



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

Update on Emergency Response Operations in South Sudan

Week Ending 3 March 2013

Highlights

- **Biometric verification and registration preparations get underway in Maban**
- **UNHCR and government partners working to ease tensions between Nuban and host communities**
- **UNHCR responds to house fires in Yida**
- **UNHCR conducts community watch training**

Upper Nile State

Biometric verification and registration preparations get underway in Maban

UNHCR is planning to conduct biometric registration and verification in all four camps in Maban County, beginning in Jamam on 13 March and concluding in Yusuf Batil refugee camp on 3 May.

The biometric verification and registration exercise will enable UNHCR and the Government of South Sudan to determine exactly how many refugees from Sudan's Blue Nile State are in need of protection and assistance. The exercise will also help to prevent any fraud or abuse of the system.

"We are confident that with biometric verification, fraud will be reduced drastically," says UNHCR Registration Officer, Dieudonne Binene Kabagambe. "The data capturing technology enables us to do this with as much accuracy as possible."

Registration is a tool that captures all the relevant data of a person of concern to UNHCR. It is one of the most fundamental protection tools at the agency's disposal. While an individual's information will usually remain unaltered some personal data will need to be regularly updated, for example, after marriage, child birth, or death.

"There are many methods of verifying refugees which are not totally fool proof, however the biometric verification method is the most secure and convenient authentication tool at present," says Binene Kabagambe. "A biometrically verified individual's finger print cannot be borrowed, stolen or forgotten and forging one is practically impossible."

The purpose of the biometric verification and registration exercise has been communicated to refugees through an information campaign targeting community leaders. Refugees' opinions and points of view were sought, considered and, where appropriate, incorporated in the methodology of the verification exercise.

Unity State

UNHCR and government partners working to ease tensions between Nuban and host communities

Following recent cattle raiding incidents in the vicinity of Yida, the Government of South Sudan, UNHCR and humanitarian partners are working closely together to resolve conflicts and ensure peaceful coexistence between the host and refugee communities in and around South Sudan's largest refugee settlement.

On the morning of 1 March 2013, a reported incident of cattle raiding involving small arms fire took place in the vicinity of Battoj, a small village located approximately 10 kilometers to the northeast of Yida. Members of the host community and Nuban cattle keepers were involved in the conflict and an investigation is ongoing to identify the individuals.

As the refugee population continues to grow, UNHCR and the host government are working to ensure equitable access to natural resources which can often be a point of contention. Issues such as water scarcity, lack of suitable grazing land, and

allegations of cattle raiding have been reported in various areas of Pariang County now that the dry season is in full effect.

The Government immediately responded by deploying national police and the army to secure the area and conduct investigations. The Pariang Commissioner, Majok Gatdek, also arrived in Yida on 2 March to resolve the conflict with representatives of the two communities.

As of 2 March 2013, no casualties had been reported, however a small number of individuals sought medical treatment for injuries.

UNHCR responds to house fires in Yida

Some 225 refugees in Yida were supported by UNHCR this week as a series of fires burned more than 50 houses. Community services staff responded quickly by identifying the families and providing them emergency food rations and relief items such as plastic sheets, blankets and sleeping mats.

This is the peak of the dry season and windy conditions can cause small cooking fires to quickly spread. UNHCR’s protection partner, Non-violent Peace Force, plans to conduct a workshop with refugee chiefs to identify solutions to prevent and respond to the increasing number of fires in Yida.

UNHCR conducts community watch training

Some 70 members of Yida’s community watch in Yida participated in a two-day training on human rights organized by UNHCR and partners including IRC, Non-Violent Peace Force and UNMISS. The training sought to clarify the role and responsibility of the community watch in a refugee context and provide a better understanding of rights and obligations of refugees. The refugee participants were willing to improve cooperation with UNHCR, NGOs and particularly local authorities. UNHCR will continue to build their capacity to empower the community watch to protect their people and promote safety and security in Yida.

Statistics

Upper Nile State: 114,084		Unity State: 70,705	
Yusuf Batil	37,558	Nyeel	913
Doro	45,186	Pariang	795
Jamam	16,071	Yida	68,997
Gendrassa	15,269		

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; 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.