

10 February 2012

I. SITUATION OVERVIEW

The humanitarian situation in South Sudan has rapidly deteriorated in the past few weeks. The country, with minimal resources, weak institutional capacity and limited infrastructure, is experiencing new internal and external political and socio-economic shocks.

Potential macroeconomic shocks take place against a background of a projected cereal deficit of 470,000 mt, half of the national cereal requirement and 60% more than the last year's deficit. The recent Crop Food Security Assessment (CFSAM) released by the Food Security and Livelihood Cluster in South Sudan cited delayed and erratic rains, as well as political instability and conflict, as major factors leading to the current cereal deficit. It is estimated that as many as 4.7 million people could experience food insecurity in 2012, with an estimated 1 million people classified as severely food insecure. WFP is currently scaling up to reach an estimated 2.7 million people across the country, while contingency plans are already being put in place to scale-up further should worst case scenarios materialize.

In addition to these structural socio-economic concerns, South Sudan currently hosts more than 100,000 refugees, with more expected to arrive from the Republic of Sudan, as the humanitarian situation in Southern Korodofan and Blue Nile continues to deteriorate. During the past 15 months more than 360,000 people have returned from the Republic of Sudan. Furthermore, an additional 107,000 people have been registered in Sudan to date who have indicated that they do not possess the financial means to return to South Sudan. It is expected that hundreds of thousands more will return if the moratorium period for residency of South Sudanese is not extended beyond April 2012. Inter-communal violence is also on the rise, with the looming threat of renewed conflict in flash point areas, such as northern parts of Jonglei state. WFP in its capacity as the co-lead of the Food Security and Livelihood Cluster has started consultations with cluster partners to develop a coordinated response to the crisis and to monitor food security trends in the coming months.

The Republic of South Sudan derives 98 per cent of its budgetary revenue from oil exports. Lack of productive capacity in the non-oil sector and significant import requirements for essential commodities make the country highly vulnerable to exchange rate fluctuations and global food and fuel price inflation. Analysts expect inflation to rise in the months ahead with landlocked South Sudan having shut down its oil production to protest against seizures of its oil by Sudan. The expected pressure on the South Sudanese pound and related price inflation for essential commodities is expected to have additional impacts on the food security status of the population.

II. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

- **WFP is scaling up its logistics capacity to overcome critical food shortfalls.** In view of the recent closure of the border between the Republic of South Sudan and Sudan, the corridor which previously accounted for 90 per cent of food aid transport, WFP is making every effort to expedite the delivery of much needed food commodities through other locations. Given problems with trucking capacity at Mombasa port, WFP is now also transporting commodities via train to Uganda where trucks are more easily available. In addition, new corridors are being tested, with attempts to bring in food from Tanzania, as well as Djibouti via Ethiopia. Storage capacity has been enhanced in transshipment points and the first commodities are expected to reach South Sudan in the coming days.
- **In January, WFP has reached close to 120,000 people affected by recent inter-communal conflicts in Jonglei.** In addition, WFP has provided about 1,200 children under 3 with highly nutritious food through a blanket supplementary feeding programme in Pibor, the most affected county. Food assistance continues to be delivered to affected populations, as new areas become accessible, households returning from the bush are registered, and as food reaches isolated locations. WFP has taken a leading role in the response, opening

up new areas for other humanitarian actors to respond, providing airlift capacity through the Logistics Cluster, and coordinating with new partners to increase coverage in Jonglei through the Food Security and Livelihood Cluster.

- **During the month of January, over 20,000 refugees were relocated from Elfonj, on the border between Upper Nile in South Sudan and Blue Nile state in Sudan.** The bombing incident reported on Tuesday 24 January took place while this relocation was taking place. Two formal settlements have been established by UNHCR in Upper Nile state. Currently there are an estimated 34,000 refugees in Doro settlement. The population in Jamam has grown from some 4,000 at the end of 2011 to almost 32,000, with between 1,000 and 1,500 new arrivals from border areas every day.

II. WFP RESPONSE

South Sudan remains one of the most complex WFP operations in the world. Since the beginning of the current emergency operation, WFP has been faced with numerous challenges that have hindered our ability to execute plans to scale. The main challenges have been moving food in through the south of the country as a result of the Republic of Sudan-South Sudan border closure and continued funding shortfalls of USD 160 million.

