killing and maiming, recruitment and use, abduction, and rape and other forms of sexual violence (UN, 30/12/2014).

12,000 children were reportedly recruited by armed groups in 2014 (AFP cited UNICEF, 14/12/2014). On 21 February, an unidentified armed group abducted at least 89 boys, some as young as 13, from their homes in the town of Wau Shilluk, near Malakal (Upper Nile). According to UNICEF, the number may be in the hundreds and the children have been recruited as child soldiers. The Shilluk militia, allied with SPLA, is believed to be responsible (UNICEF, 28/02/2015).

UNICEF has identified over 5,830 unaccompanied and separated children since the conflict began in December 2013 (UNICEF, 02/09/2014).

SGBV

According to the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, rape has been used as a weapon of war between government and opposition forces (international media, 23/10/2014). Early and forced marriage, rape, and domestic violence have been reported in Maban refugee camps (Batil, Doro, Gendrassa and Kaya) (OCHA, 16/10/2014). In Melut (Upper Nile), firewood collection remains a major safety concern for women and girls, with reports of GBV (OCHA, 26/10/2014). Gang rape and forced marriage are increasing in Cuibeit county, Lakes state, and Magwi and Torit counties, Eastern Equatoria state, as a result of inter-communal violence (OCHA, 09/02/2015).

Updated: 30/03/2015

SUDAN CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

28 March: SPLM-N claimed that they captured the garrison town of Habila and killed 54 government troops. Government troops denied both claims (AFP, 28/03/2015).

27 March 2015: The Sudanese government and a number of Darfur opposition-group commanders led by Mohamedain Ismail Basher, formerly operation commander of the SLM-MM, signed a peace agreement in N’Djamena, Chad (local media, 27/03/3015).

22 March: Clashes between Falata and Salamat tribes in South Darfur left more than 36 dead and more than 70 wounded (local media, 26/03/2015).

March: 6,200 people from Golo, Jebel Marra arrived in Guldo town and Hassahisa IDP camp, according to aid agencies (OCHA, 23/03/2015).

KEY CONCERNS

- Protracted insurgencies by armed groups are occurring across Darfur, and South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. The conflict in South Sudan has also raised tensions.

- 6.6 million people (20% of the population) need humanitarian assistance (OCHA 17/11/2014): 4.4 million in Darfur and 980,000 in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states (OCHA, 11/2014).

- 2 million children under five acutely malnourished (OCHA, 03/2015).

- Renewed fighting between armed opposition groups, militias, and the Sudanese army in Darfur since March.

- 3.1 million IDPs. Two million in Darfur prior to the latest clashes (OCHA, 03/2015), and 431,000 displaced in 2014 (OCHA, 12/2014) and 43,000 newly displaced in 2015 (OCHA, 02/2015).

- Humanitarian access remains a significant problem due to insecurity, mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), logistical constraints, and restrictions placed by the authorities.

OVERVIEW

Several regions of Sudan are facing large-scale internal displacement due to violence,
widespread food insecurity, malnutrition, lack of access to basic services, and recurrent natural disasters. Humanitarian access to conflict zones is severely restricted.

Numerous, protracted insurgencies are being waged by several armed groups across Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile. Darfur has been the scene of inter-communal clashes and conflict between the government and armed opposition for over a decade, and fighting intensified in March 2014. Violence in Blue Nile and South Kordofan grew significantly after South Sudan won independence in 2011. Tensions also continue to run high between Sudan and South Sudan.

Political Context

Profound divisions within Sudanese society have persisted since independence in 1956, and the Government’s exploitation of intercommunal differences has aggravated the situation.

Parliamentary and presidential elections are scheduled for 13 April (AFP, 31/12/2015). On 11 January, President Omar al Bashir launched his bid for re-election (AFP, 11/01/2015). Both the Sudan Revolutionary Front and the National Umma Party have announced they will not participate in the elections.

Sudan–South Sudan

Tensions between Khartoum and Juba, persistent since South Sudan’s independence in 2011, increased when violence erupted in South Sudan in December 2013. The disruption of oil flow is a key concern for both countries. In November 2014, South Sudanese officials accused the Sudanese Government of bombing Raga county, Western Bahr el Ghazal state, and Maban county, Upper Nile state, where more than 220,000 Sudanese refugees are living (AFP, 14/11/2014).

The Sudanese Government has accused Juba of using Sudanese militia groups, and the South Sudanese army (SPLA) has accused Khartoum of supporting the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement -in-Opposition. Both the opposition and Khartoum have denied the accusations.

Sudan Revolutionary Front

The Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), formed in 2011, is seeking a comprehensive peace process covering the whole country. The Government is only willing to discuss the conflict in Darfur.

The SRF is made up of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), mainly active in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, as well as Darfur’s three largest opposition groups: the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM); the Sudan Liberation Movement led by Abdel Wahid Al Nur (SLM-AW); and the Sudan Liberation Movement led by Minni Arkou Minnawi (SLM-MM).

On 27 March 2015, the Sudanese government and a number of Darfur opposition-group commanders led by Mohamedain Ismail Bashier, formerly the operation commander of the SLM-MM, signed a peace agreement in N’Djamena, Chad.

African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) has called a meeting on 5 April with the government and opposition groups in Darfur, including SLM-MM and their political allies, to discuss procedures for a national dialogue process (local media, 27/03/2015).

Blue Nile and South Kordofan States

While the SPLM governs the independent South Sudan, the SPLM-North continues an insurgency in Sudan’s Blue Nile and South Kordofan states, which have routinely opposed government rule. Talks between Khartoum and the SPLM-N have repeatedly failed, and negotiations last collapsed in April 2014, reportedly over the SPLM-N’s demand for a comprehensive peace process.

Security Context

Extensive military operations aimed to end armed opposition in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile began at the end of 2013. Tribal fighting also intensified in Darfur and Kordofan regions in 2013 and 2014, leading to thousands of deaths and injuries and forcing over 300,000 people to flee their homes. Large-scale violence by pro-government militia against the IDP population in Darfur continues in 2015.

UN Peacekeeping Mission

On 30 November, President Omar al Bashir called for a “clear programme” for the exit of the UNAMID mission in Darfur. Relations deteriorated following the Sudanese Government’s refusal to allow a UNAMID investigation of mass rape in Tabit, North Darfur (AFP, 30/11/2014). A working group of officials from the United Nations, African Union and the Sudanese government reached an agreement on the terms of reference for the exit strategy in February and will resume discussion in early April (local media, 8/03/2015).

Darfur

Security in Darfur has reportedly deteriorated significantly since late December 2013, with numerous airstrikes by the Sudanese Air Force (SAF). Attacks by pro-government militia on IDPs and villagers, their shelters, and commercial convoys, are frequent.

In early January, 15 villages were burned and another 30 abandoned during fighting between government forces and armed groups in Tawila locality, North Darfur, with thousands displaced (OCHA, 08/01/2015; local media, 06/01/2015). The Sudanese paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) later carried out more raids on villages in Tawila and Um Baru in North Darfur, plundering goods and large numbers of livestock (local media, 15/01/2015).

In early January, government and opposition forces were reported to be fighting for control over Jebel Marra region. According to the army, Sudanese troops had driven insurgents out of the Fanga area. SLM-MM denied these reports (AFP, 02/01/2015). 21 villages in Fanga have been burned. Up to 50,000 people may have been displaced, according to community leaders (OCHA, 08/01/2015). On 28 January, bombing injured seven people in the area of Darsa and Sur Reng, an SLM-AW stronghold (local media, 29/01/2014). On 1 February, 11 bombs were reportedly dropped in Golo locality, but no one was killed (local...
Inter-communal violence: On 22 March, clashes between Falata and Salamat tribes in South Darfur left more than 36 dead and more than 70 wounded (local media, 26/03/2015). On 20 March, clashes between Berti and Al Zayadia tribes killed or injured an estimated 30 people near El Fasher, North Darfur. Several villages were also reportedly burned (AFP, 20/03/2015; local media, 20/03/2015). In January, clashes between Falata and Massalit tribes, in Graidia, South Darfur, killed nine people and destroyed 165 homes (local media, 22/02/2015). In 2014, there were serious clashes between Missiriya and Salamat in Central Darfur, between Misseriya clans in West Darfur, and between Maaliya and Rizeigat in East Darfur (local media, 20/08/2014).

Kordofan and Blue Nile

Information on Blue Nile and South Kordofan states is difficult to obtain as government authorities severely restrict access to the fighting zone. The Sudanese Government announced that it would expand its counter-insurgency operations in Blue Nile state in May 2014. There have since been reports of an SAF offensive and intensified bombings in the region, the most recent being of aerial bombing in Blue Nile State in February. Fighting between SPLA-N and the government troops intensified in March, with SPLM-N claiming they captured the garrison town of Habila on 28 March. According to SPLM-N, 54 government troops were killed in the attack but government troops denied both claims (OCHA, 22/10/2014; local media, 25/11/2014; 23/02/2015; AFP, 28/03/2015).

Abyei

According to the UN peacekeeping force in Abyei (UNISFA), an estimated 100 armed Misseriya attacked and burned 24 houses in Marialachak, a village in southern Abyei in early March (local media, 04/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

6.6 million people (20% of the population) are in need of humanitarian assistance; more than half are in Darfur and South Kordofan and Blue Nile states (OCHA 17/11/2014).

In October, 4.4 million people in Darfur, more than half of the region’s population, needed humanitarian assistance (OCHA). This includes 2.4 million IDPs, 1.9 million non-displaced severely affected by violence, and 136,000 returnees or refugees from neighbouring countries. In South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, 749,000 need assistance in government-controlled areas and 378,000 are estimated displaced by conflict in SPLM-N territory. Limited access to non-government areas makes verification impossible.

Access

Humanitarian access for international relief organisations is a major problem. Humanitarian operations are heavily hampered by insecurity, the presence of mines and ERW, logistical constraints, and government restrictions. The number of humanitarian aid workers in Darfur declined from 6,850 in November 2013 to 5,440 in August 2014 (OCHA, 17/11/2014).

Administrative and Logistical Constraints

August 2013 regulations ban foreign humanitarian groups and UN agencies from working for human rights, and the Government has banned humanitarian access to areas controlled by opposition groups.

East Jebel Marra has been virtually inaccessible since 2010. Access to IDPs in Darfur is constrained by militia checkpoints and insecurity.

The Sudanese Humanitarian Aid Commission banned international staff from UN agencies and international NGOs from participating in an inter-agency multi-cluster needs assessment in Blue Nile state in November (local media, 19/10/2014). There has been no humanitarian access from Sudan to opposition-held areas in South Kordofan since October 2013.

Security Incidents Involving Aid Workers

On 8 February, three Sudanese Red Crescent workers were killed in Blue Nile state. Details of the incident are still unclear (ECHO, 10/02/2015). On 25 January, SPLM-N shot at a WFP helicopter, east of Kadugli, South Kordofan, forcing it to land. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has suspended all medical activities in Frandala, South Kordofan after it was bombed in January (MSF, 22/01/2015). There were further incidents in North and South Darfur in January. 25 aid workers were abducted in Darfur in 2014, the highest number of abduction cases recorded since 2004 (OCHA, 22/01/2015).

Displacement

IDPs

As of February 2015, there are 3.1 million IDPs in Sudan, most of whom are in Darfur (OCHA, 03/2015).

2.4 million IDPs reside in 46 camps and 68 settlements in Darfur (82,530 orphans, 34,099 widows, and 52,352 sick and elderly), according to a survey conducted by the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA) from December 2013 to April 2014. OCHA reported in June that government policy to prevent the creation of new camps is an obstacle to the verification and registration of IDPs.

457,000 people were displaced in Darfur January–December 2014, more than in any year since 2004: 141,000 have reportedly returned (OCHA 31/12/2014; 20/07/2014).

41,304 newly displaced have been verified in North Darfur since early January, with an additional 63,900 reported but not verified in North and Central Darfur, including Jebel Marra. Among the unverified, 36,000 people have been displaced in West, Central and North Jebel Marra localities (OCHA, 05/02/2015; 15/02/2015; 01/03/2015).

Jebel Marra: More than 3,000 displaced arrived at areas controlled by the Sudan Liberation Movement, led by Abdel Wahid El Nur (SLM-AW) in Jebel Marra, which is in both North and Central Darfur states. According to SLM-AW, the displaced had fled...
attacks by government forces on Golo and the neighbouring villages in January (local media, 15/03/2015).

North Darfur: 148,000 total IDPs as of March 2015. 107,000 IDPs; 124,000 returnees in 2014 (OCHA 31/12/2014). 729 villages were destroyed December 2013–April 2014 (DRA cited by local media 16/07/2014). OCHA has verified another 41,304 newly displaced: 4,458 in Rwanda camp; 10,886 in Shagra A, B, C, Behir, and Um Hajeleea towns; 4,587 in Tawila town; 1,645 in Kino and Midasis villages; 4,000 in Guido town; 6,189 in Argo camp; 418 in Dali camp; 7,450 in Um Baru UNAMID site; 1,031 in Majdocb town; and 624 in Nifasha camp (OCHA, 22/02/2015).

South Darfur: 105,000 IDPs (OCHA, 31/12/2014). 736 villages were destroyed December 2013–April 2014 (DRA cited by local media 16/07/2014).

Central Darfur: 74,000 verified IDPs as of 2015; 68,000 IDPs; 5,000 returnees in 2014 (OCHA 31/12/2014). 778 villages were destroyed December 2013–April 2014 (DRA cited by local media 16/07/2014). 6,200 people also Golo, Jebel Marra arrived in Guilo town and Hassahasa IDP camp in March, according to aid agencies (OCHA, 23/03/2015).


West Darfur: 1,300 IDPs were reported by OCHA in December 2014, in stark contrast with an earlier local government figure of 373,000 (OCHA, 07/09/2014; DRA cited by local media 16/07/2014).

Blue Nile and South Kordofan: In South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, 378,000 people are estimated displaced in SPLM-N territory (OCHA, 03/02/2015). With no presence in the SPLM-N territory, the UN is unable to verify these figures (OCHA, 19/05/2014). Between November 2014 and mid-January 2015, 820 new displaced people from SPLM-N areas sought shelter in government-controlled areas of South Kordofan (OCHA, 22/01/2015). Between 9 and 18 March, an estimated 23,600 people fled fighting between SPLM-N and government troops and arrived in Al Abassi, Abu Jubaish and Rah Abu Jubaish and Rashad towns as well as surrounding villages in South Kordofan State, according to the Government of Sudan’s Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). Almost 60 per cent of these new internally displaced people (IDPs) are women and children under the age of five. An estimated 19,000 of the total 23,600 newly displaced were in Al Abassi and Abu Jubaish localities (OCHA, 23/03/2015).

According to the HAC in South Kordofan, a large but unknown number of displaced people are expected to arrive in Kadugli, Al Abassi, Rashad, Talodi, and Gadier localities from areas controlled by SPLM-N (08/01/2015). In mid-March, NGOs in Blue Nile reported that 900 people had been displaced from Derag village in Bau locality, fleeing fighting between government forces and SPLM-N in the area. 480 displaced people arrived in Azaza and Algary village in El Roseires locality, 120 in Ed Damazine town and 300 in Bulang village in Kurmuk locality (OCHA, 15/03/2015).

West Kordofan: More than 52,000 people were reported displaced in September (OCHA, 21/09/2014).

Abyei: According to an inter-agency mission, nearly 1,700 people have fled Marialahak village following attacks by armed Misseriya. An additional 1,000 residents of Rumanier fled to other areas south of the Kiir river.

Refugees in Sudan

As of 23 March 2015, more than 127,000 South Sudanese nationals had arrived in Sudan since 15 December 2013. Between 8 and 19 March only, more than 5,000 refugees arrived from Upper Nile state, South Sudan, fleeing fighting between government and opposition forces (UNHCR, 19/03/2015).

An estimated 71,000 refugees live in White Nile, 32,000 in Khartoum, 14,000 in South Kordofan, 3,800 in West Kordofan, and 3,600 in Blue Nile (UNHCR, 19/02/2015; 14/03/2015). 66% (85,240) are children (UNICEF, 02/2015). 91% of households are female-headed (UNHCR, 29/01/2015).

All sites in White Nile state are currently beyond capacity. Access for aid workers is a concern (ECHO, 23/09/2014).

An estimated 347,000 people of South Sudanese origin are in Sudan (OCHA, 30/04/2014). 6,800 displaced South Sudanese are living in the disputed area of Abyei (OCHA, 17/12/2014).

As of 1 June 2014, Sudan was hosting 157,000 refugees, mainly from Eritrea, with smaller numbers from Chad, Ethiopia, and Somalia, according to UNHCR figures. As of 8 February, UNHCR reported 2,270 CAR refugees in Nyala, South Darfur. They will be relocated to Um Shalaya refugee camp in Central Darfur (OCHA, 08/02/2014).

Returnees

Over 9,300 Sudanese have returned from CAR to Um Dafug town, South Darfur (OCHA, 15/02/2015). An estimated 3,000 people had spontaneously returned to the Kereinik and Beida localities, West Darfur, by mid-February, according to the HAC (OCHA, 15/02/2015).

Sudanese Refugees in Other Countries

As of January 2015, OCHA reported 367,000 Sudanese refugees in Chad, 233,000 in South Sudan, 35,000 in Ethiopia, and 1,880 in Central African Republic (UNHCR, 23/02/2015; OCHA, 03/02/2015).

10,000 refugees from South Kordofan are reported to have fled to South Sudan (Yida, in Unity state) since 23 December 2014. At 500 people a week, the rate of arrival is double that of the same time period in 2013 (UNCHR, 30/01/2015).

Food Security

Despite improved food security conditions, acute food insecurity persists among 3.5 million IDPs and host communities in conflict-affected areas. An estimated 20–30% of IDPs in Darfur are expected to remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through June 2015 (FEWSNET, 01/02/2014). An estimated 25–30% of IDPs in SPLM-N-controlled areas of
South Kordofan will remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) (FEWSNET, 03/2014). Hundreds of families in Graida, South Darfur, are facing food shortages after clashes between Falata and Massalit tribes destroyed more than 165 homes (local media, 22/02/2015).

Food availability has otherwise improved. Harvests in North and West Darfur are above-average due to good rains and increased cultivation in some areas. The preliminary findings of the joint Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) estimates that 2014/15 national production will be 50% above the five-year average (FEWSNET, 12/2014).

**Health and Nutrition**

The UN estimated in mid-December 2013 that 165,000 children in SPLM-N-controlled parts of South Kordofan and Blue Nile do not have access to basic health services. There are indications that the health situation in Darfur is deteriorating; many have no access to healthcare.

**Measles**

More than 800 confirmed measles cases and 11 deaths have been reported in 12 states, the majority in Gedaref and Kassala states (OCHA, 15/03/2015).

More than 100 cases of measles have been reported by the three health centres in Otash IDP camp, South Darfur (local media, 02/03/2015).

**Nutrition**

Two million children under five were acutely malnourished as of 30 September 2014, an upward revision from 1.4 million at the beginning of August (OCHA, 15/10/2014). An estimated 500,000 were severely malnourished in 2014 (OCHA, 24/08/2014).

On 27 February, the Federal Ministry of Health acknowledged that children in Sudan suffer from iodine deficiency. The Ministry estimated the deficit to be on average 22% across the country, and 86% in Darfur and 78% in White Nile (local media, 27/02/2014).

**WASH**

A severe shortage of drinking water was reported in February after two wells were damaged in Tabit, Tawila locality, North Darfur (local media, 09/02/2015). According to an inter-agency mission, significant water supply problems were reported in North Darfur’s Tawila locality, particularly in Argo camp. 14 of 40 water sources in Tawila locality were contaminated with bacteria (OCHA, 01/03/2015).

Drinking water crises have also been reported in Kereinik locality, West Darfur and El Jeer district, Nyala, South Darfur (local media, 22/02/2015).

According to the HAC, there is a severe water shortage in South Kordofan’s Abu Kershola locality, after eight hand pumps broke down (OCHA, 01/03/2015).

**Education**

In White Nile state, poor incentives for community teachers interrupt refugees’ education. Many classrooms are occupied by refugees (UNHCR, 14/11/2014). Overcrowding remains a concern in relocation sites (UNHCR, 05/12/2014).

According to local media in July 2014, insecurity in Darfur is affecting the supply of teaching staff, with thousands of teachers in Nyala requesting transfers.

**Protection**

**Mines and ERW**

250 locations covering an estimated 32km² are contaminated by mines and ERW, with the greatest concentrations in Kassala, Gedaref, Red Sea, Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and Darfur (UNMAS). South Kordofan is the most heavily mined area of Sudan, according to the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor.

**Sexual and Gender-based Violence**

Rape of IDPs by pro-government militia was frequently reported by the local media in North, South, and Central Darfur and Jebel Marra in 2014. Reports in early November suggested that more than 200 women and girls had been raped by Sudanese soldiers in Tabit area in North Darfur. Sudanese troops denied UNAMID access to assess the situation (Reuters, 17/11/2014).

**Legal Status**

As of March 2014, the Sudanese Government refuses to recognise South Sudanese nationals as refugees and instead considers them to be Sudanese citizens (UNHCR, 03/04/2014). All foreigners in Sudan had to register with the immigration administration by 1 April. UNHCR has declared this constitutes an obstacle to humanitarian assistance.

**Updated: 30/03/2014**

**CAMEROON** **FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC, DISPLACEMENT**

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

**20 March:** 16 people, including a mayor and other local government officials, were kidnapped in the Far North Region, allegedly by CAR militants (VoA, 21/03/2015; Reuters, 20/03/2015).

**KEY CONCERNS**

- 2.1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 17/12/2014).
- 295,000 refugees have arrived from CAR and Nigeria (OCHA, 10/03/2015).
- An estimated 1.08 million people are food insecure in 2015 (OCHA, 10/03/2015).
Overview

Conflict in both Nigeria and CAR continues to displace vulnerable refugees to Cameroon, and the spillover from the Boko Haram conflict in Nigeria in particular threatens security in Cameroon. Some 2.1 million people, 10% of the population, are in need of humanitarian assistance, primarily in the Far North, North, Adamawa, and East regions.

Security Context

Boko Haram Attacks

The armed Islamist group Boko Haram (BH), based in Nigeria, has intensified attacks in neighbouring Cameroon since the end of December (ECHO, 06/01/2015). The number of security incidents increased drastically between 2013 and 2014, as BH targeted villages with more sophisticated weapons taken from the Nigerian army (UNICEF, 08/2014). While attacks are still concentrated in the Far North region, they have spread southward. BH began its campaign of armed violence in northeastern Nigeria in 2009.

In mid-December, hundreds of BH had crossed into Far North region from Lake Chad, ransacking towns and villages and stealing livestock. BH also attacked military vehicles in Amchide (Reuters, 18/12/2014; VoA, 13/12/2014). At the end of December, BH sent up to 1,000 fighters into Cameroon. They took control of the military base in Achigachia and five villages in the Far North region, prompting Cameroon’s first airstrike against BH (BBC, 29/12/2014). BH carried out a cross-border raid on a military base in the northern town of Kolofata on 12 January (Daily Mail, 14/01/2015).

Hundreds were killed in fighting in October and November. In early December, following reports of increasing recruitment of Cameroonian youth into BH, Cameroon announced it will recruit 20,000 more defense and security forces to fight the militants (VoA, 02/12/2014). The United States has announced it will supply equipment and logistics training to the Cameroonian military to aid the campaign (VoA, 12/12/2014). The Chadian Government has also pledged to support Cameroon in fighting BH (Daily Mail, 14/01/2015).

Recent Incidents

On 19 and 21 February, Boko Haram attacked Irba village, Mayo Tsanaga department, and Tokomari village, Mayo Sava department (UNHCR, 22/02/2015).

20 passengers were kidnapped from a bus in the Far North region on 8 February (BBC, 09/02/2015). On 4 February, an attack on Fotokol left 70 civilians dead and infrastructure burned (AFP, 04/02/2015). Ten people were killed by Boko Haram in Achigachia between 27 and 28 January (AFP, 29/01/2015). At least 80 people were kidnapped and three killed in a cross-border raid on 18 January, with 24 hostages subsequently freed. The raid was in response to Chad’s troop deployment to combat BH (Al Jazeera, 19/01/2015). On 11 January, at least 143 BH fighters were killed during an attack on a military camp in Cameroon (Reuters, 13/01/2015). On 3 January, Boko Haram attacked a bus in the department of Logone-et-Chari, killing at least 11 people and injuring ten (VOA, 03/01/2015).

16 people, including a mayor and local government officials, were kidnapped in Garoua-Boulai, Far North Region, and taken into CAR. This was allegedly carried out by CAR militants (VoA, 21/03/2015; Reuters, 20/03/2015).

The Cameroonian Government is refuting allegations by a regional human rights organisation that it is treating suspected BH fighters inhumanely, which emerged following the death of 25 prisoners in December (Reuters, 13/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

2.1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 17/12/2014).

Access

The limited number of humanitarian actors involved in the response in the Far North has made comprehensive humanitarian intervention almost impossible.

Logistical Constraints

The delivery of aid is complicated by the low presence of humanitarian actors in Cameroon (OCHA, 17/12/2014).

Bad road conditions delay the provision of assistance.

Security Constraints

The deterioration of the security situation has made access to the Far North extremely difficult. UN agencies have only been undertaking priority activities such as assisting refugees and some host communities, according to WFP (IRIN, 15/08/2014). Organisations like UNHCR do not have access to certain localities where refugees are present, due to heightened insecurity (UNHCR, 25/01/2015).

Displacement

At March 2015, there were 428,000 displaced persons in Cameroon, including 311,000 IDPs in northern regions due to the spillover of the Nigerian conflict (OCHA, 14/01/2015; 10/03/2015; 24/03/2014). The number of IDPs has almost doubled from the 60,000 recorded on 10 February (OCHA, 10/02/2015). As attacks increase, people are moving toward central Cameroon (OCHA, 06/01/2015).

Refugees from the Central African Republic

As of March, 245,000 CAR refugees are in Cameroon: 138,400 have arrived since December 2013 (OCHA, 24/03/2015; 30/01/2015; UNHCR, 13/03/2015). But the border is open and extensive, and there are refugees who cross without being registered. In January 2015, it was reported that the influx of CAR refugees has dropped from 10,000 per week to 8,000. The reduced flow of refugees indicates an improved situation in CAR, but many...
Refugees are reluctant to go home because they are concerned about food security and livelihoods (VoA, 16/03/2015).

In most locations, the number of refugees and third-country nationals exceeds the local population. Host communities and refugees are competing over already inadequate resources and living conditions have become very difficult for host communities (FAO, 11/12/2014).

2,000 CAR refugees were reported in Gbiti, a border town, but due to access difficulties, only 215 have been registered (UNHCR, 20/02/2015). 600 people fled to Gbiti, eastern Cameroon, due to ex-Seleka attacks on 29 January (OCHA, 03/02/2015).

Refugees from Nigeria

66,000 Nigerians are estimated to have fled to northern Cameroon since May 2013 (UNHCR, 22/02/2015; OCHA, 10/03/2015). Between 28 February and 1 March, 16,000 new Nigerian refugees arrived due to BH attacks and are now awaiting relocation to Minawao camp (ECHO, 05/03/2015). The number of pre-registered refugees doubled from 20,000 to 40,000 in just 21 days in February (UNHCR, 22/01/2015; 25/01/2015; VoA, 23/02/2015).

32,600 refugees have been registered in Minawao camp, in the Far North region (UNHCR, 25/01/2015; 01/02/2015; 28/02/2015). The camp’s maximum capacity is 15,000, and the population was only 6,000 in August 2014. The rapid growth in population has put health and education services under severe strain, with water use restricted to 6.6 L/person/day (UNHCR cited by IRIN 06/10/2014; AFP, 15/11/2014; FAO, 05/11/2014; UNHCR, 25/01/2015; VoA, 23/02/2015). The needs among refugees are largely WASH, health, and nutrition-related (UNHCR, 22/02/2015).

People living outside the camp do not receive humanitarian assistance and lack of identification is a concern.

Returnees and Third-Country Nationals

At least 17,500 third-country nationals are currently living in Garoua Boulai and Kentzou transit sites, or in host communities (UNHCR, 07/2014 and IOM, 25/07/2014; 19/02/2015).

Food Security

As of March, 1.08 million people are food insecure, mostly in the Far North, North, Adamawa and East regions, with 244,000 in severe food insecurity (OCHA, 10/03/2015; 17/12/2014; 30/01/2015). 54% of households in the Far North and North regions face shortages. An estimated 34.4% of refugee households from CAR are food insecure (FAO, 11/12/2014).

70% of farmers in the Far North region have deserted their farms during the last six months and missed out on planting (AFP, 28/01/2015). Dryness in the Sahel belt and the strain of hosting so many refugees are also affecting food security (ECHO, 06/11/2015).

20.4 million people in the Sahel (Burkina Faso, north Cameroon, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, north Nigeria, and Senegal) are expected to suffer from food insecurity in 2015 (OCHA, 10/02/2015). Food insecurity affected 24.7 million people in 2014, compared to 11.3 million in 2013 (OCHA, 03/02/2014).

Health and Nutrition

As of September 2014, 6.8 million people are in need of health services (IOM, 09/2014).

Cameroon’s Far North, North, Adamawa, and East regions suffer chronic shortages of health workers. The concentration of health staff in wealthier areas leaves around 40% of Cameroonians without access to healthcare. 46% of health centres do not have access to electricity and 70% do not have piped water (Inter Press Service, 19/08/2014).

Acute respiratory infections and malaria are the leading causes of death in refugee camps (UNHCR, 01/03/2015).

CAR refugees mostly suffer from malnutrition, malaria, and respiratory infections, according to an ECHO needs assessment. A number of measles cases have been reported among child refugees.

Cholera

In 2014, 3,400 cases of cholera and 178 deaths were reported, compared to 29 cases in 2013 (UNICEF, 24/12/2014; OCHA, 30/01/2015). The outbreak is concentrated in the north (IFRC, 20/10/2014).

Measles

Approximately 800 measles cases were reported in 2014 (OCHA, 30/01/2015).

Nutrition

There were 40% more cases of severe malnutrition in January 2015 compared to the start of 2014 (OCHA, 30/01/2015). There were 54,000 cases of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) among children under five in 2014, most in Far North, North, Adamawa, and East regions. There were 132,000 cases of moderate acute malnutrition (OCHA, 30/01/2015; UNICEF, 08/2014).

WASH

As of September, two million people were in need of WASH (IOM, 09/2014). Regions affected by the CAR refugee crisis have particularly poor access to drinking water (East: 54% and Adamawa: 70%) and basic sanitation (East: 22% and Adamawa: 64%) (UNICEF, 05/08/2014). The quantity of water provided per day to refugees remains at 6.5 litres in Minawao camp (UNHCR, 25/01/2015; 01/02/2015). The water supply in Gado and Mbile camps is below standards due to technical difficulties (UNHCR, 20/02/2015).

Education

At least 130 schools have been closed near the country’s northern border with Nigeria, according to the Government. In 2014, more than 200 trained teachers did not take up their posts in the Far North region (IRIN, 01/12/2014). Students are moving toward the country’s interior and the government is assisting in moving populations to more secure areas after
BH destroyed or occupied schools (VoA, 25/11/2014; 08/09/2014).

An assessment of the Far North recorded that 120 schools were forced to close for the school year 2014-2015 due to BH threats. 33,163 children were either left out of school or were forced to seek education in other communities (UNICEF, 28/02/2015). School attendance in camps remains low, 44% for primary and 66.9% for secondary school, despite education advocacy with parents (UNHCR, 01/03/2015).

Protection

Witnesses report that hundreds of young people are joining Boko Haram in the Far North region due to lack of access to education and employment. 6,000 troops have been sent to protect the region and prevent further recruitment of young men (IRIN, 05/03/2015).

Updated: 25/03/2015

CHAD FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

No significant developments this week, 18/03/2015. Last update 07/01/2015.

KEY CONCERNS

- 5.5 million affected by a humanitarian crisis, including 2.2 million children (UNICEF, 10/11/2014).
- 460,000 refugees in Chad, including 93,474 CAR refugees at November, 20,000 of whom have arrived since December 2013 (UNHCR, 02/11/2014; 19/12/2014).
- 2.4 million Chadians are food insecure (OCHA, 10/02/2015). 681,000 were considered to be severely food insecure during the lean season (OCHA, 28/01/2015).

Security Context

Regional Military Involvement

In January, the Chadian Government pledged to support the fight against Boko Haram (Daily Mail, 14/01/2015). Between 31 January and 2 February, Chadian forces aided Nigerian security forces to reclaim several towns in Borno state (AP, 03/02/2015; VoA, 01/02/2015). On 8 February, Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad and Benin agreed to send a joint force of 8,700 troops to fight Boko Haram (10/02/2015). On 8 February, Chad and Niger launched a joint army operation against Boko Haram militants in Nigeria (Reuters, 08/03/2015). Ten Chadian soldiers died and 30 Chadian and Nigerian soldiers were wounded taking control of two towns in northern Nigeria, Malam Fatori and Damsak, (Reuters, 09/03/2015). On 12 March, Chadian troops fighting BH withdrew to Cameroon and redeployed further south (Reuters, 12/03/2015).

Chad withdrew its troops from the African Union Peacekeeping Force in CAR in April 2014, after accusations of violence against civilians. Chad denies the charges.

International Presence in Chad

In August, France deployed a 3,000-strong counterterrorism operation across the Sahel region based in Chad. Operation Barkhane is active in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger (local media, 01/08/2014).

Boko Haram Attacks

Boko Haram launched its first attack in Chad in February, killing at least ten and burning Ngouboua, by Lake Chad, where some 7,000 Nigerians have taken refuge (Aljazeera, 14/02/2015). From 28 February to 1 March, Boko Haram attacked Kaga village, Lake Chad region, targeting Chadian soldiers (ECHO, 03/03/2015). On 15 March, BH attacked Djargagoroum village, in the Lake Chad region, killing one person and burning two houses (Reuters, 12/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

5.5 million people are affected by humanitarian crisis, including 2.2 million children; 3.2 million need humanitarian assistance (UNICEF, 10/11/2014; OCHA, 31/08/2014; 28/01/2015).

Access

Chad’s President Idriss Déby announced in May that the southern border with CAR would be closed to all except Chadian citizens until the CAR crisis is resolved. Concerns over reports of refusal of refugee entry have been raised. The Government deployed additional security forces to the border, after expressing concern that armed fighters might be infiltrating refugee populations in the area.

Two main roads in Chad, which run through Cameroon and Nigeria and are vital to Chad’s economy, remain insecure and mostly blocked due to violence (AFP, 02/03/2015).

Displacement

IDPs

Nearly 90,000 IDPs are living in protracted displacement in the east, facing difficulties accessing shelter, land, and income-generating activities (OCHA, 19/11/2013). The arrival of CAR refugees since December 2013 is further increasing competition for scarce resources (IDMC, 24/10/2014).

Following the 13 February attacks by BH on Ngouboua, approximately 5,000 Chadian IDPs moved toward Baga-Sola (OCHA, 21/02/2015). There are an estimated 14,500 IDPs in the Lake Region (OCHA, 21/02/2015; UNICEF, 20/03/2015).

Refugees

As of 10 February, Chad hosts 515,000 refugees from Sudan, CAR, Nigeria, and DRC (OCHA, 10/02/2015). Of those, 367,200 are Sudanese (OCHA, 31/01/2015), 93,500 are
Most refugees are in Wadi Fira (157,500), Ouaddai (114,350), Sila (84,650), and Logone Oriental (47,500), while 22,750 are in Dosseye camp, and 26,420 in Belom camp, Moyen Chari, and 4,300 in Dar es Salam camp in the Lake region (UNHCR, 28/02/2015; OCHA, 02/11/2014; OCHA, 20/03/2015; WFP, 06/03/2015).

1,300 people have been displaced to Mayo-Kebbi East region, fleeing BH violence in Nigeria: 527 Nigerians, 553 Cameroonians, and 232 Chadian returnees (ECHO, 27/02/2015). Two missions in February of Mayo-Kebbi East region counted 2,000 Nigerian refugees, 552 Cameroonians and 590 Chadian returnees in five localities in need of food and healthcare (UNHCR, 28/02/2015).

**Nigerian Refugees**

The Chadian Prime Minister has appealed for international aid for Nigerian refugees (Reuters, 08/01/2015). At 10 March, 27,000 Nigerian refugees had entered Chad since 3 January (OCHA, 18/03/2015; 21/02/2015; UNHCR, 28/02/2015). Some 6,900 remain stranded on small islands on Lake Chad, where they are living with host communities (OCHA, 21/02/2015). Resources are limited for both refugees and host communities, especially food, shelter, and essential household items (OCHA, 12/01/2015). At least 37,000 people in host communities are affected by the influx of refugees (OCHA, 19/01/2015). There are still almost 7,000 people stranded on islands around the Lake region awaiting assistance (OCHA, 21/02/2015).

**Returnees**

There are approximately 257,000 returnees in Chad, including 130,000 from CAR and 100,000 Chadian migrants returning from Libya (OCHA, 10/02/2015; 31/12/2014). A recent assessment estimated 57,800 returnees residing in Maingama, Sido, Kobikey, Danamadja, Djako and Gaoui (IOM, 02/03/2015). There are 8,500 Chadian returnees from Nigeria in Lake region (OCHA, 21/02/2015).

**Returnees from CAR**

As of February, there are 113,500 returnees from CAR (IOM, 16/02/2015). Although the Chad–CAR border remains officially closed, people continue to arrive at a number of points and are in a very vulnerable condition (UNHCR, 07/2014). 92% of arrivals lack any form of identity documentation (OCHA, 16/07/2014).

Returnees in the southeast – 7,000 have been identified in Salamat – are less targeted by humanitarian assistance and have little means of subsistence (ICRC, 19/11/2014).

90% of evacuees are in camps (OCHA, 15/10/2014). The Government has increased the maximum stay in transit centres from ten days to one year to allow the restoration of family links and better prepare relocation (OCHA, 30/09/2014).

The situation in southern transit sites is critical.

The IOM estimates 6,677 people are at the Kobitey transit site (OCHA, 06/03/2015). Urgent humanitarian needs have been reported in all sectors (OCHA, 15/10/2014).

The intention is to relocate people from Sido and Doyaba to Maingama, a temporary camp in Moyen Chari; however, Maingama does not have sufficient shelter and WASH capacity to host the entire population of Doyaba and Sido sites (IOM, 16/02/2015). As of 1 January, 12,600 returnees, third-country nationals and CAR refugees had been transferred from Doyaba and Sido to Maingama (IOM, 05/01/2015). Some 17,400 returnees remain in Sido transit site as of February 2015 (IOM, 16/02/2015). According to the IOM, there are 15,207 people at Maingama (OCHA, 06/03/2015). Work is under way to increase the hosting capacity at Maingama to 30,000 (OCHA, 30/09/2014).

DANAMADJA temporary site, in LOGONE ORIENTAL, has reached its current maximum capacity with over 11,000 inhabitants, although only 40% of the camp is completed (OCHA, 16/02/2014).

**Host communities**

Over 25,000 people who entered Chad since the CAR crisis are living in small villages and remote communities throughout the south, including 22 villages in Mandoul and Logone Oriental hosting around 15,000 returnees (OCHA, 30/09/2014). Pressure on resources is high and conditions are poor, with urgent need for shelter, food, health, WASH and livelihood support. 3,480 CAR arrivals in Bethel, Logone Oriental region have increased the population by five times, putting pressure on access to water, education, and shelter (UNHCR, 30/11/2014).

**Food Security**

2.4 million people in Chad are food insecure (OCHA, 10/02/2015).

Between January and March 2015, poor households will depend on market purchases and reduced food consumption, resulting in Stressed food security conditions (IPC Phase 2) (FEWSNET, 31/01/2015). In Kanem, Bahr El Ghazal, Guera and Sila, food stocks are low. People in the Lake Chad region may face higher food insecurity if they do not receive humanitarian assistance (FEWSNET, 03/2015).

Due to the closure of the border and the influx population influx, the price of food in some communities has increased by 50% (OCHA, 21/02/2015).

Refugees and returnees are putting pressure on household demand, consumption, and spending in Logone Oriental, Moyen Chari, Mandoul, and Salamat (WFP, 07/2014).

**Regional Outlook: Sahel**

20.4 million people in the Sahel are expected to suffer from food insecurity in 2015 (10/01/2015). In 2014, food insecurity rose dramatically, affecting 24.7 million people, compared to 2013, when 11.3 million people had inadequate food (OCHA, 03/02/2015).

**Health and Nutrition**

2.5 million people are in need of healthcare (OCHA, 31/08/2014).
Only 34% of children under one have been vaccinated in returnee sites in eastern Chad (UNICEF, 10/11/2014).

Due to the influx of refugees, there is an urgent need to strengthen healthcare activities in host communities and to recruit more qualified medical personnel (UNHCR, 06/03/2015).

**Cholera**

In 2014, 172 cases of cholera were reported (OCHA, 17/12/2014), including two deaths, compared to two cases in 2013 (UNICEF, 10/12/2014).

**Nutrition**

97,000 children suffer from SAM while 257,000 suffer from MAM, a slight fall in the numbers reported in October 2014 (OCHA, 10/02/2015). In September, Kanem, Bahr El Ghazel, Gera, and Wadi Fira all reported GAM above the emergency threshold of 15% (OCHA, 19/09/2014).

**WASH**

1.3 million people are in need of WASH assistance: only 50% of the population has access to safe water and 12% to adequate sanitation (OCHA, 31/08/2014; 31/12/2014). Additionally only 4% of households and 50% of health centres have access to standard sanitation facilities (OCHA, 31/12/2014).

Water levels are running low at Dar es Salam site as more refugees arrive on a daily basis (WFP, 06/03/2015).

**Education**

Access to primary and secondary education is a need in Danamadja, Kobiteye, and Djako sites (OCHA, 31/10/2014).

An assessment on child refugees from Nigeria showed that 72% of the 296 school-aged children identified had never been to school (OCHA, 21/02/2015; 20/03/2015).

**Protection**

**Child Protection**

Family reunification is a major protection challenge (OCHA, 25/10/2014). Over 600 unaccompanied minors and separated children and 44 children associated with armed groups were reported among the CAR returnee population between December 2013 and August 2014, according to UNICEF (OCHA, 31/08/2014). Only 59% of identified unaccompanied and separated children had been reunited with their families as of mid-November (UNICEF, 10/11/2014).

**Legal Status**

Second and third-generation Chadians from CAR have been recognised as de facto nationals by the Government, and UNHCR is working with authorities to formalise recognition and avoid statelessness. The Government will provide birth certificates to every child born in a transit site (UNHCR, 07/2014).

Updated: 24/03/2015

**DJIBOUTI**

**DROUGHT, FOOD INSECURITY**

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

No new significant developments this week, 25/03/2015. Last update: 10/02/2015.

**KEY CONCERNS**

An estimated 300,000 people need humanitarian assistance, including more than 24,000 refugees (ECHO, 01/08/2014; OCHA, 30/11/2014)

**Security Context**

Djibouti plays a significant role in international efforts to combat piracy in the region and restore peace in Somalia. This has led to sporadic reprisal attacks in the past (UNHCR).

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

Stress on rural livelihoods has triggered movement from rural to peri-urban areas of the capital, putting pressure on the delivery of basic services (UN, 12/06/2014).

**Access**

A lack of access due to insecurity, on top of reductions in assistance, has placed Obock in a particularly precarious situation (FEWSNET, 25/08/2014).

**Displacement**

Migrants

IOM estimates that over 100,000 migrants transit the country every year, heading towards Yemen. Almost 90% are Ethiopian; the rest are usually Somali. Children account for 32% of the migrant population (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).

Migrants arrive in dire conditions and vulnerable to a number of protection issues. A large number need medical assistance, which strains health facilities in Dikhil, Tadjourah, and Obock (IOM, 21/11/2014). Migrants/refugees continue to report lack of access to food and water during their transit through Obock (UNHCR, 12/2014).

A UNICEF report indicated that thousands of families displaced by drought live in illegal settlements, without basic water or sanitation facilities (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).
24,362 refugees, the majority of Somali origin, are registered in Djibouti (OCHA, 01/01/2015). 70% are women and children who depend entirely on humanitarian assistance and protection services (UNICEF, 15/01/2015). There are also 4,220 asylum-seekers, 3,275 of whom are from Ethiopia. They reside in two camps: Holl Holl and Ali Addeh (UNHCR, 31/12/2014; OCHA, 01/01/2015).

**Food Security**

14.5% of households in the country are food insecure and 32% are vulnerable to food insecurity. 14,200 people are in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis), while 56,000 are in IPC Phase 2 (Stressed). The region with the highest food insecurity rate is Obock (58%), followed by Dhiulil (42%), Arta (33%), Tadjourah (26%), and Ali Sabieh (24%) (WFP, 13/01/2015).

Due to below-average rainfall throughout 2014, rural populations in the Southeast Pastoral Border, Northwest Pastoral, and Central Pastoral zones are expected to be in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) acute food insecurity through June 2015 (FEWSNET, 31/01/2015).

**WASH**

In rural areas, one in five people need to walk over half an hour to reach a water source (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).

**Health and Nutrition**

In 2014, OCHA reported that 300,000 people are in need of healthcare services. Rates of communicable diseases are high, including diarrhoeal disease.

**Nutrition**

According to OCHA, 277,000 people are in need of nutritional aid, compared to 195,400 in 2013. A food security survey conducted in November 2014 indicated that the more food insecure are suffering from malnutrition, acute diarrhoea, and other diseases (GIEWS, 11/11/2014). In Obock region, acute malnutrition rates have increased from 25.7% in 2014 to 29.9% (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).

**Education**

As of January 2015, 41.6% of girls and 33.3% of boys aged 6–10 are out of school (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).

**Protection**

In 2014, 241 migrants were reported dead or missing, compared to 15 in 2013 (IOM, UNHCR, 21/11/2014). Migrants/refugees are exposed to theft and detention during transit (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat, 31/05/2014).

Reviewed: 25/03/2014

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**ETHIOPIA  FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY**

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

15 March: Water availability is very low, reducing livestock production and productivity in Borena, in southern Oromia (FEWSNET).

**KEY CONCERNS**

- 2.9 million will require food assistance in 2015. The most affected regions are Oromia, Somali, Amhara, Tigray, and Afar (OCHA, 09/03/2015).
- 1.2 million people are in need of improved access to safe water and water sources (UNICEF, 31/10/2014).
- There are 676,060 refugees, mainly from Somalia and South Sudan (UNCHR, 28/02/2015).
- A majority of refugee camps have reached full capacity. Main concerns include overcrowding, malnutrition, flooding and critical shortfalls in humanitarian aid.
- 264,500 SAM cases were reported in March; 446,800 pregnant and breastfeeding women need nutrition interventions (OCHA, 15/03/2015).

**Political Context**

Ethiopia is considered comparatively stable, but deep clan tensions and intra-communal violence persist. Two decades of deadly conflict in the southeastern region of Ogaden have had a severe impact on the Ethiopian Somali population, especially after years of a relatively successful government counter-insurgency campaign. The Government has yet to address the root causes of the violence.

However, weak political opposition, and the Government’s determination to accelerate economic growth all make continued stability likely.

Elections are scheduled for May 2015 (Amnesty International, 22/09/2014). In September, Amnesty International reported violations of civil and political rights. In January 2015, opposition parties reported roadblocks obstructing their efforts to register for the elections (VOA, 14/01/2015).

**Security Context**

**Participation in Regional Military Operations**

Ethiopia has historically been a key player in peacekeeping and counter-terrorism operations in East Africa. Peace talks on the South Sudan conflict, under the mediation of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, are taking place in Addis Ababa. In 2014, Addis also hosted peace talks over conflict in Sudan.

In January 2014, the Government pledged that Ethiopian troops, currently part of the
African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) would remain in Somalia until durable peace and security is achieved. The Somali militant group Al Shabaab has repeatedly threatened Ethiopia since Ethiopian troops arrived in Somalia. On 13 October 2013, a bomb blast killed two people in Addis Ababa. There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

**Access**

South Sudanese refugees are arriving only through Pagak and Akobo, as reception centres in Matar and Pamdong have been closed (IOM, 07/01/2015).

**Displacement**

**IDPs**

As of 11 February 2015, Ethiopia had 495,680 IDPs (IOM through OCHA, 11/02/2015), who mostly live in Sumale (USAID, 2014). About 60% of IDPs represent protracted displacement cases (OCHA, 2014).

**Refugees in Ethiopia**

As of 28 February, 202,665 South Sudanese refugees have entered Ethiopia since December 2013. 91% are women and children, 67% children (UNHCR, 24/03/2015). They are arriving in a critical nutritional condition (UNHCR, 28/02/2014). The majority come from Upper Nile state and are predominantly from Gajaak, Gajok, and Luo-Nuer tribes (UNHCR, 03/07/2014). 57,800 South Sudanese refugees were in Ethiopia before December 2013 (UNHCR, 12/02/2015).

