



Return, Reintegration, Recovery



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Introduction

The entrenchment of the rainy season during the reporting period, saw returns significantly diminish, although small numbers of spontaneous returnees continued to Southern Kordofan by road.

While the slow down in returns allowed agencies to begin tentative planning for the 2006/7 season.

The national and sub-national Return and Reintegration Working Groups (RRWG) (based in Khartoum and Juba respectively) met in Rumbek 23-24 August to finalise the Operational Plan for Returns 2006/7 season. The group confirmed the overall priority was to plan the next season closely with the Government of National Unity (GNU) and the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), so that resources available to the UN and its partners are programmed in keeping with Government priorities. It also confirmed the importance of Capacity Building support for GoSS on planning and conducting safe returns.

On 14th September the HAC/SSRRC Technical Committee met in Juba and agreed that the priority for 2006/07 season was to develop a joint GNU/GOSS/UN plan for organised returns. A Joint Planning Task Force (JPTF) was established, comprising HAC, SSRRC and UN representatives, and met in Khartoum from 25 to 28th September to develop a proposal for joint return operations. Several State representatives of the SSRRC participated in the planning.



The final proposed plan was to return in safety and dignity by December 2007:

- 150,000 IDPs for Khartoum and other Northern States

In addition –

- 48,000 South-South assisted returns

Composed of –

1. 10,000 assisted from the Equatorias to Jonglei
2. 10,000 assisted from Wau to other areas in Southern Sudan (primarily Warrab)
3. 12,000 assisted from South Darfur to Northern Bahr El Ghazal
4. 15,000 assisted within Blue Nile

The plan also outlined the basic division of labour, Government allocations for the returns from Khartoum and coordination structures. This proposal was then endorsed by the policy Committee at its meeting in October.

1. Organised Returns

UN Organised Returns

Return movements South-South have been slow due to prevailing wet conditions. As part of the second phase of the Dinka Bor assisted return, the transportation of 1,029 IDPs from Yei to the Lologo way station was completed. The number of IDPs willing to move from Yei is much lower than was earlier foreseen and to date, only around 30% of the projected case load has taken advantage of the assistance provided by IOM. The movement was then stopped in the first week of August due to heavy rains. After IDPs confirm their intentions the movement will resume towards the end of the rainy season when conditions will be favourable. The IDPs currently at Lologo way station continue to be assisted until their onward movement becomes possible; efforts are now focusing on rapidly improving conditions in the areas of arrival.

Government Organised Returns

Government organised returns ceased during the period with the exception of Unity State. On 12 August, Unity organised the return of 283 IDPs from Khartoum to Panyjar County. The State assisted with the cost of transportation, (buses and barge), while RRR coordinated agency distribution of food rations (provided by the Unity State Government), some NFIs and health kits en route.

Refugees

Throughout the reporting period refugees were assisted by UNHCR from refugee camps within Ethiopia, Kenya, Central Africa Republic (CAR), and Uganda in their return to Sudan.

UNHCR repatriated a total of 3,102 Sudanese refugees from the surrounding countries. Refugees from Uganda (1,350) and Democratic Republic of Congo (1,645) were assisted with accommodation in Alero way station where they received food, NFIs, seed and tools, medical care and mine risk education, prior to dispersal. In addition, UNHCR assisted vulnerables on arrival in the way station by issuing documentation for follow-ups, sanitary materials and soap. Refugees from Kenya (106) were accommodated at the Losolia Rehabilitation and Development Agency compound serving as a temporary way station. UNHCR then facilitated the distribution of a three-month food ration via WFP and seeds and tools were distributed by FAO. During the reporting period 23 refugees in Egypt were assisted with transportation costs from UNHCR.

From 18 to 20th August, UNHCR invited Commissioners from Kapoeta South and Torit County to visit Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya to inform the refugees about the current situation in South Sudan and to answer questions.

September also saw the launch of a GoSS initiative to assist the voluntary repatriation of refugees

from Egypt. Around 241 people have already departed Egypt in three batches. Organizers state that they intend to continue the exercise as there are still numerous refugees registering each day in Cairo.

2. Support to Returns

The Sudan Information Campaign for Returnees (SCIR)

To date the information Campaign produced a total of 35 fact different sheet covering topics such as: Generic behavior change communication issues (20 topics), child protection issues (5 topics) and geographic specific issues (10 States). Together, over 950,000 copies have, so far, been distributed.

