

South Sudanese Refugee Situation

Democratic Republic of the Congo

17 - 23 July 2017

As of 23rd July 2017, **81,873 South Sudanese refugees** were **registered** or pre-registered in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

During the reporting week, **575 South Sudanese refugees were biometrically registered** in the DRC, most of them at the Meri site (Haut- Uélé province).

UNHCR social partner ADSSE and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) supported the refugees and local population in Meri with agricultural activities to promote self-reliance.

KEY INDICATORS

81,873

South Sudanese refugees **registered and pre-registered** as of 23rd July 2017

53%

Percentage of the refugees are women and girls

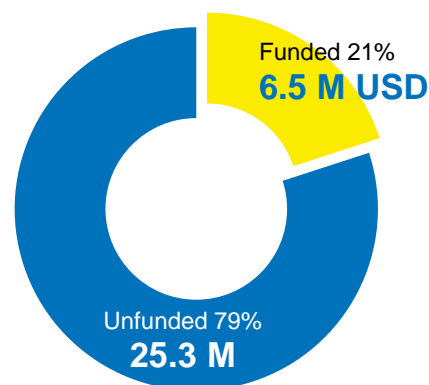
26,917

South Sudanese refugees living in refugee sites of Meri and Biringi

FUNDING (AS OF 03 JULY 2017)

USD 31.8 M

requested for the DRC - South Sudanese refugee situation



Update on Achievements

Operational Context

- From 16th to 18th July, UNHCR conducted a monitoring protection mission to the border areas of Arile, Idhibu, Karagba, Ulendere, Matale and Azu-Bazwe (Aru territory, Ituri province) where a large number of South Sudanese refugees reside. UNHCR had previously been alerted by its partners about a possible increase in refugee movements in this area. The security situation on the South Sudanese side of the border remained volatile. A strengthened presence of the South Sudanese Armed Forces (SPLA) was reported in Yei and Morobo (South Sudan) and assaults committed by the SPLA in Morobo caused new sporadic movements across the border to Arile, Idhibu and Azu-Bazwe (DRC) since 9th July. The number of these newly arrived refugees is estimated at 300. The assaults committed by the SPLA are presumed to cause further and larger movements, given the reinforced SPLA presence in the region.
- The security situation in the Aru territory (Ituri) remained relatively calm throughout the reporting period. UNHCR's monitoring protection mission observed that neither the Congolese military (FARDC) nor the police was present to ensure the safety of the numerous refugees between the locations of Arile and Ulendere. The area between Karagba and Idhibu was merely covered by two soldiers who were themselves allegedly involved in several protection incidents.
- Since mid-April 2017, alleged Lord Resistance Army (LRA) elements have multiplied their attacks in the Haut-Uélé province, posing a serious threat to the civilian population and rendering the access to the population of concern for humanitarian assistance extremely difficult. The weak presence of the FARDC in the area and the withdrawal of the American forces AFRICOM, which previously supported the FARDC, further facilitated the LRA's movements in the region.
- The security situation around the Meri site (Faradje territory, Haut-Uele province) remained also relatively calm. The belligerents on the South Sudanese side of the border, which is less than 20 km away from the site, reportedly reinforced their presence for confrontations.



Pregnant and lactating women, persons living with HIV/AIDS and malnourished children receive nutritional supplements at the Biringi site © ADES, July 2017



Twice a month, UNHCR's health partner administers routine vaccinations in Biringi. This week, 64 children were vaccinated © ADES, July 2017



Refugees are being informed about the advantages and modalities of relocating from the border of the Aru territory (Ituri) to the Biringi site © M. Barhonyi, July 2017

