

Alert

South Sudan

Assistance to IDPs and returnees in South Sudan

Geneva, 03 March 2011

1. Brief description of the emergency (if already having occurred)

The January 9th referendum in Sudan was a key part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended the two decades of civil war in the southern part of Sudan. The referendum was preceded by a presidential and parliamentary general election that was held in April 2010.

Contrary to earlier fears, the referendum was peacefully held and southern Sudanese voted overwhelmingly for separation. Between the elections and the referendum there were sporadic outbursts of violence, much of it centering around Jonglei State due to a senior military officer failing in his April election bid. Closer to the run up to the referendum, the President of Southern Sudan succeeded in quelling the violence by extending an Amnesty to all dissident factions in the South. This call was heeded and resulted in a ceasefire agreement, thus paving the way for a peaceful period before and during the referendum.

After the referendum, the key Jonglei dissenter resumed a spate of attacks on the southern military force and the civilian population in that state. The group is operating from the swamps in the north of Jonglei using bush insurgency tactics that leaves the local population living in a constant state of fear and displacement.

Before the referendum the increase in population movement from the north to the south was out of aspirations to cast their vote in the south as well as anxiety over their future in the north. The latter reason continues to result in an influx of returnees, mostly concentrated at the border states with the north. The absorption capacity of the south just cannot keep pace.

The pre and post referendum population movements, driven by violence and by the looming separation of Sudan, is rapidly developing into a humanitarian crisis due to the lack of basic amenities in a region that has barely any infrastructure after more than 20 years of war.

2. Impact

Jonglei State (LWF/DWS)

On February 9th 2011, the dissidents in Jonglei State resumed armed attacks terrorizing communities in Old Fangak area resulting to date, to over 215 people dead and 109 seriously wounded. Most of those wounded are hospitalized in Malakal and Juba. It is also estimated that 1,000 people are displaced as a result and it is feared that some of them may have been abducted by the dissidents.

Warrap State (NCA)

Warrap State has experienced an influx of returnees, posing a tremendous challenge in terms of access to provision of basic services by the local authorities. It is feared that should Abyei become more unstable than it currently is, there will be more people seeking refuge in Warrap State and particularly in Gogrial West County which is only a distance of 3 hours drive from the border with Abyei. Abyei is one of the contested border areas between North and South Sudan.

According to local estimates, by 10th February 2011, more than 29,000 people had arrived and settled in Kuajok, Gogrial West County. It is also estimated that an additional 23,000 will arrive to Kuajok in the coming months. Currently, most of these returnees are living in the open with all their household items. There are few health facilities in the returnee camps, and inadequate water points to cater for this addition. This is in addition to the already overstretched needs of the host community. Household and communal latrines are urgently needed to avert cholera and other sanitation-related diseases.

3. National and international response

Jonglei State (LWF/DWS)

Two consultation forums have been held to date. The forum was attended by LWF, SCC, SEF, Reconcile, the Nuer Peace council; representatives from the Nuer community of Fangak living in Juba and local NGOs like Standard Action Liaison Focus.

An assessment team has been formed and left for Fangak County by the 1st of March.

Warrap State (NCA)

The Warrap State authorities have responded to the returnees by allocating land in Kuajok. Several national and international organizations including the local authorities and the UN, have been working closely to respond to the needs of the people. The response has been in the form of provision of plastic sheeting and non-food items. There are requests to construct more water points, VIP latrines, health facilities, and provision of other basic services.

4. ACT Alliance response

Jonglei State (LWF/DWS)

Lutheran World Federation and the Sudan Council of Churches have started an assessment and the outcome is expected by 10th of March

Warrap State (NCA)

NCA's assessment mission to Warrap state on 14 – 18 February concluded that with the rainy season soon approaching, there is an urgent need to provide the returnees with shelter, and respond to needs related to WASH and basic health provision.

ACT Alliance members in Sudan are already implementing a preparedness appeal since November 2010. A fresh appeal for an emergency response will be issued in the coming month to reflect the reality on the ground in Jonglei and Warrap States, after the referendum.

5. Planned activities

Jonglei State

Depending on the outcome of the assessment mission, we expect an immediate intervention with NFI kits

- Provide food supplies in collaboration with WFP.
- Provide water and sanitation needs
- Start a longer term approach of conflict prevention through community based structures like Peace committees
- Advocacy: messages by SEF to the GOSS, SPLA and warring partners

Warrap State (NCA)

- Provision of plastic sheeting for shelter in collaboration with IOM who are the cluster lead for NFIs.
- Provision of additional water points.
- Provision of basic health services by supporting health clinics
- Construction of communal and household latrines
- Conduct hygiene awareness sessions to sensitize people on importance of sanitation

ACT Alliance members in Sudan are: Norwegian Church aid, Christian aid, DanChurchAid, Finn Church Aid, ICCO & Kerkinactie, Lutheran World Federation, Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED) EED, Sudan Council of Churches-ERRADA, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC), and Diakonie Austria.

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jean-Daniel Birmele, ACT Chief Finance Officer (Jean.Daniel.Birmele@actalliance.org).

Thank you for your attention.

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