Food Distributions:

- In January, WFP reached over 280,000 people out of a planned 380,000 people with much needed food assistance. Given the tight pipeline situation WFP experienced in January, those displaced by the inter-communal violence in Jonglei, displaced from Abyei and refugees from Blue Nile and Southern Korodofan were prioritized followed by other severely food-insecure people across South Sudan.
- Towards the end of January, WFP completed distributions for some 28,000 refugees from Blue Nile in Doro, while February distributions for 32,000 refugees in Jammam are on-going. As refugees continue to arrive in Maban, WFP is providing food assistance to all refugees which have been registered by UNHCR.
- WFP completed January distributions for more than 23,000 refugees in Yida. WFP trucks have already delivered food for February distributions.
- During the past week, about 55,500 people displaced from Abyei were reached with a 1-month food ration.

Assessments:

- The Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping experts have concluded their data collection for Pibor County to identify target populations and inform the continuation of assistance to beneficiaries affected by the Jonglei crisis. The analysis of the data is being conducted now to determine exact modalities and duration of assistance. Similar exercises are being conducted for other affected counties and figures will be finalized by next week.
- WFP and UNHCR teams will begin re-registration of refugees from Southern Korodofan residing in Yida next week.

Logistics:

- The operation currently depends on a tight month-to-month pipeline, which requires food to be immediately distributed or dispatched for prepositioning on arrival in country. Delays in movement of food through Mombasa, or significant shifts in the geographic distribution based on new conflicts and associated displacements will have immediate implications for planned monthly distributions to beneficiary caseloads.
- To minimize delays from and ease the pressure on the Mombasa corridor, WFP is deploying logistics experts to South Sudan and neighbouring countries to expedite the movement of commodities.

Cluster Activities:

Logistics Cluster

- WFP, as the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, is augmenting the activities of the Logistics Cluster in South Sudan in order to ensure sufficient logistics capacity for the expected scale up of humanitarian operations in the country is available. Plans are quickly being put in place to secure additional trucking, airlift and common storage capacity for the humanitarian community.

Food Security and Livelihood Cluster

- The Food Security and Livelihood Cluster has strengthened the sub-working group on emergency food assistance that will be the core planning forum for partners to prepare for a coordinated and coherent response strategy to the potential food insecurity situation facing the country. The coordination and technical capacity of the cluster has also been augmented by enlisting an information management focal point. Vulnerability mapping experts in the cluster are also consulting with partners and analysing the geography and the magnitude of the required future response.

Emergency Telecommunication Cluster

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster has set up Internet Cafés in Maban, Bentiu and Pibor. The three sites will provide humanitarian organizations with access to Internet Connectivity and Voice Telephony services in an effort to support efficient coordination of their operations in South Sudan. The Emergency Telecommunication cluster is also planning to install a similar system in Renk, which remains a major transit point for returnees. These comprehensive information technology solutions consist of the emergency.lu system provided by the Government of Luxembourg and WIDER from Ericsson. More information is available on the ICT Humanitarian Emergency Platform: <http://ictemergency.wfp.org>

IV. RESOURCING AND PIPELINE

- In general, due to the congestion in the ports and main transport corridors into South Sudan, WFP is operating on the basis of a very fragile and tight month-to-month pipeline. Food arriving in-country needs to be immediately distributed to beneficiaries on arrival, while commodities must also be dispatched to fulfil prepositioning requirements in remote rural areas. WFP has extended all efforts to ensure the viability of this fragile pipeline through the use of mechanisms such as:
 - Prioritizing food worth over 57 million USD purchased through WFP's regional Forward Purchasing Facility;
 - Securing internal financial loans worth 53 million USD;
 - Temporary borrowing from WFP stocks in the region and globally.
- Over the past few days, WFP is taking concrete steps to ease the flow of the food pipeline to South Sudan through opening new corridors thereby reducing reliance on an already congested Mombasa Port; deploying additional staff to key border points; and advocating with the Government for elimination of unnecessary delays at customs clearance points; drawing upon 11 additional trucks from the Regional Logistics Intervention Fleet to increase in-country trucking capacity in two critical states. **As we overcome our logistical challenges, it is ever more important that we also immediately mobilise the funds to cover our current shortfall of US\$160 million, which, in turn will remain essential to pre-positioning 8 months of stock within the next 6-7 weeks for areas that will become inaccessible due to the rainy season.**