**PROTECTION****Achievements and Impact**

- **Non-refoulement:** UNHCR intervened with the Congolese armed forces after it had disclosed that members of the armed forces in Idhibu and Karagba (Aru territory, Ituri) demanded fees from fleeing South Sudanese and impeded them from entering into the DRC. UNHCR stressed the DRC's obligation to respect the principle of non-refoulement and to allow asylum seekers to cross the border vis-à-vis the armed forces.
- **New arrivals** – 575 South Sudanese refugees were biometrically registered during the reporting week; 97% at the Meri site (Haut-Uélé) and 3% at the Biringi site (Ituri). 51% of the newly registered refugees in Meri were women and girls, respectively 56% in Biringi. As of 23rd July 2017, the total refugee population in Meri amounted to 24,108, and 2,809 in Biringi.
- **Child protection** – One unaccompanied child was identified and placed in a host family in Dungu. In Meri, three separated children and one unaccompanied baby were identified; the latter was reunited with a family member at the site.
- **Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)** – The SGBV focal points in Meri and Biringi continued to sensitize the refugee and local population about the prevention and response to SGBV. In Meri, they reached 2,578 individuals and in Biringi 856. Four new cases of SGBV were reported in Meri and three in Biringi; all victims received medical and psycho-social support. Since January 2017, 62 SGBV cases were registered in Meri and 54 in Biringi; however, there is a significant grey area of unreported cases.
- **Assistance** – Some humanitarian organizations, such as MSF and Solidarité, provided WASH assistance in the health centers and communities in the border areas of the Aru territory.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Relocation:** UNHCR pursued to relocate the refugees residing in the border areas of the Aru territory to the Biringi site which is at a safer distance to the precarious border. UNHCR identified the following two obstacles to their relocation: (1) refugees who had received farm land from the local authorities wished to await the upcoming harvest before relocating; (2) language barriers of UNHCR's partners who inform the refugees about the option and modalities of relocation. UNHCR will soon undertake a verification of the refugees in the border area in order to clearly identify which of them may want to be relocated.
- **Security** – In Meri, 55 additional police officers are urgently required to ensure the refugees' safety. The Meri site, situated less than 20 km from the border, is highly

exposed to the increased insecurity in South Sudan. At the Biringi site, four additional police officers are needed.



EDUCATION

Achievements and Impact

- **Enrollment** – In Biringi, 79 parents of children at school age were sensitized about the importance of enrolling their children for the upcoming school year starting in September.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Classrooms** – The six classrooms for primary school in Meri cannot accommodate the 5,462 children of primary school age; 18 additional classrooms for primary school are urgently needed. There is currently no secondary education for the 3,177 youths of this age group in Meri. Moreover, it is impossible to continue the French language classes in Meri because the four hangars which served as classrooms were completely vandalized. The hangars need to be reconstructed and 55 desks, 56 chairs and three blackboard are needed.



HEALTH

Achievements and Impact

- **Vaccination** – Twice a month, vaccinations against tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, pneumonia, measles and polio are administered at the Biringi site. During the reporting week, 64 children were vaccinated.
- **HIV/AIDS** – One new case of a refugee living with HIV/AIDS was identified in Biringi. All 37 persons with HIV/AIDS in Biringi continued to receive antiretroviral treatment. This week, over 400 condoms were distributed at the Biringi site. One of the two campaigns on the prevention of HIV/AIDS planned in Biringi for 2017 had already taken place.
- **State of health** – The health status of the newly arrived refugees is often alarming. More than half of the refugees which underwent medical screening at the transit centre in Aru required medical treatment.
- **Medical care** – In Meri, 663 patients were consulted at the different health facilities and 46 patients were referred to the hospital. UNHCR's health partner followed up on 14 chronically ill patients (diabetes, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and hypertension) to ensure that they have the required medicines and take them as instructed. The Nyalanya health centre and the referral hospital received medical supplies from the health zone's central office. In Biringi, 434 patients were consulted; 85% at the medical post at the site and 15% at the referral hospital. 31 of these patients had to be

hospitalized, the rest was treated ambulatory. In addition, 10 pregnant women were received for prenatal consultations at Biringi's hospital.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Malaria** – Malaria remained the most prevalent disease identified among the patients in Biringi and Dungu (20%, respectively 29% of all diseases). Refugees hosted in hangars due to the lack of shelter and building material do not have access to mosquito nets, which highly increases the prevalence of malaria. In both Meri and Biringi, more than half of the refugees do not have a mosquito net; leaving a gap of 12,500 nets in Meri and 1,570 in Biringi.
- **Risk of epidemics** – Due to the important gaps in shelter, common infrastructures, water shower and latrines, the risk of epidemics, including but not limited to cholera, is extremely high in Meri.



FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Achievements and Impact

- **Food distribution** – 439 newly arrived refugees in Meri received 1,756 packs of biscuits. The monthly food distribution was underway in Bitima, Duru and Mogoroko during the reporting week; 661 refugees benefited from food distribution (661 in Bitima, 163 in Duru and 110 in Mogoroko).
- **Hot meals** – In Biringi, 1,117 hot meals were distributed to 76 persons, including those with specific needs, newly arrived refugees and hospitalized patients. In addition, 209 meals were distributed to the newly arrived refugees at the transit centre in Aru. In Meri, 2,165 hot meals were distributed to 852 refugees with specific needs and the newly arrived.
- **Cash grants** – The World Food Programme (WFP) distributed the monthly cash grants in Meri from 17th to 21st July. 23,383 people benefited from the grant; 46 people were absent. In Biringi, where the distribution took place on 15th July, UNHCR's social partners engaged in discussions with 47 refugees on the adequate use of the grants.
- **Nutritional screening** – In Biringi, 94 pregnant and lactating women and 36 persons living with HIV/AIDS received a nutritional supplement made of corn, soy and sugar. No new cases of malnutrition were identified during the screening in Biringi. Overall, 51 malnourished refugee children below the age of five were registered and received nutritional supplement in Biringi.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Nutrition** – Malnutrition remains a serious concern among the newly arrived refugees. In Meri, among 77 people screened, 26 malnourished children below the age of five (six severely and 20 moderately malnourished) and seven malnourished pregnant or lactating women (two severe cases) were identified. Overall, 482 cases of malnutrition were registered in Meri.