**South Sudanese Refugees**

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Matar reception centre has been closed, and Leitchuor and Nip Nip camps were so damaged by flooding in 2014 they are not suitable for the settlement of refugees. Relocation to Pugnido camp is ongoing: so far 9,000 refugees have been relocated (WFP, 20/02/2015). Pugnido is now hosting 54,800 refugees (UNHCR, 28/02/2015). Refugees from Leitchuor and Nip Nip are also being relocated to Jewi, a new camp near Gambella, which will have a capacity of 50,000 (OCHA, 16/03/2015). The first group of 377 refugees had been relocated by 16 March (UNHCR, 17/03/2015). Other refugees have self-relocated in different parts of Nyinyang and along the Nip Nip–Jakawo corridor and Gambella–Matar highway (UNICEF, 15/08/2014; UNHCR, 10/11/2014). As of January, 2015, the other two sites, Kobe, with a capacity of 50,000, and Cholan, with a capacity of 20,000, have been identified and approved for development as refugee camps (UNHCR, 09/01/2015, 15/01/2015). 32,668 refugees are living within host communities (UNHCR, 24/03/2015).

**Eritrea**

As of February 2015, Ethiopia hosts 129,816 Eritrean refugees; including 33,000 new arrivals in 2014 (OCHA, 28/02/2015; UNHCR, 09/02/2015). There was a spike in daily arrivals in the last quarter of 2014: about 5,000 refugees, mainly from Asmara, arrived in October, and an additional 3,588 in November (OCHA, 24/11/2014). New arrivals are transferred to Hitsat camp, which now hosts 27,560 people (OCHA, 24/11/2014). The recent spike has led to a shortage of health services, shelter, and core relief items. UNHCR has highlighted that the large number of unaccompanied minors is cause for grave protection concern (OCHA, 26/01/2015).

**Somalia**

As of February 2015, there are 244,422 Somali refugees in Ethiopia. 4,621 arrived in 2014 (UNHCR, 28/02/2015).

**Sudan**

As of February 2015, there are 36,102 Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia (UNHCR, 28/02/2015).

**Ethiopian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries**

As of 1 January, 2015 there are 3,275 Ethiopian refugees in Djibouti (UNHCR, 31/01/2015). As of 1 March, there are 30,509 Ethiopian refugees in Kenya (UNHCR, 01/03/2015).

**Food Security**

An estimated 2.9 million people will require food assistance in 2015, including 381,000 people in need of assistance before the next belg season, in March and April (Government, 31/01/2015). The most affected regions are Oromia, Somali, Amhara, Tigray, and Afar (OCHA, 15/03/2015; 09/03/2015). The food security situation has worsened in belg/gu/ganna/sugum rain-receiving areas in the lowlands of Adar, Oromia, and Somali regions, as the dry season reaches its peak. Belg rains (from February to May) have been delayed, which coupled with a forecast of below-average season rainfall performance will impact planting, as well as water and pasture availability (OCHA, 15/02/2015). Poor households in northeastern Afar and in the lowlands of Borena zone in Oromia to remain in IPC Phase 3 until June. In Southern Afar, food security is expected to decline from IPC Phase 2 to IPC Phase 3 from May to June (FEWSNET, 15/03/2015). In Borena, grazing land is drier than normal and much of it is overgrazed. Water availability is very low, reducing livestock production and productivity. The situation is expected to further decline with the forecasted blow average ganna rains (FEWSNET, 15/03/2015).

**Health and Nutrition**

Malaria remains the main public health concern in all refugee camps, followed by respiratory tract infections and diarrhoeal diseases (IFRC 30/12/2014). Monitoring in Gambella region in 2014 showed critical gaps in medical personnel and supplies, as well as funds for public health clusters (OCHA, 11/08/2014).

**Measles**

There were 13,301 confirmed cases of measles throughout 2014. Oromia, Amhara, and SNNP regions accounted for more than 80% of the total measles caseload. The measles
outbreaks have continued in 2015 (OCHA, 23/02/2015).

Nutrition

Malnutrition rates at the start of 2015 have decreased in comparison to previous months, except in woredas that received poor kiremt rains, in North Gonder and Washmira zones of Amhara region (OCHA, 16/02/2015). As of 15 March 264,500 SAM cases were reported in 2015 (OCHA, 15/03/2015). 446,800 pregnant and breastfeeding women need nutrition interventions (OCHA, 15/03/2015). 

As of January, GAM in Leitchuor, Kule, and Tierkidi refugee camps was 25.8%, 28%, and 30.3%, respectively; SAM rates were 5.7%, 7.8%, and 10%, respectively (UNHCR, 01/01/2015).

WASH

1.2 million people are in need of improved access to safe water and water sources (UNICEF, 31/10/2014). In Legahida and Salahad woredas of Nogob zone, in the Somali region, around 24,000 people require emergency water trucking (OCHA, 26/01/2015). Acute water shortages have also been reported in Deka Siftu woreda of Liben zone (OCHA, 23/02/2015). The ratio of latrines per person has improved in a majority of camps, although some are still higher than the UNHCR standard of 1:50: 1:38 in Tierkidi, 1:19 in Kule, 1:43 in Leitchuor and 1:6 in Okugo (UNHCR, 27/02/2015). Water supply per day has deteriorated: in Tierkidi it is 17.3L per person, 15.3L per person in Kule, 17.8L per person in Leitchuor, 15L per person in Pugnido, and 9L per person in NipNip. The only camp meeting the UNHCR standard of 20L per person is Okugo, with 24L per person (UNHCR, 01/03/2015).

Protection

As of 24 March 2015, 18,379 unaccompanied minors and separated children were identified among the refugee population (UNHCR, 24/03/2015).

In December women have been more susceptible to attacks and assaults outside Leitchuor refugee camp, as lack of firewood and cooking gas forces them to travel further in search of wood (UNHCR, 11/12/2014).

Vulnerable Groups and Minorities

The Kwegu, a small tribe in Ethiopia's Lower Omo Valley, are in need of humanitarian assistance due to the destruction of their land to make way for the Gibe III dam and associated large-scale irrigation. Reports indicate no consultation took place with the indigenous peoples in Lower Omo Valley about projects on their land, and some tribes were forcibly settled by the Government in a process called “villagisation” (Survival International, 10/03/2015).

Updated: 30/03/2015
Health and Nutrition

Around 290,000 people are in need of healthcare, over 15% of the population. The supply of essential drugs is low, as is laboratory capacity. Staff and equipment are not sufficient to meet even the most urgent needs (OCHA, 31/08/2014).

Nutrition

10,220 children are severely malnourished as of February 2015, an increase compared to 8,000 severely malnourished in mid-2014 (OCHA, 02/2015; 09/2014).

WASH

287,000 people are in need of WASH assistance. Inadequate access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation, and poor hygiene practices continue to be an issue. 20% of deaths among under-fives are WASH-related (OCHA, 31/08/2014).

Reviewed: 24/03/2015

GUINEA FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

21 March: 3,420 cumulative Ebola cases have been reported, including 2,261 deaths (WHO, 23/03/2015).

18 March: Recovered Ebola patients are not being accepted into their communities, despite awareness-raising (USAID).

KEY CONCERNS

- 24,842 cumulative reported cases across the region, including 10,299 deaths (WHO, 23/03/2015). The numbers of registered cases and deaths are largely inaccurate, underestimating the gravity of the situation on the ground.

- Between February and March 2015, 1.35 million (15%) of Guineas population is in phase 2 food insecurity, and 275,000 are in phase 3 (5%). These figures are expected to 1.5 million in phase 2 (20%) and 395,000 in phase 3 (5%) in the lean season between June and August 2015. (Cadre Harmonise, 01/03/2015).

- Resistance to the Ebola response remains high. The Red Cross says its staff in Guinea are attacked on average ten times per month (IFRC, 12/02/2015). A recent Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice study concluded that 75% of resistance stems from lack of information or misinformation, with some people doubting the sincerity of EVD-related messages, in part due to its resemblance to other diseases in Guinea. The interventions which most frequently trigger resistance are safe burials, disinfection of public places (schools), and contact tracing activities (USAID, 25/02/2015). The Prime Minister has announced measures against resistance, including prosecution of those who hide patients from medical teams or those who hold medical teams hostage (International media, 12/01/2015). On 17 February, 58 people were convicted of an attack on Ebola workers in January 2015 (UNMEER, 18/02/2015).

For more information on the Ebola crisis in West Africa, visit the ACAPS Ebola Needs Analysis Project page.

Political Context

Presidential elections are due in 2015, but in 2014 President Condé suggesting delaying them because of the Ebola crisis (International Crisis Group, 01/11/2014). The opposition held protest rallies in January, demanding electoral commission reform (International Crisis Group, 01/02/2015). On 24 February, the Government replaced the minister charged with organising this year's presidential election with an army general on 24 February, saying the move was necessary to strengthen the fight against Ebola (Reuters, 01/03/2015).

The Ebola response has increased tensions between President Condé’s ethnic group, the Malinke, who make up about 35% of the population, and the Fulani ethnic group, about 40% of the population (local media, 18/10/2014).

Security Context

Resistance to the Ebola response

Widespread reports of resistance to the Ebola response persist. The Red Cross said members of its staff in Guinea are attacked on average ten times per month (IFRC, 12/02/2015). A recent Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice study concluded that 75% of resistance stems from lack of information or misinformation, with some people doubting the sincerity of EVD-related messages, in part due to its resemblance to other diseases in Guinea. The interventions which most frequently trigger resistance are safe burials, disinfection of public places (schools), and contact tracing activities (USAID, 25/02/2015). The Prime Minister has announced measures against resistance, including prosecution of those who hide patients from medical teams or those who hold medical teams hostage (International media, 12/01/2015). On 17 February, 58 people were convicted of an attack on Ebola workers in January 2015 (UNMEER, 18/02/2015).

In Niala village in the sub-prefecture of Fanah, the community impeded an burial team (UNMEER, 09/03/2015).

In Conakry, a Red Cross volunteer was attacked in Dixinn commune while disinfecting a house after a suspected Ebola patient died, and a burial team was impeded by the community (IFRC, 06/03/2015; UNMEER, 02/03/2015). The arrest of a Guinean cleric who was charged with assaulting an Ebola health worker led to demonstrations in Conakry, where around 12 people were injured after clashes with police (AFP, 25/02/2015). Rumours of the Guinean Red Cross spraying schools to infect children with Ebola prompted community members to threaten its headquarters (IFRC, 20/02/2015).

In Faranah prefecture, MSF has reported several security incidents, including a vehicle set on fire and stones thrown at staff (international organisation, 04/03/2015). Students destroyed a transit centre (international media 15/02/2015).

In Kito, Boffa prefecture, resistance is rising as community sensitisation and epidemiologic investigations are taking place (WHO, 02/03/2015).

In Nzerekore region, contact tracers have received death threats in Diecke and Bignamou sub-prefectures, (UNMEER, 23/02/2015).
In January and February, several incidents of assault were reported in Forecariah, including the killing of two men accused of spreading Ebola (IFRC, 12/02/2015; international media, 20/01/2015; local media, 14/01/2015; UNMEER, 15/01/2015). There have been several incidents of violence associated with rumours about Red Cross vaccination programmes in schools (UNMEER, 23/02/2015). Claims of excessive use of force by the national army against the local population in Sinkine district, Forecariah prefecture, have been reported (local media, 18/01/2015).

In Bossou, Lola prefecture, a community transit centre was burned down (UNMEER, 07/01/2015).

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

**Access**

The larger size and population of Guinea compared to Liberia and Sierra Leone make the response more difficult (Washington Post, 13/03/2015). Poor road infrastructure means many communities outside the capital are inaccessible (OCHA, 16/09/2014). **Difficulty reaching children in remote areas is hampering a measles vaccination campaign in Gaoual and Koundara prefectures (UNICEF, 16/03/2015).** Community resistance, especially in Forecariah, also challenges relief activities, as the community does not want to receive support associated with the response to the Ebola epidemic (WFP, 13/02/2015).

**Food Security**

Between February and March 2015, 275,000 people (5% of the population) are in IPC Phase 3, or Crisis, food insecurity. These figures are expected to climb 395,000 in Phase 3 and 1.5 million in Phase 2 in the June–August lean season. (Cadre Harmonisé, 01/03/2015).

Almost 90% of the Ebola-driven food insecure live in rural areas (FEWSNET, 31/12/2014). Those who have not been able to harvest their crops, due to rupture of activities and containment measures related to the Ebola outbreak, have already entered the lean season (PI, 18/02/2015).

**Agriculture and Markets**

All agricultural sectors have been hit by the crisis. In the Forest region, Ebola-related fears have reduced the availability of agricultural labour, resulting in reduced yields. Overall, rice production is estimated to decline by 3.7%, with a relatively localised impact: most disruption will be in the Forest region (WFP, 05/01/2015). Based on commercial forecasts, Guinea has a rice import gap of about 44,000 metric tons, of an estimated 340,000 metric tons to be imported from October 2014 – September 2015 (WFP, 05/01/2015).

**Livelihoods**

Poverty is predicted to rise from 2.25% in 2014 to 7.9% in 2015 (UNDG, 11/03/2015). Difficulties marketing over long distances have resulted in excess supply in many places, bringing prices of local rice in December to below their 2013 levels (FEWSNET, 31/01/2015).

In the central Fouta Djallon region, potato exports to Senegal in 2014 dropped by 90% from 2013, to 22 metric tons (local media, 15/01/2015). In Labé, potato crop has spoiled, in some cases more than 50%. Similar issues have been reported by fruit and tomato producers in Kindia, who typically export to Senegal (FEWSNET, 31/12/2014).

**Health and Nutrition**

**Healthcare provision:** As of 11 March, 173 health workers have been infected, 90 of whom have died (WHO, 11/03/2015). Three doctors working at a hospital in Conakry tested positive for EVD in the week to 15 March (USAID, 18/03/2015).

**Poverty**

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24,842 cumulative Ebola cases reported across the region, including 10,299 deaths (WHO, 23/03/2015).

Malaria

The recent gains from the past ten years in reducing malaria mortality by 50% have been seriously hampered by the Ebola outbreak. About five million people are affected by malaria each year; the disease kills at least ten people every week (international media, 14/11/2014).

Maternal Health

Women in the three most-affected countries are no longer giving birth in health facilities and the number of prenatal consultations and assisted births has dropped (UNMEER, 03/11/2014; IASC, 01/02/2015). In addition, Ebola-infected pregnant women are often not permitted in Ebola treatment centres because of the high risk of contamination during delivery (UNFPA, 13/02/2015). A 10–25% decline in antenatal consultations has been reported, as well as a 7–20% drop in births attended by the health service (UNDP, 19/12/2014).

Measles

An outbreak of measles was confirmed in Gaoual and Koundara health districts in Boke region in February (UNICEF, 18/02/2015; 25/02/2015).

Nutrition

Relative to trends between 1992 and 2012, the prevalence of undernourishment during 2014–2016 could increase by 0.49%, to 1.72% (UNDG, 11/03/2015).

Education

Most schools reopened on 19 January. Around 1.3 million children have returned to school, bringing attendance to 85% of pre-Ebola levels (UNICEF, 11/02/2015). About 400 primary schools that have reopened in EVD-affected areas were still lacking basic resources to prevent EVD by the end of February (UNMEER, 23/02/2015). Some parents are reportedly refusing to send their children to school, or students are declining to attend classes due to EVD fears (USAID, 28/01/2015). A reported 159 primary and secondary schools remain closed in February, notably in Forecariah, Boffa and Faranah (UNICEF, 11/02/2015; international media, 19/01/2015; Government, 11/02/2015). In Faranah and Forecariah, a lower percentage of schools have reopened, because of community resistance and a lack of teachers (UNICEF, 04/02/2015).

Protection

A UNDP study suggests women have been disproportionately affected by the Ebola virus, especially in certain regions. In Gueckedou, women represent 62% of the infected, and in Télémilé, women make up 74%. This could be explained by women’s role in family and resulting increased exposure. (UNMEER, 11/02/2015; UNDP, 30/01/2015).

As of 25 February, 4,429 children have been identified as having lost one or both parents to Ebola (UNICEF, 25/02/2015). All 773 children who lost both parents have been placed with extended family (UNICEF, 06/02/2015).

Health workers and survivors are stigmatised (MSF, 26/01/2015). There are reports of recovered patients not being accepted into their communities, despite awareness-raising in the community (USAID, 18/03/2015).

Updated: 23/03/2015

KENYA FOOD INSECURITY, INSECURITY

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

23 March: All the police reservists in Kailoseget village, in Turkana, have been killed. Most livestock have been stolen (local media).

19 March: The Government has stepped up efforts to evict Pokot herders from North and South Baringo in order to ensure security. It has provided aid to facilitate the return of 5,000 displaced to to Baringo (local media).

28 February: SAM and GAM rates at Kakuma camp have decreased since October 2014, from 15.4% to 11.1% and from 29.3% to 20.5%, respectively (UNHCR).

KEY CONCERNS

- Violence in the capital Nairobi, as well as northeastern and coastal areas; two-thirds of attacks were attributed to the Somali Islamist Al Shabaab movement.

- Inter-communal tensions are running high: Inter-communal violence in Kenya caused 310 deaths, 214 injuries and displaced 220,200 in 2014. Mandera, Marsabit, Turkana, Baringo and Moyale counties are the most affected (OCHA, UNHCR, 12/2014).

- More than 585,076 refugees, including at least 450,000 Somalis and 90,714 South Sudanese (UNHCR 01/02/2015).

- 1.6 million people are acutely food insecure (02/2015, FEWSNET).

Political Context

Kenya is considered relatively stable in the Horn of Africa and held peaceful presidential elections in March 2013. However, the country remains ethnically polarised and affected by two decades of conflict in neighbouring Somalia. The implementation of a devolution process, land reform, and national reconciliation all challenge stability in a country where institutions are perceived to be weak.

On 16 December, the Government de-registered 510 NGOs, accusing them of using their
charitable status as a front for raising funds for terrorism. Many of the NGOs appear to be aid agencies, Christian organisations, orphanages, or organisations working in development and health (The Guardian, 16/12/2014).

Security Context

The frequency and scale of militant attacks in Kenya have increased dramatically since 2011, when Kenyan troops began operating in Somalia, as has the nature of the violence. Al Shabaab has built a cross-border presence and clandestine support network among the Muslim population in the northeast, in Nairobi, and on the coast. Incursions by Al Shabaab into Mandera are now common, as non-Muslims and outsiders continue to be targeted. The increasing radicalisation of the ethnic Somali Muslim population is allegedly fuelled by systematic ethnic profiling and discrimination. Muslims make up 11% of Kenya’s 40 million population.

In addition, deadly inter-communal violence remains common in a number of areas, particularly in Turkana and Baringo.

Al Shabaab-related Violence

In November, Al Shabaab gunmen killed 28 non-Muslims taken from a Nairobi-bound bus in Mandera, in retaliation for Kenyan police raids of suspected radical mosques in Mombasa earlier in the month (OCHA, 28/11/2014). Significant numbers of people reportedly left Mandera, mainly health workers, teachers, and civil servants (Kenya Daily Nation, 27/11/2014). In response, the Kenyan military launched operations in Somalia, reportedly killing 115 Al Shabaab (BBC, The Guardian, 24/11/2014). The attack was not independently confirmed; Al Shabaab denied that any attack took place (Al Jazeera, 24/11/2014). In early December, there were attacks in Wajir and Mandera: one person was killed and 12 wounded in Wajir, and 36 quarry workers were killed in Mandera (AFP, 01/12/201402/12/2014).

More attacks came in March, after the alleged Al Shabaab leader of the Westgate mall attack was killed by a US drone strike in Somalia (international media, 13/03/2015). On 13 March, four soldiers were killed and seven were injured in Mandera in an attack on a convoy carrying county governor Ali Roba (AFP, 13/03/2015). On 15 March, Al Shabaab gunmen killed one and injured three in Mandera (AP, 15/03/2015). On 18 March, Al Shabaab locked people inside a shop in Wajir and set it on fire, killing four people (Reuters, 18/03/2015) (Reuters, 18/03/2015).

Inter-communal Violence

A growth in the population of both people and livestock has led to more frequent cattle raiding and violence, fed by the availability of small arms. As of the end of November 2014, inter-communal violence in Kenya had caused 310 deaths, 214 injuries and displaced 220,200 (OCHA, 31/11/2014). The areas most affected by inter-communal violence are the northern Rift Valley and northeastern regions.

On 9 March, a group of 30 armed men raided the village of Suyian in North Samburu, stealing cattle, and killing two people and injuring two (local media, 10/03/2015). A clash over land between Mwimbi and Tharaka people on 10 March left one dead in Meru, eastern Kenya (local media, 10/03/2015).

Conflicts in Baringo and Turkana

Raids in Baringo in December 2014 displaced tens of thousands. Kenya Defence Forces’ operations to seize illegal firearms have also affected trade, as commuters and motorists avoid roads connecting Baringo and Turkana. Individuals have complained of harassment at road blocks (local media, 26/01/2015). The Government has since stepped up efforts to evict Pokot herders from North and South Baringo in order to ensure security in the area (local media, 19/03/2015). On 5 February, the leaders of the Turkana and Pokot tribes met for peace talks (Finn Church Aid, 05/02/2015). However, all the police reservists in Kailoseget village, Turkana, have been killed either while guarding herders at grazing fields or helping in recovering stolen animals. Most herds have been stolen, severely impacting livelihoods (local media, 23/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Disasters

Drought

Acute water shortages have affected parts of Western Kenya following a long dry spell, particularly parts of Homa Bay, Siaya, and Kisumu counties. Residents have to walk several kilometres to retrieve water. The situation has also cause a food shortage, as most of these areas rely on rain-fed agriculture (Kenya Daily Nation, 10/02/2015). Most water points in pastoral areas are depleted and livestock trekking distances have increased 20–50% compared to normal. Distances are expected to increase further as the short lean season progresses (Government, 03/03/2015).

All subcounties in Meru have recorded a decline in vegetation conditions, particularly for maize and beans (local media, 20/01/2015). In the past, food insecurity has been the cause of inter-clan violence in Meru.

Displacement

IDPs

On 11 February, Kenya had 309,200 IDPs (OCHA, 11/02/2014).

As of 31 November, inter-communal violence had caused the displacement of 125,107 people in Mandera, 84,980 in Wajir, 4,920 in Lamu and 1,730 in Turkana throughout the year.

Conflicts in Baringo in December 2014 caused the displacement of at least 17,600 people. Mid-January reports indicate that the displaced are facing acute food shortages and are still in need of shelter support (local media, 25/01/2015). The Government has provided aid to facilitate the return of 5,000 of the displaced (local media, 19/03/2015).

Refugees
As of 1 March, Kenya is hosting almost 585,000 refugees and asylum seekers. 224,884 are in Dadaab, 127,674 in Alinjugur, 180,674 in Kakuma and 51,757 in Nairobi (UNHCR, 01/03/2015).

From Somalia: As of February 2015, 425,028 Somali refugees are in Kenya. 13,162 arrived in 2014, indicating a considerable drop in arrivals (UNHCR, 31/12/2014). Most are in the northeastern Dadaab and Alinjugur refugee camp complex (UNHCR, 01/07/2014).

The Tripartite Agreement between the Kenyan and Somali Governments and UNHCR, signed in November 2013, establishes the legal framework for those Somali refugees wishing to return home (IOM, UNHCR, 09/12/2014). As of 22 March, 2,049 returnees had arrived in Somalia (UNHCR, 22/03/2015).

From South Sudan: As of 5 March, more than 45,222 South Sudanese refugees had crossed into Kenya through Nadapal border since mid-December 2013 (UNHCR, 05/03/2015). 64% of these are children (UNICEF, 05/02/2015). The total population of South Sudanese refugees in Kenya had reached 90,714 in February 2015 (UNHCR, 01/02/2015).

There is a critical need for land. Kakuma camp has exceeded its capacity of 125,000 by over 56,000 refugees (UNHCR, 19/03/2015). The overpopulation and burden on services is causing friction among refugee communities, and security forces are finding it more difficult to manage situations (UNHCR, 14/11/2014).

From Ethiopia: As of 1 February, there are 30,504 Ethiopian refugees in Kenya (UNHCR, 01/02/2015).

From DRC: As of 1 February, there are 17,624 DRC refugees in Kenya (UNHCR, 01/02/2015).

Access

Humanitarian workers on the ground have reported that poor roads, hilly terrain and protection concerns along the northern Rift Valley and northeastern regions hamper the delivery of aid (OCHA, 31/11/2014).

Food Security

Due to below-average rains, constrained food access and high food prices, over 1.6 million people, mainly in the northern pastoral areas, are food insecure. The food insecure population is 75% larger than in 2013 (UNICEF, 05/02/2015).

On 10 February, authorities reported that 25 constituencies in Mandera need emergency food. WFP, the leading food supplier in the area, is said to have stopped supplies in the region (local media, 10/02/2015). An estimated 400,000 people in North Rift are in dire need of food relief (local media, 01/03/2015).

Hotter-than-normal conditions from January through March are likely to lead to a more severe deterioration of rangeland. Livestock productivity is continuing to decline. The majority of households in pastoral areas will remain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through March, but parts of Isiolo, Wajir, Garissa, Turkana, and Marsabit that had even drier short rains are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) until the end of March (FEWSNET, 28/02/2015).

Agriculture and Markets

October to December rainfall was below average. The driest areas are reportedly in the northeast pastoral zone: Isiolo, Garissa and Wajir. The short rains’ crops are expected to be 40% to 50% below average in volume (FEWSNET, 04/02/2015).

Livelihood

Due to the recent cholera outbreak in Migori and Kisii county, the sale of food on the street has been banned. Local media have reported that the ban has affected 10,000 traders (local media, 11/02/2015) (local media, 25/02/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Lack of medical staff was reported in Kakuma camp, creating a gap in consistent service delivery. Insufficient supply of condoms, vaccines, and associated materials were also reported (UNHCR, 28/01/2015). The ratio of hygiene promoters to refugees in Kakuma camp is 1:2,500, well below the UNHCR standard of 1:500 (UNHCR, 09/01/2015).

Eleven of 26 health facilities in Mandera have closed as staff have left the county (UNICEF, 05/02/2015).

Cholera

A cholera outbreak has been reported in Homa Bay, Migori, and Nairobi counties (local media, 13/02/2015). The outbreak has now spread to Kisii county. As of 24 February there were 805 confirmed cases and 12 deaths, most in Migori (IFRC, 24/02/2015).

Nutrition

Around 310,000 pastoral children in northern Kenya suffer from acute malnutrition (UNICEF, 29/01/2015).

SAM rates among South Sudanese refugees arriving in Kakuma Camp in February was 11.1%, a decrease from 15.4% in October 2014. GAM was at 20.5%, also a decrease from 29.3% in October 2014 (UNHCR, 23/10/2014, 28/02/2015).

Education

Sexual offences have been on the rise in Kwale county, in eastern Kenya, and this has forced girls to drop out of school (Kenya Daily Nation, 07/02/2015).

Access to education has been disrupted for 9,000 school children in Mandera, because non-local teachers were advised by their unions not to report to duty in 2015 (UNICEF, 05/02/2015). Authorities are in the process of hiring new local staff (local media, 26/02/2015).

More than 20 schools have been closed in Baringo North and South due to insecurity. An
attack on a primary school in Baringo South, where armed raiders shot dead a security guard, has further aggravated the situation (local media, 21/01/2015).

Protection

Following Al Shabaab attacks in Mandera in late November, a new security bill was introduced limiting the rights of people who are arrested and accused, adding harsh criminal penalties, and restricting freedoms of expression and assembly. On 23 February, Kenya’s High Court discarded key aspects of the law, including those which curb media freedom and introduce a refugee cap (BBC, 23/02/2015). In January, Human Rights Watch issued a report that highlighted the government’s efforts to tackle insecurity have been marred by serious human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions and torture by security forces (HRW, 29/01/2015).

Child Protection

14,619 South Sudanese refugee children are unaccompanied or separated minors (UNHCR, 31/01/2015). Trafficking of separated South Sudanese children is a growing phenomenon in Kenya. Traffickers find the children on their way to or inside refugee camps and take them to southern Africa, often Malawi, where they use or sell them as slaves (Jesuit Refugee Service, 14/01/2015).

Updated: 24/03/2015

LIBERIA FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

27 March: People suspected to have measles have reportedly fled their homes in order to avoid specimen collection and testing (UNMEER).

25 March: No new Ebola cases have originated from the last confirmed Ebola case in the country, which was 20 March (WHO).

23 March: More than 180 measles cases have been reported in Monrovia in the past week, in addition to cases in Grand Bassa and Sinoe counties (MSF).

KEY CONCERNS

- 25,030 cumulative Ebola cases have been reported across the region, including 10,398 deaths (WHO, 23/03/2015).

- 1.23 million people are facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity, and 190,000 Crisis (Phase 3). Crisis food insecurity is projected to increase to 720,000 people (15% of the population) in the lean season (June–August), particularly in Nimba, Lofa, Bong, Margibi, and Montserrado counties (Cadre Harmonisé 03/2015).

- There is insufficient capacity to meet non-Ebola medical needs, leading to an increase in non-Ebola related morbidity and mortality.

For more information on the Ebola crisis in West Africa, visit the ACAPS Ebola Needs Analysis Project page.

Political Context

Despite the Ebola outbreak and the risk of infection related to public gatherings, Liberia held legislative elections on 20 December 2014. Turnout was less than 30%. The opposition won most seats (international media, 24/12/2014; BBC, 23/12/2014).

International Presence

The Ebola outbreak in West Africa has been declared a Grade 3 Emergency under WHO’s Emergency Response Framework (ECHO, 29/07/2014). WHO declared the epidemic a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. On 18 September, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution establishing a special mission to lead the global response to Ebola (UNMEER) (UN, 18/09/2014).

On 15 December, the Security Council extended the mandate of the UN Mission in Liberia until 30 September 2015, in light of the consequences of the Ebola outbreak for national reforms (UNSC, 15/12/2014).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

Transportation problems are hampering the humanitarian response, due to a lack of vehicles in good condition, and poor road network (UNMEER, 05/02/2015; UNICEF, 11/02/2015). The upcoming rainy season, from May–October, will exacerbate these issues (USAID, 25/03/2015).

Resistance to the Ebola Response

Instances of resistance to the Ebola response continue. A funeral home in Monrovia was reported to be refusing to allow mouth swabs of bodies in March and on 13 January, burial teams were reportedly chased away by communities in Konton, Garwula district, Grand Cape Mount (PI, 20/03/2015; UNMEER, 15/01/2015).

In Garraway district, Grand Kru county, some residents prevented humanitarian actors from conducting Ebola awareness-raising activities due to fear of them carrying the disease (UNMEER, 22/03/2015).

Displacement

Migration patterns are similar to standard patterns prior to the Ebola crisis and Ebola does not seem to have led to any major population movements. In October–December, about 18% of households indicated that a household member had left since the Ebola outbreak, with approximately a third leaving the county, predominantly for Monrovia (World Bank, 19/11/2014; 12/01/2015).
Refugees in Liberia

Liberia is hosting 39,843 refugees, asylum seekers and others of concern, including 37,907 refugees from Côte d’Ivoire. Voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees, suspended by the Government of Côte d’Ivoire at the beginning of the Ebola epidemic, will resume on 6 April (UNMEER, 15/03/2015; UNHCR, 28/02/2015).

Food Security

As of March, 1.23 million people are facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity, and 190,000 Crisis (Phase 3). Crisis food insecurity is projected to increase to 720,000 people (15% of the population) in the lean season during June-August, as poor and very poor households in Nimba, Lofa, Bong, Margibi, and Montserrado counties will face insufficient purchasing power (World Bank, 12/01/2015).

Livelihoods

About two-thirds of surveyed households in December reported not being able to buy enough rice to meet their needs, mainly for lack of money (World Bank, 12/01/2015). The most food insecure households include food crop producers, fishermen and hunters, and unskilled labourers (FAO, 22/01/2015). In rural areas, community members had very limited access to food supplies, as the cost of transportation has risen (Food Security Cluster, 30/11/2014; FAO, 22/01/2015).

Despite food security improving since the last harvest and the decreased incidence of Ebola cases, poor households used more coping strategies in February than in January, especially in Lofa, Bomi, Gbarpolu, and Grand Cape Mount counties. Female-headed households are more vulnerable to food insecurity (WFP, 28/02/2015).

Agriculture and Markets

Markets and trade seem to be recovering since the reopening of Liberia’s borders with Guinea and Sierra Leone, but high staple food prices and low wages continue to hamper food access in the northwest (WFP, 28/02/2015).

Quarantine has disrupted trade throughout the country. Inadequate food availability was reported by 25–50% of traders on markets in Lofa, Gbarpolu, Montserrado, Margibi, Bong, Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties (FEWSNET, 07/01/2015).

Healthcare provision: A recent assessment of non-Ebola health facilities in Montserrado county showed 40% had a functional triage system (WHO, 11/03/2015). 372 health workers have been infected, 180 of whom have died (UNICEF, 11/03/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Nearly all health facilities in the country are open, but most are operating at reduced levels compared to before the outbreak (PI, 19/02/2015). Routine disease surveillance remains sporadic and data is limited. Outbreaks of infectious disease have been reported (UNMEER, 15/03/2015).

Ebola

As of 22 March, 9,602 cumulative Ebola cases had been reported, including 4,301 deaths (WHO, 30/03/2015). The utility of case numbers has been questioned; statistics are reported to be highly unreliable due to a lack of comprehensive contact tracing, timely case investigation, and rapid Ebola testing (WHO, 30/03/2015).

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Livelihoods

The impact of EVD on livelihoods seems to be reducing. Nearly 20% of Liberians who had stopped working since the Ebola crisis have returned to work in February. Farmers still report difficulties organising work teams due to fear of Ebola (World Bank, 24/02/2015). Some were unable to participate due to movement restrictions (World Bank, 03/2015).

In a World Bank survey, 85% of participants reported having sold assets, sold or slaughtered livestock, borrowed money, sent children to live with relatives, spent savings, or delayed investments since the start of the Ebola crisis (World Bank, 24/02/2015). In an Oxfam survey, 75% of families have seen their incomes decline, with an average income drop of 39% (Reuters, 27/01/2015). Women are particularly vulnerable since they work disproportionately in non-farm self-employment. Microcredit, one of women’s main sources of funding, has dried up, limiting recovery for many households (UNDP, 31/01/2015; Cadre Harmonisé, 03/2015). Incomes from petty trade and crop sales have been low due to poor market functioning. Bush meat vendors are out of business due to bans on sales. Closure of many industries has led to increased unemployment (Cadre Harmonisé, 03/2015).

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Containment measures:

Few people are currently quarantined. On 22 February the 1200–0600 curfew was officially lifted (AFP, 20/02/2015). The Government reopened its borders with Sierra Leone and Guinea, which had been closed since 29 July (UNMEER, 23/02/2015). Thousands of people are now crossing daily through official and unofficial crossing-points, but the
Guinean and Sierra Leonean sides of the borders remain officially closed. Due to critical gaps of infection control supplies, particularly on the Guinean side, only one official crossing with Guinea has opened on both sides (UNMEER, 15/03/2015). Infection prevention and control challenges persist in border areas, according to a CDC assessment in March, including a lack of safe drinking water at nearby health centres; inadequate WASH facilities; insufficient fuel for incineration; and inconsistent accessibility to and storage and use of personal protective equipment (USAID, 25/03/2015). Residents of Lofa county have voiced concerns about the limited monitoring of infection prevention protocols (IMS, 07/03/2015; PI, 16/03/2015; Voice of America, 18/03/2015).

There are indications that some male survivors not waiting the required 90 days to have sexual intercourse, potentially placing their partner at risk (Reuters, 19/03/2015).

Measles vaccinations have dropped dramatically as a consequence of the EVD outbreak. Children in Monrovia’s slums are most at risk (International media, 23/03/2015). There are reports of people suspected to have measles abandoning their homes to avoid specimen collection and testing (UNMEER, 27/03/2015).

Pertussis

There are 240 suspected cases of pertussis in Barrobo and Karluway districts in Maryland county (UNICEF, 25/02/2015).

Mental Health

A need for access to mental health and psychosocial support remains, especially for survivors, orphans and the bereaved (UNMEER, 22/02/2015).

There is only one psychiatrist and there are no psychologists in Liberia. 143 mental health clinicians are meant to be attached to wellness units, but these are yet to be established. There are no long-term treatment facilities for mental health in Liberia. There is one facility with approximately 80 beds for short-term patients (PI, 21/03/2015).

Nutrition

52,000 children are estimated to be at risk of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). However, there is no nutritional status information post-Ebola, since the “no-touch” policy has prevented screening. 73 acute malnutrition treatment sites remained open through the crisis (UNICEF, 24/01/2015). MoH and UNICEF work plan propose to increase IMAM sites from 93 to 127 facilities nationwide (Nutrition Cluster, 24/03/2015). Relative to trends observed from 1992–2012, malnutrition prevalence is forecast to increase by 2.8 –5.3% between 2014 and 2016 (UN Development Group, 11/03/2015). Global acute malnutrition was 6% before the EVD crisis (PI, 24/03/2015). There is need for nutritional support for infants and young children in Ebola affected households (UNMEER, 15/03/2015).

WASH

Two million people directly or indirectly affected by the Ebola epidemic are in need of WASH (UNMEER, 12/12/2014). WASH services in Ebola treatment centres have been prioritised, leading to regular acute shortages of safe water supply among communities (PI, 24/01/2015). Half of the population has no access to toilets (UNMEER, 20/11/2014).

55% of schools do not have access to functional water supply and 43% lack access to functional latrines. Only 18% of schools have hand-washing facilities (Ministry of Education, 26/02/2015). In schools with functional sanitation facilities, there is an average of 118 boys or 113 girls per latrine.

Challenges remain regarding on-site and off-site management of liquid waste from some of...
the first Ebola treatment units constructed (UNICEF, 15/03/2015).

Education

16 February was the official date for schools to open, but the exact number of schools that reopened are still unknown (UNMEER, 19/02/2015; PI, 20/02/2015). The safe reopening of schools remains a challenge, as many are reportedly not in compliance with the protocols, and parents’ concerns make them reluctant to send their children to school (UNICEF, 18/03/2015; UNMEER, 15/03/2015).

An estimated 2,800 schools need improved access to water (PI, 26/03/2015). 31% of schools assessed by the Education Cluster did not have functional latrines, while schools that do average one latrine for every 123 students. Only 60% of the schools had safe drinking water within 500m, 40% of schools had soap and water for hand washing, and 39% had functional hand-washing facilities (Education Cluster, 17/03/2015). Despite the reopening of schools, some parents have not allowed their children to attend because of rumours that EVD safety kits used by schools were contaminated with Ebola (UNMEER, 18/03/2015).

Protection

Families of victims, survivors and people quarantined are experiencing physical and verbal abuse and lack access to health facilities, food and water sources (UNMEER, 30/11/2014; UNMEER, 11/01/2015). Many survivors returning home find their possessions have been destroyed to prevent the spread of the virus. Fear and distrust among the community lead to isolation and loss of income. Women and girls, who have worse access to jobs and education, are especially vulnerable (UNFPA, 03/02/2015).

There have been reports of people being forcibly placed under quarantine by the Government. Recently, a group of young males were placed inside an ETU scheduled for decommission after one died under suspicious circumstances (PI, 20/02/2015).

Child Protection

3,979 children have been identified as directly affected – defined as quarantined, unaccompanied, orphaned and separated children, in treatment or discharged (UNICEF, 18/03/2015). Social workers have raised fears of child trafficking and exploitation, after some children, who have been placed into foster care and are receiving material support or onetime cash grants, have been claimed by strangers who failed to come forward previously (UNICEF, 31/12/2014).

Updated: 30/03/2015

LIBYA DISPLACEMENT, CIVIL WAR, POLITICAL UNREST

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

12 March: IS claimed a bomb attack on a police station that wounded one officer (Reuters, 12/03/2015).

10 March: IS, backed by local militias and militias from Misrata, controls the city of Sirte (NYT, 10/03/2015).

6–11 March: The first direct talks between the rival parliaments were held in Morocco over 6-8 March. Further consultations were held over 10-11 March (AFP, 06/03/2015; 11/03/2015).

9 March: Several guards were killed and nine foreign workers reportedly kidnapped during an IS attack on Al Ghani oilfield (BBC, 09/03/2015).

KEY CONCERNS

- The conflict has affected more than two million people (UN, 03/09/2014)
- There are 393,420 IDPs in 35 cities and towns in Libya (UNHCR, 14/11/2014). More than 150,000 people have sought refuge abroad (UNHCR 10/10/2014).
- Over 331,000 people are at risk and in need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 08/10/2014).
- Indiscriminate shelling and targeting of civilian areas (UNSMIL, 04/09/2014).
- Access is a major concern (OCHA, 03/09/2014).

OVERVIEW

It is estimated that two million people have been affected by the conflict, which has generated shortages of food, fuel, water, medical supplies, and electricity, as well as reduced access to healthcare and public services.

The rapidly deteriorating security situation has caused waves of displacement, particularly in the western outskirts of Tripoli and the eastern city of Benghazi. The fighting deepened the humanitarian needs of IDPs and communities affected by the fighting. The price of food and basic items, such as cooking fuel and wheat flour, have doubled.

Most displaced people are living in schools and host communities are under growing strain. Access is difficult, with blocked roads preventing the delivery of food and medical supplies to areas most affected by conflict.

Political Context

Libya has two rival parliaments and governments, with militias exerting much control on the ground. The political crisis led to worsening armed conflict over 2014. Rival economic
policies and a potential struggle over the control of resources is likely to exacerbate the crisis, and worsen the economic situation (Financial Times, 08/12/2014).

The House of Representatives was elected in June and Prime Minister Al Thani's Government was sworn in on 28 September. It moved to Tobruk in early August and towards the end of 2014 to the town of Shahat (AFP, 12/11/2014). In October, Libya's the House of Representatives officially endorsed former General Haftar and his Operation Dignity (now known as the Libyan National Army) against Islamist militias. On 6 November, Libya's Supreme Court ruled the House of Representatives unconstitutional. Certain members of the House of Representatives declared that they did not recognise the ruling (UNHCR, 14/11/2014).

The Islamist-dominated General National Congress (GNC), which preceded the House of Representatives and had never stood down, reconvened and voted to replace the House on 25 August.

Peace Talks

UN-brokered talks between the House of Representatives and elected members who boycotted the assembly and had links to the GNC began on 29 September (Reuters, 01/10/2014).

During January talks, a ceasefire was agreed upon by the main warring factions, including Libya Dawn who were not present (NYT, 18/01/2015).

Another round of peace talks was held in Geneva over 26–27 January, without key representatives from the GNC. On 11 February, yet another round of talks began, involving both governments (AFP, 11/02/2015). On 23 February, the House of Representatives suspended its participation in UN-brokered peace talks that had started on 19 February in Morocco, citing the GNC's alleged failure to condemn the recent IS attack (BBC, 23/02/2015).

Over 6-8 March, the first direct talks between the rival parliaments were held, led by the UN, in Morocco. The first direct talks between the rival parliaments were held in Morocco over 6-8 March. Further consultations were held over 10-11 March (AFP, 06/03/2015; 11/03/2015).

Security Context

The surge in violence since July 2014 has affected more than two million people (UN, 03/09/2014). In 2014, there were 2,383 reported fatalities from battles and remote violence (ACLED, 15/01/2015). Fighting was concentrated mainly in Tripoli and Benghazi.

An abundance of weapons from the NATO-backed uprising against Gaddafi are sustaining warring factions (AFP, 14/07/2014). The United Nations Stabilization Mission for Libya (UNSMIL) left the country in mid-July. Analysts believe the fighting to be rooted in struggles about patronage, control over wealth and resources and influence in the central government, rather than ideological rifts between Islamists and anti-Islamists (ACLED, 15/01/2015; NYT, 21/01/2015).

Main Stakeholders

The Libya Shield brigades, tied to the city of Misrata, are allied to Islamist political forces, as are the Shura Council of Benghazi Revolutionaries (SCBR), a Benghazi-based alliance including Ansar al Sharia, Libya Shield units and other armed groups. Together with insurgents from Tripoli and other towns including Zawiya and Gheryan, these groups make up the Libya Dawn.

Ansar al Sharia has declared an Islamic emirate in the eastern city of Derna and pledged allegiance to Islamic State (Al Arabiya, 06/10/2014).

The Al Qa'qa' and Al Sawalq' brigades, allied with the city of Zintan, and fighters from the Warshefana region west of Tripoli, back the House of Representatives, as does former General Khalifa Haftar, supported by units of Libya's regular armed forces. Haftar launched Operation Dignity in May, aiming to break the strongholds of Islamist forces. At end October, the House of Representatives declared a formal alliance with former General Haftar (Reuters, 20/10/2014). Operation Dignity and its supporters are now called the Libyan National Army (LNA) (ICG, 05/01/2014). On 24 February, the House of Representatives officially declared General Haftar army chief (Middle East Eye, 24/02/2015). The House of Representatives has repeatedly appealed to the international community for more weapons since January (AFP, 05/01/2014).

The Battar brigade is the main Islamic State (IS) force in Libya and based in Derna. It is not affiliated with either of the rival governments and has warned all governments and militia groups not to interfere with its activities. Reportedly, the group has been operating in Leithi neighbourhood of Benghazi (Libya Herald, 23/02/2015).

Regional Involvement

Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria have been concerned that the violence will spill into their territories (Reuters, 11/10/2014). In August, the United States said Egypt and the United Arab Emirates secretly bombed Islamist militia positions near Tripoli's airport (AFP, 08/10/2014). On 8 October, Prime Minister Al Thani announced that Egypt would help to train the Libyan army.

According to intelligence sources, Islamist groups have set up training camps in Libya. Islamist fighters pushed out of Mali following French intervention are also said to be hiding in Libya's south. Experts see links between these groups and Islamist militias in northern and eastern Libya (AFP, 26/10/2014). Islamic State (IS) has set up training camps in eastern Libya for several hundred fighters, according to US officials (BBC, 04/12/2014).

Palestinian, Sudanese, and Syrian nationals have been banned from entering Libya. The Interior Minister stated he had received intelligence reports indicating that nationals of these countries were heading to Libya to join opposition forces in the west (Libya Herald, 05/01/2015). Tuareg from Mali and, reportedly, Tebu from Chad, have joined their respective Libyan tribe members in fighting over Ubari (Al Jazeera, 05/12/2014).

Conflict Developments

On 15 February, militants pledging allegiance to Islamic State executed 21 Coptic
Tripoli and Western Libya

Tripoli has witnessed a wave of violence since 13 July, when Operation Dawn was launched, but has largely been under the control of Operation Dawn. In November, clashes and airstrikes by ISIS in support of Operation Dignity forced the temporary closure of Mitiga Airport, the last functioning airport in the capital. On 12 March, a bomb attack on a police station, which wounded one officer, was claimed by ISIS (Reuters, 12/03/2015). On 27 January, gunmen killed nine people in a hotel in Tripoli before blowing themselves up. The attack was claimed by Islamic State. The GNC stated the attack was an attempt to assassinate its chief, Omar al-Hassi, who was inside the hotel at the time, and blamed Hafter (AFP, 29/01/2015).

In October and November, there were clashes between militias from Zintan and supporters of Operation Dawn in the town of Kekla (AFP, 13/10/2014). Operation Dawn expanded south into the Nafusa mountain region, with factional fighting between Zintan militia and Misrata and other tribal and city-based militia groups (ACLED, 24/11/2014).

In December, Operation Dignity reportedly targeted Dawn strongholds in Zwara, 110km from Tripoli, and close to the Tunisian border (AFP, 02/12/2014; Reuters, 05/12/2014; Asharq Al Awsat, 6/12/2014; Libya Herald, 07/12/2014).

In early March, it was reported that ISIS, backed by local militias and militias from Misrata, controls the city of Sirte, east of Misrata (NYT, 10/03/2015).

Benghazi and Eastern Libya

Operation Dignity began an offensive on Benghazi on 15 October; SCBR had apparently been in control since mid-July (UNSMIL, 04/09/2014). In December, Ansar al-Sharia was reported to be firing missiles indiscriminately into Benghazi (Libya Herald, 07/12/2014). Over January, at least 47 people were killed and 229 wounded during fighting in Benghazi (Reuters, 02/03/2015). Between mid-October and January, 600 people were killed due to fighting in the city, according to medical staff (Reuters, 18/01/2015). In early January, the Libyan National Army claimed to have almost full control of Benghazi's Laithi district, which had been a key Ansar al-Sharia stronghold (Libya Herald, 06/01/2015). On 6 February, the LNA claimed to have taken control of central Benghazi's port area as well as taken part of the neighbouring Suq Al-Hout district following heavy fighting there the day before (Libya Herald, 06/01/2015). On 2 March, rockets hit residential areas in Benghazi, killing at least two people and wounding more than 30 others in continued fighting over the city, according to officials (Reuters, 02/03/2015).

