

Refugees in Upper Nile State

FACT SHEET



Background and operational context

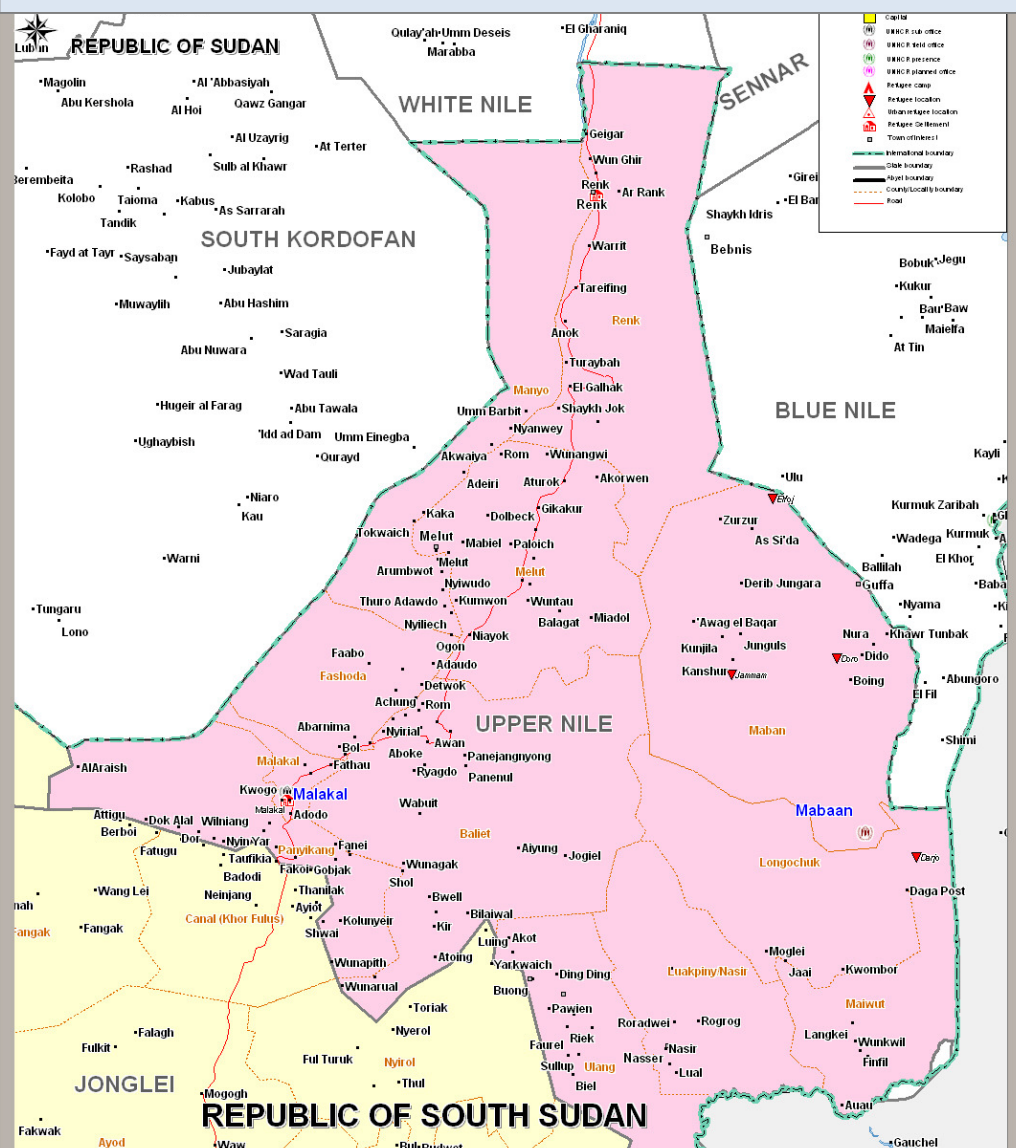
- In September 2011, fighting erupted between Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) in Blue Nile State, Sudan. Subsequently the president declared a state of emergency and named a military governor in place of the elected state governor.
- Large numbers of civilians fled east across the border into Ethiopia and west into South Sudan, and continue to do so.
- In South Sudan, the refugees settled in Maban county, Upper Nile state. From the onset of the emergency, local authorities provided land for settlement and agriculture in Doro and Jammam.
- New arrivals are generally exhausted from long walks and lack of food and water *en route*.

Constraints

- Access to and within Upper Nile is severely curtailed during the rainy season as roads become impassable. Last December, UNHCR mounted an airlift operation to complement available stocks, as arrival rate of refugees outpaced capacity to deliver non-food items.
- From the outset, existing water sources did not yield adequate supplies to meet the needs of refugees. The situation was compounded by a lack of rigs capable of drilling to depths necessary to access the water table.
- While, the situation has thus far remained relatively stable, the spread of insecurity in border areas could hinder humanitarian access.

Statistics

| Location | Population |
|--------------|---------------|
| Doro | 52,000 |
| Jammam | 37,000 |
| Border areas | 3,000 |
| TOTAL | 92,000 |



UNHCR's role

- Co-ordinate responses to the refugees' needs with South Sudan authorities, UN and NGO partners through regular consultations at both point of delivery (Maban) and central (Juba) levels.
- **The principal protection priority is to relocate refugees from border areas for their safety and in order to maintain the civilian character of refugee settlements.** Relocation from border takes place regularly. Humanitarian actors comb border areas to locate refugees in consultation with local authorities, and move them away. Border areas have on occasion been the target of aerial bombing (eg. Elfoj last January).
- Protection monitoring, registration, child separation, identifying and addressing concerns of persons with specific needs (including prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence) are key priorities.
- Coordination with UNMISS/UNMAC regarding security including de-mining of settlement areas is on-going.
- Assuring provision of basic life-sustaining assistance to refugees, including protection, food, shelter, water -sanitation-hygiene, nutrition and health services.
- Livelihood activities are also being introduced in the form of cultivation, brick-making, etc.



New developments (April 2012)

- Upper Nile has the largest concentration of refugees in the country. The influx from Blue Nile state has remained steady over the past few months, with 38,000 new arrivals recorded since January 2012.
- Registration of new arrivals was from the outset conducted through family headcounts. In mid-April, UNHCR despatched a 60-person registration team to conduct Level 2 registration together with WFP and other partners. The process involves verification of individuals' identities and recording information which, crucially, informs the design of appropriate sectoral interventions and identifies persons with specific needs.
- The water supply situation in Upper Nile has posed serious challenges. In Jammam, despite extensive drilling, viable sources remained elusive. Partners are trucking and piping water from elsewhere and treating surface water during the rainy season. In Doro, drilling efforts have been more successful. Partners have secured 12 litres of water per person per day and aim to reach the standard of 15 to 20 litres per person per day shortly.

Operational responses

- All efforts are being deployed to bring larger rigs to the area and explore deeper water sources in Jammam. Until it is possible to provide more than the current 8.5 litres per person per day, agencies are identifying a suitable site for the relocation of some 15,000 refugees to reduce the pressure on water.
- UNHCR and other actors are working around the clock to secure critical road repairs to keep access open during the rainy season.