In addition, three radio spots were produced in collaboration with UNMIS Radio and two inserts have been produced and inserted in the *Juba Post* newspaper covering- 'right to return' and 'right to remain' issues.

UNICEF finalized partnership with Sudan Radio and TV Corporation (SRTC) and Khartoum State Radio stations to produce and broadcast drama series, radio spots, live interviews, call-in's and health programmes covering returnee's issues.

IOM and UNICEF have jointly conducted 2 Training of Trainers to improve participatory communication skills and approaches for NGOs and government officials disseminating information about returns. The SICR also supported War Child – Holland to carry out child participation activities through creative workshop cycles, play days and puppet shows with financial and technical support from UNICEF.

On 27 August, UN and partners organised the second information day for 2006 for the IDPs in El-Salaam Camp Omderman (Khartoum). The purpose of the day was to provide IDPs with information related to their voluntary return and their welfare (health, mine awareness, etc). Football and volley ball matches between the UN and IDPs were also organized (and the IDPs won).

Way Stations

Way stations were completed in Chali, Yei/Allero, Kajokeji, while cconstruction continued in: Shambe, Wau, Juba and Malual Agor Bar.

In Central Equatoria, construction is on going at the Juba way station (by UNHCR) on the Juba-Yei road. In Jonglei, the construction of Malual Agor Bar way station by Atlas commenced on 16 August.

According to Atlas, works should be completed by 15 October.

Structural works for Malakal way station have been completed and the maintenance of the 700m approach road to the way station completed.

Given the lack of use by returnees of the Kauda way station in South Kordofan UN agencies, Norwegian



Refugee Council (NRC) and HAC/SSRRC met with the Minister of Social Welfare of Southern Kordofan and agreed that the way station would be handed over to local authorities for exclusively for development and/or for humanitarian purposes.

Tracking and Monitoring

During the reporting period, ADRA continued tracking and monitoring spontaneous returns in Kosti and Malakal. They reported a total number of 4818 returnees- (including the 283 returnees organized by Unity State) transiting through Kosti this quarter.

In August the tracking & monitoring database was physically installed and fully operational from the Joint Operations Center (JOC) in the IDP center Khartoum. The database currently provides regular reports on: returnee numbers in shelters, barge movements, and a summary of bus movements. The data is primarily sourced from tracking points in Kosti operated by ADRA, although IOM remains the lead agency.

Protection monitoring

During the reporting period, UNHCR continued its protection work in IDP areas in Khartoum through the Protection Working Group in Khartoum. The group undertook joint advocacy initiatives in cooperation with other partners to address protection concerns facing IDPs. Agencies visited IDP camps and settlement areas to follow up on field protection monitoring activities and identify return protection-related issues. In addition, agencies conducted specific follow up and assessment of forced relocations of IDPs.

Training workshops were conducted by Save the Children–UK on concepts of humanitarian protection and family tracing and reunification. On 20 September, UNHCR Damazin, in collaboration with SSRRC/HAC, conducted a one-day workshop for policy-makers in Blue Nile State on the legal definition and framework of IDP protection. In Kajo Keiji, training of police started on 22 September. The workshop provided assistance to the Sudan Human Rights Organization, UNDP and UNMIS Civil Police to travel to Kajo Keiji to provide lectures.

UNHCR, Community Health and Finance (CHF) International, UNICEF, UNDP and UNMIS as well as Totto Chan Child Trauma Centre, attended a three-day protection and HIV/AIDS workshop (6-8 September) for chiefs and traditional leaders from Equatoria and Upper Nile States.

UNICEF continued to support the monitoring of returnee children. In August, child protection officers and the Southern Sudan DDR Commission took part in the reunification of 163 registered child soldiers who were demobilised in July.

Non-Food Items (NFIs)

UNJLC led agency planning to finalise the 2007 framework for Non-Food Items (NFI) and emergency shelter operations, comprising three components:

- 1 - Provision of NFIs to support emergency response and assist returnees, IDPs and vulnerable populations,
- 2 - NFI Coordination,
- 3 - Capacity Building of Sudanese distribution mechanisms.

NFIs provided through UNICEF and partners included 625 plastic sheets, 620 blankets, 310 cooking pots and 310 blankets with 417 IDP kits, and 150 cartons of pf BP5 Biscuits. The total numbers of returnee's family provided with NFIs support during the reporting period is 8442. Additionally, fifty street children in Wau, many of which are returnees were provided with mosquito nets, blankets, soaps and sleeping mats.