Oilfields and Terminals

In December, Libya Dawn announced a campaign for the control of oilfields and terminals (The Telegraph, 14/12/2014). As Sidr, Libya’s biggest oilfield, and Ras Lanuf oil terminal, between Sirte and Benghazi, were closed following clashes. Fighting was reported at Al Ghani oilfield, near Zillah (IHS Jane, 18/12/2014). Misrata was later raided (AFP, 30/12/2014, 05/01/2015). On 20 January, renewed Libya Dawn–LNA clashes were reported near As Sidr (Reuters, 20/01/2015). On 3 February, Libya Dawn affiliated Islamists temporarily seized Al Mabruk oilfield south of Sirte, leaving at least 11 dead, one of them a foreign national. According to local sources, three Filipino nationals have possibly been kidnapped (BBC, 04/02/2015).

Over 3-4 January, the LNA launched airstrikes on an oil tanker in the Islamist-held port of Derna, killing two crew members and wounding others (AFP, 05/01/2014).

The Libyan national oil company declared 11 oilfields non-operational because of theft, looting, sabotage, and destruction by unidentified armed groups (NYT, 05/03/2015).

Derna

On 16 February, Egypt carried out airstrikes on the city of Derna, IS’s stronghold in Libya, reportedly killing seven civilians (Reuters, 23/02/2015). Days later, armed groups claiming affiliation to IS carried out twin suicide attacks in Al Gubba, near Derna, killing at least 44 people, including six Egyptians, and injuring dozens more (HRW, 24/02/2015, The Daily Star, 24/02/2015). IS claimed the strikes were in retaliation for Egyptian airstrikes (BBC, 23/02/2015).

Inter-communal Violence

Intermittent violence in the south, linked to inter and intra-ethnic rivalries, has been exacerbated by geopolitics and shifting allegiances. Conflict, particularly in and around the cities of Sabha and Ubari, has resulted in displacement (UNHCR, 14/11/2014). Ubari saw repeated armed clashes between the Tebu (allied with the House of Representatives) and Tuareg (allied with Libya Dawn) communities between mid-September and December. Tuareg families kept their medical aid outside the city (WHO, 24/11/2014).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

Indiscriminate fighting has led to restrictions of movement for people trying to flee conflict areas. Violence and checkpoints along the route to Zawia from Tripoli are preventing people from reaching the Tunisian border. The Saloum border crossing between Libya and Egypt has been closed indefinitely (Libya Herald, 21/01/2015). All commercial flights to Libya have been suspended (The Telegraph, 06/01/2015).

Access to areas most affected by conflict is difficult, with security constraints and blocked roads preventing the delivery of food and medical supplies. Armed groups lack knowledge of humanitarian organisations and restrict their access to people in need. Following the provisional ceasefire agreement, Libya Dawn announced it would ensure safe passages to channel humanitarian aid, particularly to Benghazi (AFP, 18/01/2015).

Most humanitarian agencies have left. Even before the worsening security situation, there were few humanitarian agencies with staff on the ground in Libya. The lack of available cooperating partners is a major challenge for aid delivery (IRIN, 30/09/2014). The national agency tasked with leading the humanitarian response evaluates its own response
Security Incidents Involving Aid Workers

On 4 June, an ICRC staff member was assassinated in Sirte, prompting the ICRC to suspend its work in the country (UN Security Council, 05/09/2014).

Displacement

IDPs

As of 14 November, there are 393,420 IDPs in 35 cities and towns in Libya (UNHCR, 14/11/2014). Additionally, at least 56,544 IDPs are still displaced since the 2011 conflict (IDMC, 23/09/2014).

Near Tripoli, NGOs and the local council estimate some 83,270 people are living in settlements, schools and abandoned buildings (UNHCR, 16/01/2015).

In Benghazi, the local council is reporting around 90,000 people unable to return home. The displacement has been centred around Benghazi, Derna, and near the Gulf of Sidra, in Ben Jawad and Ras Lanuf (UNHCR, 16/01/2015).

Around Ubari, local crisis committees in the southeast confirm 18,492 people from Ubari are displaced in six towns: Sabha, Wadi Shati, Jufra, Ghat, Murzuq, and Lewenat (UNHCR, 16/01/2015). IDPs from Ubari are facing difficulties as services have been severely disrupted by fighting. Schools, hospitals and markets remain completely inaccessible (UNHCR, 16/01/2015).

In the west, civilian groups report 38,640 people have been displaced by fighting in Kikla, including many women and children (UNHCR, 14/11/2014). 100,000 people have been displaced from the area around Warshefana since mid-September (UNHCR, 10/10/2014).

As of early October, most displaced people were living with local families (UNHCR, 10/10/2014). However, many IDPs are now reported to be living in schools. Some local councils have stopped registering new arrivals due to limited response capacity.

According to UNSMIL, the Benghazi Local Council has registered some 34,000 IDPs in need of basic assistance (UNHCR, 14/11/2014). Al Marj, near Benghazi, has had to close its schools to accommodate people unable to stay with host families. Al Bayda and Tobruk are also under pressure. Schools in Tobruk will be closed so they can host IDPs.

An estimated 35,000 of Tawerghan IDPs have been sheltering in temporary camps in Tripoli and Benghazi since 2011. No aid has been provided to the Tawergha camps since February 2014. While 10,000 Tawergha who had fled Tripoli have mostly returned, in the east, where the community is estimated to be 18,000-strong, many families are still displaced (IRIN, 10/12/2014). Some 2,500 Tawergha left their camp in Benghazi because of fighting and were staying in parks, schools and parking lots in and around the town of Ajdabiya, many with only thin plastic sheets for shelter (UNHCR, 14/11/2014).

Migrants, Refugees and Asylum-seekers in Libya

Prior to the crisis, in addition to IDPs from the 2011 conflict, Libya was supporting a growing population of refugees and asylum seekers using the country as an exit point to Europe. At end December, the total number of refugees in Libya was 36,984 (OCHA, 28/12/2014). In addition, IOM estimates that there are at least 150,000 migrant workers in Libya, 5,000 of whom might be vulnerable and in need of evacuation assistance, health services, and psychosocial support (IOM, 08/01/2015).

Detention of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Libya is widespread and prolonged; conditions, which were poor prior to the current fighting, have worsened (UNSMIL, 04/09/2014). Third-country nationals face extreme difficulties leaving the country as passage through Libya’s borders with Egypt and Tunisia is restricted (IOM, 14/09/2014).

By September, more than 150,000 people, including third-country nationals (estimated at 15,000) had sought refuge abroad since the beginning of the conflict (OCHA, 03/09/2014).

Main departure points to Europe have shifted from Tripoli towards Benghazi, from where the journey is longer and more dangerous (IRIN, 06/08/2014). According to estimates, more than 3,000 migrants died trying to cross the Mediterranean between January and September 2014, more than double the previous peak in 2011 (IOM, cited in AFP 02/10/2014). The vast majority of refugees and migrants who arrived in Italy in 2014 had departed from Libya (AI, 30/09/2014).

Approximately 1.8 million people have fled to Tunisia since 2011 (NYT, 09/09/2014).

Food Security

Insecurity is affecting the food supply chain, with some estimates indicating a substantial decline in food imports into eastern Libya since May. Food prices in Tripoli remain volatile, reducing the purchasing power of the poorest households (WFP, 18/12/2014).

Shortages of basic food supplies have been reported in all areas of Tripoli and food prices have risen drastically (IOM, 12/08/2014; UNHCR, 14/11/2014). Warehouses (both public and private) are situated in conflict areas, and fuel shortages are aggravating the situation.

Fighting has disrupted oil exports as well as imports of goods by road and sea, and caused problems purchasing food on international markets. The HoR has reported it

capacity as almost non-existent (IRIN 07/08/2014).
had started tapping into the country’s strategic wheat reserves to ensure bread supplies. In recent weeks some bakeries in Tripoli and Benghazi have closed or produce less (Reuters, 04/02/2015).

Livelihoods

People in Benghazi and Tripoli specifically, and in other cities in general, have been facing regular electricity cuts, plus interruptions to the internet and wider communications. In Tripoli, fuel shortages and water cuts have affected livelihoods (IFRC, 12/08/2014).

Health and Nutrition

Large numbers of expatriate medical personnel have left Libya, and such staff make up 80% of all medical personnel, according to the Ministry of Health.

Access to health services has become a major concern mainly in Benghazi. Ongoing fighting has led to restrictions of movement for people and health workers in the conflict areas (WHO, 24/11/2014).

The hospitals that remain operating in Tripoli and Benghazi have been overstretched dealing with casualties. Many national medical personnel have not been able to work due to insecurity. Tripoli hospitals have been hit by shelling, leading to suspension of services. Ambulances have been stolen. In Warshefana, fighting has disrupted health services (ICRC, 17/09/2014).

In August and September, a number of reports indicated shortages in medical supplies, destruction of storage facilities, and problems accessing warehouses in a number of towns (UNSMIL, 04/09/2014; IOM, 12/08/2014; IFRC, 12/08/2014; ICRC, 17/09/2014).

WASH

In Tripoli, shortages of water were reported in November (UNHCR, 14/11/2014).

Shelter

Alongside civilian properties, factories, mosques, and shops have also been destroyed in residential areas (Amnesty International, 08/08/2014).

Protection

Abductions, looting, burning of homes and other acts of revenge have all been frequently reported (UN Security Council, 05/09/2014). With some exceptions, civilians have not been given the chance to evacuate before hostilities commenced and severe fighting has taken place in and around houses and other places of refuge (UNSMIL, 04/09/2014).

In Benghazi and nearby Derna, there were at least 250 politically motivated killings in 2014 (HRW, 24/09/2014). Armed militias controlling Derna are reported to have carried out summary executions, public floggings, and other violent abuse (HRW, 27/11/2014). In Tripoli, a number of activists and other public figures have been abducted, received threats or had their homes looted or burned (UNHCR, 14/10/2014).

Abduction and Detention

On 9 March, nine foreign oil workers were reportedly kidnapped by IS, during an attack on Al Ghani oil field in which several guards were killed (BBC, 09/03/2015).

In mid-January, a group claiming affiliation with Islamic State claimed to have 21 Coptic Egyptians seized from various places in Tripoli province (Libya Herald, 14/01/2015). Militants pledging allegiance to IS on 15 February beheaded 21 Coptic Christians, 20 of them Egyptian (HRW, 24/02/2015).

In addition to the detention of fighters or suspected fighters, dozens of civilians remain missing (UNSMIL, 04/09/2014).

Third-country refugees and asylum-seekers, including unaccompanied children, face arbitrary arrest and indefinite detention for migration control purposes by both state and non-state actors. Torture and ill-treatment have also been reported (AI, 30/09/2014).

Mines and ERW

Incorrectly armed fuses or faulty ammunition have resulted in large quantities of unexploded ordnance in conflict areas (UNSMIL, 04/09/2014). According to Islamist militias, approximately 600 anti-personnel mines have been cleared since they seized Tripoli airport on 24 August (HRW, 05/11/2014).

Updated: 13/03/2015

MALAWI FLOODS

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

17 March: Despite flood waters receding and roads re-opening, access to cut-off populations on the east bank of the Shire River in Nsanje, especially in the Makhanga area, remains a challenge (Logistics Cluster, 17/03/2015).

KEY CONCERNS

- 638,000 affected by rains and floods in January, in urgent need of food, shelter and NFI, health, WASH, and protection support (Government/OCHA, 22/01/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

740,000 people are in need of assistance in 2015, including almost 400,000 children (UNICEF, 29/01/2015).

Access

Despite flood waters receding and roads re-opening, access to cut-off populations on the east bank of the Shire River in Nsanje, especially in the Makhanga area (including
Chikali, Chigwamafumu and Makhanga, remains a challenge. Access to camps in Mulanje district is also reportedly difficult due to damaged roads (Government/UN, 10/03/2015; Logistics Cluster, 17/03/2015). The Logistics Cluster is facing a funding gap of USD 450,000, and WFP helicopters have had to leave Malawi due to a funding shortfall (Government/UN, 10/03/2015; Logistics Cluster, 10/03/2015). At 13 March, the Preliminary Response Plan to the Malawi floods, appealing for USD 81 million, was 40% funded.

Disasters: Floods

Heavy rains since early January have led to severe flooding across Malawi and caused great damage to crops, livestock, food stocks, and infrastructure. The southern districts of Nsanje, Chikwawa, Phalombe, and Zomba have been most affected, and 15 districts declared a state of emergency in January (ACT, 15/01/2015; Government/UN, 02/03/2015).

Around 638,000 people have been affected overall. 104 have died and 645 injured and 172 are missing. Priority needs are for food, shelter and NFIs, WASH and protection (Government/UN, 10/02/2015; Government/UN, 22/01/2015). Heavy rains in Mwanza and Mulanje over 26-27 February led to secondary flooding in Chikwawa and Nsanje; around 1,000 people were displaced to a new site in Chikwawa and three were killed (Government/UN, 02/03/2015). Displacement

Flood-affected IDPs

Nearly 230,000 people have been displaced by floods. 173,160 were in 191 camps as of 3 March (58% female). Nearly 80,400 IDPs are in 31 sites in Nsanje (46%), 32,260 in 64 sites in Phalombe (19%), 29,840 in 18 sites in Chikwawa (17%), 27,535 in 54 sites in Zomba (16%) (IOM, 06/03/2015).

There are increasing reports of displaced populations moving back to their homes, especially in Zomba; shelter support and planned relocations, especially in Nsanje, are priorities (Government/UN, 02/03/2015; 24/02/2015).

Refugees

At August 2014, there were 19,923 refugees and asylum seekers in Malawi, mostly from DRC, Burundi and Rwanda, residing in Dzaleka camp in Dowa district in central Malawi or among host communities (UNHCR, 30/08/2014).

Food Security

615,840 people in 15 of the country’s 28 districts will need assistance until at least May, or even August, according to the Vulnerability Assessment Committee’s February assessment (UNICEF, 18/03/2015). About 20% of population of Lower Shire, Phalombe Plain, Thyolo-Mulanje Tea Estates and Middle Shire livelihood zones are facing food access constraints related to a reduction or total loss of their livelihoods due to the floods. The majority of households in flood-affected villages and in displacement sites have reportedly reduced, or sometimes suppressed, their daily meal consumption (FEWSNET, 28/02/2015). Agricultural Outlook

Around 64,000 hectares of land have been submerged, including 42,000 hectares of cropland, affecting 116,000 farmers (Government/UN, 03/02/2015). An estimated 4,300 hectares of farmland have been destroyed in Chikwawa, 1,500 in Nsanje, and 8,550 in Phalombe (Government/UN, 27/01/2015). Dry conditions since early March have also reportedly caused some wilting and drying of premature crops. Current estimates indicate that over 105,000 metric tons of cropped maize has been lost (FEWSNET, 28/02/2015; SADC, 20/03/2015). Priority needs include tools and seeds for affected populations (Government/UN, 08/03/2015).

Health and Nutrition

As of 13 March, 148 cases of cholera, including two deaths, have been confirmed since the start of the floods, mostly in Nsanje. All cases were reported from outside IDP camps, and were linked to a cholera outbreak in Mozambique (Government/UN, 13/03/2015). Malaria outbreaks and diarrhoea, eye infections, scabies and typhoid cases are also increasingly reported (Government/UN, 13/03/2015; 03/02/2015).

Health facilities have been damaged by floods; lack of personnel and medical supplies to cope with the needs of the displaced is also an issue (Government/UN, 03/02/2015).

Nutrition

There has been a significant increase in the number of malnourished children as a result of the floods and poor harvests. Road damage in Chikwawa and Nsanje districts is hampering the delivery of nutrition assistance to people in IDP camps (Government/UN, 08/03/2015). 25,313 children aged 6–59 months were suffering from SAM as of July (Government/UN, 08/03/2015; UNICEF, 27/09/2014). WASH

70,000 people are in need of WASH assistance. Water sources have either been damaged or contaminated in the affected areas, and pit latrines damaged (Government/UN, 03/02/2015; UNICEF, 26/01/2015). There is an increased need for WASH activities as cholera cases are rapidly increasing (Government/UN, 13/03/2015).

WASH services, including shower and latrine facilities, are lacking in displacement sites in Nsanje, especially on the east bank, where the current sanitation ratio is one drop hole for 150 people (Government, 17/02/2015, 24/02/2015). Tensions between villagers and IDPs on the use of boreholes have been reported in Chikwawa (Government/UN, 30/01/2015).

Shelter and NFIs

Shelter remains a primary need among flood-affected communities. 74% of IDPs reside in spontaneous sites. Planned and pre-identified sites comprise only 13% and 12% of the total number (IOM, 06/03/2015). Preliminary findings from the damage assessment show that the homes of 61% of sampled households are damaged (Government/UN, 08/03/2015).
Bed nets are insufficient, and NFI support is required in most IDP sites (Government/UN, 12/03/2015). IDP sites in Nsanje and Chikwawa are in urgent need of consistent food and NFI distributions, increased site management, and shelter and protection support (Government/UN, 06/02/2015, 03/02/2015).

Education

415 schools and 350,000 students have been affected by floods, including 181 schools being used as camps. Phalombe is the most affected with 37 damaged schools, while children in Chabuka and Savala displacement sites in Chikwawa are currently not attending school (Government/UN, 03/02/2015).

School dropouts were reported in Nsanje due to poor/non-existing school facilities and bullying (Government/UN, 11/02/2015).

Protection

Protection issues include cases of sexual abuse and transactional sex, especially in IDP sites (Government/UN, 30/01/2015). Around 1,600 children have been separated from their families (SOS Children's Villages International, 10/02/2015).

There is limited capacity to identify vulnerable children and refer them to basic social services (Government/UN, 13/03/2015).

Updated: 26/03/2015

MALI CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

25 March: Insecurity in the north is hampering humanitarian response, especially in Algouni, Timbuktu region, and Tenenkou and Youwara, Mopti region (WFP).

22 March: Islamist group AQIM killed a civilian in Tichift, Timbuktu, after accusing him of working for the French military (AFP).

KEY CONCERNS

- Security, particularly in the north, remains volatile, and access is limited for aid workers. Security in and around the northeastern region of Kidal remains of particular concern, and security incidents in Gao have increased since late 2014.
- 181,000 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition (OCHA, 10/02/2015).
- An estimated 840,000 people are severely food insecure (IPC Phase 3 and above) and 1.82 million people are in IPC Phase 2 (Stressed) (OCHA, 23/01/2015).
- 690,000 million people are in need of health assistance and 840,000 are in need of WASH (OCHA, 31/01/2015).

Political Context

The state lost control of the north of the country in 2012, after Tuareg groups from the northern region known as Azawad began a campaign for greater autonomy, and a separate coup d'état further destabilised the country. However, the fragile alliance between Tuareg and Islamists was quickly broken, and Islamists took control of key northern cities. Civilian rule was re-established in mid-2013, with the aid of French and African Union troops, and a UN mission, MINUSMA, was set up, but Mali continues to face security and political challenges. The truce in the north remains fragile, and key government institutions need strengthening. Limited access to basic social services and the poor capacity of public administration are key drivers of the crisis.

On 15 June 2014, the Azawad Movement Coalition – comprising the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA), and the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA) – signed the Algiers Declaration with the Government of Mali. The coalition has agreed to engage with the Government on a path of dialogue and negotiation after several bouts of violence broke the June 2013 peace agreement (AFP, 01/09/2014).

On 16 March, the Azawad Movement Coalition rejected the proposed Algiers peace agreement, demanding more autonomy for the northern regions. The agreement was signed by the Government and smaller armed groups on 1 March (OCHA, 17/03/2015; international media, 16/03/2015). Scores of people protested in Kidal against the accord. Islamist groups were not involved in the peace talks (international media, 01/03/2015; OCHA, 02/03/2015).

On 27 January, four civilians died and several were severely injured as thousands protested against MINUSMA in Gao. The Azawad Movement Coalition and MINUSMA had agreed to make Tabankort, in Gao, a buffer zone, requiring the disarmament of pro-government armed groups. The protest, the UN mission announced the withdrawal of the agreement, and opened an inquiry (international media, 26/01/2015; local media, 27/01/2015; UN, 28/01/2015).

Insecurity in the north has held up the revision of voter rolls, delaying local and regional elections that were scheduled for April (international media, 07/03/2015).

Security Context

Violence has somewhat calmed down since March, after an increase in early 2015. Attacks from both Islamist and Tuareg groups, and clashes with pro-government armed groups are of particular concern in the regions of Kidal and Gao. Landmines and improvised explosive devices (IED) are a particular threat. Attacks on MINUSMA vehicles, camps, and peacekeepers have spiked since mid-August 2014 (AFP, 21/09/2014).

The Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (Mujao), which split from Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in 2011, and Ansar Dine, are among the main Islamist groups active in northern Mali, carrying out attacks on pro-government and international forces.

International Presence

Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in 2011, and Ansar Dine, are among the main Islamist groups of particular concern in the regions of Kidal and Gao. Islamists was quickly broken, and Islamists took control of key northern cities. Civilian rule was re-established in mid-2013, with the aid of French and African Union troops, and a UN mission, MINUSMA, was set up, but Mali continues to face security and political challenges. The truce in the north remains fragile, and key government institutions need strengthening. Limited access to basic social services and the poor capacity of public administration are key drivers of the crisis.

On 25 March, Insecurity in the north is hampering humanitarian response, especially in Algouni, Timbuktu region, and Tenenkou and Youwara, Mopti region (WFP).

On 22 March, Islamist group AQIM killed a civilian in Tichift, Timbuktu, after accusing him of working for the French military (AFP).
The stability of the Sahel region relies on the presence of foreign troops. In addition to Malian forces, there are French forces, MINUSMA, and the EU military training mission (EUTM), mainly in Bamako (53% of forces) and in northern cities such as Kidal, Gao, Timbuktu, and Menaka (28%) (OCHA, 31/05/2014). MINUSMA’s mandate expires on 30 June 2015. 34 peacekeepers have died since the start of the UN mission in July 2013 (UNSC, 06/01/2015; international media, 17/01/2015).

On 1 August 2014, France deployed a 3,000-strong counterterrorism operation across the Sahel region. Based in Chad, Operation Barkhane is active in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger (Local Media, 01/08/2014).

Security Incidents

On 22 March, Islamist group AQIM killed a civilian on a market in Tichift, Timbuktu region, after accusing him of working for the French military (international media, 22/03/2015). On 6 March, five people were killed in an attack on a restaurant in Bamako. The Islamist group Al Murabitoun claimed responsibility (international media, 07/03/2015). On 7 March, two young men were lynched and burned in Gao, after being suspected of planting bombs (international media, 07/03/2015). On 9 March, the MINUSMA compound in Kidal was attacked by rockets and shelling, killing one soldier and two civilians and wounding a dozen others. No one claimed responsibility (08/03/2015).

On 16 February, seven UN peacekeepers were wounded in Tabankort, Gao (international media, 16/02/2015). On 4 February, pro-government armed groups and the Azawad coalition clashed near Tabankort. The pro-government groups have taken control of the area (local media, 04/02/2015). On 28 January, a suicide attack by pro-government militia against separatist Tuareg groups killed around 12 people in Tabankort, Gao (international media, 28/01/2015; 31/01/2015).

In January, several attacks on MINUSMA soldiers and UN bases in the regions of Kidal, Segou, Timbuktu and Gao killed and injured peacekeepers as well as civilians (international media, 31/01/2015; 09/01/2105; 05/01/2015; 04/01/2015; 03/01/2015; 29/12/2014). Clashes between rival armed groups and with government forces have become more frequent, and have killed a number of people in Segou and Mopti since January (international media, 17/01/2015; local media, 07/01/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

Though insecurity in the north limits humanitarian access to certain regions, no movement restrictions exist in Mali (OCHA, 15/01/2015). An agency involved in nutrition interventions left Algoumi, Timbuktu region, has left due to insecurity; a health actor also left Ténenkou and Youwara, Mopti region, to temporarily suspend its activities and relocate its staff (WFP, 25/03/2015; OCHA, 31/01/2015). Insecurity is hampering WFP’s response in the same areas (WFP, 25/03/2015). An increase in IEDs, mortar attacks and other security incidents limit movement of staff (WFP 22/01/2015).

Security incidents involving NGOs almost tripled over the course of 2014 (Première Urgence - Aide Médicale Internationale, 10/10/2014).

Displacement

IDPs

As of 4 December 2014, about 86,000 people are internally displaced as a consequence of the 2012 conflict, a decrease from 101,300 recorded in August. In northern Mali, these include 11,944 IDPs in Timbuktu, 12,025 in Kidal, and 7,070 in Gao. In addition, 31,146 IDPs have been registered in Bamako, 13,111 in Koulikoro, 4,665 in Mopti, 4,716 in Ségou, and several hundred in Kayes and Sikasso (OCHA, 04/12/2014).

Returnees

361,000 IDP returnees have been identified in Gao, Timbuktu, Kidal, and Mopti (IOM, 10/09/2014). 35,800 IDPs went back to their place of origin between June and September 2014 (IOM, 10/09/2014). The arrival of returnees has exacerbated needs in the north (OCHA, 10/09/2014). The majority of people displaced within Gao since 2012 have returned, although fighting in October led to some new displacement (IOM, 16/10/2014).

Some 35,000 Malian refugees have returned: more than 10,000 from Burkina Faso; about 12,000 from Niger; around 7,300 from Mauritania; and 2,200 from Algeria (OCHA, 31/01/2015; UNHCR, 14/08/2014). Planning figures for January 2015 from UNHCR do not indicate a large change in the number of refugees (UNHCR, 01/12/2014).

Refugees in Mali

As of 31 July 2014, Mali hosts over 14,525 refugees from countries including Mauritania (12,900) and Côte d’Ivoire (1,110) (OCHA, 16/09/2014). Planning figures for January 2015 from UNHCR do not indicate a large change in the number of refugees (UNHCR, 01/12/2014).

Malian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

As of 30 November 2014, an estimated 143,500 Malians refugees are in neighbouring countries (OCHA, 04/12/2014). As of 9 September, 54,000 Malians were recorded in Mauritania, 50,000 in Niger, 32,000 in Burkina Faso, and 1,500 in Algeria (OCHA, 10/09/2014; UNHCR, 30/11/2014).

Food Security

An estimated 840,000 people are severely food insecure (in IPC Phase 3 and above), according to the Cadre Harmonisé, in addition to 1.8 million moderately food insecure. More than half of the severely food insecure live in Gao, Mopti, Kidal and Timbuktu (OCHA, 23/01/2015).

Markets are well supplied after the harvest, resulting in prices generally below average.

Degradation of the security situation since early 2015 could negatively affect the availability of and accessibility to food for households in the affected areas in the north (WFP, 31/01/2015). Agropastoral households in the north are facing Stressed food insecurity (IPC Phase 2) as of April, due to decreased milk production and lower
prices of animals. Poor households’ prolonged dependence on markets in Timbuktu and Gao is leading to increased use of coping strategies such as borrowing and decreasing food expenditure. They will face Crisis food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) as of July (FEWSTNET, 26/03/2015).

Agricultural Outlook

Rainfall has improved the situation in northeast and central Mali, reconstituting water reserves and pastoral vegetation (FAO, 26/01/2015).

Sahel Food Crisis: Regional Overview

As of December 2014, the number of people suffering from food insecurity in the Sahel has reached 20.4 million and least 2.6 million have crossed the emergency threshold and require urgent food assistance (OCHA, 31/12/2014). In 2014, food insecurity rose dramatically to 24.7 million food insecure people, compared to 2013 when 11.3 million people had inadequate food (OCHA, 03/02/2015).

Health and Nutrition

690,000 people are estimated to be in need of health assistance (OCHA, 31/01/2015).

Nutrition

As of 10 February, 181,000 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), and 534,000 suffer from moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) (OCHA, 10/02/2015). SAM rates are highest in Mopti (3.7%), Segou (3.4%) and Koulikoro (2.7%). MAM rates are highest in the northern provinces, with **11.3% in Gao** (FEWSTNET, WFP, FAO, 28/02/2015; ACF, 31/12/2014).

WASH

About 840,000 people are in need of WASH assistance, the majority of whom live in the northern regions of Gao, Kidal, Timbuktu, Mopti, and Segou, and are IDPs, returnees, and host families without access to safe drinking water (OCHA, 15/01/2015).

Shelter and NFIs

Some 378,000 people are in need of NFIs and 137,000 in need of shelter. Those of concern are mainly IDPs and returnees (OCHA, 15/01/2015).

Education

In the three northern regions as well as several areas in Mopti affected by the conflict, access to education has been disrupted for an estimated 260,000 children. This includes 20,000 displaced children expected to return to the north in 2015, about 16,000 children who have been out of school for two years, and those living in areas affected by insecurity and who have limited access to schools.

Only 76% of schools in the north that were functional before the crisis were functional as of December 2014. Only 23% of children in school before the crisis are currently enrolled. More than 300 schools are still closed in Gao, Kidal, Mopti and Timbuktu; 79% of schools in Kidal are not functioning, 69 schools closed in Segou and Mopti after attacks in January. Education has been temporarily suspended for some 9,000 children (UNICEF, 27/01/2015; OCHA, 15/01/2015; UNICEF, 15/01/2015). In the communes of Nampala (Segou), Diouara, Tenenkou and Youwara (Mopti) parents refuse to send their children to school and teachers have left due to insecurity (OCHA, 31/01/2015).

Protection

About 860,000 people are in need of protection, including 313,000 non-displaced in the north (OCHA, 31/01/2015). Explosive remnants of war (ERW) caused 101 casualties from 2012 to June 2014 (OCHA, 30/06/2014).

Three armed groups (Ansar Dine, MNLA and MUJAO) are reportedly recruiting and using children, and are listed for rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Updated: 26/03/2015

MAURITANIA FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

No significant developments this week 24/03/2015. Last update 21/01/2015.

KEY CONCERNS

- 800,000 people are estimated to be food insecure, of whom 428,000 are severely food insecure (OCHA, 02/2015).
- 24,100 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition (OCHA, 02/2015)

Political Context

The credibility of the Government continues to be questioned by much of the northern population, who claim they are being marginalised concerning the provision of basic services.

On 15 January, three anti-slavery activists were sentenced to two years in prison, one of whom was the candidate in the 2014 presidential election. Police used tear gas and batons to disperse protesters condemning the judgement. The practice of slavery was officially designated a punishable crime in 2007 (AFP, 15/01/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Displacement

Malian Refugees
Mauritania hosts almost 48,000 Malian refugees as of February 2015 (OCHA, 02/2015). Almost all live in Mbera camp, a remote desert location on the border that has significant security challenges, and where food insecurity and malnutrition are high. According to UNICEF, 60% of camp residents are women and children, and many have been in the camp for two years, resulting in overlapping emergency and medium-term needs.

Security problems and inaccessibility to areas of northern Mali make it difficult to obtain return figures.

Food Security

In February 2015, nearly 820,000 people, a fifth of the total population, were food insecure, including 428,000 who are in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and 4 (Emergency), according to the Cadre Harmonisé (Harmonised Framework), and in need of food assistance (OCHA, 02/2015).

In February/March 2015, more than 300,000 poor households in affected areas of the Senegal River Valley (near the border between Mauritania and Senegal) and western agro-pastoral zones (southwestern Mauritania) will begin to see a decline in seasonal income and face food consumption gaps.

Erratic rains have affected pasture regeneration and level of water points in several pastoral areas, particularly in Hodh el Chargui, Hodh el Gharbi, Brakna and Tagant regions (FAO, 27/01/2015). Declining prices for sheep and cattle will affect poor pastoral households between April and May (FEWSNET, 03/2015).

Without additional, well-targeted emergency assistance, more than 600,000 households could face Crisis (Phase 3) acute food insecurity by June (FEWSNET, 18/11/2014; FEWSNET, 03/2015).

Food Security in the Sahel Region

20.4 million people in the Sahel (Burkina Faso, north Cameroon, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, north Nigeria, and Senegal) are expected to suffer from food insecurity in 2015 (OCHA, 10/02/2015). In 2014, food insecurity rose dramatically to 24.7 million food insecure people, compared to 2013, when 11.3 million people had inadequate food (OCHA, 03/02/2014).

Health and Nutrition

Nutrition

91,300 children are acutely malnourished as of February 2015, of which 24,100 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition (OCHA, 02/2015).

Results of an August survey indicate that the national GAM rate had decreased from 13.1% to 9.8%, although Guidimakha region is reported to have GAM of 16%, exceeding the emergency threshold. GAM is over 10% in Gorgol, Assaba, Tagant, Hod El Chargui and Hod El Garbi (UNICEF, 10/2014).

A nutrition survey carried out in Mbera camp in November 2014 showed a significant decrease in both global acute malnutrition (from 11.8% to 9.9%) and severe acute malnutrition (1.4% to 0.8%) (UNICEF, 12/2014).

Reviewed: 24/03/2015

NIGER FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

March: An estimated 51,000 households (363,620 individuals) in Diffa – both displaced and from the host community – are in need of emergency food assistance (OCHA, 20/03/2015).

KEY CONCERNS

- An estimated 3.5 million people are food insecure (OCHA, 02/2015).
- 1.3 million acutely malnourished children, 366,858 of whom are severely malnourished (OCHA, 01/2015).
- More than 150,000 Nigerian refugees have fled to Niger since May 2013 (OCHA, 22/01/2015).- 1,749 cases and 64 deaths have been recorded since January in a cholera epidemic, reportedly linked to the one in neighbouring Nigeria (UNICEF, 11/2014).

Security Context

Insecurity has been rising in Niger and across the region due to crises in Nigeria, Mali and Libya. Terrorist threats from Boko Haram, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) are all of concern.

In February, Niger declared a state of emergency in response to Boko Haram attacks. It has been extended until 25 May (AFP, 24/02/2015; AFP, 26/02/2015). Niger’s Parliament has also authorised the deployment of 750 Niger soldiers in a regional offensive against BH (BBC, 10/02/2015).

Boko Haram Incidents

Boko Haram launched its first attack in Niger on 6 February, on Bosso town, in Diffa. Niger’s army, together with Chadian armed forces, repelled the attack (AFP, 06/02/2015).

Since then, BH attacks in Bosso have killed eight people (AFP, 08/02/2015; Reuters, 09/02/2015; Reuters, 24/02/2015). Since early March, no new incidents have been reported.

On 18 February, 36 people were killed and 27 injured when an unidentified plane bombed a village near the Nigerian border (AFP, 18/02/2015). On 20 February, seven Niger soldiers
and 15 BH militants were killed in heavy clashes on Karouga Island on Lake Chad (Reuters, 21/02/2015). On 1 March, Boko Haram attacked three other islands on the lake. According to local sources, many people on those islands came from Nigerian islands. 19 people are estimated dead; most drowned in the lake (AFP, 2/03/2015; 3/03/2015). Thousands of troops from Niger and Chad have launched a major ground and air offensive against BH in southeastern Niger (AFP, 14/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

Movement within Diffa, northern parts of Zinder, Tahoua, and Tillabery regions is possible only with military escorts (OCHA, 16/02/2015).

With thousands of people fleeing Diffa town, it has become more expensive to travel: the cost of the seat in any vehicle travelling to Zinder from Diffa has tripled (Reuters, 12/02/2015).

Displacement

Nigeria Crisis

150,000 people are estimated to have settled in Diffa region from Nigeria since the beginning of the crisis in May 2013, according to the Coordination and Management Team for Refugees and Returned Nigeriens (OCHA, 22/01/2015). 99,852 Nigerian refugees had been registered by the Government at 25 January, including 85,872 women and children, more than half of the refugee population (UNICEF, 03/03/2015).

There are reports of large-scale displacement from Diffa town since the BH attacks towards Zinder, Niger’s second-largest town, 480km west of Diffa. Displaced persons are also transiting through Zinder to travel onward to Maradi and Tillabery regions, and Niamey (OCHA, 02/2015). Since late 2014, a new wave of Nigerian refugees has also arrived in Zinder directly from Nigeria. More than 2,800 refugees were reported in the Zinder region in February: 1,128 in the department of Gouré, 1,083 in Magaria, and 373 in Dungass (OCHA, 02/2015).

The newly displaced are in a critical situation, and have shelter and NFI, food, water, and health and nutrition needs (OCHA, 24/09/2014). New arrivals have settled in 106 sites (UNICEF, 03/03/2015). Insecurity is limiting assistance to those who have settled on islands in Lake Chad (OCHA, 12/12/2014). Refugees who arrived earlier in the year are becoming host families for new arrivals, adding to the burden on families with very limited resources (IFRC, 03/10/2014). Sayam Forge camp was opened on 30 December, and as of 10 February, 704 Nigerian refugees had been relocated from Gagamari area (OCHA, 11/02/2015). The initial camp capacity is 5,000, though the camp can be extended (OCHA, 14/01/2015). Two more camps will be set up (UNICEF, 03/03/2015).

Diffa is vulnerable to both flooding and drought, and has long faced serious gaps in the provision of food staples, healthcare and potable water.

48,742 Malian refugees are in Niger (UNHCR, 28/02/2015). In March 2014, 80% of refugees were women and children. Most live in three camps in Tillabery region: Abala, Mangaize, and Tabareybarey. Two refugee hosting areas have been established in Intikane and Tazalit, Tahoua, for refugees from nomadic communities.

In May, Mali, Niger, and UNHCR signed a tripartite agreement on the voluntary repatriation of Malian refugees. As of 31 August 2014, over 12,000 Malians have returned to their homes (UNHCR, 31/08/2014).

CAR Crisis: Returnees

Since December 2013, 1,160 Niger nationals have been repatriated from CAR by IOM in coordination with the Government of Niger.

Food Security

3.5 million people are estimated to be food insecure in 2015, compared to 5.3 million in 2014 (OCHA, 02/2015 and 30/09/2014).

51,000 households in Diffa (363,620 individuals), an estimated 43% of both the IDP and host population, are in need of emergency food assistance (OCHA, 20/03/2015).

Diffa region will face Crisis food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) beginning April, following high cereal prices and poor pastoral revenues (FEWSNET, 03/2014).

Sahel Food Crisis: Regional Overview

20.4 million people in the Sahel (Burkina Faso, north Cameroon, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, north Nigeria, and Senegal) are expected to suffer from food insecurity in 2015 (OCHA, 10/01/2014). In 2014, food insecurity rose dramatically to 24.7 million food insecure people, compared to 2013, when 11.3 million people had inadequate food (OCHA, 03/02/2014).

Agriculture and Markets

Boko Haram-related market disruptions have limited trade flows towards Diffa and increased marketing costs (FEWSNET, 31/07/2014). Moreover, the new wave of internal displacement comes when farmers should be preparing to plant crops for the next harvest season. This has raised concerns about the long-term economic impact of the violence (Reuters, 12/02/2015). Agropastoral areas of northern Tillabery, Tahoua, and eastern Zinder will face food deficits as a result of early depletion of cereal and food stocks from May or June 2015 (FEWSNET, 01/02/2014). Poor pastoral resource availability in parts of the northern Sahel will begin to stress pastoral households from June to September 2015 (FEWSNET, 11/2014).

Health and Nutrition

MSF has temporarily withdrawn from Diffa region and relocated to other parts of the country, following increased violence by Boko Haram (MSF, 12/02/2015).
51 cases of cholera have been registered throughout Niger as of end February 2015. 25 cases were registered in Tillabery region, and 26 in Diffa region (OCHA, 02/2015). On 13 December, The Ministry of Health declared a cholera outbreak in Diffa region. As of 31 December, 291 cases and 18 deaths have been reported (OCHA, 12/2014). After the first few days of the outbreak, the incidence rate dropped sharply (OCHA, 14/01/2014).

Nutrition

Around 1.3 million children are acutely malnourished in Niger; 366,858 of them are severely malnourished, and 12,710 of these are in Diffa (OCHA, 22/12/2014; OCHA, 01/2015). GAM among children under five is at 14.8% nationwide as per the SMART nutrition survey conducted between July and August, and exceeds the 15% emergency threshold in Maradi region (OCHA, 09/2014). In September, GAM was at critical levels in Agadez (14.0%), Tahoua (14.7%), Tillabery (13.4%), and Diffa (13.8%), according to OCHA.

Education

In Diffa region, dozens of schools were closed due to or occupied by refugees in December (OCHA, 12/12/2014).

Protection

82% of 13,000 Nigerian refugees surveyed in Diffa did not have identity documents, according to an IOM assessment (IOM, 23/02/2015). Unaccompanied children have been reported arriving from Nigeria (OCHA, 28/11/2014).

Updated: 24/03/2015

SENEGAL FOOD INSECURITY

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

No significant developments this week, 24/03/2015. Last update: 18/02/2015.

KEY CONCERNS

- Over 3.8 million people are food insecure, including 927,420 in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) due to erratic rains in 2014 (UN, 16/02/2015).
- 332,300 children suffering from acute malnutrition, 68,650 from severe acute malnutrition (OCHA, 30/11/2014).

Political Context

Separatists have long opposed authorities in the coastal Casamance area, but the country overall remains stable. Salif Sadio, leader of the separatist movement, declared a unilateral ceasefire in April 2014, as proof of engagement in an ongoing peace process.

Humanitarian Context and Needs

4.3 million people are in need of assistance in 2015 in Senegal (31% of the population), corresponding to a 266% increase on 2013. The needs are mostly due to climatic conditions, a rise in food prices, and reduced cross-border exchange (UN, 16/02/2015).

Displacement

As of February, there are 17,085 refugees in Matam, Saint Louis, and Tambacounda, mostly from Mauritania. 52% of refugees have declared they are seeking naturalisation in Senegal (UN, 18/02/2015).

Food Security

3.8 million people are expected to be food insecure in Senegal until at least March. This comprises 2.86 million in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security and 927,420 in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) mainly in central and southern regions. Poor households, especially in Thiès, Louga, Matam, and northern Tambacounda, will likely be Stressed until April and Crisis from May due to the exhaustion of food stocks – which normally does not occur until June – and higher than average market dependence (FEWSNET, 27/02/2015; 29/01/2015). The poor are expected to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through October (FEWSNET, 03/2015).

Agriculture and Markets

Pasture deficits will affect animal production and reduce breeders’ purchasing power; there is also a high risk of increased livestock mortality from April (FEWSNET, 29/01/2015).

A 37% and 51% reduction in 2014 cereal and groundnut production is reducing food availability and purchasing power. Moreover, as a result of the closure of borders and markets due to Ebola containment measures, trade volumes in later 2014 were 50% below last year’s levels, leading to a 40% and 50% increase in the prices of palm oil and coffee, respectively, in less than four weeks (WFP, 15/09/2014). Senegal reopened its border with Guinea on 26 January (Reuters, 26/01/2015).

Sahel Food Crisis: Regional Overview

20.4 million people in the Sahel (Burkina Faso, north Cameroon, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, north Nigeria, and Senegal) are expected to suffer from food insecurity in 2015. In 2014, food insecurity rose dramatically to 24.7 million food insecure people, from 11.3 million in 2013 (OCHA, 10/01/2014, 03/02/2014).

Health and Nutrition

Nutrition

332,300 children are acutely malnourished, including 68,650 suffering from SAM. 319,000
were acutely malnourished in 2013. Matam, Saint Louis (Podor department in particular), and Tambacounda regions are most affected (UN, 16/02/2015).

Reviewed: 24/03/2015

BURUNDI FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

No new significant developments this week, 19/03/2015. Latest update: 03/03/2015.

KEY CONCERNS

As of September, Burundi has 78,940 IDPs (UNHCR, 31/11/2014).

Political Context

Since the President’s re-election in 2010, scores of political killings, intimidation of the opposition, and a crackdown on media freedom have been reported. Most recently, observers stated concerns about restrictions on civil and political rights, following a series of violent acts by the ruling party’s increasingly militant youth wing, Imbonerakure.

2015 Elections

Deteriorating relations between the parties within the ruling coalition stem mainly from the desire of President Nkurunziza, first elected in 2005, to run for a third term in 2015. Under the Burundian constitution and the terms of the peace deal, no leader is supposed to hold power for more than ten years, but President Nkurunziza’s supporters argue that his first term does not count as he was selected by lawmakers in 2005, and not voted in (Reuters, 20/03/2015). In June 2014, the Government, the National Independent Electoral Commission, and all political parties and actors signed the General Principles for the conduct of the 2015 elections (UN, 10/06/2014). The UN Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) is mandated to follow and report on the presidential, parliamentary, and local elections scheduled between May and September 2015, though the Government has stated that MENUB’s mandate is limited, and does not cover validating the results (UN, 03/01/2015; AFP, 12/01/2015). In mid-January, opposition figures were jailed for bribery and links to armed groups (AFP, IRIN, 16/01/2015). International actors on the ground have prepared contingency plans, as the risk of violence during and after elections remains high (Burundi Red Cross, 04/03/2015).

Security Context

The Burundian army claimed it killed 100 armed fighters who had crossed from DRC in the first week of January. The fighters were reportedly trying to reach Kibira forest, an area used as a base by opposition groups in the past. Army reports have suggested that a major offensive has been planned to destabilise the country ahead of the elections (AFP, 05/01/2014; 06/01/2014). A Human Rights Watch report published in February asserted that during this attack, the Burundian National Defense Forces and police committed at least 47 extrajudicial executions, adding that armed members of the Imbonerakure also participated in the killings (Human Rights Watch, 12/02/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Displacement

IDPs

As of January 2015, Burundi has 77,600 IDPs (IDMC, 31/01/2015). They are mostly ethnic Tutsis, located in and around 120 sites across northern and central Burundi, who were displaced by inter-ethnic and inter-communal violence. No new displacement has been recorded since 2008 (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre).

There are concerns remain that tensions in neighbouring countries and the upcoming elections could bring about an increase in displacement (IDMC, 04/03/2015).

Refugees

As of September, Burundi is host to 49,800 refugees, mostly from DRC (UNHCR, 31/11/2014). Refugees are mainly located in the border regions of Ngozi (north, alongside Rwanda), Ruyigi, Muyinga, and Cankuzo (east, alongside Tanzania) and Bubanza (west, alongside DRC).

Returnees

43,000 Burundians have been forcibly repatriated from Tanzania. Most of them have not been registered due to a lack of reception facilities (IOM, 01/2014). The high number of IDPs and refugees returning is aggravating tensions over land ownership, as returnees claim land where other families, often of a different ethnic background, have since settled.

Burundian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

As of 1 September 2014, 14,367 Burundian refugees and asylum-seekers were residing in Uganda. Most Burundian refugees are located in Nakivale and Oruchinga (UNHCR, 23/09/2014).

As of 30 September 2014, 9,233 Burundian refugees were residing in DRC (UNHCR, 30/09/2014).

As of 1 March 2015, 6,619 Burundian refugees were residing in Kenya (UNHCR, 01/03/2015), most of them located in Kakuma Camp.

Food Security

Season A harvest from December to February and labour opportunities during the harvest has improved access to income. Most households country-wide will remain in Minimal (IPC Phase1) food security through March. Given above-average staple food prices and declining household food stocks as the lean season progresses, food security for poor...
households is expected to deteriorate to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) until June (FEWSNET, 01/03/2015).

Protection

The Government is reportedly targeting and incarcerating journalists, activists, and members of political parties (Human Rights Watch, 22/01/2015).

Reviewed: 25/03/2015

UGANDA DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

18 March: A general food shortage has been reported in Arua district, which has led to increased cost of food items (UNHCR).

KEY CONCERNS

- 145,225 South Sudanese refugees have arrived in Uganda since December 2013 (UNHCR, 18/03/2015).

- GAM rates of 19.6% and SAM levels of 4.1% have been reported among South Sudanese refugees in Arua, Adjumani and Kiryandongo districts (UNICEF, 23/01/2015).

- In Karamoja, GAM rates of 13.4% are the highest recorded in the last five years, while SAM remains above 3% (UNICEF, 23/01/2015).

- Rapid expansion of refugee camps has strained health services (UNFPA, 16/02/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Displacement

IDPs

As of 11 February, Uganda has 30,140 IDPs (OCHA, 11/02/2015).

Refugees in Uganda

As of 11 February, there were 422,440 refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda, from DRC (44%), South Sudan (38%), Somalia (7%), Rwanda (4%), Burundi (3%), and others (4%) (OCHA, 11/02/2015). Refugees are hosted in settlements in Adjumani, Kiryandongo, Kampala and Arua districts (UNHCR, 24/11/2014).