**WATER AND SANITATION****Achievements and Impact**

- **Water and sanitation** – 300 water purifying tablets were distributed in Biringi, the water tanks were cleaned and the hygiene and sanitation promoters conducted door-to-door campaigns on waste management. In Meri, 2,277 refugees were sensitized on food hygiene and on how to prevent waterborne diseases.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Water** – Water supply in Meri dropped further, with merely 12,8 liters available per person and day (36% below UNHCR's minimal standard of 20 liters). An additional 36 water points are required to complement the 23 existing ones.
Latrines – In Meri, 309 communal latrines and almost 7,000 family latrines are required to reach the minimal standard. Overall, 905 latrines were functional at the Meri site (167 community and 738 family latrines); an average of 27 refugees currently share one latrine. In Biringi, over 1,200 family latrines are needed. The 125 communal latrines in Biringi will soon reach their capacity limits due to their lively usage in the absence of sufficient family latrines.
- **Waste management** – The 189 available waste bins and four garbage pits have reached their limits. An additional 287 waste bins and 44 garbage pits are needed to ensure proper waste management and to prevent the spread of diseases.
- **Laundry facilities** – 59 communal washing areas are needed; none exist as today which poses a potential hazard for contamination of the drinking water.

**SHELTER AND NFIS****Achievements and Impact**

- **Shelter** – In Meri, 30 households received a partial construction kit consisting of straw and door panels to build their shelters.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Shelter** – 5,170 emergency shelters are urgently needed at the Meri site to accommodate 5,170 families who currently do not have a shelter or temporarily live with host families. Today, there are around 2,500 emergency and transitional shelters in Meri. Increased acts of vandalism at both the Meri and Biringi sites (demolition of hangars and theft of building material) reiterate the massive gap in shelter and building material.

- **Hangars** – In Meri, 20 hangars are urgently required for temporarily accommodating the newly arrived refugees, registration, distribution of food and relief material, medical and nutritional screenings and language courses. Today, 28 such hangars are in place.
- **Construction** – In Biringi, refugees with disabilities lack assistance to construct their shelter. UNHCR will address this issue with its partners to mobilize additional funds.
- **Clothing** – Additional clothing is needed for the 500 refugees with specific needs in Biringi.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Achievements and Impact

- **Harvest** – In the area of Doruma, Duru and Bitima (Dungu territory), 5.5 tons of peanuts were harvested on 5 ha; 12 ha remain to be harvested. In Biringi, 2,240 kg beans, 1,678 kg peanuts and 288 kg corn were harvested; five refugees received farm land.
- **Preparation of fields** – UNHCR and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) supported the refugees and local population in Meri with the preparation and sowing of their fields. In total, 2,000 people benefited from this support. In Biringi, 58 refugees were taught about sowing methods and 30 about preparing their fields.



LOGISTICS

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Road clearance** – 15 km of road access is needed at the Meri site to develop and access the neighbourhoods to be built.

Working in partnership

- UNHCR coordinates its assistance with a variety of humanitarian actors, working together to ensure refugee benefit from dignified and efficient protection mechanisms.
- For this operation, UNHCR's partners are: ADES, ADSSE, AIRD, CNR and INTERSOS. Other partners include FAO, WFP (with its partner TSF), MALTESER and TROCAIRE/CARITAS.

External / Donors Relations

Donors for SSD refugee response in DRC in 2017

United States of America (6.2 M) | Belgium (0.3 M)

Other donors for UNHCR operations in DRC in 2017

United States of America (22.2 M) | Japan (2.5 M) | Sweden (1.1 M) | DRC Humanitarian Fund (0.8 M) | Canada (0.7 M) | France (0.5 M) | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints (0.2 M) | U.N. Foundation (0.2 M) | Private Donors Spain (0.07 M) | Vodafone Foundation (0.05 M)

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LINKS

[Regional portal for SSD situation](#) - [DRC page for SSD situation](#) – [DRC Facebook page](#)