3. Support to reintegration

Food Aid

Food distribution in the South and Three Areas was affected by the rains which limited accessibility to numerous locations. Nevertheless, throughout July, August and September WFP distributed 29,000 MT of food to 2,773,530 beneficiaries including (Returnees/IDPs and host communities) in the South and Transitional Areas.

Food Security and Livelihoods

Towards the end of the reporting season, the hunger period began to draw to a close as the growing season progresses and, with the onset of the rains, food become available to most households. Livestock conditions improved, with the improvement of pasture. Markets continued to function, especially in semi-urban centres despite the difficulties in accessibility and impassable roads. However, food supplies have been low but the general situation in most markets remained stable.

During the reporting period FAO and partners assisted 18,312 households across South Sudan and the Three Areas including (Returnees/IDPs and host communities) with distribution of 50.16 MT of crop seeds, 921 KGs and 2151 sachets of various vegetable seeds, 15,450 peaces of hands tools, 13,890 of fishing twines and 28,800 of various sizes of hooks. In addition, 70,329 animals were vaccinated by the agency during period from July to September.

Water Sanitation

During the reporting period, drilling campaigns were ongoing across the South and Three Areas giving access to over 25,500 people, and creating an additional 84 boreholes and water points in the areas. In addition, over 145 existing water points were repaired ensuring that access to safe water is maintained for over 70,000 people throughout Southern Sudan.

In total, 162 pit latrines have been built or are being built in way stations in preparation for the 2006/7 returns season, in which both organised and spontaneous returnees will use the facilities.

Education

The reporting period witnessed a positive increase in educational facilities, materials and tuition across Southern return areas. Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Unity States launched their 'Go to School' initiatives, while access to primary education was extended to 700 girls in rural areas of Yambio and Nzara counties, Western Equatoria State through the construction of 20 new Community Girls Schools (CGSs).

With the bidding processes for construction of permanent schools still underway, UNICEF provided classroom tents to overcrowded schools and those without adequate shelter. In total, forty-eight tents were provided to Central Equatoria, 18 to Eastern Equatoria, and 48 tents were sent to Malakal. Eight tents are now in use in Western Equatoria, 54 each have been given to Lakes State and Western Bahr el Ghazal.

On 22nd September UNICEF in conjunction with the Ministry of Education launched the Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces (RALS). To date there are now 10 state maps showing the location and type of structure for some 2,910 learning spaces. RALS is intended to provide essential data for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, UNICEF and other actors for planning and programming in the Education Sector.

In Warrab distribution of school materials from the Kwajok hub commenced in September. To date, 3,800 children will benefit from 75 teachers kits, 48 students kits and 23 head teachers kits. In Upper Nile over 13,800 children from 45 schools received educational materials during an air drop operation in September.

In Kordofan, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education supported intensive English courses for 70 teachers in the area. In addition, another 100 teachers received in service training on child-centred teaching approaches.

Health

In the health sector important interventions were required to respond to not only the need of the returnees and receiving communities, but also preventing the further spread of disease due to returnee movement.

During the reporting period UNICEF vaccinated 1,268,750 children against measles and finalised plans for vaccinating an additional nine counties.

Over 250,000 people in Western Equatoria, Lakes, Upper Nile, Unity and Warrab benefited from the distribution of 79 essential medicines kits to health facilities in the area. This is especially significant to returnees in Enzo County western Equatoria, where high return numbers have put pressure on already stretched health services.

Across the South, UNICEF provided 40 Public Health Care Unit (PHCU) kits serving 105,425 people of which approximately 83% are returnees. As part of the state level capacity building efforts, 57 community health workers (CHWs) in Western Equatoria and Lakes state received training to improve their skills for supporting immunisation activities.

Mines and UXO

The onset of the annual rainy season severely restricted mine clearance activities in the South as access became restricted to many areas. For this reason, UNMAS and implementing partners turned their attention towards clearance in more easily accessible areas, surveying and road verifications.

Over the period, 116,240 Square meters of suspected dangerous areas were cleared and 6,200 meters of key return routes were verified as clear. In addition, agencies removed and destroyed: 27 anti personal mines, 6 anti tank mines and 18,081 pieces of unexploded ordnance. While a total of 2441 people were provided with Mine Risk Education.