As of 18 March, 145,225 South Sudanese refugees had fled to Uganda since December 2013 (UNHCR, 18/03/2015). Women and children account for 87% of arriving refugees; half are children under 12 years (FAO, 11/11/2014).

As camps are overwhelmed, preparation of new land in Maaji, Moyo district, is ongoing. As of 4 February, 261 people had been relocated (UNHCR, 04/02/2015).

Ugandan Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

At 1 March, there were 145,225 Ugandan refugees in Kenya (UNHCR, 01/03/2015). At 30 June 2014, there were 1,211 Uganda refugees in DRC (UNHCR, 30/05/2014).

Food Security

In Karamoja, about 700,000 people remain at Stressed (IPC Phase 2) level of food insecurity (FEWSNET, 31/12/2014). Localised areas in Karamoja remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) acute food insecurity, including Kaabong and Moroto (FEWSNET, 29/11/2014).

IPC Phase 2 food insecurity is expected in Karamoja until June, but conditions may worsen if rains are delayed or inadequate (FEWSNET, 31/01/2015). Harvesting of 2014 second season crops is almost complete and production is estimated to be average (FAO, 04/02/2015).

Around 146,000 refugees who arrived before June 2013 had their food rations halved in February due to funding issues (UNHCR, 16/01/2015). Full rations will be restored in April (WFP, 09/03/2015). Harsh climatic conditions and poor yields have deteriorated the food security situation in Arua camp. (UNHCR, 20/01/2015). A general food shortage has been reported in Arua district, which has led to increased cost of food items (UNHCR, 18/03/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Nutrition

GAM rates of 19.6% and SAM levels of 4.1% have been reported among South Sudanese refugees in Arua, Adjumani and Kiryandongo districts (UNICEF, 23/01/2015). Rapid expansion of the camps has strained health services (UNFPA, 16/02/2015).

In Karamoja, GAM rates of 13.4% are the highest recorded in the last five years, while SAM prevalence remains above 3% (UNICEF, 23/01/2015).

Health centres in Arua require additional staff, space, and supplies to respond to refugee needs (UNHCR, 20/01/2015). The number of community-based hygiene promoters remains limited, with a ratio of 1:873. There is also the need to scale up health education related to HIV counselling and testing among refugees (UNHCR, 18/03/2015).

Typhoid

At 5 March, 1,940 cases had been identified; a large increase from 19 February figures, when 513 individuals were identified with signs and symptoms of typhoid. As of 19 February, nine cases of typhoid fever and two deaths had been confirmed in Kampala city.
and the neighbouring districts of Wakiso and Mukono (Government, 19/02/2015; WHO, 05/03/2015).

**WASH**

Boreholes have dried up, so water trucking has been necessary in Adjumani. In Arua, the water supply is 13.8L per person per day, and in Kiryandongo, 16L per person per day, both below the UNHCR standard of 20L (UNHCR, 18/03/2015).

The current ratio of hygiene promoter per population is 1:775 (UNHCR, 20/01/2015).

**Protection**

Human Rights Watch issued a report in November asserting that the government response to deadly ethnic violence in the Rwenzori region in western Uganda in July 2014 was inadequate. Bakonzo community members attacked police and army posts in several districts, sparking reprisals by other ethnic groups and security forces (HRW, 05/11/2014).

**ERITREA FOOD INSECURITY**

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

No new significant developments this week, 25/03/2015. Last update: 11/02/2015.

No accurate or verified data relating to the food security situation or food price levels in Eritrea is available, therefore Eritrea is not included in the Global Overview prioritisation.

**KEY CONCERNS**

- 1.2 million people, including 696,000 children under 18, are in need of humanitarian assistance (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).
- Over 60% of the Eritrean population was reported as undernourished between 2011 and 2013 (WFP).
- Torture, arbitrary detention, and severe restrictions on freedom of expression, association, and religion are common in Eritrea (UN, HRW).
- Ongoing human rights abuses prompt thousands of Eritreans to flee the country every year. In January 2015, Ethiopia was hosting an estimated 125,000 Eritrean refugees (OCHA, 26/01/2015).
- Operations and maintenance of established humanitarian systems remain a significant challenge (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).

**Political Context**

President Isaias Aferwerki, who has ruled for over 20 years, uses the pretext of previous border conflicts with Ethiopia to justify tight control over the population (New York Times, 03/10/2014). Attempts to bring the various opposition parties under one political umbrella have been mostly unsuccessful and no consensus has been reached regarding a roadmap for democratic transition (19/01/2015, Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre).

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

1.2 million people need humanitarian assistance as of 15 January 2015, including 696,000 children under 18 (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).

**Access**

There is a lack of updated and reliable data on the humanitarian situation due to limited humanitarian access. Providing direct humanitarian assistance remains a challenge due to limited access, and absence of assessments and humanitarian space (ECHO, 10/2013).

In November–December 2013, several projects in partnership with the UN and the Government began; the Government had previously ordered the end of all operations by non-state development partners by the end of 2012 (IFRC, 30/05/2014). On 24 April 2014, according to media sources, the UAE Red Cross had access to a million children across six provinces to distribute clothing.

**Displacement**

**Refugees**

As of 11 February, 2,900 refugees reside in Eritrea (OCHA, 11/02/2015).

Eritrean Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

According to 2012 UNHCR figures, there are 300,000 Eritrean refugees in neighbouring countries as well as in Europe and Israel. According to UN figures, some 4,000 Eritreans, among them hundreds of unaccompanied minors, are fleeing the country every month to escape government repression and lack of basic freedoms (UN, 05/06/2014). The high proportion of unaccompanied minors who cross from Eritrea to Ethiopia is a priority concern (UNHCR).

**Ethiopia:** As of 31 January, there are 136,363 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia (OCHA, 31/01/2015), mainly settled in four camps in the northern Tigray and Afar regions (OCHA, 26/01/2015). Arrival rates spiked towards the end of 2014, with a total of 33,000 arriving by the end of the year (OCHA, 24/11/2014; UNHCR, 09/02/2015). The recent influx has resulted in shortages of shelter in the camps (OCHA, 26/01/2015).

About 90% of those who arrived in October were between 18 and 24 years old, and cited intensified mandatory recruitment into military service as their reason for flight (local media, 15/11/2014).
Sudan: Sudan reportedly hosts at least 114,500 Eritrean refugees. Eastern Sudan received an average of 500 Eritrean refugees per month in 2013, down from 2,000 a month in 2012.

Djibouti: As of 1 January, there are 1,240 Eritrean refugees in Djibouti (UNHCR, 30/01/2015).

Yemen: Reports indicate hundreds of Eritrean refugees are scattered across the streets of Al Safeyah in Sana’a, without proper shelter or livelihood. Refugees have informed UNHCR that most are imprisoned upon arrival in Yemen, on the grounds of security concerns (Yemen Times, 19/08/2014). Several NGOs have called on the Yemeni authorities to stop deporting Eritrean political refugees (UNHCR).

Kenya: As of 1 March, there are 1,546 Eritrean refugees in Kenya; most are located in Nairobi (UNHCR, 01/03/2015).

Chad: On 6 February, the Chadian government announced plans to deport a dozen Eritrean refugees from Chad. Humanitarian organisations have protested the move, as the returnees will most probably face indefinite detention in Eritrea (local media, 06/02/2015).

Food Security

A positive rainy season in 2014, between June and September, may significantly improve the food security situation in highland areas, but not in the coastal lowland regions (UNICEF, 15/01/2015).

It is estimated that Eritrea produces only 60% of the food it needs, and markets do not seem to be functioning properly. These two factors suggest that a significant part of the population may be in need of food assistance. In addition, local food and fuel prices are likely to be high, putting severe pressure on household coping mechanisms. The Government officially denies any food shortages within its borders and refuses food aid (ECHO).

Health and Nutrition

According to FAO in 2013, over 60% of the Eritrean population was reported to be undernourished during 2011–2013.

Protection

Indefinite national service, and arbitrary arrest and detention, including incommunicado detention and inhumane prison conditions, are the focus of a March 2015 UN human rights report (UN Human Rights Council). Between 5,000 and 10,000 political prisoners are being held in a country of just over six million people. The UN human rights chief has accused the government of torture and summary executions (UN Human Rights Council, 05/02/2014).

Harassment of citizens by authorities, on the grounds of their plotting to leave Eritrea, is reportedly widespread (UN Human Rights Council, 31/03/2014). In September 2014, the UN Human Rights Council set up a Commission of Inquiry to investigate human rights abuses in Eritrea, but by January 2015 it still had not been granted direct access to the country (Human Rights Watch, 24/09/2014; UNHRC, 16/01/2015).

Mines and ERW

With only 25% of minefields cleared, UNICEF reported in January 2015 that the impact of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in 2014 continued to have a serious impact on the population, including causing child death, injuries and disabilities in war-affected communities. Humanitarian mine action programmes in the country have weakened due to limited access (UNICEF, 15/01/2015). There are 995 dangerous areas, 914 mined areas and 702 minefields in Eritrea (UNMEE).

Reviewed: 25/03/2015

- 298,940 refugees from Pakistan since mid-June 2014; new arrivals are vulnerable, while longer term concerns emerge from protracted displacement (UNHCR, 11/02/2015).

- 805,400 IDPs, including 156,200 people displaced by conflict in 2014 (UNHCR, 31/12/2014).

- 3.7 million people are food insecure (IPC, 01/11/2014).

- 517,600 children under five suffer from SAM, and eight provinces show GAM rates above 15%, breaching the emergency threshold (UNICEF, 21/01/2015, OCHA, 31/07/2014).

OVERVIEW
Natural disasters and armed conflicts in Afghanistan have caused humanitarian crisis. Assistance needs include food, healthcare, and protection.

The Afghan Government faces both internal and external challenges to its capacity and legitimacy, and the outcome of the 2014 presidential election will have implications for the country’s internal cohesion. The security environment is highly volatile and expected to deteriorate as international troops gradually withdraw from the country.

Political Context
The Afghan Parliament rejected 10 of 18 cabinet nominees on 28 January, leaving the country in uncertainty; the President will introduce a new list of 16 nominees on 1 April (AAN, 26/03/2015; AFP, 04/02/2015). Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah were sworn in as Afghanistan’s new President and Prime Minister, respectively, on 29 September 2014 (Reuters, 29/09/2014). The pair were rival presidential candidates in disputed elections (AFP, 26/09/2014).

Peace Talks with the Taliban
Although preliminary contacts between Kabul and the Taliban have been renewed since December 2014, no substantial talks have been launched. Peace talks with the Afghan Taliban have been stalled since mid-2013. On 10 January, Afghanistan joined Pakistan in military operations against militants in both countries (British & Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group, 31/01/2015).

Security Context
Harassment and intimidation by anti-government forces, inter-tribal disputes, and clashes between state and anti-government forces remained major causes of insecurity and displacement in January, mostly in Parwan, Kunduz, Faryab, Helmand, Herat, and Kandahar. Military operations were intensifying in the north of Helmand end January (UNAMA/UNHCHR, 18/02/2015).

3,699 civilians were killed and 6,849 injured in 2014, a 22% increase in casualties on 2013; there were 21% more women casualties, and 40% more children. Ground engagements, increasingly in civilian-populated areas, have become the leading cause of civilian casualties, while the mounting use of indiscriminate weapons and IEDs is of concern (UNAMA/UNHCHR, 18/02/2015).

Taliban
The Taliban claimed victory against NATO as it ended its combat mission at the end of 2014, and said they would continue their fight against remaining foreign forces in the country (Al Arabiya, 29/12/2014). Remote parts of southern and southeastern Afghanistan, near the border with Pakistan, remain under Taliban control. Taliban numbers have increased by 15% since the beginning of 2013, as the group has intensified attacks. They are increasingly financed by criminal enterprises, including heroin laboratories, illegal ruby and emerald mines, and kidnapping (UNSC, 02/02/2015).

International Military Presence
NATO formally ended its combat mission in Afghanistan on 31 December 2014, moving to the Resolute Support mission made up of 9,800 US troops and 3,000 soldiers from other member states. The mission will focus on supporting Afghan forces’ fight against the Taliban, along with US counter-terrorism operations (Reuters, 01/01/2015). The number of US troops remaining in Afghanistan until end December is significantly higher than the 5,500 initially planned, and has been denounced by the Taliban (Le Monde, 24/03/2015).

Conflict Developments and Incidents
**Helmand:** Two Taliban attacks in Lashkargah in March, targeting provincial officials and a police station killed 11 people and wounded 61 (AFP, 18/03/2015; AFP, 11/03/2015). A Taliban suicide attack targeting an army and police base in Sangin district on 3 March killed nine people, including five civilians, and wounded eight (AFP, 03/03/2015).

**Kabul:** Days after the decision to slow the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, two suicide attacks in Kabul on 25 and 29 March, including one targeting a prominent Afghan MP, killed ten and injured dozens (AFP, 25/03/2015). Gunmen killed six and wounded five at a Sufi mosque on 7 March, raising fears among Muslim minorities over increasing sectarian unrest (AFP, 17/03/2015; 07/03/2015). A Taliban attack on a NATO vehicle killed two people on 26 February (AFP, 26/02/2015). The capital was hit by at least 12 suicide attacks over 1 November–13 December 2014, mainly targeting foreigners (AFP, 13/12/2014).

Other incidents: 13 people were killed in a bus attack in Wardak province on 24 March (AFP, 24/03/2015). A roadside bomb targeting a district police chief killed three civilians in Kunduz on 21 March (AFP, 21/03/2015). Suspected Taliban gunmen abducted 30 members of the country’s Hazara Shi’ite Muslim minority on 23 February in Zabul
province; a month later, there was no news of them (AFP, 24/03/2015; 17/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Planning figures are for 6.9 million Afghans in need of humanitarian aid in 2015, including 2.8 million children, compared to 7.4 million in 2014 (UNICEF, 21/01/2015). Badghis, Helmand, Kunar, Nangarhar, and Wardak most need assistance (OCHA, 25/11/2014).

Access

Access in January was most constrained in parts of Helmand, Kandahar, Ghor, Paktikam, Khost, Nangarhar, and Nuristan (WFP, 19/01/2015). Lack of access to IDPs remains a significant challenge, particularly in Helmand, where only two districts are accessible to humanitarian actors (UNHCR, 31/01/2015).

International military withdrawal raises concerns over reduced funding affecting the sustainability of services available to the population (Handicap International, 04/12/2014).

Security Incidents Involving Aid Workers

16 incidents against national and international organisations were reported across Afghanistan in February. Eight staff were abducted, two were killed, and two wounded. There were 293 incidents against aid workers in 2014 (OCHA, 31/12/2014, 30/11/2014). The Mine Action Programme in Afghanistan was directly affected by 37 incidents that resulted in 34 deaths among its personnel and 27 injuries in 2014 (UN, 15/01/2015).

Disasters

Nearly 59,700 people (8,176 families) in 133 districts of 24 provinces were affected by floods, heavy snowfall, and avalanches over 1 February–24 March, including 1,919 families in Nangarhar and 1,503 in Parwan. 281 people have died and 81 have been injured. Some 7,790 houses have been damaged or destroyed, and communication lines interrupted in some remote areas. Accessibility and security challenges due to road closures and areas controlled by non-state armed groups are hampering needs assessment and aid provision in some provinces. Priority needs are for food, NFIs, and emergency shelter (OCHA, 24/03/2015; IOM/USAID, 15/03/2015; IFRC, 18/03/2015).

Displacement

There are 818,160 IDPs in Afghanistan and 298,940 refugees from Pakistan in Khost and Paktika provinces; returns from Pakistan are increasing since December 2014, while around 2.5 million Afghans have taken refuge in neighbouring countries.

IDPs

At 31 January, there were 818,160 profiled IDPs in Afghanistan, including 12,754 conflict-displaced populations profiled in January and 156,200 profiled in 2014. Nearly 213,200 IDPs are in the south, 204,950 in the west, 140,000 in the east and 133,100 in central Afghanistan. Priority needs are food and NFIs (UNHCR, 31/01/2015).

Refugees

Displacement from Pakistan to Afghanistan’s Khost and Paktika provinces has been ongoing since mid-June 2014. At 11 March, these provinces were hosting nearly 254,550 refugees (36,511 families) from Pakistan, 67% of whom are in Khost (UNHCR, 11/03/2015). Urgent needs remain for shelter, protection, health, WASH, food and mine clearance around camps (UNHCR, 11/03/2015; 11/02/2015; 04/02/2015).

More than 80% of refugees live in host communities, which are often remote and difficult to access, and stretched beyond capacity (UNHCR, 11/02/2015; 03/12/2014). New families arrived in Barmel district in Paktika, and Gulan camp in Khost in the first week of February, following military operations in North Waziristan. Gulan camp hosts 8,663 families. A re-verification exercise for refugee figures in Khost is ongoing (UNHCR, 11/03/2015).

An additional 600,000 Baloch refugees who have fled insurgency activities in Pakistan since 1986 are living in precarious conditions, notably in Nimroz (AAN, 31/12/2014).

Returnees

Returns of undocumented Afghans from Pakistan have increased following security incidents in the country, particularly the December Taliban attack in Peshawar. By 28 February, 41,209 undocumented Afghans had spontaneously returned in 2015 through the Torkham border, including nearly 19,000 in February. The average daily return rate in 2015 was 26 times higher than in December 2014. 37% have settled in Nangarhar province. 30–40% of undocumented returnees are vulnerable and in need of assistance (OCHA, 28/02/2015; IOM, 13/02/2015). As of 10 March, more than 6,000 Afghans had returned to Kunar in 2015 and were in need of assistance (OCHA, 10/03/2015).

Afghan Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

As of 30 September 2014, there were 2.5 million Afghan refugees in neighbouring countries (USAID, 01/10/2014).

Food Security

At least 3.7 million Afghans are food insecure in 187 districts (IPC, 01/11/2014). IDPs inaccessible to humanitarian agencies, particularly in insecure districts in Helmand, are in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), having lost much of their access to income (FEWSNET, 30/11/2014, 01/11/2014). Households displaced or otherwise affected by conflict and natural disasters will remain Stressed until June, as long as they receive humanitarian assistance (FEWSNET, 28/02/2015). At least 20% of households in Badghis province will move to Crisis from April to May, due to a below-average 2014 harvest and lack of dietary diversity during the lean season.

Agriculture and Markets

Floods and avalanches since 23 February have destroyed farmland and orchards across the country (Government, 28/02/2015).
2014 wheat production was 64% lower than 2013, and January 2015 wheat grain and flour prices have increased 12% on average compared to 2014, leading to excess sales of livestock; Badghis province is most affected (FEWSNET, 11/02/2015). Conflict in Helmand in 2014 hampered farmers’ ability to harvest their crops (FEWSNET, 01/11/2014).

Livelihoods

Political uncertainty over 2014 led to decreased investment in many sectors including construction and trade, which are key employers of casual labour. Faryab province saw the largest decline in casual labour wages: rates were 43% lower in September than in 2013 and the five-year average. They were 23% and 14% lower than 2013 in Badakhshan and Balkh provinces, respectively (FEWSNET, 01/11/2014).

Decreased prices for some cash crops compared to last year is limiting incomes (FEWSNET, 01/12/2014). Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan has risen by 7% in a year, from 209,000 hectares in 2013 to 224,000 hectares in 2014 (UN, 12/11/2014).

Health and Nutrition

A spike in pneumonia cases and deaths has been reported among children under five, notably in Takhar province, following severe weather conditions. Access to health services is limited due to heavy snow and blocked roads (OCHA, 05/03/2015). Increasing reports of malaria and measles cases, especially in Paktika, Khost, Balkh and Zabul provinces, are a cause for concern (Government, 07/03/2015).

There is a shortage of trained surgeons, anaesthetists, and trauma capacity in conflict-affected areas (OCHA, 25/11/2014). Nearly 80% of maternal and reproductive health needs are unmet (WHO, 10/12/2014).

Tuberculosis is also a high burden for Afghanistan, but many new cases were missed out in 2014 due to lack of close monitoring (Government, 24/03/2015).

Polio

One case of polio has been reported so far in 2015, from Helmand province. 28 cases were reported in 2014, mostly in conflict-affected areas, compared to 14 in 2013 (Global Polio Eradication Initiative, 25/02/2015; 14/01/2015).

Nutrition

517,596 children suffer from SAM (UNICEF, 21/01/2015). In Uruzgan, Nuristan, Khost, Paktika, Wardak, Kunar, and Laghman provinces, GAM rates were breaching the emergency threshold of 15% in mid-2014 (National Nutrition Survey, OCHA 31/07/2014).

An estimated 45% of all child deaths in refugee and IDP camps are linked to malnutrition (UNICEF, 21/01/2015). The presence of common animal diseases in areas of Khost and Paktika have reduced the availability of meat and milk products to Pakistani refugees and host communities (FEWSNET, 11/02/2015). Fewer than 20% of children with SAM and MAM received the treatment they needed in 2014 (OCHA, 25/11/2014).

WASH

1.9 million Afghans are in need of better access to safe WASH facilities (UNICEF, 21/01/2015). WASH conditions remain public health concerns in Khost and Paktika (FEWSNET, 11/02/2015). Additional latrines are needed in Gulan camp (UNHCR, 08/01/2015).

Shelter

A growing number of displaced populations live in informal settlements in major Afghan urban centres, in substandard and crowded accommodation, with insufficient WASH facilities, food, education, and employment opportunities. Women are particularly at risk, living with reduced access to education, health, and livelihood opportunities, and facing significant unmet mental health needs (NRC, 23/03/2015).

As of 11 December, 40,629 refugees were in 52 informal settlements in the capital. The most populated is Charahi Qamber (7,436 individuals) (OCHA, 17/12/2014). Overall numbers on people in informal shelters across Afghanistan are missing.

Education

Educational facilities in Khost are overstretched, with 344 schools employing 6,000 teachers and catering for around 360,000 children. There are 50,000 school-aged refugee children in Khost (Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 05/11/2014).

Protection

Child Protection

The Afghan national and local police and three armed groups (Taliban, Haqqani Network, and Hezb-e-Islami) have been listed for recruitment and use of children. The Taliban has been listed for attacks on schools and hospitals (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict 02/06/2014).

Sexual and Gender-based Violence

There are reports of possible increased domestic violence among refugees as a result of camp conditions (UNHCR, 08/01/2015).

Detention

35% of detainees in national facilities have experienced ill-treatment or torture, including 42% of child detainees, according to a UNAMA study conducted between February 2013 and December 2014. 49% of detainees had experienced ill-treatment or torture during the same study over 2011–2012 (OHCHR, UNAMA, 25/02/2015).

Violence against Journalists

There were 129 incidents of violence against Afghan journalists in 2014, resulting in eight deaths, a 69% increase in incidents on 2013 (International Media Support, 15/01/2015).

Updated, 30/03/2015
IRAQ CONFLICT, INTERNAL UNREST, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

27 March: Many essential food and WASH operations may be suspended by May due to funding constraints (OCHA, UNHCR).

23 March: 93 informal IDP sites are at risk of eviction across Iraq; 1,900 families are at risk in KR-I and 1,300 in Kerbala (UNHCR/CCCM Cluster).

23 March: 17,000 families in Haditha in Anbar are in need of urgent humanitarian support, including food and fuel for cooking (OCHA).

23 March: An explosion in Sadr City in Baghdad killed eight people and wounded more than 20 (AFP).

KEY CONCERNS

- Almost 1,100 deaths were recorded by UNAMI in February, including at least 611 civilians. Approximately 12,000 people were killed in 2014, corresponding to the worst levels of violence since 2006–2007 (UNAMI 01/03/2015, 01/01/2015).

- An estimated 5.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, including 2.54 million IDPs and 2.2 million beyond the reach of aid agencies (ECHO, 12/12/2014; IOM, 12/03/2015).

- Access is highly constrained in Anbar, Kirkuk and Nineawa (2015).

- Nearly 246,836 registered Syrian refugees are in Iraq; over 40% are children (UNHCR, 15/03/2015).

- Protection is a key concern, particularly in areas directly affected by conflict and under IS control.

OVERVIEW

The IS insurgency has compounded an already fragile political and humanitarian situation, leading to a level 3 humanitarian crisis and international military intervention. Iraq now hosts one of the largest internally displaced populations in the world. Priority needs are food, water, shelter, fuel and access to healthcare. Access constraints and human rights violations, particularly in IS-controlled areas, are of major concern. There are large information gaps on the situation of affected populations outside of the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

Political Context

National Political Context

The perceived marginalisation of Sunni groups by former President Maliki’s Government is considered one of the main drivers of the current conflict. A unity government, led by President Abadi, was formed in September 2014. While trying to balance sectarian tensions inside the country, Abadi has been seeking to garner international support for the fight against the Islamic State, including from neighbouring Sunni Arab states, where high level officials have been regularly sent in an effort to sooth long-standing animosity (Foreign Affairs, 16/01/2015).

Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I)

Masoud Barzani’s Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have ruled the autonomous KR-I through a coalition government since 2005. Barzani’s term has been extended to 2015, a move denounced as illegal by the opposition. In mid-November 2014, Baghdad and Erbil reached a budget agreement around oil revenues, which was incorporated into Iraq’s 2015 national budget law late January; both sides have signaled reluctance to uphold commitments (Al Jazeera, 19/02/2015; UN, 02/12/2014).

Security Context

Around 1,100 people were killed in acts of terrorism and violence in February, including 611 civilians. At least 12,000 people were killed and more than 23,000 injured in Iraq in 2014, in the worst violence since 2006–2007. It is difficult to verify reported casualties in conflict areas (UNAMI, 01/03/2015, 01/01/2015).

Stakeholders

Islamic State (IS)

In June, IS declared the establishment of a Sunni caliphate, covering the area between Aleppo in northern Syria and Diyala in eastern Iraq. Abu Bakr al Baghdadi was declared caliph and leader for Muslims worldwide. IS has taken over large areas of northern and eastern Syria, and parts of northern and central Iraq. In September, IS had around 20,000 –31,500 fighters in Iraq and Syria (BBC, 15/09/2014). Estimates of its current capacity are hard to obtain: the group has suffered significant losses, while attracting an increasing number of foreign fighters. The group has been selling crude oil and gasoline to finance its operations. It has destroyed several heritage sites (Le Monde, 07/03/2015).

Government Forces

Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) are made up of around 48,000 troops, involved in offensives around Baghdad, and in central governorates (Foreign Policy, 28/03/2015). The Iraqi Prime Minister declared in January that falling global oil prices could lead to possible budget deficits, which will hamper the capacity to undertake military operations (Reuters, 22/01/2015).

Shi’a militias

Three militias have been supporting government forces on all major fronts against IS since...
the beginning of the insurgency, as part of the Popular Mobilisation Forces: Asa’ib, Kita’ib Hezbollah, and the Badr Brigades. Escalating abuses of civilians in Sunni areas by militias have been reported since the fall of Mosul last June (UN, 19/03/2015; Reuters, 30/04/2014; HRW, 15/02/2015). The Popular Mobilisation Forces are made up of around 100,000 fighters, including 30,000 reportedly backed by the Iranian Government (Al Jazeera, 23/01/2015).

KR-I Forces

The Kurdish Peshmerga, supported by Kurdish fighters from Syria and Turkey, are engaged in a counteroffensive against IS. Kurdish fighters receive training and equipment from multiple countries, including the United States (AFP).

International Involvement

In August, US forces started airstrikes on IS locations. On 15 September, 30 additional countries pledged to help Iraq fight IS. Iran has dispatched members of its elite Revolutionary Guards Corps and reportedly carried out airstrikes against IS, at the request of the Government of Iraq (The Economist, 03/01/2015; The Guardian, 05/01/2015, 04/12/2014). Gunfire exchanges were reported in January, engaging Canadian forces who came under attack while training Iraqi troops (Al Jazeera, 20/01/2015).

Conflict Developments

Since December 2014, IS has carried out simultaneous attacks on multiple fronts, in areas north of Baghdad, Anbar, Salah al Din, and Kirkuk governorates (ISW, 12/12/2014, 31/01/2015).

IS made important gains in Anbar in the last quarter of 2014, taking control of around 80% of the governorate, and continues to push into the provincial capital Ramadi (REACH, 27/01/2015). However, ISF and Kurdish forces have regained territory. ISF recaptured all populated areas of Diyala governorate from IS in January, and Al Baghdadi in Anbar early March (AFP, 26/01/2015; 08/03/2015). Peshmerga forces are fighting IS in Kirkuk.

Recent Incidents

Anbar: Clashes between IS and Iraqi forces have been ongoing in the southern part of the province since early January, especially around Garma and Fallujah. Military operations engaging ISF and affiliated militias against IS are also ongoing in Ramadi as of 18 March (ISW, 18/03/2015; 13/03/2015; 21/01/2015). Seven coordinated IS suicide attacks on government-held areas of Ramadi on 11 March killed at least ten people and wounded 30 (AFP, 11/03/2015).

Baghdad has seen nearly daily bombings and shootings since November. However, the 2003 night curfew was lifted on 7 February as a result of relative security improvements in the city (AFP, 07/02/2015). An explosion in Sadr City killed eight people and wounded more than 20 on 23 March (AFP, 23/03/2015). A series of bombings targeting public places and police killed 11 people and injured another 24 on 8 March (Al Jazeera, 08/03/2015). At least 31 people were killed and 43 wounded in several explosions on 24 February (AFP, 24/02/2015).

Diyala: A battle to retake villages in Mansuriyah, Muqdadiyah, began on 23 January (AFP, 26/01/2015). On 27 January, unidentified gunmen reportedly killed 70 people in the village of Barwana in Muqdadiyah (ISW, 28/01/2015).

Kirkuk: Peshmerga forces initiated a wide operation to dislodge IS from areas of southwestern Kirkuk in February; by 18 March, Peshmerga and Popular Mobilisation forces had retaken Bashir and surrounding villages (ISW, 18/03/2015). Both forces, with the support of ISF, are planning for an operation in Al Hawija in the coming months. This cooperation is significant, as tensions are visible between Kurdish and Shi’ite rivals over control of Kirkuk city, raising fears of IS advances if violence erupts (ISW, 13/03/2015; Ekurd Daily, 17/02/2015; The Daily Beast, 17/02/2015).

Nineawa: IS continues to carry out security operations south of Mosul, to control tribal resistance and safeguard one of their most important areas of control. Peshmerga forces have reportedly taken control of a key road used by IS to supply Mosul. Community tensions are growing in Sinjar: armed Yazidis raided four villages end January, killing 21 suspected IS supporters (Reuters, 10/02/2015).

Salah al Din: Iraqi forces and affiliated armed groups launched an offensive on IS strongholds along the Tigris River, advancing from Samarra to Tikrit, on 2 March (Reuters, 02/03/2015). Government forces reportedly recaptured Abu Ajil, Tal Ksaiba, Al Alam, and Al Dour on the outskirts of Tikrit (Wall Street Journal, 13/02/2015; Al Jazeera, 08/03/2015). Coalition airstrikes have been supporting the offensive since 25 March (WSJ, 28/03/2015). Thousands of IEDs left by IS fighters are causing major losses (ISW, 18/03/2015; Wall Street Journal, 19/03/2015).

Other incidents: A bombing near Umm Qasr port in Basra governorate on 18 March killed at least three people and wounded another four (AFP, 18/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

As of end February, 5.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, including 2.6 million children (UNICEF, 28/02/2015).

Access

Around 2.2 million people in need of emergency assistance are beyond the reach of aid agencies, and access to the estimated 3.6 million people in areas under control of IS and affiliated armed groups is limited (ECHO, 12/12/2014). Several INGOs have suspended activities in IS-controlled areas, or provide emergency assistance through local partners. High insecurity and unexploded ordnance (UXO) also hinders access, as do long delays in obtaining clearance from Iraqi authorities (OCHA, 05/12/2014).

Border crossings: Due to the temporary closure of the Ibrahim Khalil border crossing since 2 March, most refugees have been entering via the Peshkabour crossing (UNHCR, 15/03/2015). The IS-controlled Al Qa’im and Al Waleed crossings are technically open, but insecurity prevents most civilian movement. Insecurity at Rabia crossing prevents cross-border movement (Reuters, 23/11/2014, UNHCR, 28/02/2015; 15/01/2015).
IDP movement restrictions: Over 30% of IDPs are forced to stay within the governorate, due to movement restrictions imposed by neighbouring governorates; restrictions have been reported at checkpoints in Baghdad, Salah al Din and Anbar governorates (IOM, 15/01/2014; Protection Cluster, 15/01/2015; OCHA, 27/03/2015). Access to and in KR-I remains challenging for certain IDPs, particularly those of Arab ethnicity (UNHCR/Protection Cluster, 28/02/2015; OCHA, 23/01/2015).

Anbar remains largely inaccessible. Thousands of people are trapped in siege-like conditions in Ramadi (UNHCR, 31/01/2015). Only one-fifth of Falluja’s population was left in the city in January: residents are reportedly prevented from leaving the city, and roads and bridges blocked due to insecurity and UXO contamination (ISW, 18/03/2015; REACH, 27/01/2015). The three main roads linking Haditha to other cities in Anbar are closed, leaving the population in urgent need of food and fuel for cooking (OCHA, 23/03/2015; 02/03/2015).

Kirkuk: Inaccessibility is hampering the delivery of essential medical supplies, equipment and vaccines, especially access to Al Hawija and Debes districts, where a significant displaced population is reported. Health workers have fled Al Hawija (WHO, 12/03/2015; IOM, 24/02/2015).

Ninewa: Access to Mosul is impossible for humanitarian actors and communications with areas outside the city are allegedly cut off. Civilians are prevented from leaving the city. Conditions have dramatically deteriorated since IS took control (OCHA, 02/03/2015; WFP, 02/02/2015).

Displacement

As of mid-March, there are 2.63 million IDPs, 246,836 Syrian refugees, and 1.5 million in need of assistance in host communities.

IDPs

At 12 March, around 2.63 million IDPs were identified across 2,950 sites. 41% of IDPs are in KR-I, including 444,420 in Dahuk and 212,770 in Erbil. Outside of northern Iraq, Anbar hosts 392,710 IDPs, Kirkuk 344,730, and Baghdad 325,690. 8% are in 25 IDP camps (mostly in KR-I), 27% in critical shelter arrangements (mostly in Dahuk and Anbar), and 64% in private settings. Priority needs are for income, shelter, NFIs, and food support (IOM, 27/03/2015). The number and wide geographical spread of IDPs pose a major challenge to the assessment of needs and delivery of assistance (IOM, 02/12/2014).

Salah al Din: At 11 March, nearly 30,000 people had fled operations between ISF and IS in Tikrit for areas in and around Samarra, adding up to nearly 97,500 IDPs in Samarra since January 2014. The majority are living in 127 collective shelters. Priority needs are for food, shelter, health, and WASH (ECHO, 11/03/2015). 4,000 families had settled in unfinished buildings and mosques in central and southern provinces early March, and needed urgent WASH support (OCHA, 08/03/2015; 03/02/2015). IDPs have also fled to Baghdad, Kirkuk, and Diyala, but numbers remain unclear (UNHCR, 15/03/2015).

Anbar: Newly displaced or people trapped by conflict are in need of NFIs, food, and health support, especially in Haditha and Hit (UNAMA/UNHCR, 24/02/2015; IOM, 24/02/2015). 17,000 families in Haditha are in urgent need of humanitarian support. A surge in displacement, averaging approximately 80 families per day, continues from Haditha to Nukhaib subdistrict of Rutba (OCHA, 23/03/2015).

The humanitarian situation for IDPs in Najaf, Karbala, Babel, Qadissiya, and Wasit is also critical. The majority live in public buildings or collective shelters, with significant food, WASH, and livelihood needs, and have received little assistance to date compared to northern areas (WFP, 27/01/2015; REACH, 27/01/2015).

IDP Returnees

Around 1,500 families who returned to Muqaddiya district in Diyala mid-March are in need of shelter, NFIs, and protection support. Spontaneous returns from Kirkuk to Al Alam district in Salah al Din have also been observed (OCHA, 23/03/2015; UNHCR, 15/03/2015).

Heavily disrupted health and water infrastructure, mines, IEDs, inter-communal tensions and threats by sectarian militia all increase the risks for returnees (OCHA, 20/02/2015; ICRC, 24/02/2015).

Refugees in Iraq

At 15 March, 246,836 Syrian refugees were registered in Iraq. KR-I hosts an estimated 97%, with 110,020 in Erbil, 99,740 in Duhok, and 29,160 in Sulaymaniyyah; another 4,520 were last known to be in Anbar governorate, 1,330 in Ninewa, and around 2,100 elsewhere in Iraq. 38% live in nine camps; over half of these are in Domiz camp in Dahuk (49,690) and 10,150 and 9,720 in Kawergosk and Darashakran camps in Erbil (UNHCR, 15/03/2015). The number of Syrian refugees in Al Obaidy camp in IS-controlled Al Qa‘im in Anbar significantly decreased over the past two months, to 851, although understanding the trend is difficult due to access difficulties (UNHCR, 15/03/2015, 04/03/2015).

Around 33,810 Syrian refugees have arrived in KR-I from Kobane since 25 September; a reduction in arrivals has been noted since 16 February. Most families are residing in host communities (UNHCR, 15/03/2015; 19/03/2015).

Around 32,950 Syrian refugees returned to Syria in 2014 (UNHCR, 31/12/2014).

Non-Syrian Refugees

During the first quarter of 2014, there were 39,480 registered, protracted, non-Syrian refugees and asylum seekers. There is no updated information on this number.

Iraqi Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

At 1 November, there were around 254,000 Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries, including 200,000 in Turkey, 8,700 in Lebanon, and over 3,000 in Yemen. And, as of 31 December, more than 43,000 Iraqis were registered in Jordan (the Government estimated...
2.8 million people urgently need food assistance. Needs are particularly high in Anbar (Hit, Haditha and Rutba districts), Diyala (Khanaqin and Ba’quba), Baghdad (Resafa and Tarmia), Babil, Najaf, Dhi-Qar, and Dahuk (OCHA, 23/03/2015). Due to funding shortages, 1.8 million people are at risk of losing WFP food assistance from May (OCHA, 27/03/2015).

Conflict has severely disrupted supply lines to Anbar, Salah al Din, and Kirkuk. Reduced public distributions are keeping wheat flour prices high. Food prices in Salah al Din have increased significantly since March due to fighting: rice and flour prices have doubled and increased fivefold in some areas, while markets in Dour district are no longer supplied (OCHA, 23/03/2015; WFP, 11/03/2015).

Refugees: Due to a reduction in funds, WFP has reduced the food voucher value in Domiz, Darashakran, Akre, and Kawergosk camps from USD 28.20 to USD 19 per person per month since February. A further reduction is expected from April if shortfalls persist, and WFP will begin targeted assistance (WFP 22/01/2015).

Many farmers and rural households have fled their fields (FAO, 11/2014). Some 120,000 farmers in host communities need agricultural inputs for the winter planting season (OCHA, 06/02/2015).

IS controls major wheat storage silos in Ninewa and Salah al Din (FAO 10/02/2015). The prospects for the 2015 winter crop are uncertain in conflict-affected parts of Anbar, Salah Al Din and Diyala (WFP, 11/03/2015).

Refugees: Reduced access to basic food is posing a significant risk to refugees’ livestock (FAO, 10/02/2015). Many families, especially in Ninewa and Dahuk, have reportedly sold their livestock in exchange for cash (UNHCR, 18/02/2015).

800,000 people are in need of livelihood support in Iraq (UN, 18/02/2015). The need for livelihood support is increasing as IDPs’ financial conditions are deteriorating, and unemployment is rising in IS-controlled areas (UNHCR, 15/03/2015; OCHA, 02/03/2015). KR-I’s poverty rate increased from 3.5% to 8.1% between 2013 and 2014. GDP growth in Iraq declined by five percentage points to 3% in 2014 (World Bank/Government, 12/02/2015). In conflict-affected areas, casual labour opportunities are limited and wage rates are low (WFP, 11/03/2015).

Refugees: The ability to find sustainable job opportunities is still severely limited, and hampered by competition. As of February, only 5% of refugees targeted for access to wage employment in 2015 had been reached (DRC/UNDP, 28/02/2015).

Health and Nutrition

5.2 million people need health support in Iraq (OCHA, 28/02/2015). Acute diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections, and scabies are a leading cause of morbidity among refugees and IDPs. 31 measles cases have been reported in Arbat IDP camp since the outbreak was confirmed, and 700 influenza cases were reported during the winter throughout Iraq, compared to 100 in 2013. Cases of mumps, hepatitis E, and leishmaniasis have also been reported from Anbar (WHO, 02/03/2015; 12/03/2015; 25/02/2015). The influx of under-vaccinated Syrian refugees into KR-I increases the health risks in the region (WHO, 11/2014).

A number of health facilities have been damaged by bombing and shelling; 80% of the remaining facilities are only partially functional. Critical shortages of essential medicines, vaccines, and supplies are concerning in urban facilities, as supply routes from Baghdad are disrupted; difficulties in import and clearing of supplies through customs are also reported (OCHA, 23/03/2015). The rapid and massive influxes of IDPs have further strained the health system. Health professionals are in short supply in KR-I and conflict areas (45% of health professionals have reportedly fled violence), while insecurity hampers access to healthcare in some locations (WHO, 16/03/2015; 09/2014).

Refugees: 20% of the non-camp population has difficulties accessing health services, due to cost and perceived availability (WHO/UNHCR, 28/02/2015). In KR-I, health service delivery for refugees is challenged in areas with high concentrations of IDPs; lack of specialised care for disabled children, and mental health and psychological care for refugees, are also a concern. Medicine shortages are currently reported in Basirma camp in Erbil (WHO, 12/03/2015; UNHCR, 31/01/2015; 28/02/2015).

Anbar: Critical shortages of essential medicines are reported by still functional health structures (ECHO, 16/02/2015).

Dahuk: Public health concerns include the spread of communicable diseases due to overcrowding, lack of immunisation, and increased mental health issues (WHO, 28/01/2015). The newly established Kebirto and Sharia IDP camps have no functioning primary health centres (WHO, 18/01/2015).

Mosul: Only two units of the main hospital remain functional, staffing levels are down to 30~50%, and severe medicine shortages have been reported. Interruptions in the water supply have resulted in a rise in waterborne diseases (AFP, 12/2014). IS has reportedly executed ten doctors for refusing to treat wounded IS fighters, and evacuated hospitals in order to treat injured IS members only (ISW, 01/12/2014).

Salah al Din

Overcrowding in Arbat IDP camp has reportedly led to referrals to medical facilities in Sulaymaniyyah city, putting additional pressure on the health infrastructure (OCHA, 23/03/2015).

Maternal Health

It can be assumed that 450,000 IDPs and 50,000 Syrian refugees are women and girls of reproductive age. Maternity services are particularly stretched in Erbil hospital (WHO,
WASH

Five million people need WASH support, while many essential operations face imminent suspension due to funding constraints (UNHCR, 15/03/2015; OCHA, 28/02/2015).

Access to safe water is a critical problem in areas affected by conflict or controlled by armed groups. Power cuts, fuel shortages, disruption of supply routes, a shortage of chlorine, and broken pipelines have left communities without safe water, especially in Mosul and Nineawa (WHO, 01/02/2015; 20/12/2014). Urgent WASH support is required in Arbat camp in Sulaymaniyah, in Baharka and Debagah camps in Erbil, where facilities are hard to reach (OCHA, 13/02/2015). WASH facilities need upgrading at IDP camps in Dahuk, including Sharia (WHO, 12/03/2015; OCHA, 20/02/2015).

Refugees: In Darashakran and Basirma camps in Erbil, drainage, waste disposal and water quality remain pressing issues (UNHCR, 15/03/2015; 15/01/2015). Lack of funding has meant garbage collection has halved in refugee camps in KR-I (UNICEF/UNHCR, 28/02/2015).

Shelter and NFIs

Around 1.37 and 1.4 million IDPs require shelter support, including one million in urgent need (OCHA, 23/03/2015). Urgent shelter solutions are needed in Kirkuk, as IDP camps are reaching overcapacity (UNHCR, 15/03/2015). 852 shelters need rehabilitation in Muqdadiya district in Diyala, while 75% of returnee houses in Al Alam in Salah al Din have been demolished (OCHA, 27/03/2015).

Arbat IDP camp in Sulaymaniyah is overcapacity and access to basic services is of major concern, as it hosts 19,500 individuals instead of the planned 7,160. 1,200 families will be shifted to its extension end April (OCHA, 23/03/2015; 02/03/2015; CCCM, 01/03/2015). Most camp facilities and services do not meet minimum Sphere standards (REACH 31/10/2014).

Eleven camps are under construction for an additional capacity of 384,235 IDPs (CCCM, 02/03/2015). The Government has announced plans for two IDP camps in Samarra, Salah al Din, to deal with the influx from violence around Tikrit (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

93 informal sites are at risk of eviction, putting 1,900 IDP families at risk in KR-I and 1,300 in Kerbala (UNHCR/CCCM Cluster, 23/03/2015). There are 735 informal sites in total.

Refugees: 20% of refugees live in inadequate dwellings in Domiz camp (UNHCR, 31/12/2014). Basirma and Kawergosk camps’ capacities are exhausted, and the cancellation of the construction of Qushtapa 2 camp aggravates limitations (UNHCR, 15/12/2014). Nearly 2,640 refugees were relocated to a permanent site within Kawergosk camp mid-March. In Sulaymaniyah, refugees renting houses are facing eviction due to the pressure on accommodation in the governorate, and are trying to move to Arbat camp (UNHCR, 15/03/2015).

Education

68% of school-aged displaced children across Iraq are still out of school (512,700,000 children) (OCHA, 27/03/2015). Over 500 schools, including 376 in Anbar, remain occupied by IDPs, and an estimated 130 by the military, affecting 39,000 children. Educational materials are needed (UNICEF 31/10/2014; OCHA, 16/01/2015).

Refugees: 61% of school-aged refugee children (aged 6-17) in camps are attending schools, compared to 43% of those out of camps. Only 3% are enrolled in pre-school (UNICEF/Save the Children, 28/02/2015). Challenges include limited capacity in schools with an Arabic curriculum, shortages of Syrian teachers, increasing schooling demand, and insecurity (UNHCR, 31/12/2014; 12/02/2015).

Protection

5.2 million people are in need of protection support (OCHA, 28/02/2015). Widespread abuses committed by IS, including targeted attacks, killings, torture, rape and sexual slavery, forced religious conversion, and child conscription, may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Sharia courts have been established in IS-controlled territories, carrying out extreme punishments against men, women, and children (UN, 19/03/2015; 20/01/2015).

Violations allegedly carried out by ISF and associated militias during their counter-offensives against IS, including killings, torture and abductions, may also amount to war crimes. Reports have documented raids of villages and neighbourhoods around Amerli in Salah al Din by ISF and pro-government militias following operations to end IS siege in the city late August 2014 (UN, 19/03/2015; HRW, 18/03/2015). There have also been reports of burning and looting homes in Al Dour in Salah al Din after Shia militias recaptured the area from IS early March (Reuters, 21/03/2015).

Eviction

An increase in detention of IDPs is reported, due to growing mistrust from local authorities and communities (OCHA, 19/12/2014).

Eviction concerns remain for urban families in Kirkuk, where arrests have been reported, Karbala, and Wasit (UNHCR, 15/03/2015; OCHA, 27/03/2015). 20 IDP families were evicted from their shelters in Kirkuk city beginning of January, while 170 received eviction warnings (OCHA, 30/01/2015). IDPs are also facing illegal sale and destruction and looting of their properties (IOM, 02/02/2015).

Documentation

Around 10% of IDPs have no documentation, which is a prerequisite for obtaining residency permits and difficult to obtain outside a person’s area of origin. Up to 50% of
displaced families report that at least one family member is missing one or more civil
documents (UNHCR/Protection Cluster, 28/02/2015).

**Refugees**: Lack of documentation is also of concern for Syrian refugees; residency in
urban areas is reportedly being denied to Syrian asylum-seekers lacking original ID
documents (Protection Cluster 15/01/2015, UNHCR, 30/11/2014).

**SGBV**

Accurate numbers of women and girls affected by abuses across Iraq are hard to obtain.
Reports show an increase in sexual violence, abductions, trafficking, and forced
recruitment towards women. Due to stigmatisation, many survivors are reluctant to seek
assistance (UNAMI, 08/03/2015).

**Child Protection**

Concerning issues include harmful practices targeting girls, such as early and forced
marriage, child labour, and discrimination of children from ethnic minorities (OHCHR,
22/01/2015). IS is reportedly selling children as sex slaves, using minors as suicide
bombers, and providing military training to schoolchildren in Syria and Iraq (OCHA,
06/02/2015; Radio Liberty, 10/2014).

