

## **FLASH INFORMATION**

### **Jewi Refugee Camp inaugurated, as relocation from Nip Nip camp begins**

***\*UNHCR presents 3 vehicles to ARRA for security escort of relocation convoys, medical referrals, and monitoring of protection and assistance activities in Jewi camp***

After several months of searching for suitable plots of land for the establishment of refugee camps and the eventual relocation of about 50,000 flood-affected South Sudanese refugees, the Jewi Refugee Camp located about 18 kilometres from Gambella, the region's capital, was inaugurated on Sunday, 15 March.

The opening of the camp comes as a big relief to refugees and humanitarian workers as another rainy season begins in late April.



*From L to R: ARRA Deputy Director Ato Ayalew Aweke; UNHCR Director Valentin Tapsoba; Deputy Assistant Secretary Catherine Wiesner; President Gatluak Tuk Khot, and Deputy Chief of Mission Peter Vrooman*

The President of Gambella Regional State, His Excellency Ato Gatluak Tuk Khot; Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) Deputy Director Ato Ayalew Aweke; UNHCR outgoing Representative (incoming Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa), Mr. Valentin Tapsoba; Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy in Ethiopia, Peter Vrooman; and Deputy Assistant Secretary Catherine Wiesner of the Bureau of

Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM) in Washington inaugurated the new camp. The relocation of refugees from Leitchuor camp to the new site will begin first week in April.

The Deputy Assistant Secretary applauded the people of Ethiopia for hosting refugees and described them as “the number one donor for sharing your land, water resources and your communities with refugees. This camp in Jewi is the latest demonstration of your generosity,” she said.



*Director Valentin Tapsoba delivering a statement at the inauguration ceremony*



*Director Valentin Tapsoba, Head of Sub-Office Ms. Angele Djohossou and some UNHCR staff at the inauguration ceremony*

Director Tapsoba expressed deepest gratitude to the Government of Ethiopia for “its traditional hospitality and for maintaining an open door policy towards refugees”. The outgoing UNHCR Representative noted that the allocation of suitable site for the development of the Jewi camp is “a clear evidence of the commitment of the Government of Ethiopia to ensure an effective protection of refugees”.

In a meeting held with the President of Gambella together with Deputy Assistant Secretary Catherine Wiesner prior to the opening of Jewi camp, Director Tapsoba appealed for more suitable land as new arrivals continue to cross into the Gambella region from South Sudan.

### **Relocation from Nip Nip camp begins**



*A convoy of relocating refugees passing through Gambella*

In another development, UNHCR on 16 March commenced the relocation of refugees from Nip Nip Refugee Camp. The first batch of 366 refugees left the camp for Pugnido Refugee Camp in a convoy of 11 vehicles, including buses, ambulance, a luggage truck, and a security escort. On 17 March, 19 refugees with special needs were also relocated from Nip Nip camp to Pugnido camp on a UNHCR-chartered helicopter.

The relocation by road convoy and by air marks the beginning of the UNHCR strategy to relocate 51,316 refugees from the flood-affected area, including 2,888 from Nip Nip and 48,428 from Leitchuor. While Pugnido camp, which currently hosts nearly 56,000 South Sudanese refugees, has been extended to receive refugees from Nip Nip camp, refugees from Leitchuor camp would be relocated to Jewi Refugee Camp.

UNHCR is undertaking the relocation exercise in collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia represented by the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and other organizations. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is transporting the refugees.

UNHCR Head of Sub-Office in Gambella, Ms. Angele Djohossou, said the plan is to relocate all willing refugees in a safe and dignified manner from the flood-prone camps. "UNHCR and partners are working on phased gradual exit strategy from both camps. The strategy includes the development of peaceful coexistence projects targeting both possible residual refugee population who will not opt for relocation and the host community, which has generously hosted these refugees," she said.

### **UNHCR presents vehicles to ARRA for relocation**



*Head of Sub-Office Ms. Angele Djohossou presenting the vehicles to Ato Teferi of ARRA*

To support the ongoing relocation exercise, UNHCR on 17 March presented three vehicles to ARRA. The vehicles, including an ambulance, a pickup van and one Land Cruiser, were presented by Head of Sub-Office Ms. Angele Djohossou. Taking delivery of the vehicles, ARRA Zonal Coordinator Ato Teferi thanked UNHCR for its continued support and collaboration with ARRA in providing humanitarian assistance to refugees.

The Gambella region currently hosts over 252,000 South Sudanese, more than 194,400 of whom arrived since mid-December 2013.

**UNHCR Sub-Office, Gambella  
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