

Update on Emergency Response Operations in South Sudan

Week Ending 24 November 2012

Highlights

- **UNHCR Concerns over Armed Elements in Maban Camps**
- **UN Refugee High Commissioner Guterres visits South Sudan**
- **Biometric Registration begins in Yida**

Upper Nile State

UNHCR Concerns over Armed Personnel in Maban Camps

UNHCR is alarmed about the increasing presence of armed personnel observed in the refugee camps of Maban County over the past two weeks.

The presence of armed persons among refugees undermines the civilian character of asylum and endangers the safety of refugees and humanitarian workers. UNHCR and partners continue to monitor the situation closely.

Registration staff have been specially trained to detect armed elements. All new arrivals are being screened and any person suspected to be a combatant is referred to the Protection Unit for further scrutiny. In several cases, new arrivals have been denied registration.

The agency works with the local police and military authorities in Maban County as well as on national and international levels regarding the removal of non-civilians from the camps.

In support of law enforcement, UNHCR has offered support for the establishment of police posts in all four camps and is training police officers on the basics of refugee law particularly on the exclusion of combatants and non-interference by armed forces.

In all refugee situations, UNHCR encourages the screening and disarmament of armed personnel and combatants at a distance from the camps to avoid interference with humanitarian settings.

Securing the civilian character of camps in Maban is critical as humanitarian agencies in South Sudan are anticipating a new influx of refugees with the onset of the dry season.

Unity State

UN Refugee High Commissioner Guterres visits South Sudan

UN High Commissioner Antonio Guterres conducted a three-day visit to South Sudan from 21-23 November 2012 to bring attention and support for more than 176,000 refugees from neighbouring Sudan.

On Thursday, Mr. Guterres visited Yida refugee settlement in Unity State, only a few kilometres from the conflict zone and from a disputed border. For several months of the year the camp is not accessible by road due to seasonal rains and humanitarian organisations depend entirely on airlifts to bring in supplies.

The High Commissioner expressed grave concern about the welfare of more than 60,000 refugees, 80 per cent of whom are women and children.

UNHCR would like to relocate the inhabitants to sites that are at a safer distance from the border. However, refugees are reluctant to leave this area as they prefer to be close to home and to the familiar highland environment of their native region.

In extensive meetings with the refugee representatives and the people in the camp the High Commissioner urged refugees to move.

“This is the most threatening situation I have ever seen in a refugee camp,” he said, “not only because it is close to a war zone but also because of access - everything has to be brought in by plane.”

In Juba, Mr. Guterres held meetings with President Salva Kiir Mayardit, the Minister of the Interior, General Alison Manani Magaya, the Chairperson of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Peter Lam Both as well as the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, Joseph Lual Achuil who had also accompanied him to Yida.



UNHCR High Commissioner Antonio Guterres speaks with unaccompanied girls at the registration center in Yida. UNHCR/K.Mahoney

Biometric Registration begins in Yida

UNHCR launched biometric registration in Yida settlement on Thursday, November 22, a landmark event that coincided with the visit of the UN High Commissioner, Antonio Guterres.

Since 22 November, the registration team has verified a total of 4,351 refugees. The process will continue for approximately one month in order to cover the entire population of more than 60,000 refugees.

So far, 390 individuals have been inactivated due to fraudulence. However, UNHCR has also seen the arrival of 697 new refugees during the same period.

Biometric registration will provide UNHCR and all humanitarian partners on the ground an accurate baseline population which is critical for 2013 planning. As more refugees continue to arrive, updated data will help organizations to pre-position enough food and relief items for a growing population.

Statistics

Upper Nile State: 111,102		Unity State: 67,905	
Yusuf Batil	37,199	Nyeel	827
Doro	43,826;	Pariang	763
Jamam	15,439	Yida	66,315
Gendrassa	14,638		

Partners:

ACROSS; ACTED; CARE; Danish Refugee Council (DRC); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); GOAL; GIZ; IBIS; International Rescue Committee (IRC); International Organization for Migration (IOM); INTERSOS; MEDAIR; MSF-Belgium; MSF-France; Non-Violence Peace Force (NVPF); Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); OXFAM; Relief International; Samaritan's Purse; Save the Children Fund; UNICEF; World Food Programme (WFP); World Health Organization (WHO); World Relief; World Vision International.