**ERW and Mines**

Iraq is heavily mined, with up to 1,838km$^2$ of contaminated territory and IS is reportedly
planting more (Landmine Monitor/ICBL, IRIN, 06/11/2014

**UPDATED: 30/03/2015**

**KEY CONCERNS**

- Over 220,000 deaths documented March 2011–December 2014, including over 63,000
civilians, almost 11,000 of whom were children (SOHR 12/2014). 2014 recorded the
highest number of deaths, with 76,000 fatalities.

- 12.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria, including 5.6

- 7.6 million IDPs (OCHA 28/12/2014).

- 4.8 million people live in hard-to-reach areas (OCHA 12/2014).

- 3,936,019 Syrians are registered or waiting to register as refugees outside Syria as of
23 March. Lebanon: 1,188,535; Turkey: 1,718,147; Jordan: 626,932; Iraq: 244,731;
Egypt: 133,619 (UNHCR 23/03/2014). Children make up 51.6% of the refugee
population.

- 711 of 1,921 primary health centres and 37 of 92 public hospitals are out of service. 26
of 41 basic emergency obstetric care centres are reported non-functional (Syrian
Ministry of Health/UNFPA 30/11/2014).

- 13,000 people have died in detention since March 2011, including more than 100
children, reportedly from torture (SOHR, 13/03/2015).

**OVERVIEW**

The humanitarian situation continues to worsen. The conflict has killed over 220,000
people and caused large-scale displacement. Over 2014, more people moved to camps
than the previous year, and the humanitarian needs of non-displaced people continued
to grow. Protection concerns are widespread. The country has also experienced severe
drought. WASH and access to food are high priorities as well as access to health
services. Humanitarian needs in areas under prolonged and ongoing siege are
particularly high as access is obstructed.

**Political Context**

Russia-mediated peace talks took place in late January, and included some members of
the Syrian opposition, but not the exiled National Coalition (AFP, 26/01/2015). The talks
did not yield significant results; the next round of negotiations is scheduled for April (Reuters,
30/01/2015; AFP, 05/03/2015). On 5 March, the National Coalition announced that the
conflict could end even with Assad still in power (AFP, 05/03/2015).

In a separate process, UN Envoy Mistura continues to advocate for the establishment of
‘freeze zones’ in Aleppo (UN/BBC 11/2014; Reuters, 05/02/2015).

Security Context

Widespread conflict and high levels of violence continue, including indiscriminate aerial bombings by Government forces and indiscriminate shelling by armed opposition (UNSC 21/11/2014).

In 2014, 76,000 people were killed in the conflict, the highest toll since the war began. 18,000 civilians, including at least 3,500 children, were among the victims (SOHR, 02/01/2014). At least 6,550 civilians died during airstrikes, half of them in Aleppo. More than 220,000 people have died since fighting began in March 2011 and more than one million people have been wounded or suffered permanent disabilities (SOHR, 02/12/2014, 07/02/2015, UNICEF, 03/2015). Siege tactics are used by all actors in the conflict.

Stakeholders

Government forces: Government forces have control of several areas near Aleppo, in and around Homs city, and in several areas in the Qalamoun region in Rural Damascus. Government forces control As-Suweida governorate, Tartous, parts of Dara’a and Latakia, and several areas in Idlib, and positions in pre-dominantly IS or Kurdish controlled areas in Al Hasakeh.

Syria's military has increasingly used barrel bombs. Over January, government forces carried out almost 1,000 airstrikes and dropped more than 1,000 barrel bombs, killing 271 civilians, wounding over 1,000 people, and displacing thousands (SOHR, 02/02/2015).

Islamic State (IS, formerly the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) declared an Islamic caliphate on 30 June, defining the group’s territory as running from northern Syria to the Iraqi province of Diyala, northeast of Baghdad. IS has been in full control of Ar-Raqqa governorate, its stronghold in Syria, since October 2014. It holds significant swathes of territory in Aleppo, Al Hasakeh, and Deir-ez-Zor, and is fighting in Rural Damascus, Damascus, and Homs.

Democratic Union Party (PYD) and People’s Protection Units (YPG): Syrian Kurds, repressed by the current Syrian Government, have been in de facto control of Kurdish areas in the north since Government forces withdrew mid-2012. Kurdish leaders from the PYD formed an armed wing, the YPG, aiming to secure control over predominantly ethnic Kurdish areas in northern and eastern Syria (ISW 19/09/2014). According to media reports, the YPG has 65,000 fighters (Today’s Zaman, 04/01/2015).

Jabhat al Nusra (JAN), linked to Al Qaeda, is increasingly consolidating its control in northwestern Syria, previously held by the collapsing moderate opposition. JAN has turned against other opposition factions, such as the Syria Revolutionaries’ Front (SRF) and the Hazm Movement, which are considered mainstays of the Free Syrian Army (FSA). In contrast, mainstream Islamist groups have begun to strengthen relations with JAN. The dissolution of the Hazm Movement in western Aleppo governorate cements JAN gains in the area (ISW, 02/03/2015).

Opposition alliances: Ahrar al Sham has been reconstituted following the merger of two group members (ISW 09/12/2014). Five major factions, including Ahrar al Sham, Jaysh al-Mujahideen, and Harakat Nour al Din al Zenki, have united in a new military command called the Sham Front (ISW, 30/12/2014).

Christian militias: Christian militias in northeastern Syria, in alliance with Kurdish forces and other armed opposition groups, are attempting to counter IS advances. Reportedly, they number up to 450 (The Guardian, 03/03/2015).

International intervention: As part of a multinational campaign against Islamist militant groups, a US-led coalition began airstrikes on IS and JAN military installations in mid-September. In early February, following IS’s execution of a Jordanian captive, Jordan carried out 56 airstrikes on IS targets in three days (BBC, 08/02/2015). More than 2,000 people have been killed by coalition airstrikes since the beginning of the offensive, the vast majority of them IS fighters, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR, 23/03/2015).

Conflict Developments

The YPG, supported by other armed groups, and coalition airstrikes have considerably challenged IS in northern Syria (ISW, 02/03/2015).

IS has come under pressure on four fronts in Syria, and it is unclear how IS will shift in response (ISW, 17/03/2015).

Over late October – late March, the Syrian Government carried out over 10,000 airstrikes and dropped more than 5,300 barrel bombs. Aerial bombardment killed almost 2,200 civilians over October-March and wounded 10,000 (SOHR, 20/03/2015).

Aleppo: Clashes between IS and YPG continue in the Kobane countryside (SOHR, 15/03/2015). Fighting began in September, when IS took control of over 300 villages and advanced toward the city (The Guardian, 11/10/2015). Kurdish forces have recaptured the Kobane city area and backed by Ar-Raqqa armed groups including Shams al Shama and Jabhat al Akrad has gained control over 242 villages around Kobane, most of them in Aleppo governorate and some in Ar-Raqqa (SOHR, 19/02/2015).

Aleppo city saw heavy clashes between opposition and government forces in early March, and high casualties on both sides (BBC, 04/03/2015; AFP, 05/03/2015). In January, opposition forces launched an incremental counteroffensive in Aleppo city that reversed government forces’ most recent gains (OCHA, 02/01/2015). Opposition groups including JAN have sustained their offensive on Nubul and Zahra villages, held by the Government (OCHA, 05/12/2014). By 9 March, JAN had seized Handarat village (SOHR, 09/03/2015).

Al Hasakeh: On 20 March, Kurdish New Year’s celebrations were attacked with several bombs, killing at least 54 people. Responsibility was attributed to IS (SOHR, 23/03/2015). Following a joint YPG and Syriac Military Council offensive on IS positions, IS began an offensive on Assyrian positions in February, carrying out a raid in Tal Tamr and capturing several villages (Long War Journal, 24/02/2015; AFP, 07/03/2015). If Tal Tamr falls, IS would dominate a key road that links to its stronghold of Mosul, in Iraq (AFP, 07/03/2015; SOHR, 03/03/2015). The US-led coalition has carried out several strikes on IS positions around Tal Tamr (SOHR, 15/03/2015). In January, YPG seized several
government positions in northern Al Hasakeh city. On 30 January, YPG and regime forces in Hasakeh city reached a ceasefire agreement (ISW, 04/02/2015).

**Deir-ez-Zor:** The pro-Government attack on the T2 pumping station is its first attack deep into IS-controlled Deir-ez-Zor countryside since IS’s occupation of the province in July 2014 (ISW, 10/03/2015). IS made minor advances in government-controlled areas of Deir-ez-Zor city over 5–16 January. Reports indicate that IS has retreated from several positions east of the airbase (OCHA, 16/01/2015; SOHR, 12/2014; SOHR, 06/02/2015).

**Idleb:** Over 12 –16 March, Government forces closed Idleb city and the neighbouring government-held towns of Kafriya and al Fouah. The Government is reportedly preparing to transfer command centres from Idleb city to Jisr al-Shughour (ISW, 17/03/2015). This came amidst a chlorine gas attack in the opposition-controlled town of Sarmin, which killed six people and poisoned a further 70 people. Helicopters were seen dropping barrel bombs (MSF, 12/05/2015). The manoeuvre indicates the calculated use of a chemical weapon against a civilian population by the regime as a military tactic targeted to create freedom of movement for pro-Government military forces (ISW, 17/03/2015).

Since mid-2014, JAN has seized towns and extended its influence along the border with Turkey. In mid-December, JAN seized two key military posts, thereby gaining control of most of Idleb governorate (AFP, 16/12/2014). At end January, JAN seized the town of Hamadiyat al Shahad in Idleb, not far from the besieged government airbase of Abu Duhur (OCHA, 30/01/2015). JAN has attempted to consolidate its influence in rural Idleb, setting up checkpoints on key access routes. Its activities have resulted in protests, and in Salqin in western Idleb, clashes between Ahrar al Sham and JAN (OCHA, 02/01/2015).

**Central and southern governorates:** Opposition groups consider the south, especially Dar’a, as a main stronghold. The Government controls most of Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama, Tartous, Lattakia and As-Sweida governorates. Central governorates have witnessed an increase in airstrikes and the use of barrel bombs, especially Rural Damascus. The operation launched on 9 February by pro-government forces in Dar’a marks the first significant government offensive in southern Syria since May 2014. The creation of new pro-government groups in Homs and Al Hasakeh alleviates government manpower challenges in the central corridor and far northeast. The formation of a new unit in Homs also constitutes an expansion of Iranian support to pro-government militias in Syria. Increasing Iranian involvement may potentially serve larger Iranian strategic objectives by positioning Iranian forces in closer proximity to the disputed Israeli-controlled Golan Heights (ISW, 11/02/2015; 10/03/2015).

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

Some 12.2 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria, including 5.6 million children. The humanitarian situation appears most critical in the governorates of Aleppo, Ar-Raqq, Rural Damascus, and Deir-ez-Zor (SNAP, 28/01/2015).

Parties to the conflict continue to target public infrastructure and facilities. Water cuts in Aleppo, rural Damascus, Deir-ez-Zor, Ar-Raqq, and Idleb are frequent and deliberate (UNICEF, 15/02/2015). Syria experienced severe drought conditions in 2014, impacting the

availability of drinkable water and the health status of the population, as well as reducing agricultural output and local food production. 83% of lights in Syria have gone out since the beginning of the conflict, indicating the impact on infrastructure and supplies (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, Islamic Relief, et al., 16/03/2015).

The UN’s response efforts are chronically underfunded: only 47% of the Syria component of OCHA’s appeal is covered (Financial Tracking Service, 06/01/2015).

**Access**

4.8 million people are living in hard-to-reach areas, including up to two million children (UNICEF, 12/2014). There is a trend of tit-for-tat blocking of access between IS and its opponents, making IS-controlled areas hard to reach, particularly from northern Al Hasakeh, underlining the importance of cross-border access (OCHA, 16/01/2015). Similarly, stakeholders do not allow assistance to reach people perceived to be affiliated with opposing parties, for example in government-controlled areas of Lattakia, Hama, and Idleb.

**Security Incidents Involving Aid Workers**

69 humanitarian workers have been killed in the conflict since March 2011. 27 UN staff (including 24 UNRWA staff) have been detained or are missing (UNSC 21/11/2014).

**Trapped and Hard-to-Reach Communities**

212,000 people remain besieged at the end of 2014: in Nubul and Al Zahra in rural Aleppo; Eastern Ghouta, Darya, and Moadamiyah in Rural Damascus; the Old City in Homs; and Yarmouk camp in Damascus (UNSC 21/11/2014; UNICEF, 12/2014). Shortages of food and medicine caused the deaths of more than 300 civilians, including about 100 children, in areas besieged by the Syrian regime in 2014, mostly Eastern Ghouta (AFP, 27/12/2014).

January 2015 saw a reduction in the amount of food delivered into Syria’s hard-to-reach areas by 44% as compared to the previous month, primarily as the result of widespread insecurity and delays in the release of approvals (WFP, 04/03/2015). Over February, requests by inter-agency convoys for access to besieged areas were not approved.

**Aleppo:** February saw an increase in clashes on the fronts inside Aleppo city, especially on the Salamiyah and Sheikh Hilal roads that are used by the UN (UNFPA, 10/03/2015).

**Ar-Raqq:** As of end January, persistent insecurity continued to render Ar-Raqq governorate completely inaccessible (WFP, 04/03/2015). IS has closed down the offices of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, as well as several small local charities, and appropriated warehouses and equipment. Several INGOs continue to operate cross-border into Ar-Raqq (OCHA, 30/01/2015).

**Damascus:** Food, healthcare, NFIs, and shelter needs are unmet for 18,000 civilians in Yarmouk Palestinian camp. UNRWA has carried out several deliveries since 5 March, although on several occasions deliveries could not take place or had to be interrupted (UNRWA, 13/03/2015; 21/03/2015). Persistent armed violence prevented any successful
UNRWA aid distribution between 6 December 2014 and 5 March 2015 (UNRWA, 05/03/2015).

Rural Damascus: It is estimated that close to a quarter of a million people in Ghouta are in urgent need of assistance (WFP, 04/03/2015). Over February – March, an escalation of violence and attacks have been reported in several besieged locations of eastern Ghouta (OCHA, 18/03/2015).

Deir-ez-Zor: Since January, IS has increasingly restricted commercial and humanitarian access to government-controlled neighbourhoods of Deir-ez-Zor city, which caused a shortage of food supplies and a rise in prices (OCHA, 18/03/2015). Volatile security conditions and the presence of armed groups along access routes have prevented WFP deliveries since May (WFP, 31/12/2014).

Hama: Between end October and beginning November, the deterioration of the security situation and numerous checkpoints in rural areas slowed deliveries (WFP, 11/11/2014).

Homs: Under partial siege since October 2013, over half of Al Waer’s 350,000 residents are IDPs, who are mostly living in substandard accommodation (WFP, 22/10/2014). Following intense negotiations, the first UN aid delivery for six months reached Homs in November (AFP 13/11/2014).

Idleb: Assistance to rural Idleb was interrupted in January, following the suspension of approvals for humanitarian deliveries to opposition-held areas. Armed groups cut supplies from the main power station and water pumps for Idleb city (WFP, 04/03/2015).

Border Restrictions

Border closures or tight restrictions by neighbouring countries are dissuading people in life-threatening situations from seeking refuge abroad. Humanitarians have voiced concern over the inconsistent application of regulations at border crossings. Palestinian refugees are particularly affected by closed borders and forced returns from neighbouring countries (UN 24/11/2014).

Turkey: New border restrictions as of 1 January 2015 mean that refugees crossing between Turkey and Syria, can only spend three out of every six months in Turkey. Those without a valid passport or travel document will be turned back (IRIN, 14/01/2015).

Displacement

IDPs

There are 7.6 million IDPs within Syria; 50% are children (OCHA 25/11/2014). Between January and September 2014, the number living in IDP camps grew by 56%, from 108,000 to approximately 165,000. There are 147 IDP camps in northern Syria and 175,520 IDPs are sheltering in camp settlements (OCHA, 30/01/2015).

Multiple displacement is increasing, due to changed conflict dynamics, ongoing violence, the depleted capacity of host families, depletion of savings, and the search for better livelihoods (MSNA 30/10/2014; OCHA/REACH 30/10/2014).

The IS advance on Assyrian settlements in Al Hasakeh in February displaced around 6,000 people. Reportedly, 1,200 people (200 households) from IS-besieged villages fled to Qamishli, while 2,000 people went to Hasakeh city (AFP, 26/02/2015; The Guardian, 03/03/2015).

30-40,000 people remain displaced north-west Dar’a and south-west Rural Damascus, although the government offensive to retake strategic locations has stalled. More recently, almost 4,000 people are believed to have been displaced from Busra Esh-Sham, close to the Jordanian border, after clashes between opposition and pro-government forces. These IDPs are now seeking refuge in several villages to the north-east (OCHA, 23/03/2015).

Refugees

Palestinian refugees in Syria: 460,000 Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA are in need of assistance (UNRWA, 02/03/2015). Over 50% of approximately 540,000 in Syria have been displaced within Syria (UNRWA 28/10/2014).

Iraqi refugees: There are an estimated 29,000 Iraqi refugees in Syria (UNHCR 25/11/2014).

Syrian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

3,936,019 Syrians are registered or waiting to register as refugees outside Syria as of 23 March (UNHCR, 23/03/2015).

Turkey: 1,718,147 registered refugees (AFAD/UNHCR, 13/03/2015). The Government suspended pre-registration in October to focus on the full biometrical registration process (UNHCR, 05/01/2014).

Lebanon: 1,188,535 refugees (UNHCR 20/03/2015). Lebanon’s borders have been closed to Syrian refugees since 24 October. Since January, Syrians wanting to enter Lebanon must apply for a visa (BBC, 05/01/2015).

Jordan: 626,932 refugees (UNHCR 23/03/2015).

Egypt: 133,619 refugees (UNHCR 02/02/2015).

Iraq: 244,731 refugees (UNHCR 28/02/2015).

Palestinians: 42,000 have been recorded with UNRWA in Lebanon, 14,348 in Jordan (UNRWA, 02/03/2015) and 860 in Gaza. Around 4,000 are reportedly in Egypt (UNRWA 28/10/2014).

Returnees

In Kobane, Aleppo governorate, media reports indicate up to 25,000 returnees (Deutsche Welle, 23/02/2015). In mid-February, some sources reported up to 500 returns a day. Some are staying, or are unable to return to Turkey due to restrictions on re-entry, and are in need of emergency assistance (OCHA, 17/02/2015).
Food Security

An estimated 6.8 million people are facing severe food insecurity. 4.5 million are receiving food assistance (FAO, 04/03/2014). Food dispatches continue to be hindered by worsening security, particularly in the northeast and south (WFP 25/11/2014).

The food aid basket for 4.2 million Syrians was cut by 40% in October (AFP, 10/2014). Only 304 of the 212,000 people who were besieged were reached with food in January (UN, 26/02/2015).

IDPs outside formal camps are most susceptible to food shortages. The most acute needs are reported in Aleppo, Dar’a, Quneitra, and Rural Damascus (MSNA, 10/2014).

Agriculture and Markets

The cereal belt of Syria includes Ar-Raqq, Aleppo, Al Hasakeh, Deir-Ez-Zor, Hama, and Ibleb, which produce more than 80% of the country’s wheat. Drought and conflict have both impacted production. According to FAO estimates, Syria’s overall cereal production in 2014 was approximately 25% below total production in 2013 (FAO, 05/03/2015).

Since 2011, the average monthly price of wheat flour increased 197%; rice has gone up 403% (WFP, 31/01/2015).

Livelihoods

More than half the population lived in extreme poverty at the end of 2013. Unemployment is at 54% (3.39 million people) (Syrian Centre for Policy Research/UNDP, 19/10/2014). The conflict has set the economy back more than three decades. Gross domestic product has contracted by more than 40%, and exports have fallen by 90%. Oil production has dropped by 96% (World Bank/IMF/AFP, 02/12/2014). Official diesel prices increased by 102% from January 2014 to February 2015, while petrol prices increased by 30% over the same period (WFP, 27/02/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Over 2.4 million people are in need of health assistance, with highest numbers reported from Ar-Raqq (627,600), Aleppo (475,270), and Al Hasakeh (356,200).

Tuberculosis, typhoid, hepatitis A and scabies have become endemic in northern Syria (AFP, 28/11/2014). In opposition-held Aleppo, these diseases as well as cholera, are spreading, according to local doctors (Reuters, 08/01/2015). WHO had not been able to deliver medical aid to the opposition-held parts of Aleppo by January, despite a government promise to allow access end of December (Reuters, 08/01/2015).

Capacity

Since the start of the conflict, some 200,000 Syrians have died from chronic illnesses due to lack of access to treatment and medicines. Hospitals are unable to cope with the demand for surgery, due to the increase in the number of injured – averaging 25,000 each month – combined with a lack of (female) medical staff, severe supply shortages, and frequent power cuts (PHR, 10/2014).

Only 43% of hospitals are fully functioning (UNICEF, 29/01/2015). 711 of 1,921 primary health centres are out of service (Syrian Ministry of Health/UNFPA, 11/2014). Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Homs, Dar’a, and Deir-er-Zor have the highest number of non-functional public hospitals. Only four public hospitals remain operational in Aleppo governorate, and only 132 primary health care centres (WHO, 22/02/2015). In Ar-Raqq, no obstetric, gynaecological, or paediatric services are reportedly available for the 1.6 million people living there (PHR, 27/02/2015). Little to no mental health services are available (PHR, 27/02/2015).

Attacks on Health Workers and Facilities

As of 31 December 2014, 599 medical personnel had been killed since the conflict began (PHR, 27/02/2015). PHR documented 224 attacks on 175 separate medical facilities between March 2011 and the end of December 2014 (PHR, 27/02/2015). Over 2014, government forces were reportedly responsible for 93% of the death of the 162 medical personnel (PHR, 03/2015).

Diarrhoeal Disease

The number of acute diarrhoea cases continues to increase, with 60,012 reported by mid-September 2014, up from 22,169 reported in July (WHO, 22/08/2014; WHO, 30/10/2014). Diarrhoea is one of the main causes of death for children under 12 months old (IFRC, 24/07/2014).

Hepatitis A

Some 31,400 cases of hepatitis A were reported in 2014. Since January 2015, 1,000 have been recorded per week (Reuters, 24/02/2015). Hepatitis A is linked with lack of safe water and poor sanitation.

Maternal Health

Three million women and girls of reproductive age are in need of assistance in Syria, including around 432,000 pregnant women. Every day, some 1,480 women give birth in dire conditions. 26 of 41 basic emergency obstetric care centres are reported as non-functional (Syrian Ministry of Health/UNFPA, 30/11/2014).

Mental Health

More than 350,000 individuals in Syria are estimated to suffer from severe forms of mental illness; over two million people suffer from mild to moderate problems such as anxiety and depression disorders, and a large percentage suffer from moderate to severe psychological/social distress (WHO/UNHCR, 19/10/2014).

Nutrition

In areas with high IDP concentration, 2.3% SAM – above the 2% crisis threshold – and 7.2% GAM rate has been reported (UNICEF, 21/10/2014). It is estimated that four million
women and children are in need of preventative and curative nutrition assistance (UNICEF, 15/02/2015).

WASH

Syrian families consume 40% less water than they did pre-crisis. 4.6 million people are in need of WASH assistance. Six out of ten governorates report major problems in the WASH sector.

The reliability of urban piped water is severely reduced and the quality of drinking water cannot be guaranteed due to a lack of testing facilities. Fuel shortages also affect water supply (UNICEF, 15/02/2015). One-third of water treatment plants no longer function, and sewage treatment has halved (WHO/UNICEF, 22/07/2014)

Shelter and NFIs

1.6 million people are in need of shelter assistance (MSNA, 30/10/2014). 1.2 million houses have been damaged, 400,000 of which have been totally destroyed (UNHCR, 30/10/2014). Only IDPs in government-controlled areas receive shelter response, through collective shelter rehabilitation and private shelter upgrade (UNHCR, 20/11/2014).

Dar’a, Lattakia, and Quneitra have acute needs, followed very closely by Hama, Ar-Raqqaa, Aleppo, Al Hasakeh and Rural Damascus. 40% of people identified in need of shelter are located in Aleppo governorate, as are 34% of people identified in need of NFI assistance (MSNA, 30/10/2014). Satellite imagery analysis indicated that fighting in Kobane affected 3,250 structures, destroying 1,200 and severely damaging almost another 1,200 (UNOSAT, 06/03/2015).

2.7 million people are in need of NFI assistance. The dispatch of non-food items (NFIs) has fallen significantly since April 2014 (MSNA, 30/10/2014).

Education

The estimated number of children enrolled in basic education increased from 2.9 million in the 2012/13 academic year to 3.6 million in 2014/15. Likewise, the gross enrolment ratio in basic education rose from 66% in 2012/13 to 79% in 2013/14 (UNICEF, 15/02/2015). Continued conflict and the recent closure of some schools in Ar-Raqqaa and Deir-ez-Zor governorates and parts of rural Aleppo in Syria are believed to have disrupted education for 670,000 school-aged children. The primary reason for student drop-out is the need to work to support the family (Syrian Interim Government/OCHA, 07/11/2014).

In 2014 there were at least 68 attacks on schools across Syria, killing at least 160 children and injuring over 340 (UN, 06/01/2015). 4,000 Syrian schools have been destroyed, damaged, or used to house IDPs. 76 UNRWA schools – more than two-thirds – have become unusable.

Protection

Protection is a priority concern. Human and organ trafficking are reported (UNHCR 20/11/2014). Non-state armed groups continue to commit violations, including summary executions. Ethnic and religious communities in IS-occupied areas have been targeted directly (UN Human Rights Council 11/2014). IS has executed 1,429 people in Syria since June, the majority civilians (UN Human Rights Council, 14/11/2014; SOHR/AFP, 17/11/2014). Over October–December 2014, IS killed more than 120 of its own members, most of them foreign fighters trying to return home (SOHR, 28/12/2014).

On 21 February, it was reported that the Syrian Government had executed at least 48 people, including ten children – the families of opposition fighters – in Rityan village, north of Aleppo (AFP, 21/02/2015).

On 24 February, IS abducted between 220 and 300 Assyrian Christians from Tal Tamer, Al Hasakeh governorate. By 2 March, 21 had been released. There are conflicting reports over whether they were released for ransom or following a IS “court” order (Al Jazeera, 02/03/2015).

Indiscriminate Attacks

Improvised mortar bombs, used by Syrian fighters, killed 311 civilians between July and December 2014, two-thirds in Aleppo (SOHR/Reuters, 12/12/2014).

Children

Non-state armed groups and the Government’s Popular Committees are increasingly recruiting children: over 120 cases – more than half by the Free Syrian Army – were documented between 1 January and 19 August, including girls, and some as young as eight (UNSC, 08/2014). In Ar-Raqqaa, IS is using education to foster a new generation of recruits (UN Human Rights Council, 14/11/2014).

Chemical Weapons

There have been allegations of chlorine attacks, the most recent reported on the town of Kafr Zeta on 28 August (OPCW, 09/2014). An OPCW commission found confirmation that a toxic chemical was used in three villages of northern Syria earlier in 2014. A chlorine gas attack in Idlib governorate, reportedly carried out by government forces, killed six and poisoned over 70 people in March 2015 (MSF, 18/03/2015).

Mines and ERW

In 2013, there were 2,403 civilian casualties from landmines, victim-activated improvised explosive devices (IEDs), cluster munition remnants, and other explosive remnants of war (International Campaign to Ban Landmines/Cluster Munition Coalition, 19/11/204). Large quantities of unexploded ordnance and many booby-trapped houses in the Eastern sector of Kobane city and the surrounding countryside are preventing return (OCHA, 17/02/2015). Reportedly, ten civilians have died and around 20 injured by mines in Kobane city (Geneva call, 26/02/2015).

Detention

200,000 people are estimated to be in government detention, including 20,000 detainees...
who are unaccounted for (SOHR/HRW, 02/12/2014). 13,000 people have died in Government detention since March 2011, including more than 100 children, reportedly from torture (SOHR, 13/03/2015).

Some 7,000 government troops held by opposition forces are unaccounted for (SOHR, 07/2014). Another 1,500 IS, other opposition, and Kurdish fighters have been kidnapped during battles in the first half of 2014 (AFP, 07/2014).

**Sexual and Gender-based Violence**

IS has sought to exclude Syrian women and girls from public life. Forced marriage of girls to IS fighters and the selling of abducted girls into sexual slavery have been reported (UN Human Rights Council, 14/11/2014).

**Media**

Journalists and other media workers are systematically targeted.

*Updated: 23/03/2015*

**YEMEN** CONFLICT, FOOD INSECURITY, DISPLACEMENT

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

26–30 March: Saudi-led aerial bombing displaced around 4,500 people (750 families) to refugee camps in Hajjah from Sa’ada in the far north (Reuters, 30/03/2015).

26 March: Saudi Arabia, backed by a coalition of ten countries, began airstrikes on Houthi positions in Aden, Sana’a, and Sa’ada. Reportedly, the strikes disabled the Houthis’ air force (Washington Post 26/03/2015). 25 people, including at least six children, were killed in airstrikes on Sanaa (IRIN 26/03/2015).

20–26 March: 267 people were killed and 994 injured by violence in Yemen (OCHA, 29/03/2015).

25 March: Houthis took Lahj governorate. They advanced on Aden, seizing Al Anad airbase, and forces loyal to the Houthis took over Aden airport (Washington Post 26/03/2015).

**KEY CONCERNS**

- 15.9 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 28/12/2014).

- 10.6 million are food insecure, including 5 million severely food insecure (Comprehensive Food Security Survey 2014; WFP, 31/12/2014). Levels of food insecurity have doubled since 2009 (FAO, 06/2014).

- 8.6 million have no access to healthcare (OCHA, 09/10/2014).

- One million children under five are acutely malnourished; 280,000 are severely malnourished (OCHA, UNICEF 06/2014).

- 13.1 million do not have access to safe water and improved sanitation; 4.4 million lack access to adequate sanitation (OCHA, 09/10/2014). Open defecation remains the practice for more than 20% of the population (UNICEF 2014)

- 335,000 IDPs, 227,000 returnees and 245,000 refugees in the country (OCHA, 09/10/2014).

- Extreme access constraints prevail in Hadramaut, Shabwah, and Marib governorates. The governorates with the highest severity of needs are Aden, Abyan, Amanat Al Asimah, Al Jawf, Sa’ada, Hajjah (OCHA, 22/12/2014).

**OVERVIEW**

The highest priority humanitarian needs include protection, food and nutrition assistance, access to healthcare, shelter — primarily for conflict-affected people —, and provision of water and sanitation.

Yemen’s political transition turned into armed conflict between Houthis from the north and the Government. Southern secessionists, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) activity throughout the country and recently also Islamic State attacks compound the security and political challenges.

**Political Context**

Instability and violence continue across the country, and attempts at political transition have been upended. Shia Houthi insurgents have rejected the proposed federal division of the country. In February 2015, the Houthis dissolved Parliament and replaced the Government with a presidential council they claimed will fill the presidential vacuum for two years. The move was condemned as a coup by other parties and Yemen’s neighbours. President Hadi continues to reject the Houthi take-over and has reiterated his demand for their retreat from the capital; he is attempting to mobilise forces in the south. Hadi left Sanaa on 21 February, for the city of Aden (AFP, 21/02/2015). On 8 March, Defence Minister al Subaihi fled Sanaa for the city of Aden, a move which is likely to bolster President Hadi’s position (Reuters, 08/03/2015). Former Prime Minister Bahah and members of his cabinet were released from almost two months of house arrest on 16 March (NYT, 16/03/2015).

On 8 February, the Houthi-controlled interior ministry banned all unauthorised anti-Houthi protests (AFP, 08/02/2015). However, demonstrations in support of President Hadi have multiplied since he escaped from house arrest last month and resumed power from second city Aden (AFP, 12/03/2015).

**Southern Movement (Al Hirak)**

Various leaders of southern provinces announced their secession following events in
Sanaa in January. As none speak for the entire region, there are fears of fighting among southerners (Reuters, 25/01/2015). Rallies in the south calling for secession had gained momentum since October due to the developments in the capital and northern governorates (Yemen Times, 19/10/2014; AFP, 01/01/2015).

Economic Crisis

Oil production represents over 70% of total government revenue. Production was suspended in January in the major oil-producing governorates of Shabwah and Hadramaut, and is likely to be disrupted in Marib. Saudi Arabia and other regional partners have suspended much of their assistance to Yemen, placing further pressure on government revenue (FEWSNET, 18/02/2015).

Oil revenues had already declined almost 30% between January 2013 and January 2014 (Yemen Central Bank, 02/2014). In July 2014, the Government increased the price of petrol by 60% and diesel by 95%. Observers have warned that the economy will continue to decline if the Government cannot protect pipelines. Attacks on oil pipelines are regularly reported (Al Jazeera).

Security Context

Conflict has escalated significantly in Yemen since 23 March, affecting 11 of Yemen’s 22 Governorates. Houthi-affiliated militants moved south, and armed clashes erupted mainly in Lahj, Al Dhale’e and Aden governorates. 267 people were killed and 994 injured by violence in Yemen between 20 and 26 March. This figure includes 143 people killed and 382 injured by suicide attacks on two mosques in Sana’a on 20 March (OCHA, 29/03/2015).

Divided state forces have been unable to check the Houthis’ ascent (Reuters, 09/11/2014). Certain factions in the deeply divided Yemeni army have allied themselves with the Houthis against President Hadi, including members of the former central security force, a unit seen as loyal to ousted president Ali Abdullah Saleh (Reuters, 12/03/2015; ABC, 23/03/2015). AQAP, Al Qaeda’s powerful Yemeni branch, backed by Sunni tribesmen, has fought to halt the Houthis’ advance (AFP, 20/10/2014). Hundreds of young men have been recruited since Hadi called for 20,000 new troops from the south (Yemen Times, 16/03/2015).

International media report that violence resulted in more than 1,500 deaths in 2014, a 150% increase on 2013 (USAID, 13/02/2015).

Houthi Insurgency

The Houthis, also referred to as Ansarullah, are based in Sa’ada governorate. Houthi insurgents have de facto control over Sa’ada and neighbouring Amran, Raymah, and parts of Al Jawf, and Hajjah governorates. The Houthis virtually control Ibb governorate, with the exception of Udain, which AQAP and its allies recaptured in October (29/10/2014). They occupied much of the capital in September. Houthis seized the Red Sea port city of Hudaydah in October. In late March, Houthis pushed south towards Aden. They seized an airbase in Taiz and Lahj governorate.

Violence persisted despite a peace agreement in September, and an annex covering security and military conditions in other governorates witnessing violence (Yemen Times, 29/09/2014). By December, armed Houthi ‘popular committees’ had mushroomed at improvised checkpoints across the city.

The Houthis have taken up arms before, citing political, economic, and religious marginalisation (Al Jazeera, 16/11/2009).

Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Ansar al Shari'a

AQAP, based in the south and east of the country, has expanded its presence in Hadramaut. According to analysts, the Houthis advance has bolstered support for AQAP and Ansar al Shari'a: tribes in Ibb and Al Bayda, for example, who are opposed to the Houthis, have allied themselves with Ansar al Shari’a (Reuters, 09/11/2014). According to the national security service, there are around 1,000 Al Qaeda militants in Yemen from 11 Arab and non-Arab countries (AFP, 17/01/2015).

AQAP regularly targets army and security forces, foreigners for abduction, and oil pipelines. In late December and early January, AQAP targeted several members of the security forces, including in Al Bayda and Shabwah. Yemeni authorities blame AQAP for a campaign of targeted killings in which up to 350 senior army officers have died in the past three years (Reuters, 04/01/2014).

International Involvement

Saudi Arabia firmly backs President Hadi. UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar are providing fighter jets. Egypt, Jordan, and Sudan have said their forces are involved in the operation, with Sudan pledging ground troops as well as warplanes. Morocco declared its support for the Saudi-led operation, but did not confirm or deny earlier reports that it had sent fighter jets. Pakistan said it had not decided whether to heed a request for military support from Saudi Arabia, but reaffirmed its support for the kingdom. Turkey also expressed its support (Reuters 27/03/2015). The US Government stated it had authorised the provision of logistical and intelligence support to the Saudi Arabian coalition’s military intervention (Amnesty 26/03/2015).

The air campaign includes over 100 jets targeting air fields and bases near Sanaa and Aden (Washington Post 26/03/2015). Saudi Arabia has mobilised 150,000 troops and said it is prepared to launch a ground invasion if necessary (NBC 26/03/2015; IRIN 26/03/2015). Iran has condemned the Saudi Arabian intervention, and has been accused of backing Houti militants financially and materially, a claim the Iranian Government denies (Amnesty 26/03/2015).

Security Incidents and Conflict Developments

Sanaa: On 26 March, 25 people, including at least six children, were killed in airstrikes on Sanaa. A number of military targets were hit, but the crowded, low-income suburb of Bani Hewat near Sanaa International Airport was also badly damaged (IRIN 26/03/2015).

On 20 March, three suicide attacks on mosques in Sanaa, targeting Shi’ite worshippers,
killed 142 people and wounded at least 351. Islamic State claimed responsibility (AFP, 21/03/2015). Fighting between Houthis and security forces between 19 and 21 January caused the deaths of 35 people, wounded 94, displaced hundreds of families and damaged a hospital (OCHA/IRIN, 20/01/2015).

**Aden:** On 19 March, President Hadi’s palace was attacked in an air raid (AFP, 19/03/2015). 11 people were killed and 63 wounded when special forces fighters loyal to the Houthis tried to seize control of Aden’s airport, in fighting that forced its temporary closure (MSF, 20/03/2015; AFP, 21/03/2015). Houthis seized the airport temporarily before it was recaptured by Government forces on 29 March (Bloomberg, 29/03/2015). On 12 March, three people were killed in a gunfight between militants loyal to Hadi and opposition (Reuters, 12/03/2015).

**Al Bayda:** On 12 March, Houthi militias shot dead two protesters during a rally in support of President Hadi in Al Bayda city (AFP, 12/03/2015). On 3 March, an AQAP attack on a Houthi outpost left five dead and wounded between five and 15 people (Reuters, 03/03/2015). Clashes between Houthis, AQAP and affiliated tribes began in October and intensified in November. Attacks in January killed at least 15 (Reuters, 01/02/2015; Yemen Times, 12/01/2015; Reuters/Yemen Times 06/01/2015). Clashes have involved attacks on schools and hospitals used by the warring parties (AFP, 17/10/2014; 20/10/2014; 08/11/2014).

**Ab Yan:** On 9 March, AQAP militants overran the city of Mahfad, a former AQAP stronghold, and held it for eight hours before they were driven out by the Yemeni army (Gulf News, 10/03/2015).

**Ibb:** The Houthis have deployed some 5,000 militia and more than 80 tanks to an area of Ibb 30km northeast of Taizz (ABC, 23/03/2015). On 1 February, Ansar Al Sharia fighters killed a Houthi commander in Ibb city (Reuters, 01/01/2015).

**Hadramaut:** On 20 February, a bomb attack targeting an army general on a road between the main towns of Sayun and Shibam killed one soldier and wounded four (AFP, 20/02/2015).

**Hajjah:** On 30 March, an airstrike killed 45 people and wounded 65 in Mazraq refugee camp (Reuters, 30/03/2015).

**Lahj:** Lahj governorate was seized by Houthis on 25 March (Washington Post, 26/03/2015). According to sources, troops loyal to President Hadi and southern paramilitary forces deployed in Lahj in anticipation of a possible Houthis advance (Al Jazeera, 22/03/2015; ABC, 23/03/2015). On 20 March, IS claimed responsibility for an attack that killed 29 police (ABC, 23/03/2015).

**Marib:** On 25 March, six days of fighting between Houthi militias backed by security forces and tribesmen in the Qania area ended with a ceasefire (Yemen Times, 25/03/2015). Sunni tribes in Marib are heavily armed and have been mobilised to resist Houthi advances (AFP, 22/01/2015). Reinforcements from Al Jawf, Al Bayda, and Sa’ada governorates are joining local tribes to defend the governorate against possible Houthi assaults. According to tribal sources, upwards of 30,000 armed tribesmen are stationed in

Sahil area (Yemen Times, 12/01/2015). On 22 January, two tribesmen were killed and six wounded in an ambush by Houthis in Naqil al Watada, an area between Marib and Sanaa. Several Houthis were also killed, according to sources. Abdul Malik al Houthi had threatened to take control of Marib, which supplies electricity and fuel to most of Yemen (AFP, 22/01/2015).

**Sa’ada:** On 12 March, thousands of Houthi fighters held military exercises in the Al Buqa region, close to the border with Saudi Arabia (Reuters, 12/03/2015).

**Taizz:** Violent demonstrations against the Houthi takeover left eight dead and wounded over 140 people (ICRC; 26/03/2015). On 23 March, Houthi forces seized part of Taizz city and its military airbase (BBC, 22/03/2015; ABC, 23/03/2015).

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

An estimated 15.9 million people, over 60% of the population, are in need of humanitarian aid. Children under 18 years old represent 50% of people in need. Of the 50% of people in need who are over 18 years old, 4% are elderly (over 60 years old) (OCHA, 05/03/2015).

**Access**

The aerial campaign against the Houthis has led many aid agencies to suspend their activities and evacuate their staff (IRIN, 27/03/2015).

Extreme access constraints prevail in Hadramaut, Shabwah and Marib governorates (OCHA, 22/12/2014).

The ongoing fuel crisis and insecurity are also slowing humanitarian operations and access. Road closures further hamper aid deliveries.

The World Bank has suspended operations in Yemen, after a review concluded that the situation in Yemen had deteriorated to the degree that the Bank was unable to exercise effective management over its projects (World Bank, 11/03/2015).

**Displacement**

Several waves of conflict, lack of access, and the fluidity of displacement all make it extremely difficult to estimate new displacements and needs.

In 2015, an estimated 915,000 refugees and migrants will require multi-sector humanitarian assistance – an increase of 16% on 2014’s estimate (OCHA, 22/12/2014).

**IDPs**

As of end of December, there were 334,000 IDPs in Yemen (OCHA, 22/12/2014). The vast majority are hosted in five governorates: Sa’ada (103,014 people); Hajjah (88,603 people); Amran (71,548 people); Sanaa (46,228 people); and Al Jawf (24,700) (OCHA, 11/2014).

90% of IDPs are estimated to live outside camps (OCHA, 03/09/2014; Global CCCM Cluster, 27/03/2014).
Over 2014, localised conflicts displaced approximately 100,000 Yemenis – most returned home within days, according to the UN. These conflicts were primarily associated with the movement of Houthi forces into new areas, including Amran, Al Bayda, Al Jawf, Marib, Sanaa, and Ibb governorates (USAID, 13/02/2015).

Over 26–30 March, aerial bombardment displaced around 4,500 people (750 families) to refugee camps in Hajjah from Sa’ada in the far north (Reuters, 30/03/2015).

Refugees and Migrants

Around 800,000 refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants require humanitarian assistance. There are 257,645 registered refugees, most are Somalis (236,803); 5,934 are Ethiopians (Mixed Migration Secretariat, 28/02/2015).

Over January, an estimated 2,750 migrants and refugees from the Horn of Africa arrived in Yemen, the large majority of them Ethiopians (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat, 31/01/2015). In 2014, nearly 91,600 refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants arrived in Yemen, a 40% increase compared to 2013, according to IOM. Many arrive destitute and in need of life-saving services and basic protection. They have reported abduction, torture, physical assault, and rape as common forms of abuse (Mixed Migration Secretariat, 28/02/2015).

Somali refugees are living in precarious conditions either in the only refugee camp, Kharaz, or in urban areas. One million undocumented Ethiopian migrants also live in Yemen (ECHO, 27/08/2014: UNHCR, 12/2014, ECHO, 09/02/2015).

At least 2,000 Syrian refugees have been registered in Yemen since August 2014. The total number of Syrians in Yemen is estimated to be more than 10,000 (OCHA, 05/11/2014).

Returnees

During October, IOM recorded 25,940 Yemeni returnees at the Al Tuwal border crossing point between Yemen and Saudi Arabia (IOM, 14/11/2014). Between January 2013 and September 2014, 936,408 Yemenis returned from Saudi Arabia, as the Saudi Government restricted the activities of foreign workers (OCHA, 30/11/2014). Most returnees have acute humanitarian needs.

At the end of November, 215,400 IDPs had returned home (OCHA, 31/12/2014). Returnees were located in Abyan (138,631), Sa’ada (68,618) and Al Bayda (8,155) (OCHA, 31/12/2014).

Food Security

The food security situation shows a slight improvement since 2011. Nonetheless, 5 million people are severely food insecure (WFP, 31/12/2014). Most areas of Yemen are expected to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) through June 2015, with increased need for humanitarian assistance as the lean season and political crisis continue (FEWSNET, 03/2015). Nearly half of the rural population and over one quarter of the urban population are food insecure (Comprehensive Food Security Survey, 11/2014).

Sa’ada governorate has the country’s most food insecure areas; more than 40% are of the governorate’s population severely food insecure (Comprehensive Food Security Survey, 11/2014).

Agriculture and Markets

Insecurity is hampering agricultural activity as well as agricultural assistance programmes (FAO cited in OCHA, 08/10/2014).

Due to conflict-related disruptions to the imported food supply, as well as the likely reduction in fuel subsidies and currency depreciation, food prices are likely to increase in the coming months, although this could be mitigated to some extent by low international commodity prices. Disruptions to sources of income and the potential increase in the cost of food and other goods are likely to reduce household purchasing power. This is likely to decrease the quantity and quality of food consumed, as almost all poor households rely heavily on market purchases (FEWSNET, 03/2015). Although food availability on markets is adequate, accessibility is problematic, with a substantial part of the population not meeting food consumption needs due to a lack of purchasing power (WFP, 19/03/2015).

The declining supply of cooking gas led to a 30–40% increase in prices in January. Shortages may worsen if the current political tension in Marib deteriorates, as this governorate supplies cooking gas to Sana’a and other central and northern governorates (FEWSNET, 18/02/2015).

Livelihoods

The loss of remittances due to the expulsion of Yemeni migrant workers from Saudi Arabia is likely to have a severe impact on the lives of thousands of families (ECHO, 27/08/2014).

Health and Nutrition

An estimated 8.6 million people have limited access to health services (OCHA, 09/09/2014). Qualified medical staff are in short supply, as is medical equipment.

Limited access to essential health care services as a consequence of ongoing conflict has increased the risk of higher morbidity and mortality from mass casualty events and common diseases (diarrhoea, respiratory infections and vaccine-preventable diseases) in areas such as Al Bayda, Marib, Taizz and Aden.

Over 2015, an estimated 7,500 children are expected to contract vaccine-preventable diseases with serious consequences. 400,000 children are estimated to need psychosocial support due to the humanitarian situation (UNICEF, 29/01/2015).

Nutrition

The number of acutely malnourished children under the age of five has fallen from an estimated one million at the end of 2013 to just over 840,000 in 2014, according to the Nutrition Cluster. In the same period, the number of severely acutely malnourished children declined from 279,000 to about 170,000. However, more than one in ten children is still acutely malnourished, with boys more affected than girls (Comprehensive Food Security Survey, 11/2014).
National GAM has slightly improved: 12.7% of under five children are malnourished compared to 13% in 2011 (OCHA, 31/08/2014; FEWSNET, 16/09/2014). The Comprehensive Food Security Survey shows that GAM has improved considerably in Al Hudaydah, Aden, Lahj, Marib, Al Dhale’e, Hadramaut and Al Bayda; but severely deteriorated in Taizz, Ibb, Dhamar and Al Maharah, due to various factors including poor water and sanitation conditions, poor food consumption habits, and scarce health facilities. In early February, 61 out of 333 districts in Yemen were reported to have critical levels of GAM (over 15%) and another 105 with serious levels (10–14.9% GAM) (OCHA, 14/02/2015).

**WASH**

An estimated 13.1 million people do not have access to safe water (OCHA, 09/09/2014). 12.1 million are without access to improved sanitation, and 4.4 million lack access to adequate sanitation (OCHA, 28/02/2014). An estimated 68,000 IDPs, many of whom are in protracted displacement, and their host communities in Hajjah require WASH assistance. About 9,000 people (1,500 families) affected by conflict in Al Jawf over August–September need WASH assistance (OCHA, 14/02/2015). Open defecation remains standard practice for more than 20% of the population and appears to be higher for young children (UNICEF 2014).

**Education**

In 2015, 1.1 million people affected by conflict or other disasters will require education services, including provision of education or rehabilitation of schools, among other things (OCHA, 22/12/2014). Over 350 damaged schools require rehabilitation or reconstruction, affecting some 72,000 children (Yemen Times, 04/11/2014).

Nationwide, an estimated 2.5 million children are not in school (OCHA, 04/2014). 69% of the estimated 1.14 million 6–14 year-olds not in school are girls (UNICEF cited in Yemen Times, 04/11/2014).

