

Uganda Flash Update

South Sudanese Influx

6 January 2014

For internal and external use

Highlights

- A total of **23,546 South Sudanese refugees** have arrived in Uganda since 16 December and refugees continue to stream in. There are also reports that many more people are hiding near the border and trying to make their way across unhindered.
- This includes **16,264 individuals received at Dzaipi transit centre/primary school** in Adjumani District and **5,552 individuals received at Ocea reception centre** as well as **1,730 individuals** who have arrived directly at **Kiryandongo refugee settlement**.
- **The situation at Elegu / Nimule border and the Dzaipi transit centre remain worrisome given the particularly large number of arrivals.** Though an emergency response is underway and some assistance is available, there is a critical lack of adequate shelter, water and sanitation facilities, and medical supplies at the overcrowded premises. UNHCR and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the few partners on the ground have been overwhelmed by the number of arrivals and are struggling to deal with the situation. Replenishment of non-food items has been requested and WFP has prepositioned 82 MT of food. Given the massive influx all basic needs require an immediate response.
- An **interagency assessment mission arrived in the area on 5 January.** Additional collection points and reception centres are being identified and the local Government has stated that land is available to settle 100,000 people though this has to be confirmed with local communities.



Recent arrivals from South Sudan sleep outside Dzaipi reception centre in Adjumani District - before the onslaught of refugees in the last days. ©UNHCR/C.Mavenjina

Major Developments

The huge influx of South Sudanese refugees in the last several days has created a dire situation as UNHCR/OPM and other humanitarian actors in the area scramble to meet even the basic needs of the new arrivals. Water and sanitation facilities have been overwhelmed and the capacity to provide timely and adequate assistance has been fully overstretched.

Refugees have been arriving mainly through several border points including Elegu, Oraba, Koboko and Ngomoromo. Of the 23,552 new arrivals, 16,264 individuals are staying at Dzaipi transit centre (TC) and the nearby primary school in Adjumani District, and 5,552 individuals are staying at Ocea reception centre in Arua District. In addition, 1,730 South Sudanese have made their way directly to Kiryandongo refugee settlement located in the mid-northwest in Kiryandongo District.

At the main border crossings, UNHCR/OPM have established collection points where refugees are being picked up and transported to Dzaipi TC or Ocea RC. Some 4,000 individuals were relocated from the border to reception/transit centres today though several thousand refugees remained at the border awaiting transportation. Some refugees have also been arriving at the centres by their own means.

Dzaipi TC is supposed to accommodate roughly 400 persons and though refugees are also staying at the nearby primary school, both Adjumani sites are extremely congested and overwhelmed by the needs. Ocea reception centre is located within Rhino Camp settlement and accommodates some 400 persons but it already has more than 5,500 individuals staying there. Hence, the centres are facing severe challenges in providing water and sanitation and basic services.

Some 2,000 refugees were relocated to settlements today where they are to be registered in the biometric database, allocated land plots and access more comprehensive assistance including primary health care, education and other services.

The 23,546 South Sudanese refugees that have arrived since 16 December are in addition to the more than 8,000 South Sudanese new arrivals that have been registered since January 2012, and the some 15,000 South Sudanese refugees that were already in Uganda before that date.

Daily coordination meetings are taking place in the field with humanitarian partners including OPM/UNHCR, Action Africa Help - International, District Local Governments of Arua, Adjumani, and Koboko, the Danish Refugee Council and the World Food Programme. Other partners will be on board shortly. An OPM/UNHCR and partners coordination meeting was held on Thursday, 2 January 2014 in Kampala, and followed up by an interagency assessment mission. Given the rapid and alarming developments emergency partner meeting will be called by OPM/UNHCR.

Congolese influx at the midwest border area

In addition to the dramatic situation in the north of Uganda, after attacks of 25 December in the Kamango and Kikingi areas of eastern DRC attributed to the rebel group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and subsequent fighting involving the Congolese army and UN intervention brigade, some 8,000 Congolese have sought refuge in the Bundibugyo area. Most of the refugees are staying in the community while some 2,600 are registered at Bubukwanga transit centre (TC) in Bundibugyo District. The TC was opened in mid-July to accommodate the initial influx from similar fighting in and around Kamango that began on 11 July 2013. As well, there are some 2,200 Congolese at Nyakabande TC in the southwest and some 3,000 recently arrived Congolese in the Koboko area in the northwest.

Overall statistics

At the end of October 2013, Uganda was hosting 250,392 registered refugees and asylum seekers, the large majority of whom originate from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This does not include unregistered asylum seekers/refugees staying at transit centres and the current influx of South Sudanese in the north.