

Humanitarian Bulletin

South Sudan | Bi-weekly update

15 May 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hostilities in Unity State affected hundreds of thousands people.
- Newly displaced people arrived in Bentiu.
- Funding constraints will create a gap on medical supplies.
- Food insecurity to aggravate.



First airdrop of vegetable oil in South Sudan via little orange parachutes. Source: WFP

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FIGURES

# of internally displaced people	1.5 million
# of refugees in neighboring countries	546,254

FUNDING

29%
of appeal funding received

\$527 million
total funding received

\$1.8 billion
requirements for South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan

Violence in Unity State affects hundreds of thousands people

Intensified armed hostilities in Unity State since the beginning of May have affected hundreds of thousands people south of Bentiu. The escalation of violence obliged most humanitarian partners to evacuate staff from Leer, Koch, Nyal, Ganyiel and Mayendit.

The humanitarian activities in the area were halted and, as a consequence, over 300,000 civilians in need of emergency relief, including food aid and medical services, cannot receive life-saving assistance. Humanitarian partners reported that the humanitarian hub and a hospital were looted and damaged in Koch.

As hostilities escalated around these areas, civilians in main towns reportedly fled to remote villages, while others dispersed to the bush.

Renewed violence in southern Unity came at a time when stocks of food were depleted, and at the peak of the traditional planting season, when people need to be able to move freely and safely to plant their crops in order to reap a harvest later this year.

Since late April, some 151 staff members from 22 organizations have been relocated from southern Unity State due to the insecurity. Aid agencies are committed to returning to all areas of southern Unity to assess the needs of people and to continue emergency operations there as soon as the security situation improves.

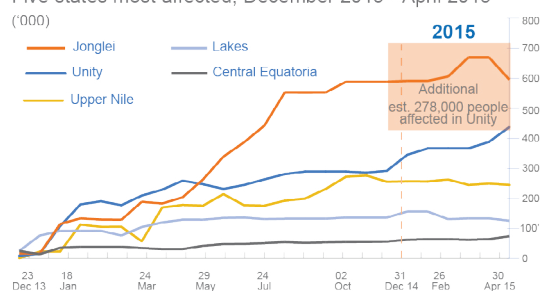
In statements issued on 8 and 11 May, the Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan called for assurances from the parties to the conflict that the work of aid agencies, based on the principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality, can continue without delay to assist populations in need.

He added that it is incumbent on all forces engaged in military activities to protect civilians in accordance with International Humanitarian Law, and that people should never be harmed, and certainly not targeted or forced to flee from their homes.

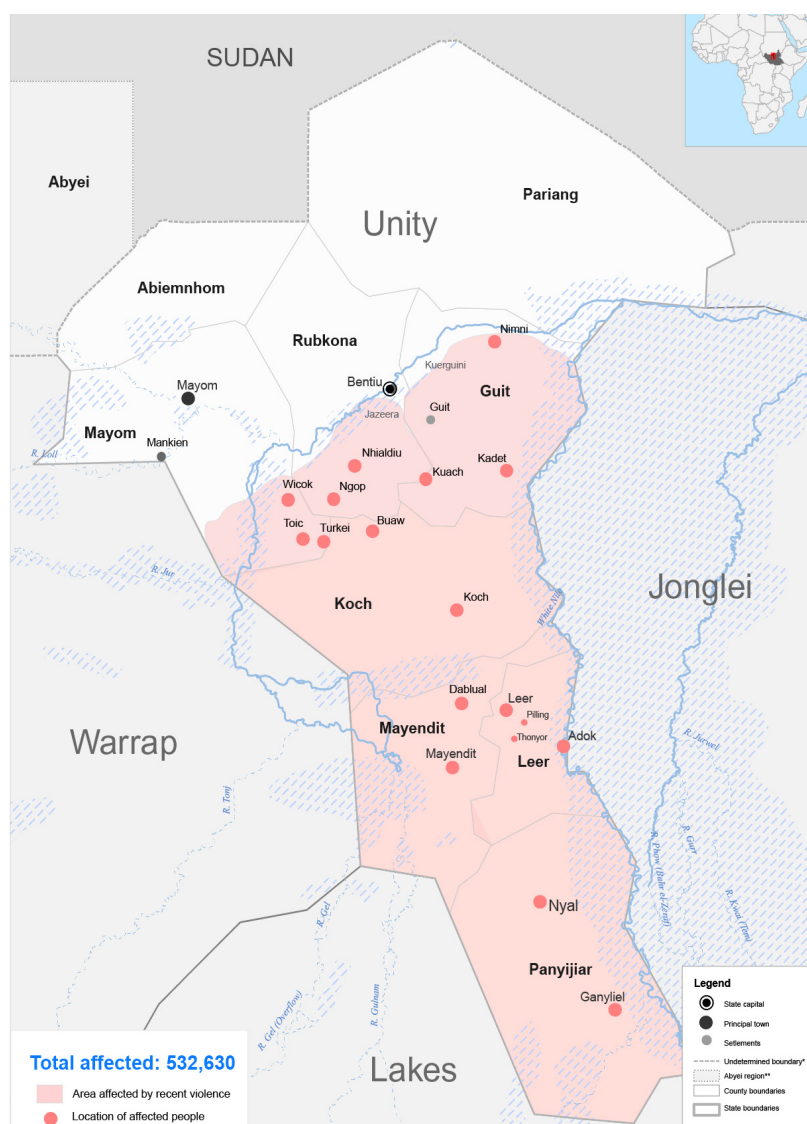
Read more: HC Statement "Over 300,000 people left without life-saving aid in Unity State" (11 May): <http://bit.ly/UnityAssistance>. HC Statement, "Up to 100,000 People Displaced in Unity State in May Alone" (8 May): <http://bit.ly/1L66iob>