**Protection**

Protesters against the Houthi takeover have been illegally detained and tortured, according to several reports. One protester was reported dead on 14 February, after sustaining severe injuries while being detained by Houthi militias (AFP, 14/02/2015; Amnesty, 16/02/2015).

Over 15 October–15 January – since the Houthi takeover – an NGO in Ibb governorate has documented 37 killings, 12 cases of assault against journalists and human rights activists, five demolitions and 17 partial demolitions of homes, 381 people displaced, 49 homes looted, nine cases of taking over public institutions, three cases of shelling public institutions, and 190 cases of illegal detention of civilians (Yemen Times, 05/03/2015).

Over January, 1,490 migrants and refugees arriving in Yemen were reportedly abducted. 234 were women. A further 243 migrants and refugees reported being physically assaulted and 63 reported robbery or extortion (RMMS, 31/01/2015).

Due to their marginalisation, the Mumasheen minority has higher humanitarian needs than the average population (UNICEF, 20/02/2015).

**Children**

In 2015, an estimated 3.9 million children are living in areas where violations of their rights constitute a serious risk. Of these, an estimated 2.6 million are in need of child protection services (OCHA, 22/12/2014). During February, the UN verified nine incidents related to killing and maiming, where 15 children were maimed and two boys were killed (UNICEF, 28/02/2015).

Houthis, Ansar al Sharia, AQAP and state forces are all recruiting children (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, 01/10/2014). Armed children guard checkpoints throughout Sa'ada, Ibb, Hudaydah, and Amran (UNICEF, 31/12/2014; 20/01/2015). In January, the UN verified 27 cases of children aged 14–17 manning Houthi checkpoints (UNICEF, 29/01/2015).

Since the beginning of 2014, nearly 1,000 Yemeni children are known to have travelled to Saudi Arabia alone in search of income. Most were expelled upon arrival. At the same time, an estimated 15,000 children reach Yemen from the Horn of Africa every year via smugglers. The children mainly originate from Ethiopia and are often unaccompanied (UNICEF, 28/02/2015).

**GBV**

About 100,000 people are predicted to require support related to gender-based violence in 2015. GBV in Yemen remains critically under-reported. From January to mid-October 2014, 8,300 GBV cases were reported (OCHA, 22/12/2014).

**Mines and ERW**

Landmines and explosive remnants of war are a major concern in the northern governorates. There were several incidents reported in Sanaa, Sa’ada, Al Dhale’e, Amanat Al Asimah and Ibb in September and October (UNICEF, 31/10/2014).

The Yemen Executive Mine Action Center (YEMAC) believes areas in northwestern Hajjah governorate contaminated with cluster munition remnants, but it has been unable to survey them due to insecurity. YEMAC has confirmed the presence of cluster munition remnants in four districts on the border between Sada’a governorate and Saudi Arabia (Cluster Monitor, 04/12/2014).

In 2013, there were 49 casualties from mines or ERW, including 40 children (Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor, 19/11/2014).

Updated: 31/03/2015
LATEST DEVELOPMENTS
No significant developments this week, 25/03/2015. Last update: 19/02/2015.

KEY CONCERNS
1,189,214 Syrians are registered as refugees in Lebanon. 11,161 are awaiting registration. Bekaa is hosting 417,505 refugees; Beirut 345,198; North Lebanon 286,520; and South Lebanon 139,991 (UNHCR 23/03/2015).
- More than three million people are directly affected by the Syrian crisis in Lebanon (UNHCR, 25/01/2015).
- As of December, 35,000 families still need winterisation assistance (Shelter Cluster, 12/2014).
- 300,000–400,000 refugee children of school age not being educated within Lebanon; between 210,000 and 320,000 are involved in some form of child labour (VoA, 23/01/2015)
- Only 30% of Syrian children born in Lebanon have birth certificates (UNHCR 10/11/2014).

OVERVIEW
Lebanon has the highest per capita concentration of refugees worldwide. While the country struggles to deal with the refugee influx, which exceeds a quarter of the Lebanese population, tensions between host and refugee populations are increasing due to food price hikes, and pressure on health and education systems, housing, and employment. The number of poor living in Lebanon has risen by nearly two-thirds since 2011, to 2.1 million, and Lebanese unemployment has doubled (UNHCR 18/12/2014).

Political Context
The Lebanese Parliament has extended its mandate until June 2017, on the grounds that elections would present too much of a security risk. The Reform and Change bloc boycotted the extension vote and said it would challenge the extension at the Constitutional Council (Daily Star, 12/11/2014).

The Government was formed in February 2014 after ten months of political stalemate. It brings together the Hezbollah movement and its allies, and the Future Movement bloc, who back opposing sides in the Syria war. Neither side has veto power over the other.

Former president Michel Sleiman’s term expired on 25 May 2014. The March 8 bloc, which includes Hezbollah, has boycotted voting for the new president, arguing that the sessions are futile until rival groups agree on a consensus candidate. The next parliamentary session to vote for a new president has been postponed until 2 April (Daily Star, 11/03/2015).

Security Context
Hezbollah’s involvement in Syria, and the alleged presence of Jabhat al Nusra (JAN) and the Islamic State (IS) in Lebanon, raises destabilisation concerns in Lebanon. Longstanding tensions between Lebanon and Israel have flared occasionally in the context of the Syrian civil war.

The security situation in many Palestinian refugee camps is tense. A Palestinian joint security force deployed to the southern refugee camp of Mieh Mieh in late March, less than a year after a similar security plan was implemented in Ain al Hilweh. The refugee camps of Burj al Barajneh and Shatila, in Beirut’s southern suburbs, are planned to be the next in line for the deployment of the security force (Daily Star, 24/03/2015).

South Lebanon: On 12 March, shooting was reported between Israel and Lebanon in the disputed Shebaa Farms. The same day, an Israeli soldier was wounded in a shooting incident that occurred near Quneitra in the Golan Heights (Daily Star, 10/03/2015; 12/03/2015). There were a number of incidents between Hezbollah and Israeli Defence Forces at Shebaa Farms and the Golan Heights in January. 13 were killed, including a UN peacekeeper and a General of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard (UNIFIL/Daily Star, 28/01/2015; NYT, 28/01/2015; Washington Post, 19/01/2015; BBC, 19/01/2015; Middle East Monitor, 21/01/2015).

Bekaa Valley: Along its northern and northeastern border with Syria, Lebanon is engaged in a battle against armed groups reportedly affiliated to Islamic State (IS) and JAN. However, analysts estimate that no more than 3,000 IS and JAN fighters are in Syria’s Qalamoun area on the border with Lebanon, which is insufficient to wage a large-scale assault on the country (Stratfor, 03/01/2015; Daily Star, 06/01/2015).

The Lebanese army has maintained a near-daily pattern of attacking militant positions on the outskirts of Ras Baalbek in a bid to repulse new possible attacks (Daily Star, 15/03/2015). On 26 February, it was reported that the army had ousted IS militants from Lebanese territory (The Daily Star, 26/02/2015). On 23 January, clashes near Ras Baalbek killed 53, and wounded 22 (Daily Star, 26/01/2015; Al Jazeera, 05/02/2015).

A decrease in security incidents was recorded between 1 December 2014 and 10 January 2015; the majority occurred in the Arsal-Baalbek area. Armed fighter briefly took over Arsal in August 2014 (OCHA, 15/01/2015). Violence in Arsal, and sporadic incidents across the country, have been followed by an increase in raids and arrests by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF).

Tripoli: On 10 January, a double suicide attack by JAN killed nine people and wounded 37 others in an Alawite neighbourhood (AFP, 11/01/2015; OCHA, 15/01/2015). Bouts of fighting took place late in 2014 between Sunni groups in Tripoli sympathetic to armed opposition groups in Syria, and Alawite groups supporting the Syrian Government. Fighting
was recurrent before the alleged presence of IS and JAN, and is mostly a manifestation of longstanding socio-economic grievances and sectarian tensions (SNAP 06/11/2014).

Prisoner Exchanges

Since clashes in early August, IS and JAN are believed to be holding about 25 Lebanese soldiers and members of security forces. JAN has since executed a hostage, which led to unrest, including a spike in security incidents targeting Syrian refugees. According to sources, the negotiations are progressing and both sides have listed their conditions (Al Monitor, 25/01/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Some 3.3 million people in Lebanon, including 1.2 million children, are directly affected by the Syria crisis (UNHCR 16/12/2014). Lebanon is also hosting 270,000 long-term Palestinian refugees (UNICEF 12/12/2014).

Access

Refugees live across 1,750 different locations in Lebanon, making the delivery of humanitarian assistance challenging (UNHCR 10/2014). Northern Bekaa, Tripoli, and Akkar are areas of higher risk, and the UN will only carry out critical missions to parts of those areas (WFP 03/12/2014).

Border Restrictions

In October, the Government formally agreed to stop welcoming displaced people, barring exceptional cases, and to ask UNHCR to stop registering the displaced. The policy has resulted in a substantial reduction in refugees registering and raised serious protection concerns (UNHCR, AFP 24/10/2014; UNHCR 07/2014).

Since January, Syrians wanting to enter Lebanon must apply for a visa. Syrians who do not specify their purpose for entry require sponsorship by a Lebanese national (UNHCR, 25/01/2015; BBC, 05/01/2015; Daily Star, 14/01/2015). The visa policy and other new regulations make legal stay more complex for refugees. An average of 13% of registered refugees have entered through unofficial border crossings and are not able to pay the prohibitive regularisation fees. Those who entered through official crossings often have difficulties meeting the residency renewal fees (UNHCR 10/2014).

Critical Infrastructure

The shortage of surface water, partly due to little rainfall last winter, has reduced hydroelectric power generation, leading to a scarcity of electric power (UNHCR 11/2014).

Displacement

Refugees in Lebanon

1,189,214 Syrians are registered as refugees in Lebanon. 11,161 are awaiting registration. Bekaa is hosting 417,505 refugees; Beirut 345,198; North Lebanon 286,520; and South Lebanon 139,991 (UNHCR 23/03/2015). The number of Syrians in Lebanon who are not registered with UNHCR is unknown.

26% of refugees are women, and 53% children. 32% of registered families are headed by women. Over 38% of households include at least one person with specific needs (UNHCR 09/2014). Most refugees come from Homs, Idlib, and Jebel Saman (Aleppo) (UNHCR 30/11/2014).

More than half of refugees coming to Lebanon moved at least once before crossing the border; one in ten moved more than three times (UNHCR 01/09/2014).

Palestinian refugees from Syria: 45,185 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) reside in Lebanon (UNHCR, 28/02/2015). Since May, PRS entry to Lebanon has been almost entirely limited to those transiting to a third country. An increasing number of PRS remain in Lebanon without legal stay, and face an array of protection concerns (OCHA 01/09/2014).

Host Communities

All 446 host communities have reported inadequate or insufficient access to water, waste water management systems, affordable housing, and employment opportunities. Conditions in urban locations are better than in rural communities (OCHA 09/2014).

86% of Syrian refugees are living in Lebanon’s 242 most vulnerable locations. Competition for scarce income-generating opportunities, more expensive goods and services, and less affordable accommodation, are the main drivers of tensions (UNHCR 09/2014; REACH 08/2014)

Food Security

1.5 million people are in need of food assistance. As of end January, significant funding shortfalls for the humanitarian component of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan resulted in a 30% reduction in the value of the food for targeted displaced Syrians and Palestinian refugees from Syria (WFP/FAO, 31/01/2015).

The highest levels of food insecurity are found in North Lebanon (Akkar) and the Bekaa Valley (WFP 18/12/2014).

Agriculture and Markets

A severe drought has resulted in a substantial decline in agricultural production throughout the country (FAO 11/2014). Aid workers say much of the suffering due to water shortages could be alleviated by repairs to infrastructure (VOA, 23/12/2014).

Aggregate cereal consumption has increased from 0.9 million metric tons a year (2004–2008) to 1.2 million. Lebanon relies heavily on imports: national grain production is tentatively put at just under 200,000 metric tons, similar to last year and the five-year average (FAO 11/2014).

An increased number of livestock have been crossing from Syria into neighbouring countries and potentially spreading animal diseases (FAO, 17/03/2015).
Livelihoods

700,000 people are in need of livelihood assistance (UNDP, 31/01/2015). An ongoing assessment indicates that 36% of refugees are severely or moderately economically vulnerable (UNHCR, 04/03/2015). 78% of refugee households are not able to generate an income, citing a lack of work as the main issue. Newcomers arriving in 2014 are in general more vulnerable: 39% of refugees surveyed in July were unemployed for over 12 months in Syria before fleeing to Lebanon (UNHCR 09/2014).

88% of the employed are paid 40% less than the minimum wage. Female Syrian workers earn 30% less than male workers (UNHCR 09/2014).

Palestinian refugees from Syria: More than 37% of PRS have reported cash and food aid as their main source of income (UNRWA, 03/2014). The majority of employed PRS cannot rely on wages to ensure a decent standard of living. Only 11% of PRS households were able to rely on previous savings and remittances.

Health and Nutrition

3.3 million people are in need of healthcare (WHO/UNHCR, 31/01/2015). Health services are available, but are costly (WHO, 01/2015). Short opening hours and lack of trained health personnel further limit access.

72% of primary health centres assessed by UNICEF in 2014 lack sufficient essential drugs, 67% lack sufficient medication for chronic diseases, and 49% lack sufficient antibiotics for children (08/2014).

Mental Health

Around 300,000 displaced Syrians are estimated to be most vulnerable to mental health concerns; 60% are women and children (WHO 07/2014). 89% of Syrian youth (18–25 years of age) have described themselves as depressed, anxious, or afraid most of the time (UNFPA; UNHCR 10/2014).

WASH

3.9 million people are in need of WASH assistance (UNICEF/UNHCR, 31/01/2015). As of mid-2014, 33% of refugee households do not have drinking water, compared to 28% in 2013 (VASyR 08/2014; UNHCR 07/2014). In some areas, water shortages can only be addressed through infrastructure projects (UNHCR 09/2014).

WASH conditions are worse for refugees in informal settlements, in difficult-to-access locations in the Bekaa Valley and the north, and PRS (UNHCR 07/2014). Informal settlements have limited or no sanitation facilities.

Approximately 12% of households (twice the percentage in 2013) do not have access to a place for washing. Of those who had access, over 7% were sharing bathrooms and latrines with 15 people or more (VASyR 08/2014).

Only 8% of wastewater in Lebanon is treated, and the increase in the population has led to an 8–14% increase in the amount of wastewater generated (Ministry of Environment, UNHCR 16/12/2014).

Waste management: Waste management remains poor in most places where refugees live. Diminishing funding has reduced waste management activities in Bekaa and the north, and municipalities do not have the capacity to collect (UNHCR 09/2014).

Shelter and NFIs

1.8 million people are in need of shelter assistance (UNHCR, 31/01/2015). 55% of Syrian refugees live in substandard housing, including 38% in insecure dwellings; and 17% in improvised informal settlements (UNHCR 09/2014).

The number of refugees forced to move to tents in informal shelters continues to grow (MSF, 26/01/2015). As of 1 September, 1,392 informal settlements house 186,240 refugees; in June 2012, there were 282 informal settlements (UNHCR 09/2014, 07/2014). Their populations are highly dependent upon assistance and loans (UNHCR/REACH 11/2014). In Beirut, many Syrian refugees have settled in Palestinian refugee camps, where WASH and shelter conditions are often substandard (IFRC, 03/02/2015).

Palestinian refugees from Syria: The PRS population has increased from 110,000 to 140,000 since 2011: 44,000 are Palestinian refugees from Syria (OCHA 09/2014; 01/2015). PRS households are residing in alarmingly crowded dwellings, with an average of 4.6 persons per bedroom; 8.4 people on average share one bathroom. Most households (71%) reported paying rent for shelter. Slightly over a quarter of households (27%) were hosted free of charge.

Lebanese returnees: At least 20,000 Lebanese nationals had returned from Syria by mid-December (UNDP, UNHCR, 18/12/2014). Assessments indicate that at least 51% of returnees are shelter insecure: 27% live in single-room structures, warehouses, garages, or unfinished buildings; 4% live in informal settlements and collective shelters; 4% are classified as homeless (IOM/OCHA 09/2014; UNHCR 07/2014).

Education

750,000 children are in need of education assistance (UNICEF, UNHCR, 31/01/2015).

According to ILO estimates, 300,000–400,000 refugee children of school age are not being educated (VoA, 23/01/2015). 90,000 Syrian refugee children between the ages of 5 and 17 were enrolled in public schools in 2013/2014. A total of 502,000 school-aged Syrian refugee children in Lebanon (aged 3-18 years) are registered by UNHCR (31/01/2015).

The biggest barrier to schooling is financial. Other obstacles are a lack of awareness of available educational support; a lack of space in public schools; and the cost of transportation. Language barriers and safety concerns contribute to a high drop-out rate among refugee children (REACH 11/2014; UNHCR 09/2014).

Palestinian refugees from Syria: About 6,600 PRS students have enrolled in 60 UNRWA schools for the 2014/2015 school year (UNRWA 03/12/2014). School enrolment rates have doubled since the previous academic year, to 64%. Enrolment rates are lower for PRS
living outside camps, and decrease as children grow older (even within the same household): children aged 13 years and older are facing difficulties adjusting to UNRWA’s Lebanese curriculum, taught in English or French.

Protection

Members of the Lebanese army have committed serious violations, including violations of the rights of detained refugees, evictions, and threats of eviction. 45 Lebanese municipalities have imposed curfews on Syrian refugees since the clashes in Arsal in August, which violate international human rights law and appear to be illegal under Lebanese law (HRW 10/2014). As of February, the Lebanese army has ordered 17,000 refugees in eastern Bekaa Valley to vacate informal tented camps, according to UNHCR, reportedly in an attempt to prevent infiltration by militants (Daily Star, 07/02/2015). Around 4,000 people have already left camps and around 65 sites are believed to be at risk (UNFPA, 28/02/2015).

Statelessness: Stateless refugees in Lebanon include Syrian Kurds who were denaturalised in Syria in 1962. Between March 2011 and August 2014, 34,272 Syrian refugees have been born in Lebanon. 72% do not possess an official birth certificate (UNFPA 30/11/2014). The exact number is difficult to ascertain.

Sexual and Gender-based Violence

The mobility of refugee women in Lebanon is reportedly restricted due to fear of sexual harassment and exploitation (UNFPA 13/08/2014). 25% of survivors of reported SGBV cases are under 18 years of age. A weak legal framework, limited resources, and social barriers prevent refugees at risk of SGBV, or victims, from seeking and receiving adequate protection. Other challenges include lack of documentation and growing tension between refugees and host communities.

There are no official statistics on child marriage, which exists in some areas; but the rate has risen with the influx of Syrian refugees (UNICEF, AFP 08/2014).

Child Protection

Only 30% of Syrian children born in Lebanon have birth certificates (UNHCR 10/11/2014).

According to ILO estimates, between 210,000 and 320,000 refugee children of school age who are not in school, are involved in some form of child labour (VoA, 23/01/2015). The main factors that cause children to live or work on the streets are social exclusion, vulnerability of households, the influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon, as well as organised crime and exploitation of children (ILO et al., 16/02/2015).

The fragile national child protection system, compounded by protracted displacement and a dispersed refugee population, remain the main challenges in addressing refugee child protection risks (UNHCR 31/10/2014).

Mines and ERW

Lebanon has nearly 1,400 confirmed minefields and 520 cluster munitions strike areas, including in areas hosting refugees. In March 2014, refugees were living within 10–20m of known minefields in West Bekaa and Rashaya (Mine Action Group).

**OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES COMPLEX, FOOD INSECURITY, INSECURITY**

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

No significant developments this week 26/03/2015. Last update 19/03/2015.

**KEY CONCERNS**

- 1.9 million people need humanitarian assistance; 1.3 million in Gaza and 600,000 in the West Bank (OCHA, 12/02/2015).

- 1.45 million people, or 33% of the people in oPt, are estimated to be food insecure (WFP, 19/12/2014). 868,000 people in Gaza alone require food aid (UNRWA, 05/02/2015).

- 1.4 million people are in need of WASH assistance, particularly access to water (OCHA, 12/02/2014).

- Continuity of medical care is threatened by the financial crisis and electricity shortages in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (OCHA).

- The ongoing blockade of the Gaza Strip limits access and movement of both people and goods.

**Political Context**

On 5 March, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation ended its security cooperation with Israel, following the Israeli Government withholding USD 375 million in Palestinian tax revenue (UNICEF, 26/02/2015; Reuters, 05/03/2015). On 16 January, the International Criminal Court (ICC) launched a preliminary examination of the events of the 50-day war (ICC, 16/01/2015). This followed Palestine officially joining the ICC on 7 January. The United States and Israel opposed the move, citing that oPt is not a sovereign state. From April, Palestinian officials will be able to launch war crimes complaints against Israel. On 28 February an Egyptian court declared Hamas a terrorist group, increasing tension along the Gaza border (UNRWA, 06/03/2015).

Israel has announced a series of measures affecting occupied territory since August 2014, beginning with the appropriation of some 400 hectares in the occupied West Bank, which an anti-settlement group termed the biggest in 30 years (Reuters, 31/08/2014).
The Palestinian reconciliation Government, made up of members of both Hamas and Fatah, was sworn in before President Abbas in June, ending seven years of division (AFP, UN, 02/06/2014). It had a six-month mandate, but no formal announcement regarding the passing of the six months has been made (UNRWA, 14/12/2014).

Security Context

Gaza

Israeli forces opened fire into the Access Restricted Area (ARA) 23 times in separate incidences in the week ending 16 March. No one was injured. The boundaries of the ARA have not yet been defined by Israeli authorities, increasing the risks to civilians (OCHA, 16/03/2014). In the week ending 9 March, Israeli forces opened fire on several fishing boats, injuring two and killing one (OCHA, 09/03/2015).

On 3 and 5 February Egyptian security forces opened fire on two Palestinian military posts near the border following a bomb attack. Hamas has been blamed by Egypt, but it has denied responsibility (OCHA, 09/02/2015; Reuters 03/02/2015). On 23 January, Egyptian naval forces opened fire on a Palestinian boat accused of infiltrating Egyptian territorial waters (OCHA, 30/01/2015).

Social Tensions

Only USD 135 million out of USD 720 million requested for repairs and rental subsidies has been received, and the slow pace of recovery from Operation Protective Edge, as well as two months of reduced salaries for Palestinian Authority staff, is prompting protests outside UN and international NGO premises (AFP, 28/01/2015; OCHA, 02/03/2015; UNRWA, 06/03/2015). There were 17 protests in the week ending 16 March (OCHA, 16/03/2015). The growing unrest has been linked to an increase in the number of violent incidents not associated to the conflict (Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, 16/02/2015). During the week ending 6 March, Palestinian militant factions clashed in Beit Lahia, resulting in one man injured (UNRWA, 06/03/2015).

Operation Protective Edge

Israel launched Operation Protective Edge on 8 July 2014, striking Gaza with intensive aerial bombing, aimed at ending cross-border rocket fire. Hamas and Israel agreed to a permanent ceasefire on 26 August (AFP). At least 2,257 people were reported killed, including 539 children: an estimated 1,473 victims were civilians (UNICEF, 02/01/2015). Thousands of structures were destroyed. On the Israeli side, 66 soldiers, and five civilians, including one child, were killed (OCHA, 29/08/2014).

West Bank and East Jerusalem

In the week ending 16 March, Israeli forces injured 42 Palestinians (OCHA, 16/03/2015). On 13 March, Israeli forces opened fire on more than 100 Palestinian protesters at the entrance of Jalazun refugee camp, injuring one Palestinian, AFP, 13/03/2015). On 6 March, a Palestinian deliberately drove his car into a group of Israeli pedestrians in Jerusalem, injuring six police (BBC, 06/03/2015). Clashes associated with the construction of the West Bank Barrier, or during search and arrest operations, are the most frequent cause of injury and death. In 2014, 56 people were killed and 5,668 injured by Israeli forces.

Settler-related Violence

In the week ending 16 March, there were seven settler attacks on Palestinians resulting in injury or property damage and one settler was injured by Palestinians (OCHA, 16/03/2015). There have been two hit-and-run incidents so far in 2015 (OCHA, 09/02/2015). 94 structures have been demolished and 117 people displaced in 2015 (OCHA, 02/03/2015).

590 buildings were destroyed and 1,177 people displaced in 2014. 330 incidents of settler-related violence resulted in Palestinian casualties or property damage in the West Bank and 237 incidents resulted in Israeli casualties or property damage in 2014 (OCHA, 16/02/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

Border Restrictions

Egyptian authorities opened the Rafah crossing in both directions on 9 and 10 March, allowing 649 Palestinians to leave and 477 people to cross into Gaza. Border crossings continue to be highly restricted and closures in response to security incidents are frequent. It has only opened for 13 days since October 2014 (OCHA, 16/03/2015). 30,000 people are waiting to exit Gaza; 17,000 are registered with the border authority (OCHA, 09/02/2014).

Critical Infrastructure

The Gaza Power Plant continues to run at half its operational capacity (OCHA, 30/01/2015; 09/02/2015). Sewage systems and the electricity grid remain damaged throughout the Gaza Strip (ICRC, 20/02/2015).

Security Incidents Involving Aid Workers

Nine UNRWA staff members were killed in July and August (UNRWA, 03/08/2014).

Disasters

On 22 February, 100 people were evacuated because of flash floods in the Gaza Strip.
Displacement

As of 6 March, 100,000 people remain displaced since the July–August conflict, and are residing in schools or temporary shelters (IFRC, 06/03/2015).

Between 27 January and 2 February, at least 162 Palestinians were displaced in the Jordan Valley and Hebron by the Israeli military, due to their proximity to an Israeli-declared ‘firing zone’ (OCHA, 02/02/2015).

Food Security

1.45 million, or 33% of Palestinians, are food insecure: 57% of the population of Gaza and 19% of the population of the West Bank (WFP, 19/12/2014). 868,000 people in Gaza require food aid (UNRWA, 05/02/2015).

Electricity shortages have impacted food production and refrigeration. Delays at crossings are complicating deliveries. Destruction of tunnels bringing inexpensive goods has also impacted access to food and supplies.

Livelihoods

As of September 2014, a quarter of the Palestinian workforce was unemployed: 16% in the West Bank and 45% in Gaza (World Bank, 10/09/2014).

The majority of the Gaza population lost its productive assets in the July–August conflict. The livelihoods of 28,600 households have been severely affected or destroyed (Food Security Cluster, 28/08/2014). Losses to the farming sector are estimated at USD 450 million (Ministry of Agriculture cited by OCHA, 18/08/2014).

Health and Nutrition

Longstanding shortages of electricity, equipment, and drug supplies persist. Fifty primary health centres and 17 hospitals reported infrastructure damage during the conflict; one hospital and seven clinics were destroyed (OCHA, 04/09/2014; WHO, 05/09/2014).

The health system was already overstretched before the 2014 conflict (WHO, 30/09/2014). In the West Bank, stocks of 150 (of 525) essential medicines were at zero in May; the main government pharmacy in the Gaza Strip reported no stock of 118 (of 481) essential medicines (OCHA, 31/05/2014).

Child Health

300,000 children are in need of direct and specialised psychosocial support in the Gaza Strip (UNICEF, 26/02/2015).

WASH

95% of groundwater in the Gaza Strip is unfit for human consumption, forcing residents to rely on aid (UNICEF, 22/01/2015). 400,000 people in the Gaza Strip, including those still displaced, have no or reduced access to water supply and sanitation services (EWASH, 14/01/2015). Although extensive repairs have restored 70–80% of the water and sanitation network to pre-conflict conditions, significant constraints still impair the delivery of services (OCHA, 29/10/2014). In addition, 30–50% of water storage capacity at the household level is damaged (ECHO, 02/10/2014).

Gaza’s only water reserve is the coastal aquifer, which it shares with Israel and Egypt, and which is 55 million cubic metres; Gaza needs 190 million cubic metres every year, according to senior officials. The aquifer could be unusable by 2016 and the damage it has suffered may be irreversible by 2020 (AFP, 05/09/2014).

Only 50% of wastewater in Gaza is treated, and treatment is currently of low quality (World Bank, 10/09/2014).

Although solid waste is being collected in most areas, it is being left in temporary sites rather than dumped in designated landfills.

Shelter

An estimated 500,000 people are in need of shelter assistance (OCHA 12/02/2014).

Approximately 124,000 housing units have been damaged, including 17,000 that were severely damaged or destroyed (Gisha, 19/01/2015). This is in addition to the pre-crisis housing deficit of 80,000 units (NRC, 11/10/2014).

In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, demolition of houses, stop-work orders for houses and structures, as well as confiscation of building materials, pose critical challenges (OCHA, 03/12/2014).

Education

22 schools were completely destroyed and 118 schools damaged during Operation Protective Edge (OCHA, 04/09/2014). The education sector already had a shortage of almost 200 schools before the conflict (Gisha, 19/01/2015). 90% of the 252 UNRWA schools in Gaza run on a double shift basis, and some on triple shifts, affecting some 400,000 students (UNRWA, 29/01/2015; OCHA, 12/02/2015).

Protection

18,000 Palestinians live in or near the 18% of the West Bank designated by the Israeli authorities as “firing zones”, areas of land claimed by the Israeli military for training
and security purposes. Palestinians who live in these zones face severe access restrictions, recurrent demolition, and incidents of forced displacement and home demolition (OCHA, 12/01/2015). Most of the around 7,000 Palestinian Bedouins and herders, some 60% of them children, have demolition orders pending against their homes, and over 85% lack connection to the electricity and water networks. Two-thirds of communities reported facing settler violence during the past three years (OCHA, 23/09/2014).

Child Protection

3,436 children were injured in 2014; 54,000 were homeless. Up to 1,500 orphaned children will need sustained support (OCHA, 04/09/2014; UNICEF, 02/01/2015).

151 Palestinian children are currently being held in Israeli detention (Defence for Children International Palestine Research, 09/02/2015).

Detention

At the end of August, 473 Palestinians were under administrative detention in Israel without trial, compared to 250 in June–July. It is the highest number since April 2009 (Israel Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, 07/10/2014).

Mines and ERW

On 7 and 8 March four Palestinians were injured by ERW in separate incidences in Gaza in Rafah and Nuseirat (UNRWA, 12/03/2015). On 1 March, a Palestinian was killed and his brother injured by ERW east Rafah, Gaza OCHA, 02/03/2015). From January to February, ERW related incidents killed one and wounded 6 Palestinians, most of whom were children (AFP, 26/02/2015; UNICEF, 24/02/2015; OCHA, 03/02/2015; 02/02/2015).

It is estimated that more than 1,900 ERW have yet to be secured (UNRWA, 23/09/2014). In 2014, ERW killed 31 civilians and injured ten in Gaza, and injured 18 in the West Bank (UNICEF, 23/10/2014; 27/10/2014; OCHA, 02/02/2015).

Updated: 26/03/2015

PAKISTAN CONFLICT, FLOODS, DISPLACEMENT, EARTHQUAKE

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

20 March: An explosion targeting a Shi’ite mosque killed at least two people and wounded seven in Karachi (AFP).

16–20 March: 25,000 families returned to Sararogha and Sarwakai in South Waziristan from, while 20,000 started to return to Bara in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Returning families require reconstruction support (local media, 23/03/2015).

KEY CONCERNS

- Nearly 860,000 displaced by military operations in Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan and Khyber Agency (UNHCR, 16/03/2015). There were already 1.1 million IDPs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA as of mid-December 2013.

- Ongoing chronic drought conditions in Tharparkar in Sindh is resulting in food shortages and high numbers of children dying from malnutrition. Nearly 1.74 million people were affected in 2014 and 650 killed, mostly children (local media, 23/03/2015; USAID, 04/12/2014).

OVERVIEW

Priority humanitarian needs are health, nutrition, and food assistance. The security situation remains volatile due to militant attacks in urban centres and military operations against the Taliban in the tribal areas.

Political Context

Opposition protests demanding a probe into allegations of vote rigging by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif began in mid-August, led by Imran Khan’s Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Tahirul Qadri’s Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT). There are signs that the military has been exploiting these protests as a means of re-asserting its dominance over civilian authorities (AFP, 10/12/2014). The PTI called off its opposition campaign following the 16 December attack on a school in Peshawar but warned in mid-January of further protests, should an independent judicial commission not be formed (The Express Tribune, 30/01/2015).

Security Context

Militant attacks have continued in the first quarter of 2015, including in Balochistan, while sectarian violence is mounting against Shi’ites, especially in Sindh. Government military operations in tribal areas have escalated, notably since the Taliban attack on an army-run school in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on 16 December that killed 141 people, in retaliation for government operations in FATA (ICG, 05/01/2015; BBC News, 17/12/2014).

1,781 civilians were killed in terrorist violence in Pakistan in 2014, compared to 3,001 in 2013 (SATP, 01/01/2015).

On 21 January three Islamic State (IS) recruiters were arrested in Lahore, raising fears of an IS infiltration in the region (Le Monde, 21/01/2015). In early September, a new branch of Al Qaeda was announced, covering Pakistan (Financial Times, 03/09/2014).

Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

In June 2014, the Taliban vowed to start an all-out war against the Government, and the
Government launched operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan Agency. A second operation began on 18 October in Khyber Agency, and was expanded mid-March to cover Landi Kotal, Jamrud and Bara districts. Military operations may continue until end 2016 (local media, 23/03/2015; OCHA, 19/02/2015).

Three people were killed, including two children, after a bomb concealed inside a toy went off in the Swat Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on 17 March (AFP, 17/03/2015). A blast in Kurram Agency on 15 February killed one and injured 14 (DAWN, 15/02/2015). A Taliban attack targeting a Shi‘ite mosque in Peshawar on 13 February killed at least 16 people and injured a further 62; the attack was in retaliation for the execution of one of their leaders in December (AFP, 13/02/2015).

Balochistan

The United Baloch Front (UBF) has opposed the alleged annexation of Balochistan since 1948. 2014 saw a sharp rise in acts of violence. Attacks by Islamist armed groups are also a problem in the state.

One person was killed and one severely injured by a landmine explosion and an attack in Kech district on 11 March. Both attacks were reportedly targeting members of the administrative military staff (DAWN, 11/03/2015). An explosion in Chaman – one of the two main crossing-points for supplies to international troops fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan – killed one and wounded seven on 24 February; another explosion on 22 February killed one and wounded six (DAWN, 24/02/2015; AFP, 22/02/2015).

Tensions along the Pakistan–India border

Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged fire along the Line of Control on 5 January, killing four near Sialkot. Tensions escalated on 31 December, when an Indian border guard and two Pakistani paramilitary soldiers were killed during exchanges of fire (AFP, 05/01/2014).

Other Incidents

Extremist groups are increasingly active in the central and northern districts of Sindh, and sectarian violence against Shi‘ites is mounting (USIP, 26/01/2015). An explosion targeting a Shi‘ite mosque killed at least two people and wounded another seven in Karachi on 20 March (AFP, 20/03/2015). A bombing targeting a Shi‘ite mosque in Shikarpur in Sindh on 30 January killed more than 60 people (AFP, 30/01/2015).

17 people were killed and more than 70 injured in twin Taliban suicide attacks on churches in Lahore in Punjab on 15 March, sparking protests which led to three more deaths, including two suspected militants (AFP, 16/03/2015). A Taliban attack near police headquarters in Lahore on 17 February killed five and injured 17; the attack was in retaliation for the execution of imprisoned Taliban members (AFP, 17/02/2015).

At least three people were killed and two others injured in an attack on a Shi‘ite mosque in Islamabad on 18 February (AFP, 18/02/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

IDPs

Access

Access in Balochistan remains challenging due to insecurity (ECHO, 20/10/2014).

Security Incidents Involving Aid Workers

At least three peace volunteers were killed and a further two injured on 2 February in a bomb blast in Tira Valley in Khyber Agency (DAWN, 03/02/2015).

A member of a polio vaccination team and a police guard were killed on 17 March during a vaccination campaign in Sheikhabad in Balochistan (AFP, 17/03/2015). Five people were killed in attacks on polio vaccination teams in Balochistan in February (AFP, 18/02/2015; AFP, 04/02/2015; DAWN, 05/02/2015). Three polio workers were attacked in January, including two killed (OCHA, 03/02/2015).

By November, 79 aid workers had been attacked in 2014 in 71 incidents, 51 of which were linked to polio (OCHA, 30/11/2014). The highest number of incidents occurred in KP, FATA, and Sindh (OCHA, 31/08/2014).

Disasters

Floods

Heavy rainfall has affected northern and eastern Pakistan end February, disrupting transportation, electricity, and communication networks, and causing damage to buildings. At 3 March, 32 people had been killed and several others injured (ECHO, 03/03/2015). Another person killed, ten were injured, and 350 left homeless by heavy rains and snowfall in Balochistan on 14 March (Local Media, 16/03/2015).

Monsoon rains and floods in October affected more than 2.53 million people and caused 367 deaths in Punjab, Azad Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. At end February, 70,000 people were still targeted for emergency health, food, shelter, and NFI assistance by IFRC. More than 107,000 houses had been damaged and 971,000 hectares of cropped areas affected (IFRC, 26/02/2015).

Drought

As of 23 March, 211 children have died from malnutrition in Thar in 2015, as the area continues to suffer food shortages due to chronic drought conditions (local media, 23/03/2015). The Government of Balochistan has warned 29 of its 34 districts of a Sindh-like famine due to the prolonged dry spell (local media, 26/01/2015).

Drought in Tharparkar affected nearly 1.74 million people (259,946 families) in 2014 and killed 650, mostly children. 3,814 livestock have died, and many families have migrated (USAID, 04/12/2014; Inter Press Service, 03/01/2015; DAWN, 16/02/2015). 50,585 hectares have been damaged in Dadu district, affecting around 50,000 people (DAWN, 21/01/2015).

Displacement

IDPs
As of 16 March, there are nearly two million IDPs (294,750 families) in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including 856,400 displaced since military operations began in 2014. 29% of IDPs are in Bannu (85,170), another 29% in Peshawar (84,400), 15% in Dera Ismail Khan (45,270), and 8% in Kohat (22,440). 8,161 families (3%) are in three IDP camps in Khyber, Orakzai, and Kurram agencies in FATA (UNHCR, 16/03/2015). Lack of identification documents, education facilities and psychological support were reported as priority needs according to a 2014 assessment (Protection Cluster, 31/12/2014).

Refugees in Pakistan

At end December, 1.5 million Afghan refugees were in Pakistan, mostly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, although numbers are difficult to ascertain. The majority lives in host communities (UNHCR, 29/12/2014; 01/11/2014).

Returns of undocumented Afghans from Pakistan have increased in 2015 following security incidents in Pakistan, particularly the Taliban attack in Peshawar in December. By mid-February, 32,000 undocumented Afghans had spontaneously returned in 2015; 4,500 had been deported through the Torkham border (Local Media, 02/03/2015; IOM, 13/02/2015). The Government announced on 11 March plans to register 1.4 million unregistered refugees over the next four months, while Afghanistan is offering incentives for refugees to return (AFP, 11/03/2015; DAWN, 10/03/2015).

Returnees

The phased return of people displaced by military operations in FATA started on 16 March. 25,000 families returned to Sararogha and Sarwakai in South Waziristan, while 20,000 started to return to Bara in Khyber Agency on 20 March. A further 18,000 families from Mir Ali in North Waziristan will begin repatriation from 31 March. Returning families require reconstruction support (local media, 23/03/2015).

Pakistani Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

At 11 March, nearly 254,550 refugees (36,511 families) from Pakistan had arrived in Afghanistan's Khost and Paktika provinces since mid-June (UNHCR, 11/03/2015).

Food Security

1.83 million people are in need of food assistance (Food Security Cluster, 04/02/2015). Economic access to food continues to be the main limitation to household food security. According to the last March–May 2014 IPC food assessment, 12 districts and agencies are in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) food security, including Tharparkar, parts of Balochistan, and parts of FATA, and 35 in Crisis (IPC Phase 3); no assessment has been made since (WFP, 31/12/2014).

Tharparkar and parts of Umerkot, Sanghar, Khairpur, Sukkur and Ghotki districts in Sindh were in Emergency food insecurity (IPC Phase 4) at November, due to prolonged drought (USAID, 04/11/2014). Populations away from irrigated agricultural land are expected to face difficult conditions (WFP, 09/12/2014).

Populations displaced from FATA continue to be vulnerable to acute food insecurity, particularly with the new influxes from North Waziristan and Khyber Agency (WFP, 31/12/2014). Most conflict-related IDPs rely on negative coping mechanisms and need food support (ECHO, 20/10/2014).

Health and Nutrition

1.1 million people, including displaced populations, are in need of basic health and quality maternal and child health services (OCHA, 31/01/2015). The influx of IDPs has severely strained health facilities and the lack of medical staff to provide care for displaced women is a critical challenge (UN Population Fund, 03/10/2014). Concerns are rising over shortages of vaccines against tuberculosis (DAWN, 26/02/2015).

Polio

20 new polio cases have been reported so far in 2015 from Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Khyber Agency, South Waziristan, and Sindh (local media, 23/03/2015).

Over 16,400 families across the country refused to get their children vaccinated and 610,333 children were missed during the first two days of the third round of the 2015 National Polio Campaign initiated on 16 March (DAWN, 19/03/2015).

297 wild polio cases were reported in 2014 in Pakistan, from FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan, and Punjab; the previous peak was 199 cases in 2000 (Global Polio Eradication Initiative, 15/01/2015; DAWN, 01/01/2015).

Nutrition

An estimated 2.86 million children and pregnant and breastfeeding women are undernourished in Pakistan, including one million IDPs (OCHA, 31/01/2015). In Sindh, 1.1 million children under five are acutely malnourished; 400,000 of them are suffering from SAM (ECHO, 20/10/2014). In Dadu district, Sindh, 3.8% of children under five were found to suffer from severe acute malnutrition in December 2014 (ACF, 03/02/2015).

In Balochistan, maternal mortality rates have been increasing due to malnourishment and anaemia (DAWN, 29/11/2014).

WASH

1.1 million people are in need of WASH, including 500,000 IDPs (OCHA, 31/01/2015). Over 80% of water resources in Pakistan's southern Tharparkar district have become unsafe for drinking due to the drought (Reuters, 02/02/2015).

Shelter and NFIs

1.1 million people are in need of emergency shelter, including 530,000 IDPs (OCHA, 31/01/2015). Inadequate shelter services, overcrowding, harsh weather conditions, and high rental charges are key challenges for the displaced (OCHA, 15/08/2014). 50% of the population in Tirah valley in FATA has been living in makeshift shelters after having been
**Education**

450,000 children are in need of education, including 205,000 displaced children. Educational supplies are a major gap in the education response (OCHA, 31/01/2015).

Almost 275 schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are non-functional, including 40 in Mansehra and 37 in Swat districts, due to lack of staff, land disputes, and security issues. Around 33% of children in Balochistan are also out of school (DAWN, 13/03/2015; 20/02/2015).

The majority of school-aged Afghan refugees in camps in Pakistan are unable to attend school after sixth grade due to lack of means to attend private schools (Inter Press Service, 22/12/2014).

**Protection**

An estimated 1.08 million people are in need of protection, including 500,000 displaced people. This group largely consists of IDPs and returnees in KP and FATA. Women, children, the disabled, and the elderly need referral assistance and specialised protection in displacement and returnee areas (OCHA, 31/01/2015).

**SGBV**

421 incidents of violence involving 534 women and girls were reported in Karachi province during the third quarter of the year (DAWN, 11/10/2014).

In areas where the Taliban is active, over 500 girls’ schools have been bombed. In the south and southwest of the country, ethnic violence continues to curtail women’s freedom of movement.

Updated: 26/03/2015

**INDIA** INTERNAL UNREST, FLOODS

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

No new significant developments reported this week, 25/03/2015. Last update: 19/03/2015

**KEY CONCERNS**

- Landslides and floods triggered by heavy monsoon rains in Jammu and Kashmir affected 1,949,790 people and left 67,934 left homeless (Times of India, 30/09/2014).

- Over 32,233 cases of swine flu and 1,900 deaths have been confirmed since an outbreak began in mid-December (international media, 19/03/2015).

**Political Context**

Despite a general stability, the country experiences pockets of insecurity and conflict. The Government of India, the Government of Pakistan, and Kashmiri insurgent groups have fought over control of the disputed region of Kashmir since the Indo-Pakistan War. Pakistan controls the northwest portion, India controls the central and southern portion and Ladakh, and China controls the northeastern portion (Aksai Chin and Trans-Karakoram Tract). Although thousands have died as a result of this conflict, the situation has become less deadly in recent years. UNHCR-supported elections in 2008 resulted in the creation of a pro-India Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, which formed a state government.

**Security Context**

**Kashmir**

Since August 2014, cross-border fighting between India and Pakistan has left 23 dead, a majority of them civilians (AFP, 08/10/2014, 29/10/2014, 27/11/2014, 03/01/2015). More than 10,000 villagers have been displaced in Samba and Kathua districts in Jammu and Kashmir, seeking refuge in Hariachak, Hiranagar, Plat, Kanha, Baniyari, and Chadwal (Times of India, 07/01/2014).

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

**Disasters**

In September, more than 1.9 million people were directly affected by flooding in Jammu and Kashmir (Caritas India, 25/09/2014). In October, severe cyclonic storm Hud Hud made landfall on India’s east coast. 920,000 people were affected. 41,200 houses and buildings were damaged in Andhra Pradesh, south Odisha, and Chhattisgarh (OCHA, 20/10/2014).

**Drought**

Nine million farmers have been affected by drought in Maharashtra, particularly Marathwada and Vidarbha regions, following a delayed and inadequate monsoon season (Times of India, 06/02/2015).

**Floods**

Rain, lightning, and hailstorms killed 14 people and damaged crops in several areas of North India on 15 March, mainly in Rajasthan (Government, 15/03/2015).

**Health and Nutrition**

**Swine Flu**

As of 23 March, more than 32,233 cases of swine flu have been confirmed; 1,911 people have died since the outbreak began in mid-December (Al Jazeera, 23/03/2015). 5,521 cases, including 410 deaths have been reported in Gujarat, and 5,949 cases and 391 deaths in Rajasthan (international media, 09/03/2015, 19/03/2015). As of 2 March, 2,999
cases had been confirmed in Delhi (international media, 02/03/2015). Public gatherings in Ahmedabad, the largest city in Gujarat, have been restricted (local media, 25/03/2015). Government restrictions and licensing issues have made it difficult for hospitals to obtain adequate quantities of antivirals (Al Jazeera, 23/02/2015).

Updated: 25/03/2015

JORDAN DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

19 March: From April, 34,000 Syrian refugees will no longer receive WFP food vouchers, while an additional 239,000 will see the value of their vouchers reduced (WFP).

10–19 March: Nearly 1,430 Syrian refugees reportedly arrived in Jordan, increasingly from Dara’a governorate, which has seen a surge in fighting (UNHCR).

KEY CONCERNS

- 627,010 Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 24/03/2015). Another 100,000–200,000 may be unregistered (PI, 12/11/2014).

- Syrians continue to face increasing difficulty accessing Jordan. Official border points have closed or become inaccessible, and entry restrictions have increased (RRP6, 2014–2015).

- Since early 2014, a more rigorous approach to the encampment policy of Syrian refugees has reportedly been implemented (PI, 08/01/2014).

- An estimated 52,000 other refugees are registered with UNHCR, mostly Iraqis (UNHCR, 15/03/2015).

Security Context

Concerns over spiralling crises in Iraq and Syria and extremist infiltration have increased since Jordan joined the US-led airstrikes against Islamic State in September. Jordan has reinforced its commitment to fight IS and expanded airstrikes on Iraq since the group released a video showing the assassination of a captured Jordanian pilot on 3 February. There are fears that Jordan will increasingly be the target of asymmetrical attacks against its civilians or security services and that social divisions will be amplified (ISW, 19/02/2015; Al Jazeera, 12/02/2015).

Jordan has a substantial home-grown extremist movement. The Government has cracked down on fighters returning from Syria, and on anyone expressing support for IS, and arrests have increased (Al Jazeera, 07/07/2014). However, thousands of Jordanians are reportedly fighting for opposition groups with links to Al Qaeda, particularly Jabhat al Nusra (JAN) and IS, despite the military’s tight control of cross-border movements (NYT, 12/04/2014). The country is also home to several prominent extremist religious leaders of an older generation, linked to Al Qaeda ideology and who generally support JAN (Al Jazeera, 07/07/2014). There is debate over whether the group has substantial support in Jordan (Al Jazeera, 05/07/2014). Jordan has increased pressure on the Muslim Brotherhood, arresting one of its prominent leaders in November (Jordan Times, 22/11/2014).

