

#### Background and Operational Context

- Conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) in Sudan's Blue Nile state in September 2011 led to the influx of refugees into South Sudan in November 2011.
- Since then over 118,900 refugees have sought protection and assistance from the Government of South Sudan, UNHCR and humanitarian agencies where they have been settled in four camps – Doro, Yusuf Batil, Gendrassa and Kaya - in Maban County, Upper Nile state.
- UNHCR conducts regular border monitoring to assess the situation of new arrivals from Blue Nile State. Living conditions in this and other areas of Blue Nile state are reported to have worsened with residents facing a shortage of food, water and access basic health care.

#### Protection

- UNHCR undertakes protection monitoring and registration of all refugees. Through humanitarian agencies UNHCR facilitates the identification and family reunion of separated and unaccompanied children, identifies and addresses concerns of persons with specific needs including prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence, which are key priorities.
- Maintaining the civilian character of all refugee camps remains a major challenge for UNHCR. UNHCR is liaising with local and state authorities to discourage the presence of armed elements in the camps and continues to sensitize the refugee community about maintaining their civilian character.
- Supporting the Government of South Sudan through capacity building training, by providing technical support to local authorities and law enforcement. UNHCR will also continue monitoring the protection situation in the camps to ensure that every effort is made to maintain the civilian character of camps.
- UNHCR conducted the biometric verification and registration exercise across all refugee camps in Maban County.
- Relations between the refugee and the host communities which were initially satisfactory as refugees were considered a potential resource for expanding the local economy have since deteriorated, primarily over the use of resources such as firewood, poles and grass for construction and competition for grazing land.
- Maban is a highly militarized border area and UNHCR constantly intervenes for the preservation of the civilian character of the camps to protect refugees against forced recruitment into SPLA-N.

- UNHCR continues to advocate for peaceful coexistence through dialogue between the host community and refugee leaders. In partnership with humanitarian agencies, a number of projects that will directly benefit the host communities, such as the construction of schools, health and livelihood initiatives, are underway.
- July 2013 saw the arrival of some 2,100 asylum seekers from South Kordofan who claimed aerial bombardment and encroaching hunger as reasons for flight. They were assisted with medical help, food and non-food items. UNHCR, partners and South Sudan's Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA) have begun relocating the refugees to Ajuan Tok, a refugee camp in Western Upper Nile State, formerly called Unity State.

#### Statistics: as of 31 August 2013

Location	Population
Doro	45,780
Yusuf Batil	38,457
Kaya	17,957
Gendrassa	16,737
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118,931</b>

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#### Education

- The 2012/2013 academic year saw an increase in enrolment (69.47%) and attendance in primary school across all camps. Facilities such as 85 semi-permanent classrooms are being built in Doro, Batil and Gendrassa including two permanent schools in the host communities of Batil and Jamam. Some 56 temporary structures are also being upgraded and increased. Refugee teachers are being trained to teach in English as the South Sudanese curriculum prescribes.
- To cater to the educational needs of 30,083 primary school children however, UNHCR requires over 500 classrooms, over 174,200 textbooks covering different subjects, over 10,000 desks as well as salaries and capacity building opportunities for over 600 teachers.
- Some cultural practices such as livestock rearing and minding young siblings affect the children's continuous attendance in school. Young girls face issues relating to early and or forced marriage. Similarly, girls monthly cycles also keep girls from attending schools. In a few cases, refugee communities withhold their children from attending school claiming fear of abduction to and from schools within the camp.

- UNHCR and partners ensure the provision of basic life-sustaining assistance to refugees, including protection, food, shelter, water-sanitation-hygiene, nutrition and health services.
- Income generating activities such as cultivation and the establishment of small business ventures such as cafes and hair dressing salons among others are also being introduced.

## Health

- Hepatitis E: Over 10,900 cases and 239 deaths from Hepatitis E have been reported across all refugee camps since the outbreak began in July 2012. In the week ending 04 August however, a total of 52 new cases and no deaths were registered across all camps. This is the lowest reported number of Hepatitis E cases in six weeks.
- Measures have been put in place to increase early case detection and promote best hygiene practice as a means to containing the outbreak at its earliest stages.
- Improvements have been made in the provision of safe drinking water, the decommissioning of full latrines, the construction of new latrines, environmental cleaning, water chlorination, the provision of soap, frequent cleaning of jerry cans and buckets and the identification of hepatitis E cases through community involvement and mobilization.
- UNHCR and health partners are addressing a recent increase in malaria despite widespread blanket mosquito net distribution across all camps which coincided with the commencement of seasonal rains. Stagnant water as breeding site for vector, lack of indoor residual spray, inadequate community awareness on the transmission of the disease and inadequate or inappropriate use of mosquito nets are contributory factors leading to the spread of the disease.

## Nutrition

- Current interventions to malnutrition include therapeutic and supplementary feeding and the referral of those with complications of acute watery diarrhoeal, respiratory tract infections and malaria to health facilities in Kaya, however severe cases are being referred to the health facility in Yusuf Batil camp. Children under five years of age and pregnant lactating women regardless of their nutrition stats participate in Blanket Supplementary Feeding targeting programmes.
- Results of Augusts MUAC screening indicate that the overall nutrition status of refugees in Maban is improving with the malnutrition rate being below the 15 percent emergency threshold with two out of four camps below 10 percent. In Kaya, the trend continues to decrease. This is consistent with the general reduction in numbers of programme beneficiaries and admission rates to nutrition facilities.

## WASH

- WASH indicators are within UNHCR standards across all camps, particularly that the operation has moved to the post emergency phase.
- Sanitation and hygiene remain a high priority due to the outbreak of Hepatitis E. New latrines continue to be constructed as others are decommissioned. Mass public health education interventions continue to encourage the regular use of these facilities including hand washing with soap and ash.
- One of UNHCR's challenges where WASH is concerned is the high cost implication for the operation and maintenance of all water systems. Together with WASH partners, UNHCR is looking for alternative solutions to moderate these costs on a long term basis.
- UNHCR chairs bi-weekly sector meetings to better coordinate work within the camps. The sectors then feed into a weekly general coordination meeting which is held with all humanitarian agencies providing assistance in refugee camps.

## Operational challenges, successes and preparedness

- One of the major challenge UNHCR faces is meeting its mandate to refugees is an extremely remote and under-developed location which has many logistical constraints. Climatic conditions greatly hinder the delivery of services throughout the year but particularly during the rainy season.
- Successes include implementing a life saving operation through establishing health facilities which provide proper medical treatment, increasing the number of boreholes and water distribution points in all camps to ensure access to safe drinking water, establishing and introducing the biometric registration of refugees, the relocation of refugees to safe locations and good access to assistance.
- UNHCR and partners are prepared for a possible influx of refugees at any time given continued active conflict in Sudan's Blue Nile state. A contingency plan is in place and UNHCR has pre-positioned non food items for up to 30,000 refugees.



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