Internal Displacement trend

Five states most affected, December 2013 - April 2015



Graphic: OCHA. Sources: OCHA and humanitarian partners.



Unity State conflict-affected areas. Map: OCHA.

The information shown on this map does not imply official recognition or endorsement of any physical, political boundaries or feature names by the United Nations or other collaborative organizations.

Funding constraints will create a gap on the supply of medicines.

Following ongoing discussions and presentations by the Ministry on the status of the pharmaceutical procurements, there are concerns that delays in procurement will leave a drug supply gap from September to November.

Further, the procurement will only cater for three months and supply county and teaching hospitals. Secondly, delays in the Ministry budgeting cycle mean the shortages will extend beyond February 2016 for a possible four months. Existing buffer stocks are unlikely to meet the demand for this period.

The conflict in South Sudan has caused a major public health crisis disrupting essential primary and secondary health care services. Communicable diseases are a concern throughout the country due to poor sanitation, shortage of safe/potable water, crowded living conditions -especially in displacement sites- malnutrition and poor immunity. Outbreaks of cholera and kala-azar affected thousands of people in 2014 and the pattern is likely to continue in 2015. Other common illnesses among IDPs include acute respiratory infections, acute watery diarrhea, malaria, malnutrition and measles.

New arrivals in Bentiu

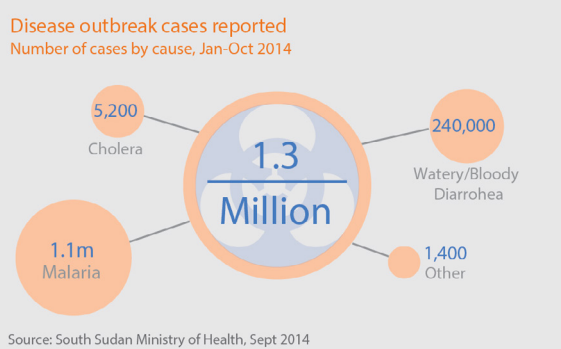
Inter-communal tension continued within the Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) site during the past weeks. Humanitarian partners worked closely with community leadership to manage the situation.

Also, there was a steady flow of displaced people into the PoC since the escalation of military operations in Unity. Partners reported that 2,394 people arrived from 4 to 11 May. About 78 per cent of the new arrivals were from the surrounding county of Rubkona. Transit shelters were constructed and food distribution was to be completed.

An inter-cluster assessment was conducted in Bentiu town on 15 May. The mission came after weeks of limited access due to restrictions leaving Bentiu PoC site. The assessment team observed new arrivals staying in government buildings and schools. Some 2,700 people were verified and registered during the exercise. The mission saw an estimated 20,000 head of live-stock in the area. The people reported fleeing from around Nhialdu in Rubkona County following recent fighting.

Medicines run dry

Health partners have warned that there will be a gap in the supply of medicines in the last quarter of this year. The potential pipeline break will result in a four month gap in the supply of medicines in the country due to funding constraints. The health cluster is supporting the Ministry of Health to engage donors for the impending stock out of drugs procured through the Emergency Medicines Fund (EMF).



Needs high in Lakes State



Displaced women sitting under a tree in Citchok. Source: Inter-agency rapid needs assessment report.

Continuous attacks in cattle camps have caused multiple displacements in Cuiebet county.

By late 2014, about 38% of the population of South Sudan was considered food insecure.

Food insecurity is expected to continue deteriorating during 2015.

An inter-agency rapid needs assessment mission to Taiptaip, Citchok and Pagor payams (administrative divisions) in Cuiebet county, Lakes state, found that the humanitarian situation there is grim and unprecedented. Continuous attacks in cattle camps in these payams have caused multiple displacements.

The fighting between the raiders and the cattle keepers led to the destruction of many homes and forced people to abandon their villages close to cattle camps and live in payam headquarters. The growing insecurity increased the vulnerability of the communities, especially women and children.

Due to widespread displacement, the people are not able to cultivate their farms or engage in any meaningful livelihood activities. The assessment mission determined that the three payams are food insecure and food assistance is needed to prevent the situation from deteriorating.