Social tensions between refugees and host communities are a concern, primarily due to a sense of competition over housing, jobs, and international assistance (Mercy Corps, 12/2014). Despite few notable incidents, refugees report widespread discrimination and harassment, and some localised protests have taken place among host communities (The Guardian, 01/12/2014).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

The influx of Syrian refugees has placed significant additional stress on Jordan’s already-stressed public services. Public health and education services, which Syrians can access, are particularly affected, and water infrastructure, waste collection, and the cost to the national budget of subsidised goods are significant issues (Government, 12/2014).

Access

International NGOs working in Jordan are required to get all projects approved by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), and frustration persists among NGOs about the lengthy approval process, and lack of clear guidelines. MoPIC also informally requires all aid agencies assisting Syrians to include vulnerable Jordanians as 30% of their beneficiaries, and some NGOs have faced pressure to increase the proportion of Jordanians to 50% (PI, 06/2014).

Tension between humanitarian agencies and the Government may increase, as the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) 2015–16 attempts to channel the bulk of international assistance to Syrians through Jordanian government institutions, rather than humanitarian actors (JRP, 12/2014). At 17 March, only 5.5% of the funding requested for the JRP has been secured (Government, 17/03/2015).

Displacement

Syrian Refugees

As of 24 March, 627,010 Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR in Jordan: 52% are children. Around 84% live in urban areas and the remainder in three camps (UNHCR, 24/03/2015; 19/03/2015). Another 100,000–200,000 refugees may be unregistered (PI, 12/11/2014). Nearly 1,430 Syrian refugees have reportedly arrived in Jordan between 10 and 19 March, increasingly from Dara’a governorate in Syria, which has witnessed a surge in fighting. On average, 250 Syrian refugees arrived daily between 15 and 19 March, a significant increase on recent months. The refugees have been transferred to camps (UNHCR, 19/03/2015; Jordan Times, 22/03/2015).
76,000 Syrian refugees have reportedly returned to their country since the beginning of the crisis (Jordan Times, 10/02/2015).

Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS)

UNRWA records 14,736 PRS who have approached the agency for support since the start of the Syrian conflict (UNRWA, 03/12/2014). It is unclear if these cases represent new arrivals, or simply people approaching UNRWA for the first time. 183 PRS, along with a similar number of Syrians, are held in the Cyber City facility near Ramtha, a government-appointed holding facility for Palestinian and Syrian refugees; this number has dropped from 201 at the start of October (UNRWA, 18/11/2014, 28/10/2014, 03/10/2014).

Since late 2012, the Government has explicitly stated that it would not allow PRS to enter Jordan. Those who do enter are subject to a number of protection issues, including refoulement, confiscation of documents and, for those with Jordanian citizenship, de-nationalisation (HRW 05/2014, 04/07/2012). UNRWA reports 106 cases of PRS deported in 2014, a 40% increase on 2013, but warns the actual number of deportations is likely much higher (UNRWA, 03/12/2014).

Non-Syrian Refugees

As of 15 March, UNHCR had registered around 52,000 refugees, including more than 46,000 Iraqis (UNHCR, 15/03/2015). A surge in the registration of Iraqi refugees was reported between September and December 2014, but new registration numbers have significantly decreased in 2015; no reason is known for the decrease (UNHCR, 23/09/2014; PI, 11/03/2015).

Food Security

In October 2014, WFP began to replace blanket food distribution with targeted distributions, and cut assistance to 37,000 urban refugees (WFP, 11/11/2014, CFSME, 07/08/2014). Of more than 6,400 appeals received so far, 847 have been approved, and 216 rejected; 29% of households will likely be re-included for assistance following their appeals (UNHCR, 13/01/2015; 10/03/2015).

Changes in WFP’s food assistance to Syrian refugees in host communities are expected to begin in April. An additional 34,000 people living above Jordan’s absolute poverty line will be removed from assistance due to funding constraints; some 239,000 living between the absolute and abject poverty lines will see the value of their food vouchers reduced from USD 18/person/month to USD 14; for the nearly 180,000 refugees living under the Jordan abject poverty line, assistance will be increased from USD 18/person/month to USD 28 (WFP, 19/03/2015).

Food availability is of concern in Azraaq camp (UNHCR/NRC, 24/02/2015).

Livelihoods

One in five Syrians in Jordan is supported by the social safety network (Government, 17/03/2015). Two in three refugee households live below the poverty line in Jordan. With an average expenditure 1.6 times greater than income, refugees increasingly resort to a range of coping strategies (UNHCR, 15/01/2015; UNICEF, 10/03/2015). Up to 87% of refugee families living outside camps in Jordan are in debt (UNHCR, 30/11/2014). 18% of the 3,300 beggars arrested in Jordan in 2014 were Syrian refugees (Jordan Times, 18/03/2015).

Health and Nutrition

The Government decision to halt free access to health services for refugees in November 2014 has led to a marked reduction in Syrians accessing such services, and increased returns to camps to receive healthcare. Maternal health and mental health services, including severe emotional disorders, are of particular concern (IMC, 16/03/2015). Lack of vaccination among many Syrian children is also a concern (UNHCR, 10/03/2015).

Shelter and NFIs

Refugees in Host Communities

Most of the 83% of Syrian refugees living outside camps are concentrated around the major urban areas of the northwest, such as Amman and Irbid. While 91% are renting homes, over half live in substandard shelter, and many are struggling to pay the bills.

In June 2014, REACH assessed 10,500 Syrians residing in 125 informal tented settlements (ITS) across six governorates, nearly half in Mafraq. The number of ITS in Mafraq had increased fourfold from December 2013 to June 2014, and the number of ITS inhabitants had more than doubled (REACH, 02/10/2014).

An urban verification exercise, which requires biometric registration of all Syrians outside camps and the reissuing of key documents, has been ongoing since 15 February. Non-participation could affect refugees’ legal status and limit their access to government services, although the impact on refugees’ access to protection is as yet unknown (UNHCR, 10/03/2015; PI, 24/02/2015).

Zaatari camp hosts about 83,850 residents (UNHCR, 15/03/2015). At the beginning of 2015, significant numbers of refugees have been returning to the camp from urban areas, probably linked to the onset of cold weather and cuts to food and health assistance in urban areas. Since the camp was established in 2012, at least 320,000 refugees have left the camp through both official and unofficial channels (including returns to Syria).

As of 15 March, 13,900 refugees were registered in Azraq camp in Zarqa. The number of refugees returning to Azraq camp now exceeds the number moving to Zaatari (UNHCR, 15/03/2015; 18/02/2015). There are also 5,110 refugees in the Emirati-Jordanian Camp (EJC). The EJC has received extensive support, primarily from the UAE Red Crescent; however, refugees have complained about limited freedom of movement in the camp (UNHCR, 15/03/2015; Financial Times, 2014).

WASH

While Jordan has an effective public water system, reports suggest these facilities are
under significant strain in areas with high concentrations of Syrians. The per capita water share in the northern governorates has dropped from 110 litres/day to 84 litres (Government, 17/03/2015). Municipal sewage and garbage removal services are also under stress (REACH, 12/11/2014). Two out of five Syrian refugees live in poor sanitary conditions; people in informal shelters are particularly affected (UNHCR, 14/01/2015).

Education

59% of the roughly 220,000 Syrian school-aged children in Jordan are enrolled in the public school system. An additional 30,000 are attending informal forms of education, while the remaining 60,000 are not attending any form of education (UNICEF, 19/03/2015).

Barriers to attendance include distance, overcrowding, violence in schools, and harassment and violence on the way to schools (in both camps and urban areas) (IMC-UNICEF, 09/12/2014, REACH, 04/11/2014). A small proportion of children are reported not to attend because they need to work to support their families.

37.5% of Iraqi refugees were not enrolled in schools in 2014, and non-attendance was reported among 40% of those enrolled, mostly for financial reasons, fear of bullying, and level differences (UNHCR, 31/01/2015).

Protection

Entry restrictions

The average number of Syrians able to enter Jordan on a daily basis has significantly dropped since 2013 (RRP6, 2014–2015). The number and accessibility of entry points has been limited, and entry restrictions have increased, forcing Syrians to travel to remote informal crossing-points in the eastern desert. In the last three months of 2014, even those crossings were shut for long periods of time, and refugees have been stranded, leading to protection concerns (IOM, 2014).

There has been increasing evidence in the second part of 2014 that the Government is returning screened refugees to Syria. Jordanian officials maintain that the border is open to refugees, and that Jordan is simply instituting security measures to exclude people connected to “terrorist organisations” (Al Ghad, 14/12/2014; Jordan Times, 11/12/2014). Current information makes it impossible to estimate how many Syrians have been deported from Jordan, or whether this number has changed over time. The most vulnerable refugees likely include those without identity documents, or with forged documents, and those who had previously returned to Syria (PI, 29/09/2014).

Evictions and Encampment

Since early 2014, the Government appears to be implementing a more rigorous approach to its encampment policy of Syrian refugees. Significant numbers of refugees are being forcibly returned to camps (NRC-IRC, 13/11/2014, PI, 03/12/2014, 12/11/2014).

Refugees living in urban areas are required to obtain a service card from the Ministry of Interior in order to access public health and education services, or register marriages, births or deaths. The Government has instructed humanitarian agencies not to provide assistance to Syrians who do not have service cards. There is no sign this decision has been enforced, but it creates a vulnerability (PI, 08/01/2014, 03/12/2014).

Refugees in camps and who wish to move to urban areas must obtain “bail” from the government. However, large numbers of refugees have left the camps without obtaining bail. The Government has asked UNHCR not to issue asylum-seeker certificates to Syrians in urban areas who left the camp after 14 July 2014 and who did not obtain bail (PI 16/07/2014 R1, PI 07/2014 R1). These requests are contributing to a climate of fear and may impact refugees’ ability to maintain regular status and access services.

In December, more informal tented settlements were dismantled, affecting more than 100 families. Some of the inhabitants were returned to camps, with their bail deemed invalid by the authorities (PI, 10/12/2014, Jordan Times, 09/01/2015). Eviction threats were also given to Syrians living in ITS (PI, 18/12/2014).

Child Protection

There are reports of recruitment of child soldiers in Syrian refugee camps in Jordan (Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, 16/02/2015).

Women and Girls

In the first quarter of 2014, about 32% of all registered Syrian marriages were classified as early marriages, compared to 25% in 2013 and 11% in 2011. Early marriage is perceived as a form of security among Syrian refugees, but also as a way to circumnavigate government restrictions, such as the bailout rules in camps (which require a close relative for sponsorship).

Updated: 25/03/2015

MYANMAR INTERNAL UNREST, FLOODS, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

No significant developments this week 23/03/2015. Last update: 17/03/2015

KEY CONCERNS

- Repeated bloodshed between Buddhists and Muslims in Rakhine state since 2012, with human rights abuses reported against the Muslim minority (UN).
- 244,400 IDPs, resulting from years of internal conflict, including mainly Rohingya Muslim 146,400 IDPs in Rakhine state (OCHA, 27/02/2014).

Political Context

Myanmar’s first democratic elections in 25 years are scheduled for October or November
2015 (local media, 21/10/2014). Foreign observers will be invited to monitor the election (Reuters, 24/03/2015). On 12 February, the President approved a law allowing a referendum on changes to the constitution. This move could lift Suu Kyi’s ban from the presidency (Reuters, 12/02/2015). Unprecedented talks were held between President Thein Sein and his political rivals, including Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as senior military and election officials, in 2014. Nonetheless, local activists report that the prosecution of dissidents continues (HRW, 17/10/2014).

Peace Negotiations

In 2013, the Government made peace deals with a number of ethnic groups involved in armed insurgency, with the exception of the Kachin Independence Army (the armed wing of the Kachin Independence Organisation, or KIO), and the ethnic Ta’ang army (TNLA). On 12 February, four ethnic armed groups signed a Deed of Commitment for Peace and National Reconciliation, agreeing to build a union based on democratic and federal principles and a nationwide ceasefire, ahead of the 2015 elections (local media, 13/01/2015).

On 17 March, the KIO met with the President and affirmed its commitment to the ongoing peace process (Government, 17/03/2015).

Security Context

Despite peace negotiations, the security situation remains tense in parts of Myanmar. The Government came under criticism in October 2014, for what has been perceived as a series of offensives against ethnic armed groups in Kachin, Karen, Mon, and Shan states (local media, 20/10/2014). In early December, the United Nationalities Federal Council, the largest coalition of ethnic armed organisations, announced the establishment of the Federal Union Army, an umbrella group that has been trying to negotiate a nationwide cease-fire between ethnic minorities and the national military. It is unclear if this establishment will help or hinder the peace process (VoA, 02/12/2014).

In the west, massive human rights infringements against the Rohingya Muslim minority in Rakhine state continue to be reported.

Kachin State

The KIO still has administrative control over several key areas of Kachin, and there are intermittent clashes between its army, the KIA, and the Myanmar army (local media, 06/10/2014). On 15 January, there was fighting in the area of Hpakant. The KIA took the state transport minister and three police hostage, releasing them on 20 January (AFP, 15/01/2015; local media, 20/01/2015). On 28 January, a bomb exploded in Hpakant township, injuring two people. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack (local media, 27/01/2014). There were reports of shelling by government forces near Laiza and Mai Ja Yang in November 2014 (OCHA, 24/11/2014). An attack on a KIA camp near Laiza killed 23 members of militias affiliated to the KIA (local media, 28/11/2014).

Kayah State

According to reports from early December by local activists, government military forces have been expanding their presence in Kayah state by various measures, including the confiscation of land (local media, 08/12/2014).

Kayah and Mon States

In November, fighting between a Karen armed group and the military displaced 700 people (WFP, 15/11/2014). Fighting in October reportedly displaced 2,000 people towards Thailand (local media, 08/11/2014). In September, in some of the worst fighting since 2012, mortar fire and rocket-propelled grenades were reported in Mon state’s Kyakmayaw township and near Kayin state’s Myawaddy town (local media, 29/09/2014).

Shan State

Fighting broke out in early February between Myanmar’s army and Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDA), an insurgent group in Kokang area of Shan state, near the Chinese border, displaced tens of thousands of people (AFP, 10/02/2015; Radio Free Asia, 23/02/2015).

On 18 February, the President declared a 90-day state of emergency and imposed martial law in the Kokang region. This is the first time military rule has been invoked under Myanmar’s 2008 constitution (Reuters, 18/02/2015; AP, 21/02/2015). Other groups have joined the fight, including the KIA, the Ta’ang National Liberation Army, the Arakan Army and the Shan State Army-North, as well as former Chinese soldiers (Deutsche Welle, 13/02/2014; Al Jazeera, 21/02/2015). 61 soldiers from Myanmar’s military and more than 70 MNDA soldiers were reported dead on 21 February (international media, 21/02/2015). A prison convoy was attacked, injuring 45 (AFP, 24/02/2015). On 10 March, two children and more than 10 people were injured after a shell exploded at a crowded market in Laukka (Radio Free Asia, 10/03/2015). The conflict has spilled over across the border in China, with warplanes from Myanmar killing four people and injuring nine others in China. Both parties blame each other for the incident. China’s air force is patrolling the border (Radio Free Asia, 14/03/2015).

Prior to the most recent fighting, clashes between the same parties had been reported in July, October and December 2014. In 2009, serious clashes between MNDA and the army almost wiped out the MNDA (Deutsche Welle, 13/02/2015).

On 28 February, fighting broke out after a member of Shan State Army-South (SSA-S) accused government troops of staging an attack on the SSA-S base in Mauk Mae township. No casualties were reported. The SSA-S was a signatory to February’s the Deed of Commitment for Peace and National Reconciliation (local media, 3/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

According to local NGOs, the delivery of aid to conflict-affected communities in remote areas within Shan and Kachin states is hampered by the categorisation of some areas as “black zones” by the Myanmar army, restricting foreign groups’ access (IRIN, 08/10/2014). Insecurity also impedes access.
Kachin state: There has been no cross-line humanitarian assistance to non-government-controlled areas in Kachin state since September, due to the volatile security situation and delays in government authorisation – more than 50,000 IDPs are living in camps under KIO management (local media, 05/12/2014).

Rakhine state: Access to services is impeded by tension and restrictions on freedom of movement. As of mid-July 2014, a vulnerability mapping exercise showed that 36,000 Rohingya Muslims in 113 isolated villages in Rakhine state have no or limited access to basic services, including markets, education, and healthcare (OCHA). Buddhist Rakhine activists and politicians have campaigned to restrict healthcare and other aid for Rohingya.

International media reports from the end of July indicate that access to northern Rakhine state along the Myanmar–Bangladesh border is tightly restricted. NGOs and UN agencies say the limited space allocated to them in Sittwe’s Southern Quarter is a key constraint to operating at full capacity (USAID 02/07/2014).

Shan state: Roadblocks and border closures are restricting the movement of civilians fleeing fighting between government troops and MNDA. Chinese government officials have increased border controls (Radio Free Asia, 25/02/2015). The Government intensified airstrikes in early March, and recaptured some strategic hills, which has improved access between Laukkai and Chinswehaw, a town near the Chinese border. Many displaced persons in Laukkai are fleeing to China (Xinhua, 9/03/2015).

Security Incidents Involving Aid Workers

On 17 February, unknown attackers shot and wounded two people in a convoy of eight Myanmar Red Cross Society vehicles in the Kokang area, Shan state. The vehicles were carrying civilians displaced by fighting in Laukkai (Reuters, 17/02/2015). On 22 February, five more people were wounded in an attack on a local aid organisation’s vehicle. Government troops blamed MNDA for both the attacks; the group has denied responsibility (AFP, 22/02/2015).

Displacement

Nearly 90,000 civilians in northeastern Myanmar are believed to have fled clashes between troops and MNDA and allied insurgent groups. 40,000 people, mainly ethnic Chinese Kokang, have crossed the border into China (AFP, 18/02/2015).

IDPs

An estimated 244,000 people are displaced and living in camps in Rakhine, Shan, and Kachin states (OCHA, 27/02/2015). As of February 2015, more than half of the 98,500 IDPs in Kachin and Shan states were living in areas where government services are not available (OCHA, 12/2014; OCHA, 27/02/2015).

Shan: An unconfirmed number of people are displaced within Kokang region; about 13,000 have fled to central Myanmar through Lashio; another 40,000 people from Kokang and other ethnic minorities have fled to areas near the border (OCHA, 27/02/2015; AFP, 18/02/2015).

Rakhine: 146,000 Rohingya Muslims live in closed camps following inter-communal violence in 2012 (OCHA, 27/02/2015).

Kachin: 560 people were displaced in Hpakant, after fighting at the end of 2014 (OCHA, 27/02/2015). An estimated 20,000 IDPs live with host communities in Kachin (OCHA, 27/02/2015).

Returnees

Land taken by the military, the state, and companies close to the Government impedes the orderly future return of refugees, particularly from Thailand, and the resettlement of IDPs to their home communities or new sites (Center for International and Strategic Studies, 22/10/2014).

Refugees from Myanmar

According to UNHCR as of late March, over 415,000 refugees originate from Myanmar. In early November, UNHCR reported that an increasing number of people, mainly Rohingya, are setting out to sea on smuggling boats; many capsize. As of end November, the number of Rohingya to have fled since early October was thought to have reached 19,000 (AFP, 30/11/2014).

China: Since early February, according to unconfirmed media reports, an estimated 40,000–100,000 people, mainly ethnic Chinese Kokang, have fled fighting into Nansan, in Yunnan province, China (AFP, 18/02/2015; local media, 25/02/2015). The Chinese Government has yet to release official figures (AFP, 10/02/2015).

Bangladesh: Most Rohingya are denied refugee status by the Bangladeshi authorities. 200,000 reside in unofficial camps or villages where they get little or no humanitarian assistance and almost no protection from human rights abuse. An estimated 30,000 Rohingya Muslims in official camps and receive assistance from aid agencies. In November 2014, the Bangladeshi Government announced that Rohingya refugees will be relocated from the existing camps, as the area will be developed for tourism (local media, 09/11/2014).

Malaysia: As of end November, over 40,000 Rohingya registered with the UN are in Malaysia. Rohingya activists say a roughly equal number are unregistered (AFP, 30/11/2014).

Thailand: Since June 2014, movement restrictions have been more strictly enforced; Myanmar refugees are banned from leaving camps, confined to their homes 1800–0600, and threatened with deportation if they do not comply (Refugees International 29/08/2014). In July, the Thai authorities pledged to send about 100,000 of the 120,000 refugees living in border camps back to Myanmar (UNHCR has registered 76,000 refugees). According to senior Thai military officials, measures are in place to deter boats from approaching the country’s shores (Reuters, 15/11/2014). Rohingya Muslims are reportedly subject to human trafficking in Thailand (international human rights organisations, 12/2013).

Food Security

Overall, the food security situation has improved, although recurrent inter-communal
tensions have negatively impacted the situation, mainly for IDPs (FAO, 24/09/2014). 70,000 people are food insecure in Rakhine state (OCHA, 31/10/2014).

Livelihoods

The trend for poppy cultivation in Shan state, which was on course to be wiped out ten years ago, has reversed. Poppy cultivation has tripled since 2006, with close to 60,700 hectares of poppy farms, according to UN surveys (NYTimes, 03/01/2015).

Rohingya fishermen of Maungdaw township, Rakhine state, have been barred from fishing since 7 November (local media, 10/11/2014).

Health and Nutrition

Access to healthcare is a major challenge in Rakhine (OCHA, 30/09/2014). If Rohingya camp residents wish to leave their camp to see a doctor, they must first obtain a referral by a government doctor and reportedly must also often bribe the security guards (Center for International and Strategic Studies, 22/10/2014). Only patients in the most critical condition tend to reach hospital.

Nutrition

In Rakhine state, GAM is above 20% in some areas (UNICEF, 01/02/2015). In June 2014, 2.1% SAM and 6.8% MAM was found among 32,000 children under five screened in Rakhine, indicating a deterioration in parts of the state since March. Severely malnourished children are being referred to Sittwe hospital; fewer referral services, high transportation costs, and fear of travelling to Sittwe are preventing many children from receiving medical care (OCHA 30/06/2014).

Shelter and NFIs

In Rakhine state, 15,000 people are in urgent need of assistance to repair shelters. In Kachin, there is a major need to scale up maintenance and repair work, to reduce the need for reconstruction (OCHA, 31/10/2014).

Displaced people and vulnerable communities in Rakhine have limited access to cooking fuel and energy. The situation is particularly difficult for over 80,000 IDPs who have been in camps in Sittwe Township for over two years. Households in camps and isolated villages are using shelter materials or unsustainable and hazardous materials as fuel, the exchange of food rations for fuel, and over-exploitation of surrounding forest and woodland (OCHA, 30/11/2014).

WASH

In Rakhine state, a general deterioration in the WASH situation in camps is aggravating health problems and increasing the risk of waterborne disease (OCHA, 11/09/2014).

Education

In Rakhine state, 28,000 vulnerable children require education support. 60,000 adolescents in isolated communities are without any education opportunities (OCHA, 08/2014).

Protection

About 200 Shan people are alleged to have been forcibly recruited into the Kachin Independence Army since the start of armed clashes with the army in June 2011 (local media, 11/11/2014).

Legal Status of Rohingya Muslims

On 11 February, the Myanmar Government said that temporary identity cards issued to those without full citizenship, including Rohingya Muslims, will expire at the end of March 2015. These identity cards were part of a citizenship application process. This move came after dozens of protesters gathered in Yangon to call on the Government not to allow people without full citizenship to vote in the referendum on amending the constitution (AFP, 11/02/2015).

Over 800,000 people are estimated to be without citizenship in the northern part of Rakhine state, mostly Rohingya Muslims (UNHCR). Myanmar continues officially to state that the Rohingya Muslims are migrants from neighbouring Bangladesh, thus excluded from citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Law. The Government has drafted a plan which would force Rohingya Muslims either to register as Bengalis or be detained. Rakhine authorities would construct temporary camps for people who refuse to be registered or who are without adequate documents (local media, 12/10/2015). Rights advocates say this could put thousands of Rohingya at risk of indefinite detention. Accepting the term Bengali could leave the Rohingya vulnerable if authorities class them as illegal immigrants and attempt to send them to Bangladesh (Reuters, 27/09/2014).

Children

42 children were released from the armed forces on 24 January. In 2014, 376 children were released (AFP, 24/01/2014).

SGBV

In 2014, the Women’s League of Burma released a report that documented more than 118 victims of sexual violence at the hands of the Myanmar army since Thein Sein’s government took power (local media 26/11/2014).

Assessments in northern Shan state indicate that domestic violence is prevalent in IDP camps. Drug consumption and other negative coping mechanisms among men were identified by the women as a contributing factor. Adolescent girls are exposed to particular protection risks, according to the assessment findings. Cross-border trafficking for the purposes of domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, and forced marriage was identified as a major protection concern by respondents (OCHA, 30/11/2014).

Mines and ERW

Around five million people in Myanmar live in mine-contaminated areas (Mines Advisory Group, 05/2014). In Kayah state, around 15–20 people are injured annually, although the number of fatalities is unknown. More than 34,000 IDPs are at greatest risk due to their being in unfamiliar areas.
An assessment in Kachin and Northern Shan states concluded that the majority of reported landmine victims over the second half of 2014 were male farmers, and 56% were displaced people. Most of the accidents registered happened while people were travelling on foot to areas they visit often, such as fields. More than 25% of landmine victims knew the area was dangerous before entering it (UNICEF, 30/11/2014).

According to local media, citing intelligence reports by the Bangladeshi border security forces, Myanmar security forces have planted mines along the border between Myanmar and Bangladesh (local media, 23/11/2014). Myanmar has previously denied this practice, while Bangladesh has claimed to have found and removed mines in the border area.

Updated: 23/03/2015

PHILIPPINES  CONFLICT, FLOODS, TYPHOON

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

30 March: The Philippines military chief announced that the month-long offensive against BIFF had ended. 139 insurgents have been killed, 12 captured, and bomb-making bases had been seized (AP).

25 March: 125,000 people are displaced in Maguindanao. The majority are staying in 75 evacuation centres (IRIN, UNHCR).

7 March: 14,672 cases of dengue and 39 deaths have been reported in 2015. The weekly number of reported cases has declined since mid-February (WHO).

KEY CONCERNS

- Over 26,000 people remain displaced ten months after Typhoon Haiyan and more than two million lack adequate shelter or housing (FAO, 09/10/2014).

- 30,000 people who fled fighting in Zamboanga in September 2013 are still displaced (AFC, 20/03/2015).

- The Philippines is one of the most hazard-prone countries in the world, experiencing several large-scale natural hazards a year.

- Tensions in Maguindanao continue as fighting has erupted in January and February between government forces, Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) fighters. 125,000 people have been displaced (IRIN, 20/03/2015).

OVERVIEW

A series of natural disasters, most significantly Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013, has caused widespread damage across the Philippines and affected millions. The overall political situation had been relatively stable until January 2015, when fighting broke out in Maguindanao. Although tensions remain high, the peace deal with MILF has not derailed.

Political Context

Since October 2012, the Government has been engaged in finalising a lengthy peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the country’s largest Muslim separatist group. Draft legislation for the 2014 March Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro, which gives MILF, as a political group, rule over a new autonomous region, replacing the current Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), was submitted to Congress in September (AFP, 10/09/2014). The deal excludes important stakeholders, including the BangsamoroIslamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), Abu Sayyaf, and Khalifa Islamiyah Mindanao. The agreement paves the way for the creation of a new Muslim autonomous entity called Bangsamoro. The government aims to setup the region by 2016. The agreement allows for a Muslim self-rule area in southern Philippines in exchange for the decommissioning of MILF forces.

The disarmament process for Philippine Muslim opposition groups started in September 2014. The decommissioning of a first batch of firearms was scheduled for late 2014 (AFP, 28/09/2014). The parties met on 30 January and signed the protocol for its implementation (Government, 28/01/2015; local media, 31/01/2015). The Independent Decommissioning Body has not yet reported on the process.

Security Context

Splinter groups on Mindanao and smaller neighbouring islands continue their violent opposition to the Government. Increased violence between the Government and opposition groups was reported in November and later in January as a consequence of government efforts to capture outlaws.

On 25 January Philippine security forces entered the remote village of Mamasapano, in Maguindanao, which is held by MILF. However, they had not coordinated with MILF beforehand, as required under the ceasefire agreement. In the worst fighting since the peace agreement of 2014, 44 police officers, 11 militants and two civilians were killed (AFP, 26/01/2015, ECHO, 28/01/2015; OCHA, 02/02/2015).

On 9 February, a feud erupted between families reportedly associated with MILF and BIFF in Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Maguindanao. Between 23-29 March, armed conflict left two civilians injured, three BIFF fighters and four national army soldiers dead (OCHA, 30/03/2015; local media 30/03/2015). On 30 March the Philippines military chief announced that the offensive had ended. 139 insurgents have been killed, 12 captured, and bomb-making bases have been seized (AP, 30/03/2015).

BIFF split from MILF in 2008. Thousands were displaced by fighting between the Philippine army and BIFF in 2014 (IRIN, 22/07/2014; OCHA).
Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

Insecurity in parts of Mindanao and nearby areas is limiting humanitarian access. Concurrent natural disasters have hampered further aid delivery to affected populations.

Disasters

Tropical Storm Mekkhala, locally known as Amang, crossed over the Eastern Visayas and Bicol regions on 17 January (Government, 19/01/2015). Almost 150 houses were destroyed and two people died (ECHO, 19/01/2015).

Tropical Storm Jangmi, also known as Seniang, made landfall in Hinatuan on 29 December, affecting about 486,900 people across seven regions, killing 54 and injuring 40. 390 houses were destroyed (OCHA, 05/01/2015).

Category 5 Typhoon Hagupit, locally known as Ruby, made landfall on 6 December 2014 in Eastern Samar province (Eastern Philippines), (GDACS, 06/12/2014). 3.8 million people were affected across nine regions (WFP, 15/12/2014). Around 38,100 houses were destroyed and 203,600 partially damaged (OCHA, 15/12/2014).

Displacement

As of February 2015, reports suggest that nearly 500,000 people are displaced. Around 80% of the 3 million displaced in 2014 fled natural disasters. An estimated 95,000 fled conflict and violence in Mindanao. The total number of people displaced by conflict and violence reached its lowest level since 2011 (IDMC, 10/02/2015).

Maguindanao

Fighting in Maguindanao since late January has caused the displacement of 125,000 people. A majority are staying in 75 evacuation centres, including schools and madrassas, the rest with friends and family (Government, 15/03/2015; UNHCR, IRIN, 25/03/2015). Their safety is of concern as the conflict has spread (UNHCR, 20/03/2015). Although numbers are expected to rise, the Government has stated that some of the displaced population will be allowed to return home (AFP, 22/03/2015; UNHCR, 20/03/2015). On 30 March, the Philippine military chief reported that 30,000 had already returned home, although these figures have not been independently confirmed (AP, 30/03/2015). There are serious concerns regarding the protection of women and children.

Typhoon Haiyan

Resettlement has begun for families in Tacloban still living in tents. Nearly 1,500 people have moved to relocation sites. A further 200 families living in tents in Tanauan municipality are also being relocated (OCHA, 31/10/2014). Larger shelter gaps persist in Western Leyte (EU Red Cross, 20/03/2015). Little information is available about progress towards solutions for the approximately four million people who have returned home, although it is believed that livelihood, food, and housing needs remain considerable in Haiyan-affected areas (IDMC, 10/02/2015). Longer-term assistance is required, such as supporting self-recovery, assisting households in no-build zones, helping with safer reconstruction, and enabling access to healthcare, schools, public transportation, and livelihood opportunities (UNHCR, 30/09/2014).

Zamboanga

18 months after fighting in the city, 30,000 people are still in evacuation centres, transit sites, or with host families. Those in evacuation centres are in tents or makeshift huts made of wood and tarpaulin (ACF, 20/03/2015). In late 2014, disease outbreaks and sanitary conditions were a main concern (OCHA, 09/09/2014). Protection concerns remain critical; women and children in particular are at risk of abuse and exploitation (OCHA, 01/10/2014).

Fires

Almost 50,000 people have been affected after a number of fires broke out in Parola compound in Tondo, northwest Manila, on 2 March. 800 houses have been severely damaged. Around 25,000 people are being housed in six evacuation centres (IFRC, 08/03/2015).

Food Security

Food remains a priority need for people affected by typhoon Haiyan, more than a year after the event. Food prices are inflated and thousands of people still do not have the means to buy food or have sufficient access to markets (EU Red Cross, 20/03/2015).

Health

Dengue: As of 7 March, 14,672 cases of dengue and 39 deaths have been reported in 2015. Since mid-February, the weekly number of dengue cases reported in the country has declined (WHO, 24/03/2015). According to the Health Cluster, diarrhoea cases have been rising in several areas of Ormoc and Leyte since 30 November 2014 (EU Red Cross, 20/03/2015).

Nutrition

A SMART survey of displaced communities of Zamboanga indicated high malnutrition rates among children under five (ACF, 20/03/2015).

Education

Schooling in Pagalungan (Maguindanao province) and Pikit (Cotabato province) has been suspended following the fighting (ECHO, 24/02/2015). Almost 50 schools, and 20,630 children, have been affected (Government, 13/03/2015).

Protection

BIFF continues to actively recruit and train child soldiers.
TURKEY DISPLACEMENT

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

No significant developments this week 25/03/2015. Last update: 19/02/2015

No current data on child mortality, food security, food price levels, or the general magnitude of humanitarian needs is available. Therefore, DPRK is not included in the Global Overview prioritisation.

KEY CONCERNS

- Massive human rights infringements, including against prisoners in prison camps who face starvation and torture, continue to be reported. Humanitarian access remains extremely limited (UN).
- Information on the food security situation remains limited. As of August, an estimated 16 million people (almost 65% of DPRK's population) are chronically food insecure and an estimated 2.4 million people need food assistance (OCHA).
- As of August, malnutrition rates, particularly in the northwest, were extremely high with global chronic malnutrition (stunting) at almost 28% and global acute malnutrition (wasting) at 4% among children under five (OCHA).
- DPRK is disaster prone, regularly experiencing seasonal flooding that, for instance, affected over 800,000 people in summer 2013 (OCHA).

Political Context

In November 2014, the UN General Assembly approved a resolution condemning DPRK for human rights abuses and recommending the prosecution of its leaders for crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court (international media, 19/11/2014). In response, DPRK threatened to conduct a nuclear test (BBC, 20/11/2014). On 4 March 2015, the United States said the increase in the range and precision of missiles in DPRK's nuclear programme were of great concern (Reuters, 4/02/2015).

Security Context

DPRK–South Korea

In February 2014, Seoul and Pyongyang held their first high-level talks in seven years, in the Panmunjom truce village. However relations subsequently deteriorated. In April, South Korean officials said that DPRK had completed all steps required prior to a potential nuclear test, as Pyongyang conducted a scheduled military exercise near the border.

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Access

Humanitarian access is extremely limited. On 1 May, the UN Human Rights Council's recommendations to the Government as part of the Universal Periodic Review included unrestricted access to prisons and prison camps for humanitarian organisations, and close collaboration with humanitarian organisations to ensure the transparent distribution of aid.

Food Security

Information on food security remains limited. An estimated 16 million people, of a total population of 24.6 million, are chronically food insecure. An estimated 2.4 million people need food assistance (OCHA, 11/09/2014). The food system in DPRK remains highly vulnerable to shocks and serious shortages exist, particularly in the production of protein-rich crops. According to FAO, food production remained stagnant in 2014, after an improvement of the harvest in previous years. FAO estimates that the food security situation for 2015 is likely to remain similar to 2014 (FAO, 03/02/2015).

WFP reports that 45% of households have borderline and 30% poor food consumption. People in central mountainous areas do not have access to sufficient food from the public distribution centre and have to rely on planting hillside crops to supplement their daily diet, despite poor seed quality, shallow soil, accelerated erosion, low yield expectations, and the fact that most of the hillside cultivators do not necessarily have an agricultural background (US State Department, 22/09/2014).

Livelihoods

In May 2014, the Central Committee of the Worker’s Party and the cabinet of ministers signed a set of market-oriented reforms, which appear to liberalise the economy. These reforms could improve food security, as farmers now work for a share of crops, instead of receiving fixed rations (international media, 21/01/2015).

Health and Nutrition

More than six million people need access to essential health services, including vaccines and other medicines (OCHA citing WHO, 11/02/2015).

Nutrition

Chronic child malnutrition and poor dietary diversity among children, women, and households are major concern. Super cereals, biscuits, pulses and oil are needed to supplement the poor dietary intake among targeted vulnerable groups (WFP 06/2014).

Reviewed: 25/03/2015
UKRAINE: CONFLICT, DISPLACEMENT

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

30 March: Nearly five million people are affected by the crisis in Ukraine, and more than 1.6 million are in need of humanitarian support, including nearly 1.1 million in non-government-controlled areas. Households’ poor financial situation is the main driver of need (MSNA).

23 March: Fears of a new offensive in Mariupol are rising, as non-government forces are reportedly gathering troops along the front line and fighting is escalating in Shyrokyne (AFP).

20 March: Up to 20–30% of IDPs could lose their status and benefits as a result of the implementation of a mechanism for verifying current IDP addresses (UNHCR).

17 March: Parliament passed a law granting special status to non-government-controlled areas, in line with the February peace roadmap (local media).

KEY CONCERNS

- Nearly five million people are affected by the crisis in Ukraine, and more than 1.6 million are in need of humanitarian support. The situation is most severe in non-government-controlled areas (MSNA, 30/03/2015).

- Nearly two million people have been displaced internally and over 764,000 externally. It is difficult for civilians to escape contested areas (UNHCR, 23/03).

- Availability of food but also of health services and medicine, are key concerns. Access to safe water is also an issue (MSNA, 30/03/2015).

- Bureaucratic, security and financial restrictions are impeding access and response (OCHA, 26/12/2014; MSF, 23/01/2015).

Political Context

Ukraine and pro-Russian separatist forces signed a peace roadmap on 12 February. The terms of the agreement included the introduction of a full bilateral ceasefire from 15 February, the establishment of a buffer zone around the frontline, the release of hostages and illegally detained prisoners, and the restoration of social and economic links with affected areas (BBC, 12/02/2015). The Parliament passed a law granting special status to non-government-controlled areas on 17 March, in line with the agreement (Local media, 17/03/2015).

The ceasefire has been broken repeatedly, most severely when the city of Debaltseve came under separatist control on 19 February (Al Jazeera, 19/02/2015). The presence and use of heavy weapons continues to be reported in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (OSCE, 21/03/2015).

On 15 November, Ukraine’s President ordered the withdrawal of all state services from the eastern regions held by armed groups, as well as the evacuation of state workers (international media, 15/11/2014). Since 1 December, allocations from the state budget to these areas have been halted, including for social payments (UN, 15/12/2014).

Security Context

As of 22 March, at least 6,072 people had been killed in the conflict and 15,345 wounded, though the death toll may be higher, since access to conflict-affected areas is restricted (OCHA, 22/03/2015).

Armed groups control most of eastern Donetsk region, including Donetsk’s airport and Debaltseve, and a small area of southern Luhansk region (Government, 13/01/2015; international media, 22/01/2015). Non-government forces reportedly comprise around 35,000 to 40,000 fighters, including up to 10,000 Russian fighters (AFP, 23/03/2015).

In February, most of the fighting was around Debaltseve, Horlivka and Svitlodarsk, in Donetsk region (international media, 02/02/2015). Violence abated early March, but fighting continues in certain locations, notably in and around Donetsk airport and to the east of Mariupol, including around Shyrokyne and Pisky villages. Fears are growing of a new offensive in Mariupol, as non-government forces are gathering troops along the front line and fighting is escalating in Shyrokyne (AFP, 23/03/2015; 21/03/2015).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Nearly five million people are affected by the crisis in Ukraine, including 3.6 million in non-government-controlled areas, 954,000 in government-controlled areas in Donetsk and Luhansk, and 310,000 in Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Zaparizhia regions, the main IDP reception areas. More than 1.6 million are in need of humanitarian support (MSNA, 30/03/2015). At 20 March, 15% of the humanitarian plan launched in December 2014 has been funded (OCHA, 22/03/2015).

Access

Getting in and out of the conflict zone is becoming more difficult (MSF, 23/01/2015). Freedom of movement is an issue and civilians are often trapped. Lack of available and
affordable transport, insecurity along exit routes and administrative barriers are preventing civilians from reaching safety (UNHCR, 10/03/2015). Only four international humanitarian organisations are operating in conflict zones (OCHA, 16/03/2015).

Obligatory permits to cross the lines separating government- from opposition-controlled areas have been enforced since 21 January but are inconsistently applied. The permit is not easy to acquire and corruption is reported (UNHCR, 20/03/2015; OCHA, 06/03/2015). Administrative requirements are increasingly complicated, and entry is most difficult for humanitarian organisations (Logistics Cluster, 06/03/2015). Since the ceasefire, many instances extensive delays or refused permission to aid trucks to enter non-government areas have been reported (UNHCR, 20/03/2015). Volunteer organisations working in both self-declared republics have made similar reports (HRW, 13/03/2015).

Logistical Constraints

The Government has decided to halt public transportation in non-government areas, hampering humanitarian access (OCHA, 09/01/2015). Months of conflict have severely damaged Donetsk international airport (international media, 01/12/2014). Limited rail transport to the region continues to impede humanitarian access (OCHA, 28/11/2014).

Access to Luhansk region is constrained due to deteriorated road conditions, access risks posed by UXO and IEDs, and damage to the Stanitsia Luhanska bridge, which can now only support small vehicles (OCHA, 27/02/2015).

Bus connections and private vehicles crossing the administrative border to and from Crimea are often delayed for several days (UNHCR, 06/02/2015). International shipping has been prohibited from the ports of Yevpatoria, Kerch, Sevastopol, Theodosia, and Yalta, on the Crimea peninsula, since 15 July (GARD, 17/07/2014).

Trapped and Hard-to-Reach Communities

Many civilians remain stranded in hard-to-reach areas in conflict and non-government controlled areas. 500,000 people are living in underground shelters in conflict areas, with little or no access to humanitarian aid (OCHA, 16/03/2015). Only half of the pre-conflict population of 300,000 remains in non-government controlled Horlivka in Donetsk (OSCE, 17/03/2015). 5,000 civilians are estimated to be trapped in Debaltseve as of 20 February, while 4,000 people remain in 21 institutional care facilities in hard-to-reach areas not controlled by the Government (ICRC, 22/02/2015; OCHA, 06/03/2015). 3,000 people out of 10,000 remain in Kuibyshevskyi district in Donetsk city and have not been reached by humanitarian aid; priority needs are for shelter, water and health support (OCHA, 22/03/2015).

Displacement

IDPs

By 23 March, nearly 1.18 million IDPs had been registered in eastern Ukraine since March 2014, including 174,000 children and 48,000 disabled people. Key reception areas are areas under government control in Donetsk (429,500) and Luhansk regions (151,200), and Kharkiv (155,000), Kyiv (83,500), Zaporizhia (84,700) and Dnipropetrovsk regions (72,000) (UNHCR, 23/03/2015; 20/03/2015). 19,000 people are estimated to be displaced within Crimea (IDMC, 31/10/2014). The discrepancy between the real and registered numbers of IDPs is a major issue hampering delivery of assistance (OCHA, 30/01/2015).

61% of the IDP population are pensioners, 12% children, and 4% disabled people. The proportion of pensioners among IDPs rises to 72% and 74% in Luhansk and Donetsk regions, respectively. Many pensioners have registered as IDPs solely to be able to access their pension payments, and then moved back home (UNHCR, 06/02/2015).

The Government is encouraging IDPs to move west, to ease pressure on accommodation, but coordination is lacking (OCHA, 13/02/2015; UNHCR, 06/02/2015). Some evacuees have been temporarily accommodated in train carriages at the railway station in Slovyansk, awaiting onward transportation (UNHCR, 06/02/2015). IDPs need information, notably regarding evacuation, safe roads, travel permits, markets, laws and regulations, and where to access humanitarian aid (IO, 02/2015).

Returnees

IDPs and affected populations continue to commute to their areas of origin, to register for pensions, receive assistance, or scope out damage to their homes (OCHA, 22/03/2015). Some IDPs are reportedly returning to conflict areas, as the devaluation of the national currency has limited their ability to afford basic living expenses, including rent and food (OCHA, 06/03/2015).

Reports also indicate an increasing trend of people exiting Russia to Ukraine, with nearly 2,500 having passed the two Border Crossing Points in Donetsk region between 4-11 March (OSCE, 11/03/2015).

Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

The total number of Ukrainians seeking asylum or other forms of legal stay in neighbouring countries stands at 763,700, including 625,500 in Russia and 80,900 in Belarus (UNHCR, 23/03/2015). Since July, Russian authorities have prevented Ukrainians from obtaining refugee status in several regions, including border areas and major cities such as Moscow. Most asylum seekers have been unable to collect the required documents and access refugee status (IO, 09/12/2014).

Food Security

More than 1.3 million people are estimated to be in need of food assistance, including nearly 1.1 million in non-government-controlled areas, and 200,000 in government-controlled areas in Donetsk and Luhansk. 673,290 people with a poor food consumption score should be prioritised for assistance (MSNA, 30/03/2015).
Eastern Ukraine’s food reserves are depleted (FAO, 26/01/2015). Food shortages have been reported in Luhansk since the beginning of February (OCHA, 13/02/2015; 22/03/2015).

Food prices have risen, especially in the eastern parts of the country. Prices in the east have gone up 30% in a year for items such as bread and milk, and by 75–80% for meat and cheese (WFP, 19/02/2015). At least 20% of the population living in Luhansk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhia have limited access to markets, due to increased food prices, disrupted transport systems, high insecurity, remoteness and lack of hard currency.

Agriculture

The ongoing conflict in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions is severely affecting the agriculture sector. Some farming enterprises close to the conflict zone have reportedly lost up to 30% of their winter harvest, as the conflict rendered them unable to plant autumn crops properly. 13% of wheat, barley, and maize, and up to 30% of sunflower crops were not harvested in 2014 due to displacement, corresponding to losses of 530,000 and 400,000 metric tons. Greenhouses and fruit orchards were shelled, farm machineries were either directly damaged by shelling or taken away, and livestock were killed and lost during the fighting, or slaughtered by owners due to lack of animal feed or fear of losing them.

2.7 million people are estimated to be in need of a livelihood (OCHA, 24/02/2015).

Households’ poor financial situation is the main driver of need (MSNA, 30/03/2015).

At the end of November, around 650,000 pensioners had not received any pensions since August (AFP, 28/11/2014). Pensions and salaries are not being paid in non-government-controlled areas (OCHA, 13/03/2015).

IDPs from Crimea are often unable to transfer their pensions to mainland Ukraine since banks ceased the use of electronic banking, yet they will only receive payments if they provide proof they are not receiving a pension in Crimea (UNHCR, 06/02/2015).

As of 10 October, nearly 40,000 small and medium businesses in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions had ceased activity (OCHA, 10/10/2014). Industrial production had declined 60% in Donetsk region and 85% in Luhansk by September 2014 (OCHA, 08/12/2014).

Health and Nutrition

There are critical shortages of basic and specialised medicines and medical supplies in eastern Ukraine, especially in Donetsk region, and many people cut off from medical care in non-government areas. The average vaccination coverage in the country is well under 50%, while a significant increase in medicine prices affects access to basic medication and treatment for chronic illnesses (OCHA, 21/03/2015; MSF, 04/03/2015; WHO, 16/01/2015).

More than 100 health facilities in Donetsk and Luhansk regions have been destroyed or damaged, while 30% and 70% of health workers are no longer at their posts in the respective regions (OCHA, 21/03/2015; WHO, 16/01/2015). The safety and security of health workers remains a major concern in conflict areas; targeted attacks on ambulances have been reported (OCHA, 17/10/2014; IMC, 31/01/2015). Only half of ambulances in conflict areas are operational for lack of fuel (OCHA, 23/01/2015).

Seasonal flu incidence has exceeded the normal threshold in Khmelnytska, Vinnytska, and Volynska regions, while Hepatitis A incidence is growing in Donbas area (OCHA, 20/02/2015; 13/02/2015).

HIV/AIDS

Hospitals in eastern Ukraine have insufficient medicine and diagnostic equipment to treat HIV, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis. Over 16,000 people are living with HIV/AIDS in non-government areas, including over 7,000 people receiving antiretroviral therapy, whose treatment is endangered (HRW, 13/03/2015).

Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST)

Restrictions on the delivery of narcotic drugs since December 2014 for people undergoing OST in Donetsk and Luhansk regions has resulted in discontinuation of treatment for more than 300 of the 899 patients who reside in the area (OCHA, 23/01/2015). There are concerns that HIV, hepatitis C, and tuberculosis, could spread, and the lives of many drug users will be at risk (international media, 28/01/2015).

Mental health

Approximately 100,000 children and adults are estimated to need psychosocial support (UNICEF, 29/01/2015). Soldiers’ access to psychological services is reportedly severely insufficient in Lviv region (OCHA, 22/03/2015).

Tuberculosis (TB)

At least 2,400 people in non-government areas with active forms of TB, including 530 people with multidrug-resistant TB, lack consistent treatment provision and follow-up, and are at risk of treatment interruption from April (HRW, 13/03/2015). New TB cases are estimated to have increased by 5% in non-government areas of Donetsk, mainly among the elderly and combatants (OCHA, 06/02/2015).

In areas under government control, stocks of drug supplies for HIV and TB patients will be finished by March 2015 (OCHA, 23/01/2015).
Shelter and NFIs

Nearly 600,000 people are estimated to be in need of shelter assistance, including 270,000 in government-controlled areas in Donetsk and Luhansk, 179,000 in non-government-controlled areas, and 148,000 in Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Zaporizhia regions (MSNA, 30/03/2015). Housing solutions are provided to only 3–5% of IDPs in temporary collective centres (UNHCR, 20/03/2015). Many IDPs left their homes without basic belongings (UNHCR, 06/02/2015).

Many villages along the conflict line are affected by shelling. 60% of Shyrokyne buildings have been destroyed (OSCE, 27/03/2015). In Luhansk region, more than 10,000 houses need emergency repair, while 40,000 remain without electricity in Donetsk region (OCHA, 13/03/2015; 13/02/2015). People left in cities where shelling is ongoing are living in underground shelters, in acute need of basic NFIs (OCHA, 30/01/2015). In Donetsk, bunkers are damp and not heated (UNICEF, 06/02/2015).

The humanitarian situation in non-government areas is worsening, especially in Debaltseve and near Donetsk airport where people live in shelters or basements without access to electricity or running water (MSF, 03/03/2015). Priority needs in Debaltseve and surrounding villages are for gas, shelter, food, health and NFIs (OCHA, 06/03/2015).

95% of IDPs are in private accommodation and are often excluded from humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 24/02/2015; UNHCR, 06/02/2015). The absorption capacity within host communities has been weakening, and is now exhausted in high reception areas and in Odessa. Tensions are rising between the host population and IDPs. A likely increased influx of IDPs to Kyiv could further increase social tensions (OCHA, 16/03/2015; 06/02/2015).

WASH

More than 1.3 million people are estimated to be in need of WASH assistance, including nearly 1.2 million in non-government-controlled areas, and more than 79,000 in government-controlled areas in Donetsk and Luhansk (MSNA, 30/03/2015).

As of 13 February, approximately 461,350 people in Donetsk region and 86,860 people in Luhansk do not have access to safe drinking water, and sanitation is insufficient (OCHA, 13/02/2015; UNICEF, 09/01/2015). Numerous cases of intestinal diseases have been reported in Horlivka, Donetsk region, due to lack of access to clean water (OCHA, 13/02/2015).

Education

600,000 people in Donetsk and Luhansk need education support (OCHA, 24/02/2015). 56% of schools have been damaged or rendered non-operational in non-government-controlled areas, and 20% in government areas of Donetsk and Luhansk (MSNA, 30/03/2015). The conflict has disrupted the education of up to 25,000 children in Donetsk and Luhansk cities. Only three out of eight schools are functioning in Debaltseve, with many of the 250 children in the city not having attended school for months. Lack of transportation, mines and UXO, and overcrowding, are main barriers to school attendance in Donetsk (UNICEF, 20/03/2015; OCHA, 13/03/2015; 09/01/2015).

Protection

A fourth wave of military mobilisation has been launched. Draftees must notify authorities any change of residence within seven days, in order not to be considered as a draft evader. Men of military-draft age will only be able to leave the country with written permission from local military commissions (OCHA, 06/02/2015).

Human rights abuses by armed groups continued to be reported, including abduction, torture and ill-treatment, unlawful detention, execution, forced mobilisation of civilians, and seizure and occupation of public buildings. Up to 600 people continue to be held by armed groups (OHCHR, 15/11/2014; Amnesty, 12/02/2015; OCHA, 23/01/2015). At least nine people have reportedly been abducted; intimidation and restrictive laws have been used to silence the media and NGOs, and public protests have been banned since annexation (UNHCR, 31/01/2015; Amnesty, 17/03/2015).

IDPs

The requirement to register as an IDP in government-controlled areas to be eligible for social payments and pensions is causing displacement. The deadline for registering as an IDP in order to receive pensions was 1 February, putting people who do not make the journey or meet the deadline at risk of financial and other hardship (UNHCR 31/12/2014; 23/01/2015). IDPs from Crimea are particularly vulnerable as transport communications to Crimea have ceased (UNHCR, 31/01/2015).

An increasing number of unlawful refusals of registration and financial assistance, violations of employment rights, and limited access to social benefits is being reported (OCHA, 13/03/2015). A mechanism for verifying current IDP addresses came into force on 19 March and could lead to 20–30% IDPs losing their status and benefits, as many registered with temporary addresses (UNHCR, 20/03/2015).

Discrimination and stigmatisation of IDPs on political grounds has been reported (IOM, 22/10/2014).

Mines and ERW

There is evidence of use of cluster munitions by government and non-government forces in at least seven villages in eastern Ukraine in January and February, killing at least 13 civilians (HRW, 19/03/2015). Mines and ERW in conflict areas is of increasing concern as the planting season should begin soon (OCHA, 22/03/2015).

Minorities

Minority issues have become highly politicised since the start of the unrest. The situation of minority communities in Crimea, including Crimean Tatars and ethnic Ukrainians, among others, is of concern, while there has been an apparent escalation of anti-Roma sentiment in the country (UN, 27/01/2015). An estimated 260,000 Roma live in Ukraine.

Vulnerable Groups
The 48,000 disabled people in eastern Ukraine constitute the most vulnerable in the population (MSNA, 30/03/2015; UNHCR, 20/03/2015).

Children are showing signs of stress and anxiety in all areas; children in Donetsk region are most affected (MSNA, 30/03/2015). 50% of state and municipal institutions for the care and guardianship of minors in Donetsk and Luhansk regions are not functioning (international media, 07/10/2014). Concerns over militarisation of children in non-government-controlled areas are also reported (Protection Cluster, 04/03/2015).

The situation for older people in Donetsk and Luhansk is worsening, and particularly alarming in remote rural areas and areas with active military conflicts, as lack of pensions’ payment is preventing them from satisfying basic needs. Access to food and medicine is almost non-existent for many immobile older people (OCHA, 20/02/2015). Almost 4,000 elderly people remain in nursing homes in non-government areas and need NFI support (Protection Cluster, 28/01/2015; OCHA, 13/03/2015). Members of armed groups are not allowing their evacuation to government areas (HelpAge, 25/02/2015; OCHA, 20/02/2015).

People with special needs are facing problems accessing services and transportation in areas re-taken by the Government (OCHA, 09/01/2015).

An increasing number of cases of gender-based violence are being reported in conflict-affected areas (OCHA, 31/10/2014).

Updated: 30/03/2015

North America

Guatemala - Drought, Floods, Food Insecurity

Latest Developments

No significant developments this week, 24/03/2015. Last update 26/01/2015.

Key Concerns

- 1.5 million people have been affected by drought (SESAN MAGA quoted by WFP, 07/11/2014).
- 12,200 cases of acute malnutrition had been recorded among children under-five in Guatemala in 2014, as of 12 October (Government, 12/10/2014).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Disasters

Cold Wave

9,000 people have been affected by the cold wave that began in November 2014. They have sought shelter in 14 centres in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala, Jalapa, Huehuetenango, Quetzaltenango, Quiche, Sacatepequez, San Marcos, Solola and Totonicapan (OCHA, 19/01/2015; Government, 22/01/2015; 13/02/2015).

Drought

1.5 million people have been affected by drought (SESAN MAGA quoted by WFP, 07/11/2014; UNHCR, 12/12/2014). 944,000 people in the Dry Corridor are particularly affected, as they are highly dependent on subsistence farming (ACT Alliance, 15/10/2014). The Government declared a state of emergency due to drought in August 2014, which is due to expire on 24 March, in 16 departments: Jutiapa, Chiquimula, Santa Rosa, Quiché, El Progreso, Huehuetenango, Baja Verapaz, Zacapa, Retalhuleu, Solola, Totonicapan, Chimaltenango, San Marcos, Guatemala, Suchitepequez and Jalapa. 73% of the country’s territory was affected (UN Country Team, 28/08/2014; Government, 24/02/2015).

98% of harvests have been lost in Chiquimula, El Progreso, and Zacapa (Government, 28/08/2014). 56% of affected communities were left with no possibility of planting, and 99,600 people with no income opportunities (ACTED, 28/08/2014; Government, 11/09/2014).

The current crisis is preceded by two years of bad harvests and aggravated by the impact of reduced employment in the coffee bean sector, caused by the coffee leaf rust epidemic of the last two harvests (UN Country Team, 28/08/2014).

A decrease in rain in 2015 is forecast for Central America’s dry corridor due to the possibility of El Niño (local media, 12/02/2015). Drought has affected 2.5 million people across Central America: Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador are also affected (Government of Honduras, 13/01/2015).

Floods

Heavy rains over the May–December season affected 655,200 people and damaged 9,610 houses. (local media, 03/12/2014). Zapaca department was the most affected (Siglo XXI, 19/10/2014). 9,989 people are in 15 shelters throughout the affected area as of 26 February (Government, 26/02/2015).

Food Security
Guatemala is projected to be at IPC Phase 3, Crisis, February–August 2015, higher than the same period in 2014 and the five-year average (FEWSNET, 13/03/2015). 874,000 people are affected by moderate and severe food insecurity (OCHA, 23/02/2015).

Two million people in Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras are in need of food assistance due to the drought (UN, 06/02/2015). A coffee leaf rust epidemic which began in 2012 is affecting all Central America and still impacting Guatemala’s food security and livelihoods with a loss of 100,000 jobs (Save the Children, 29/09/2014). Households in the western part of the country affected by the coffee rust epidemic are facing IPC Phase 3, Crisis, if most have finished food reserves (FEWSNET, 02/2015).

Agricultural Outlook

70% of small-scale and subsistence farmers have suffered losses due to the drought. 47% of households affected depend on basic crop production (WFP, 07/11/2014). In 2014, 75% of the maize and bean harvests were lost (FEWSNET, 18/11/2014, OCHA, 10/12/2014) and households most affected by drought decided not to plant crops in the second planting season, which typically runs from August-September. For the subsistence farmers who decided not to plant, the scenario is very uncertain until the next harvest in August 2015 (OCHA, 10/12/2014).

Health and Nutrition

Provision of primary healthcare has been interrupted in rural areas of several municipalities due to budget limitations (Government, 12/10/2014).

Chikungunya

Between end December 2014 and mid-February 2015, 588 chikungunya cases were reported in San Jorge, Usumatlan, Gualan and Estanzuela de Zacapa departments (local media, 28/02/2015).

Nutrition

116 children died from malnutrition in 2014. Between January and November, 14,731 children were reported to be malnourished, a 16% reduction compared to last year (Prensa Latina, 17/12/2014). The highest rate of acute malnutrition was identified in the eastern part of the country, at 5.4% (OCHA, 10/12/2014).

WASH

23% of households in drought-affected areas are estimated not to have access to safe drinkable water (SESAN quoted by OCHA, 03/11/2014).

1.6 million people in Guatemala lack access to basic WASH services, including 830,000 who lack access to water (local media, 07/02/2014).

Reviewed: 24/03/2015

HAITI FOOD INSECURITY, EPIDEMIC, HURRICANE
The number of humanitarian actors has continued to decrease, from 512 in 2010 to 147 by the end of 2014, and government capacity has not always improved, creating critical sectoral gaps (OCHA/UN, 31/12/2014). The UN launched in March a Transitional Appeal Process, requiring USD 401, in an effort to address basic development challenges that result in persistent humanitarian needs and risks (OCHA/UNCT, 11/03/2015).

Disasters

Nearly 91,000 Haitians were affected by heavy floods that hit northern and western departments in November 2014. 18 people were killed and more than 22,000 houses damaged. At end December, Nord department still reported significant NFI and WASH needs (OCHA, 31/12/2014).

Displacement

IDPs

As of early January, 79,400 IDPs remain in 105 camps following the 2010 earthquake, including 62,637 who are not targeted by any return or relocation programme (IOM, 09/01/2015; OCHA/UN, 31/12/2014). At end December, 80% of displaced households were living in Delmas (49%), Croix-des-Bouquets (15%), Tabarre (9%) and Leogane (8%) (IOM, 27/01/2015). Priority needs include the provision of minimum basic services, including WASH and health, protection monitoring and response, and promotion of durable solutions (OCHA, 03/11/2014).

Population numbers in open camps grew over the first six months of 2014, as other camps closed, and insecurity elsewhere has increased (OHCHR, MINUSTAH, Protection Cluster, 30/06/2014). 56 camps are targeted for closure, affecting 16,760 IDPs (CCCM, 27/01/2015). Basic services in camps have declined faster than the pace of return or relocation. Only one-third of camps have access to water and access to healthcare is problematic due to lack of infrastructure and funding (OCHA/UN, 31/12/2014).

Haitian Migrants in Neighbouring Countries

Thousands took to the streets on 25 February to denounce violence against Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic, following the killing of two Haitians in the Dominican Republic in February; the border between the two countries was closed on 20 February (Alter Press, 20/02/2015; 25/02/2015).

Food Security

605,000 Haitians are food insecure, including 165,000 in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food security due to early exhaustion of food stocks as a result of the drought (OCHA/UN, 31/12/2014).

Below-average food stocks due to the prolonged drought are expected to result in higher food prices between March and April 2015 (AlterPress, 21/10/2014).

Agricultural Outlook

Around 67,500 people (16,000 families) are reportedly affected by the drop in cereal production in Central Plateau, Nord-Ouest, Sud-Est, and Ouest departments (FAO, 02/12/2014).

Heavy rainfall at the beginning of November affected agricultural output, with 62% and 29% losses in breeding production in the north and northeast, respectively (Government, 20/11/2014). In contrast, prolonged drought conditions over Haiti in January are reducing the availability of water for irrigation systems; Nord-Ouest, Artibonite, Nord, Grand’Anse and Sud departments are most affected. Potential above-normal temperatures until March could reduce water availability for crops and increase the cost of cropping activities in Artibonite Valley, in Plaine de l’Arcahaie and Plaine du Cul de Sac in Ouest, Plaine des Cayes in Sud, and St Raphael and Grison Garde in Nord (FEWSNET, 19/01/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Five million Haitians (half of the total population) lack access to basic health services (UN, 27/10/2014). Some hospitals have still not been fully rehabilitated since the earthquake (MSF, 08/01/2015). Lack of mental health support is also reported, with only seven mental health professionals in the country (Alter Press, 10/01/2015).

Cholera

The upward trend in incidence continues at the beginning of 2015, with 50% more cases than in the same period last year. By 21 February, there were 7,225 cholera cases, including 5,794 hospitalizations, and 86 deaths (ECHO, 16/01/2015; PAHO, 03/03/2015). Mechanisms to identify, track and respond to outbreaks need to be put into place, as 28,000 people are likely to be affected by cholera in 2015 (OCHA/UNCT, 11/03/2015).

27,753 suspected cases of cholera and 296 deaths were recorded in 2014, a 53% and 50% reduction on 2013, respectively; an increase was reported over September–November however, with 918 weekly cases on average, compared to 251 in the previous months (PAHO, 30/01/2015). The departments of Artibonite, Centre, Ouest, and Nord are most affected (PAHO, 02/12/2014).

731,880 suspected cholera cases and 8,741 deaths have been reported since the start of the epidemic in October 2010 (PAHO, 03/03/2015).

Nutrition

At March, 85,000 children suffered from acute malnutrition, including 17,000 requiring immediate assistance (OCHA/UNCT, 11/03/2015).

Malnutrition rates in IDP camps are of great concern. In May, GAM in 20 camps stood at 12.5% (OCHA, 20/08/2014).

WASH

More than 3.4 million Haitians lack access to safe water (one-third of the total population and 47% of the rural population) (UN, 30/09/2014). 38% do not have access to improved water sources and 69% lack access to improved sanitation (World Bank, 30/09/2014). 60% of schools have no toilets and more than three-quarters lack access to water (HRW, 21/10/2014).

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Access to water sources in Belladere in Centre department is reportedly limited (Alter Press, 14/01/2015). As of June, 50% of camps lack adequate sanitation facilities; only one-third have a water point.

Shelter

94% of people left homeless by the 2010 earthquake have been relocated outside camps. Their living conditions are poorer than before the earthquake (UN, 27/10/2014).

Overall, 3.5 million people live in precarious neighbourhoods and informal settlements in urban areas in Haiti. These residents also suffer socio-economic deprivation, inadequate housing and elevated risk of disaster impacts and forced eviction. Around a third do not have legitimate status/rights for the land they occupy. Land disputes and tensions between landowners and occupants are common and have been accompanied by coercion, violence and forced eviction (OCHA/UNCT, 11/03/2015). 22,810 people in 21 camps are considered at risk of forced eviction, especially in Port-au-Prince, Delmas, Croix des Bouquets, as landowners seek to reclaim their land (OCHA/UN, 31/12/2014).

Education

17% of IDPs in camps surveyed in 2014 have not received any education services (OHCHR, MINUSTAH and Protection Cluster, 30/06/2014).

Protection

Children

Five years since the earthquake, many children still show signs of emotional and psychological stress and remain in need of protection; minors in camps are particularly at risk of exploitation, with sexual violence commonplace (Save the Children, 08/01/2015).

Risk of deportation from Caribbean countries

An estimated 600,000 Haitian nationals or people of Haitian descent face an elevated risk of forced expulsion and deportations from countries of the Caribbean region. Most of them are unable to obtain birth certificates and have their civil status has been affected by national policies (OCHA/UNCT, 11/03/2015). 892 irregular migrants have been repatriated to Haiti in 2015 and returns are expected to rise in the coming months (GARR, 06/03/2015).

Sexual and Gender-based Violence

The number of rapes reported in the first half of 2014 is double that of the same period in 2013. More than two-thirds of the rapes reported involved minors (OHCHR and Protection Cluster, 30/06/2014). Gender-based violence continues to be of great concern in IDP camps (OHCHR, MINUSTAH and Protection Cluster, 30/06/2014).

Reviewed, 26/03/2015
Health and Nutrition

Limited access to water due to drought is having a negative impact on hygiene, in turn increasing health risks, especially acute diarrhoeal diseases. Health services in rural areas do not have sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the affected population and there is a 50% shortage of medicine stocks (OCHA, 10/12/2014).

Chikungunya

7,400 cases of chikungunya have been reported since October 2014 (local media, 23/02/2015).

Nutrition

3.4% of children under five are suffering from acute malnutrition, the proportion is greater among girls (5.6%). At least 19,559 children are malnourished as a direct consequence of the drought (OCHA, 10/12/2014).

Reviewed: 24/03/2015

NICARAGUA  DROUGHT, FOOD INSECURITY

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

No significant developments this week, 24/03/2015. Last update 18/03/2015.

KEY CONCERNS

- An estimated 460,000 people have been affected by drought (WFP, 02/2015; OCHA, 03/11/2014; ACT Alliance, 31/10/2014).

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Disasters

Drought

A drought that began in July 2014, the worst in 30 years, affected an estimated 460,000 people (WFP, 02/2015). The most affected areas were the northern departments of Nueva Segovia, Madriz, and Estelí, bordering Honduras. **Drought has affected 2.5 million people in Central America (Government, 13/01/2015).** The agricultural impact included the death of 5,000 cattle and loss of one million bushels of rice and maize (local news, 11/02/215).

Winds

3,050 people have been affected by heavy winds in Managua, Chinandega, Carazo, Rivas, Leon and Esteli departments (Government, 10/03/2015).

Food Security

An estimated 460,000 people are affected by moderate and severe food insecurity (OCHA, 23/02/2015). Poor households in northwestern areas will be at Stressed levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 2) in February–April 2015 due to production losses in the **primera** harvest in 2014, higher prices for basic food products, and reduced income opportunities. Other parts of the country are projected to be in emergency levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) May–September 2015 due to lack of food reserves, high grain prices, and lack of rain in coffee production (FEWSNET, 18/11/2014; 31/01/2015; 13/03/2015).

Agricultural Outlook

In Estelí, Madriz, Nueva Segovia, Matagalpa, León and Chinandega departments, farmers waited until the end of September to sow postrema seeds due to insufficient rainfall, which will result in a decrease of production.

The coffee leaf rust epidemic, affecting the entire Central American region, is further affecting the livelihoods of small-scale farmers and day labourers, though it is expected to be less harsh than in previous years (Government, 05/01/2015). Additionally, a dry start to apante season, which lasts from mid-December to the end of March, could negatively affect cropping activities (FEWSNET, 27/02/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Chikungunya

As of 24 February, 3,096 cases of chikungunya have been reported since July 2014, with 136 recorded during the weekend of 21–22 February (local media, 24/02/2015).

Reviewed: 24/03/2015

OCEANIA

KIRIBATI CYCLONE

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS
**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

**Disasters**

Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Pam caused severe bad weather on the islands of Kiribati. 4m waves and heavy rain were experienced on 11–13 March, causing widespread coastal flooding, with damage in the capital Tarawa (UNICEF, 15/03/2015; Red Cross Movement, 16/03/2015). The southern islands, including Tamana and Arorae, were especially affected by high tides exacerbated by strong winds (FAO, 23/03/2015; international media, 16/03/2015). The storm hit after several weeks of severe flooding (international media, 16/03/2015).

An estimated 2,174 people have been affected by cyclone Pam across the country (UNICEF, 26/03/2015). Communication about needs has been limited and the country may require more support than is being received (OCHA, 22/03/2015). The most urgent needs include NFIs, shelter, health, and WASH (Red Cross Movement, 16/03/2015).

**Access**

Extensive damage was caused to the Dai Nippon causeway, an important connection between Betio town and Bairiki in the most populated Tarawa atoll, resulting in temporary closure to all traffic (UNICEF, 15/03/2015; OCHA, 18/03/2015). A few days after the storm, the causeway was operating at limited capacity (international media, 16/03/2015). The Onotoa Island causeway was damaged, preventing vehicles from crossing to the islet (UNICEF, 24/03/2015). There has also been damage to major bridges, disruption to communications, and constraints on travel. There is only one ferry (OCHA, 22/03/2015). In Betio, power and mobile phone networks have been working intermittently (Red Cross Movement, 16/03/2015).

Recovery work has been made more difficult by the high tides, as a lot of coastal infrastructure has been affected (international media, 24/03/2015).

**Food Security**

Seawater has heavily impacted food crops and other valuable plants, and salinization means large areas cannot now be cultivated. Food crops at the shoreline were uprooted or wiped out. The impact on food security is significant, as most families cultivate fruit trees and food plants around their homes (FAO, 23/03/2015).

**Health**

The Betio national hospital and maternity ward on Tarawa atoll was damaged and patients had to be temporarily relocated to the gym on Bairiki (UNICEF, 15/03/2015; 17/03/2015; OCHA, 18/03/2015; Red Cross Movement, 16/03/2015). Some ten days after the storm the hospital was running again at its usual location, but much of its equipment has been damaged (international media, 24/03/2015).

**Shelter and NFIs**

On Tamana and Arorae islands, the damage appears much worse than has been reported so far. Hundreds of homes have been destroyed, leaving about half the communities on both islands displaced (international media, 24/03/2015). On the southern island of Tamana, 68 houses were reportedly destroyed. Affected families are staying with host families and relocating inland (UNICEF, 24/03/2015).

In many villages seawalls have collapsed, allowing high tides and storm surges to flood and damage property (UNICEF, 14/03/2015; international media, 12/03/2015; international media, 16/03/2015). Strong winds have also caused damage, prompting families to relocate (Red Cross Movement, 16/03/2015).

**WASH**

Local sources report the main concerns on Tamana and Arorae Islands are fresh water and sanitation (international media, 24/03/2015). Freshwater wells have filled with seawater (UNICEF, 24/03/2015).

**Education**

Schools are open but lack of transportation means a lot of children cannot reach school (UNICEF, 17/03/2015).

**Updated 30/03/2015.**

**VANUATU DISPLACEMENT, CYCLONE**

**LATEST DEVELOPMENTS**

**17 March:** 24 people so far are confirmed dead after Cyclone Pam hit on 13 March (AFP, 17/03/2015).

**16 March:** The hardest impacted provinces include Shefa, Tafea, Malampa and Penama (Government, 16/03/2015). Other reports indicate that Tanna island has been severely hit (AFP, 17/03/2015).

**13 March:** Category five Tropical Cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu in the evening of 13 March 2015, with winds of more than 250km/hr. It has affected the entire country, but particularly in the central and southern provinces.

**Humanitarian Context and Needs**

**Disasters**

Category five Tropical Cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu in the evening of 13 March 2015, with
Category five Tropical Cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu in the evening of 13 March 2015, with winds of more than 250km/hr. It has affected the entire country, but particularly the central and southern provinces. On 13 March, the Government issued a ‘red alert’ to all six provinces, advising people to seek shelter immediately. Damage is widespread and severe. The hardest impacted provinces include Shefa, Tafea, Malampa and Penama (Government, 16/03/2015). Other reports also indicate that Tanna island has been severely hit. 24 people so far are confirmed dead (AFP, 17/03/2015). More emergency supplies are needed urgently as the pre-positioned stocks in-country are likely to have been damaged (GDACS 14/03/2015).

Access

The logistical challenges will be significant, particularly in terms of communications and transportation.

The Government has opened the airport only to military flights from Australia and New Zealand (IFRC 14/03/2015). The runway is still flooded and blocked by trees. Civilian flights may be grounded for up to two weeks, according to the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO Sitrep 14/03/2015). This is hampering the humanitarian response (IRIN, 14/03/2015).

Most roads are flooded or blocked by debris. Teouma Bridge has been badly damaged and affected by a flash flood, blocking access to the most affected areas of Efate province, where the capital is located (social media 15/03/2015).

Current estimates indicate perhaps 80% of power lines are down throughout the capital Port Vila and may not be fully restored for a few weeks (GDACS Virtual OSSOC 14/03/2015).

The only cellular communications tower known to be operational is a Digicel (mobile phone service provider) tower near the National NDMO in Port Villa. The network is intermittently available within the vicinity of the tower, but is reported to be unavailable elsewhere. As such, no communications have been made to other provinces (GDACS 14/03/2015)

HF radio at NDMO has been damaged, meaning NDMO cannot use it to communicate with any provinces regarding emergency services (NDMO Sitrep 14/03/2015)

Food Security

Severe, widespread damage to crops, especially non-root crops, is expected in Shefa and Tafea provinces (NDMO Sitrep 14/03/2015). The Food Security Cluster is estimating extensive damage to crops across the country. Food shortages will be a serious concern for the majority of the population, particularly those without homes and food gardens. Banana crops and leafy vegetable crops are likely to have been destroyed, with root crops uprooted or inundated. Fruit trees will have lost fruit and small livestock and pens will have been destroyed. Food and seed stocks, and fishing assets, may be destroyed (OCHA 15/03/2015; Radio New Zealand International, 17/03/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Part of the country’s main hospital, Vila Central, has been destroyed, according to National Disaster Management Office (international media 13/03/2015). The hospital is still operational, but it is overcrowded and may require a temporary clinic or shelter. Patients have been temporarily moved to classrooms in the hospital. The hospital is short on medical staff, and fuel is lacking for standby vehicles (NDMO Sitrep 14/03/2015).

It is expected that at least 50% of children under five (17,000 children) will be at risk of worsening childhood illnesses and nutritional status (OCHA 15/03/2015). Measles in present in Vanuatu, and a breakdown in sanitation could facilitate transmission (UNICEF 15/03/2015). Immunisation and child nutrition are priorities (OCHA 15/03/2015).

Shelter and NFIs

According to the Government, 28 evacuation centres have been opened on Efate, where the capital is located, with 2,865 evacuees so far (Government, 16/03/2015). Estimates indicate 10,000 are expected in the evacuation centres in Port Vila (NDMO Sitrep 14/03/2015; international media 14/03/2015). Shelter and NFI supplies are critically low (NDMO Sitrep 14/03/2015).

There are estimates that around 90% of structures have been damaged or destroyed on the most populated island of Efate (OCHA 15/03/2015). Homes have reportedly been completely destroyed, and even evacuation shelters, where people had sought refuge, have been flooded and left exposed to Cyclone Pam (AFP, 14/03/2015). Most evacuation centres are buildings with corrugated iron roofs (UNICEF 15/03/2015). On some of the islands, people may be sheltering in caves (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 14/03/2015).

25.2% of the population lives in urban areas (UNICEF 2014). According to National Statistics data from 2010, in Port Vila, 27% live in makeshift housing. In the rural areas, 42% of families live in traditional houses, made entirely of impermanent materials (Vanuatu National Statistics Office 2010).

WASH

The provision of WASH services in evacuation areas is urgent. A tenfold increase in WASH supplies will be needed for the next 2–3 months (OCHA 15/03/2015). WASH needs to be assessed in rural areas in all affected provinces. Port Vila’s water supply has been reconnected in some areas. There are concerns for non-reticulated areas as well as the safety of drinking water. Current stocks of WASH supplies and NFIs can only cater for 5,000–10,000 people. Insufficient human resources for WASH response have been reported in some provinces (NDMO Sitrep 14/03/2015).

Education

All schools in the provinces have been closed (NDMO Sitrep 14/03/2015). Several schools are being used as evacuation centres or have been damaged by the cyclone (OCHA 15/03/2015).

Updated: 17/03/2015
SOUTH AMERICA

COLOMBIA
CONFLICT, DROUGHT, DISPLACEMENT, INSECURITY

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

22 March: 1,200 people were affected by heavy rains in Tolima, Valle del Cauca and Caldas departments. One died (Redhum, 23/03/2015).

19 March: 912 Eperara Siapidara, an indigenous people, are confined to a rural zone in Cauca department due to security threats. Schools have been cancelled and they have stopped daily activities (OCHA, 19/03/2015).

13 March: Six forest fires were reported in the municipalities of Ituango, Anzá, Urrao, Caicedo, Itagui, and Medellín, Antioquia department (PAHO, 13/03/2015).

KEY CONCERNS

- 4.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance (OCHA, 20/01/2015).
- 5.7 million cumulative IDPs, including 224,300 in 2014 (IDMC, 10/2014; HDMX, 2015).
- 262,000 people are trapped in their communities due to armed violence (OCHA, 20/01/2015).
- Approximately 1.3 million people are affected by natural disasters (flood, wind, heat wave, drought) every year (OCHA, 24/02/2015).

OVERVIEW

Five decades of armed violence coupled with the country’s frequent natural disasters have had serious humanitarian consequences. Forced displacement, landmine contamination, and gender-based violence are among the major concerns. For rural communities, movement restrictions by armed groups limit access to basic health services, crops and labour markets, especially in the country’s Pacific region.

Political Context

Colombia’s armed conflict has spanned five decades, pitting the central government against armed groups such as the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). Created by landless peasants, the FARC-EP stated aim is to “end social, political, and economic inequalities”. The ELN was founded on Marxist-Leninist ideals (In Sight Crime). Attempts at peace negotiations in the 1980s and 1998-2000 failed. The latest FARC-EP–Government peace negotiations began in November 2012 in Havana, Cuba. Agreements have been reached on agrarian reform, political participation, and illicit drugs. Negotiations resumed on 2 February and will focus on the end of the armed conflict (World Bulletin, 20/01/2014; AFP, 02/02/2015). Another round of peace talks began on 25 February prior to the arrival of former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, to Cuba (international media, 25/02/2015). On 3 March, the FARC-EP declared a peace agreement wouldn’t be signed if its members were to be tried and jailed (AFP, 03/03/2015).

Security Context

The intensity of the armed conflict has decreased substantially since peace negotiations began in 2012. Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes have been operational since 2003: 56,903 people have been demobilised from armed groups, including 47,770 people who have gone through reintegration programmes with the Colombian Reintegration Agency (Government, 16/12/2014).

Nonetheless, violence and insecurity persist, including kidnappings and extortion by armed groups and BACRIM.

On 20 December 2014, FARC-EP announced a unilateral ceasefire (Washington Office on Latin America, 2014). On 7 March, the Colombian Government and FARC-EP agreed to remove landmines and explosives, with a target of 2025 to complete demining (Reuters, 09/03/2015). On 10 March, the Colombian Government declared it would halt bombing raids against the FARC-EP, for one month in recognition of FARC-EP’s unilateral ceasefire (Al Jazeera, 11/03/2015; BBC, 11/03/2015). On 19 March, the FARC-EP threatened to end the unilateral ceasefire unless the president calls off all attacks, stating that while air raids have stopped, other offensive manoeuvres have continued (Reuters, 19/03/2015). Three FARC-EP and one soldier were killed in combat on 22 March when members of the FARC-EP were caught collecting an extortion payment from a local farmer (local media, 23/03/2015).

Stakeholders

FARC-EP: The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP) is the oldest left-wing militant group in Colombia. It was formed in 1964 by the Colombian Communist Party as a result of rural unrest from fighting between the liberal and conservative parties. Approximately 7,000 fighters make up the FARC-EP today, which allegedly makes between USD 500 and 600 million in profits from the illicit drug trade (UNRIC 2013; BBC 29/08/2013). The FARC-EP has been active throughout the country, but especially in Arauca, Meta, Norte de Santander, Cauca and Antioquia. In November...
2012, the group joined peace negotiations with the Government.

**ELN:** The National Liberation Army is a left-wing militant group formed in 1965 and composed of 1,500 fighters. On 7 January, it stated that it intended to join the peace talks and would consider disarmament (AFP, 07/01/2015; BBC, 07/01/2015). The ELN has been active in Arauca, Norte de Santander, Narino and Cauca Departments (Kienyke, 2013). The Colombian army said they killed six ELN fighters in Catatumbo, Norte de Santander department following a number of recent attacks and kidnappings by the group (local media, 22/02/2015).

**Government forces:** The Government of Colombia’s strategies to combat non-state armed groups have been closely linked to eliminating the cultivation of illicit crops in the country, which finance the armed groups.

**BACRIM and post-demobilised armed groups:** Criminal gangs (bandas criminales) under the names Black Eagles, Erpac, and Rastrojos, among others, are generally made up of former paramilitary fighters and another former armed group, the United Armed Forces of Colombia (AUC). They are involved in drug-trafficking and extortion throughout the country as well as in Venezuela and Panama, but are particularly active in Antioquia department as well as the Pacific and Caribbean regions (BBC 29/08/2013).

### Conflict Developments

During the fourth quarter of 2014, Antioquia, Cauca, Arauca, Meta, and Norte de Santander departments were the most affected by armed activity (OCHA, 07/01/2015).

Since FARC-EP’s unilateral ceasefire in mid-December, the number of violent incidents related to the armed conflict has dropped to levels not seen since the 1980s (Missionary International Service News Agency, 12/01/2015). FARC-EP claimed at the end of January that 20 of its fighters had been killed by the military since FARC-EP’s ceasefire (AFP, 27/01/2015). On 7 February, the FARC-EP stated that it would be ready to give up its arms and become a political party if the Colombian Government meets its side of recent agreements, which include a bilateral ceasefire, the suspension of investments in mining projects, and the reform of armed forces and state security (El Espectador, 07/02/2015).

An attack against the police in Bogotá resulted in eight injured and is thought to have been carried out by the ELN (local media, 12/03/2015). In February, the Colombian army said they killed six ELN fighters in Catatumbo, Norte de Santander department, following a number of attacks and kidnappings by the group (local media, 22/02/2015).

### Humanitarian Context and Needs

4.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in Colombia, including 1.5 million affected by natural disasters and 262,000 in trapped communities, primarily in Chocó department and made up mostly of indigenous communities and Afro-Colombians (OCHA 2014; 20/01/2015).

**Access**

**Trapped Communities**

Approximately 262,000 people are trapped and need assistance due to ongoing conflict where they live (OCHA 20/01/2015). In Chocó, an estimated 6,500 people are trapped. The situation is critical for 2,000 (OCHA, 31/01/2015). Since end February, movement has been restricted and humanitarian assistance blocked for 1,200 members of indigenous and farming communities in Caceres, Antioquia department, due to fear of potential clashes between ELN and a ‘demobilised’ armed group (OCHA, 11/03/2015). A community of 912 Eperera Siapidara, an indigenous people, are confined to a rural zone in Timbiquí, Cauca department due to security threats – cancelling all classes and putting a stop to daily activities (OCHA, 19/03/2015).

Almost 25,000 people suffered movement restrictions in January and February 2015 due to armed violence (OCHA, 28/02/2015).

#### Disasters

**Drought**

In January and February 2015, the prolonged drought, primarily in the Caribbean coast, affected 86,500 people. It limited access to water, affected food security, health services, and education because classes were cancelled (OCHA, 28/02/2015). Six forest fires have been reported in the department of Antioquia (Ituango, Anzà, Urrao, Caicedo, Itaguí and Medellín municipalities). 24 of the southwestern municipalities are on red alert (PAHO, 13/03/2015).

In Chocó department, 200 drought-affected areas lack proper access to water, food security, and are reporting health issues (OCHA, 15/01/2015). Almost 800,000 people have been affected by drought in Colombia since January 2014 (OCHA, 24/02/2015), including approximately 566,300 people affected in the north (OCHA, 22/08/2014).

**Six forest fires were reported in Ituango, Anzà, Urrao, Caicedo, Itaguí and Medellín municipalities of Antioquia department. 24 of the department’s southwestern municipalities remain on red alert** (PAHO, 13/03/2015).

**Floods**

11,200 Afro-Colombians and indigenous people have been affected by flooding and landslides due to heavy rains in Quibdo, Bojaya, and Alto Baudó (Chocó department) (OCHA, 03/02/2015). 600 people are affected in Circasia and Cordoba municipalities, Quindio department (local media, 10/02/2015).

Heavy rains affected 1,200 people and killed one in the departments of Tolima, Valle del Cauca, and Caldas on 22 March, marking the beginning of the rainy season. Many houses were destroyed and the Cañaveral River in Valle del Cauca department overflowed (RedHum, 23/03/2015).
Earthquake

On 10 March, a 6.6 magnitude earthquake at a depth of 147km occurred in Santander department in the north. 200 households were affected as well as some roads and buildings (ECHO, 11/03/2015; Government, 11/03/2015).

Displacement

IDPs

Colombia has 5.7 million IDPs (IDMC, 10/2014). In 2014, there were 97,450 new IDPs (OCHA, 20/01/2015), compared to 228,526 in 2013 (Reuters, 25/02/2015). 39% of the IDP caseload between 2012 and June 2014 was concentrated in the Pacific region. In 2014, new displacement was primarily concentrated in Cauca and Chocó (OCHA, 07/01/2015). 655 people were displaced at end February from rural communities in Bajo Baudó, Chocó department due to clashes between the ELN and a post-demobilised armed group. More than 1,000 others are trapped and at risk of displacement. Access to the region is difficult, and populations have limited access to food, water, education, and health services (OCHA, 04/03/2015).

Returnees

2,000 IDPs have returned to Meta department (Government, 26/02/2015).

206 Embera Katio, an indigenous people, will return to Pueblo Rico municipality in Antioquia department (Government, 19/03/2015).

Colombian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries

400,000 Colombians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. 900–1,000 are arriving in Ecuador every month; the rate has dropped by 30% since 2012 (Nuevo Municipio, 26/11/2014).

Food Security

1.2 million people are food insecure, due to in part to low food production, poverty and internal displacement from conflict (OCHA, 20/01/2015; USAID). Indigenous communities in Nariño are among the most affected. 223,000 people affected by conflict are food insecure, with 557,000 requiring support to receive food assistance (OCHA, 20/01/2015).

Health and Nutrition

Only 30% of victims of the armed conflict have access to healthcare (OCHA, 20/01/2015).

Dengue

In 2014 there were 88 deaths related to dengue, of 108,290 cases (REC, 15/01/2015).

Chikungunya

213,000 people are currently infected with chikungunya, which started in September 2014, including 90,000 who are predicted to suffer from long-term arthritis as a side-effect of the disease (local media, 19/03/2015; 12/03/2015). The Caribbean region is the most affected (local media, 19/03/2015).

Nutrition

From January to November 2014, 240 children under the age of five died due to malnutrition (RCN, 25/11/2014).

WASH

1.1 million people are in need of WASH (OCHA, 20/01/2015). Only 35.5% of the population consumes safe drinking water, with only 15% of rural areas consuming treated water (OCHA, 20/01/2015).

Flooding in Quibdo, Bojaya, and Alto Baudó (Choco department), has caused river sedimentation, cutting off access to water (OCHA, 03/02/2015). In Santa Marta, the water plant is operating at 50% capacity due to a shortage of water in the Piedras, Manzanares and Gaira rivers (local media, 02/03/2015).

Shelter and NFIs

916,000 people need shelter (OCHA, 20/01/2015). Many of those displaced by armed conflict come from rural areas and have difficulty in re-obtaining rights to their homes upon their return. A legal process is in place in the departments of Atlantico and Magdalena in northern Colombia, though some claimants have received threats from paramilitary groups (Amnesty, 23/01/2015).

Education

One million school-aged children are in need of education; 70% in rural regions and 30% in urban areas (OCHA, 20/01/2015; Enseña por Colombia, 2015). More than 3,000 children living in institutions do not have access to school kits or feeding programmes (OCHA, 20/01/2015).

Protection

Afro-Colombians and indigenous peoples are highly vulnerable groups, as they are minorities and generally live in areas more likely to be trapped by conflict (NRC, 09/2014).

In 2014, there were 626 registered attacks against human rights defenders, a 147% increase compared to 2013. 73% of attacks were carried out by post-demobilised armed groups. Many local NGOs are concerned that successful peace negotiations may not result in a decrease in such attacks (OCHA, 28/02/2015).

Child Protection

Reports show that since peace negotiations began in 2012, 76% of children fighting with the FARC-EP and 18% with the ELN have been reintegrated into society (UNICEF, 2014).
Gender and Gender-based Violence

52% of displaced women have suffered some type of sexual violence after displacement, according to a study by OHCHR. Women in the Pacific region are particularly affected (NRC, 09/2014).

Mines and ERW

In the municipality of San Miguel, Putumayo department, pamphlets distributed by the FARC-EP warn citizens of antipersonnel mines; 1,284 people are unable to fish, hunt, or work regular hours (OCHA, 16/01/2015).

Updated: 25/03/2015

BOLIVIA DROUGHT, FLOODS, FOOD INSECURITY

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

No significant developments this week, 24/03/2015. Last update 18/03/2015.

KEY CONCERNS

- 146,300 people affected by heavy rains (OCHA, 23/03/2015).
- Around 130,000 affected by drought (Government, Media, 10/12/2014).
- A series of natural disasters has affected Bolivia since the beginning of the rainy season in October 2013 and has had a severe impact on livelihoods and food security.

Humanitarian Context and Needs

Disasters

Drought

Around 130,000 people have been affected by drought, including an estimated 20,000 farmers (Government, 05/01/2015).

Estimates indicate that close to 63,000 hectares of crops, including rice, maize, and cassava, have been negatively impacted. Another 120,000 hectares of soy have been lost in Cuatro Canadas and Pallon, Santa Cruz (local media, 22/02/2015). It is estimated that approximately 20,000 farmers in 20 municipalities in Cochabamba are affected (Government, 05/01/2015).

Heavy Rainfall and Floods

Since October 2014, heavy rains have affected 146,300 people in 97 municipalities of La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, Santa Cruz, Potosi, Chuquisaca, Tarija, Pando, and Beni departments. 30 people have died (OCHA, 23/03/2015; 16/03/2015; 09/03/2015). 19,000 hectares of crops have been affected (UN, 05/03/2015; RedHum, 10/03/2015). Chuquisaca is worst hit, with 30,100 people affected in 13 districts (Government, 23/01/2015). In Pando department, the Acre River overflowed, affecting 2,400 people (OCHA, 23/02/2015). Access to Ixiamas and San Buenaventura, La Paz department, is limited due to floods (local media, 06/02/2015). The overflow of the Ibare River in Beni department flooded Puerto Varador and forced families to find alternative shelter (Government, 05/03/2015). On 5 March, 19 people were evacuated due to the overflow of Tahuamanu River in Pando department (Government, 05/03/2015).

The floods in Bolivia's Amazon valleys, lowlands, and plains during the October 2013–March 2014 rains were the worst in 60 years, affecting an estimated 325,000 people (OCHA 06/2014; ACT Alliance, 24/09/2014). In September, 146 of 339 communities were still affected (Government).

Landslides

258 people were evacuated from the centre of Huanuni, Oruro department following a landslide on 14 February (Government, 15/02/2015).

Cold Wave

Cold waves have affected 2,200 people in three municipalities of Oruro department (local media, 27/02/2015).

Access

Two bridges were destroyed in Quiabaya and Warisata communities, La Paz department, due to heavy rains, limiting access to approximately 8,600 people (Government, 24/02/2015). On 27 February, a bridge connecting Cochabamba to Santa Cruz was destroyed. Reconstruction of this bridge will take six months, and metal bridges will be set up in the meantime (Government, 05/03/2015). In Beni department, the route between Siles and Paraíso is blocked, as is the road from Porvenir to Chive in Pando department (local media, 28/02/2015; The Telegraph, 28/02/2015). In Chuquisaca department, heavy rains and landslides have damaged numerous roads in the Heredia stretch of San Juan del Pirai (Government, 09/03/2015). Three stretches of highway are also closed in La Paz, Beni and Tarija departments (local media, 17/03/2015). It includes the stretch between Tarija and Villa Montes in La Paz department (local media, 17/03/2015).

Food Security

Despite losses in the department of Beni, harvest prospects for 2014’s verano season (November to March) are favourable, since the main cereal-producing departments of Santa Cruz, La Paz, and Cochabamba were less severely affected by drought, and the abundant rains may have benefited the developing crops in some places (OCHA, 26/01/2015; 09/02/2015; 23/02/2015). In Azurduy municipality, Chuquisaca department, more than 2,000 families have missed the planting season due to heavy rains and (local media, 02/02/2015).

Health and Nutrition
There are 147 reported cases of chikungunya in Santa Cruz department (Redhum, 15/03/2015).

Between January and February 2015, 25 cases of dengue were reported in Beni department and 206 suspected cases exist (Government, 24/02/2015).

WASH

Water is still cut off in municipalities affected by the rains (UN, 05/03/2015). Shelters do not have proper waste collection and the number of functioning latrines is limited (UN, 05/03/2015).

Updated: 24/03/2015
Introduction to the Global Emergency Overview Update

The Global Emergency Overview is a weekly update that provides a snapshot of current humanitarian priorities and recent events. The Global Emergency Overview collates information from a wide range of sources, including Reliefweb and media sources, and displays this information in a manner that allows for quick comparison of different humanitarian crises. The primary objective of the Global Emergency Overview is to rapidly inform humanitarian decision makers by presenting a summary of major humanitarian crises, both recent and protracted. It is designed to provide answers to four questions:

1. Which humanitarian crises currently exist? (World map)
2. What has happened in the last seven days? (Highlights and Snapshot)
3. What is the situation in the country affected by a crisis? (Highlights Box and Narrative)
4. Which countries could be prioritised in terms of humanitarian response? (Prioritisation)

The Global Emergency Overview consists of three main sections:

First, the world map provides an overview of how the countries are prioritised, indicated by different shades of blue. The countries are subdivided by four priority levels: “on watch”, “situation of concern”, “humanitarian crisis”, and “severe humanitarian crisis”.

The priority levels are assigned on the basis of:

- the number of people affected by recent disasters
- the level of access to the affected population
- the <5 mortality rate
- the level of development of the country
- the number of protracted IDPs and refugees.

If a country experienced a disaster in the seven days prior to an update or witnessed an escalation of an ongoing crisis, a country is highlighted by a yellow dot on the map.

Second, the snapshot briefly describes what has happened in the last seven days from the date of publication, by outlining the crises that have occurred in the different highlighted countries.

Third, narratives for each country included in the Global Emergency Overview reflect major developments and underlying vulnerabilities of a country over the last months. Narratives are written based on secondary data. For each country, a specific highlights box is also added to put emphasis on the major developments that happened over the past 10 days.

The Global Emergency Overview is a mobile application.

To download the mobile application for Android phones click here.


To download the mobile application for iOS phones click here.


Update

The Global Emergency Overview will be updated once a week and the results will be available every Tuesday before midday (Central European Time/Central European Summer Time). In case of major new humanitarian events or an escalation of an ongoing crisis which triggers a change of prioritisation, the Global Overview will be updated on an ad-hoc basis.

Disclaimer

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