According to the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), approximately 41,000 people live in the three payams and at least 1,100 people are displaced into Citchok and Taiptaip. According to the assessment findings, host community and the IDPs were in need of humanitarian assistance. The most affected were women and children who were surviving mainly on eating leaves, wild fruits and roots. Some cases of malnutrition were also identified.

Basic health services were available in the area, but drugs needed to be pre-positioned before the rainy season, and fridges and cold chain facilities need to be repaired. In the area of education, some concerns were the lack of teachers and educational materials and the occupation of schools by armed elements. Rehabilitation of damaged bore holes and construction of latrines is required.

Food insecurity remains a serious concern

A recent special report on crops and food security in South Sudan (not IPC) highlighted that food insecurity remains a serious concerns for the rest of 2015. Conflict-affected areas registered very large cereal deficits against a backdrop of deficient market functionality.

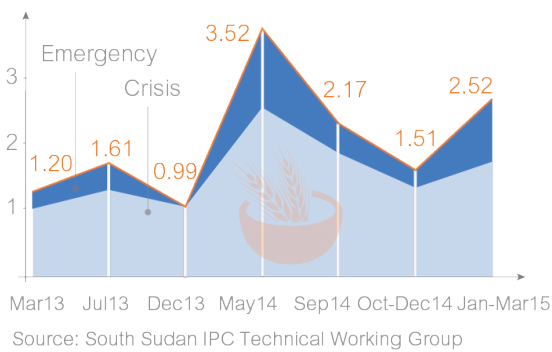
Prior to the start of the conflict in late 2013, South Sudan had made significant progress in improving food security. However, by late 2014, about 38 per cent of the population was considered food insecure.

The report envisages that a large number of the displaced population will depend mainly on food assistance and only to some extent on market supplies. As agriculture remains highly vulnerable to adverse weather conditions and insecurity recovery will remain fragile unless market functionality and supply of food commodities improve significantly during 2015.

The report pointed that the generally favourable rains and the absence of major outbreaks of pests and disease supported the cereal crop production in the traditional farming sector in 2014. The overall deficit until the next harvest in late 2015 is estimated at nearly 249,000 tonnes.

Livestock conditions were generally good due to adequate pasture and water availability. However, conflict and insecurity affected migration and caused unusual movements of livestock and concentration of animals in small areas, which raised concerns about disease outbreaks, reduced access to resources and increased tensions between herders and farmers.

Food insecure people in millions
IPC Phases 3 (Emergency) and 4 (Crisis)



Food security projections for the coming months

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) working group for South Sudan is finalizing a new analysis for the coming months.

Indications are that the situation will continue to deteriorate during 2015 and the number of people in emergency and crisis levels will likely increase.

The last IPC report published in December 2014 projected that 2.5 million people would face emergency (IPC Phase 4) and crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity levels between January and March 2015. The country's food insecurity is mainly caused by conflict-related displacement, disruptions in live-stock and crop-based production and high staple food prices.

Agriculture has huge potential to reverse the food insecurity and to drive growth and prosperity.

Conflict-hit farmers receive crop kits

As the main planting season begins, food partners accelerated their efforts to get vital seeds, tools and other materials to some of the most vulnerable communities.

With up to 18 flights loaded with seeds, tools and fishing kits leaving Juba each day, partners are working to get these materials into farmers' hands in time for planting in conflict-hit areas of Jonglei and Upper Nile states, where hunger and malnutrition levels are particularly high. The airlifts are complementing land transportation in areas not reachable by road.

Almost 100 tonnes of inputs have been flown from Juba to local airstrips, representing just a portion of those destined to reach over 175,000 food-insecure farming families in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile by the end of May.

However, just one flight was able to land in Unity state before the conflict forced partners to suspend activities. The current wave of fighting comes at a crucial time for farmers who have depleted their food stocks and have only the next few weeks to prepare for the planting season.

Crop kits distributed by partners to the target regions contain at least three cereal seeds (sorghum, cowpea, maize, groundnut and sesame) and a hoe, the kits are sufficient to plant 1.3 hectares per family. Recipient households can be expected to harvest 1,360 kg of cereals in September/October, enough to feed their families for five months.

Agriculture has huge potential to reverse the food insecurity and to drive growth and prosperity in South Sudan. As food insecurity deteriorates in many parts of the country, partners are escalating up their efforts to support the people of South Sudan to produce the food that is so crucially needed.

Partners are aiming to support 2.8 million people with livelihood support throughout South Sudan in 2015 by providing a combination of vegetable, crop and fishing kits, as well as other kinds of support.

Meanwhile, food partners conducted the first vegetable oil airdrop test in Ganyiel in Unity State on 8 May, which sets the groundwork to reduce airlifts of supplies for remote locations and could vastly improve delivery of the emergency food basket and greatly reduce costs for the air operations.



Crop kits are airlifted to conflict-hit areas. Source: FAO

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