

# South Sudanese Refugee Situation

## Democratic Republic of the Congo

31 July – 6 August 2017

During the week, **3,800 refugees and members of the host community were sensitized** on the prevention and response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Meri and Biringi sites.

Clashes and the fear thereof continued to cause a steady flow of refugees into the Haut-Uélé and Ituri provinces, where **251 new refugees were registered**, compared to 424 the previous week.

The increased presence of troops along the border and the belligerents' preparations for confrontations indicated a worsening of the situation and the continuation of refugees arriving in the DRC.

### KEY INDICATORS

**82,322**

South Sudanese refugees **registered or pre-registered** as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017

**53%**

**Percentage** of the refugees are women and girls

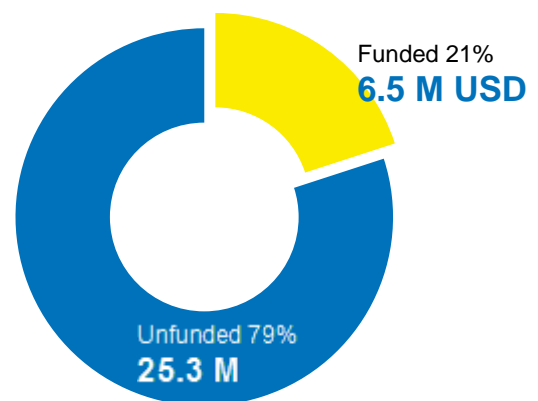
**27,366**

South Sudanese refugees living in the refugee sites of Meri and Biringi as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017

### FUNDING (AS OF 30 JULY 2017)

**USD 31.8 M**

requested for the DRC - South Sudanese refugee situation



# Update on Achievements

## Operational Context

- **Haut-Uélé province**, Faradje territory: reported clashes in Ombaci and Lasu (across the border from Effacer and PK18 in the DRC) led to further displacement of the population towards the Meri site. Dungu territory: the presence and activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Haut-Uélé remained a serious concern to the safety of the population and UNHCR's operations as it blocks access to a large number of refugees residing along the South Sudanese border. Assistance to the refugees north of Doruma remained suspended until the security situation improves. The entire area north of Dungu is considered LRA's operational center.
- **Ituri province**, Aru territory: FARDC had recently deployed troops to reinforce the security along the border of the Aru territory. However, insecurity prevailed; the health center in Rikazu (15 km north of Ingbokolo) was attacked and looted several times during the week by unidentified armed men. Its successive closure leaves more than 10 villages in the region, including a large number of refugees residing in this area, without medical assistance, while also cross-border movements of unidentified armed elements were reported.



*Medical screening at the Biringi site's temporary health post which will soon be replaced by a new ward. © UNHCR/ A. Cadonau. June 2017*

**PROTECTION****Achievements and Impact**

- **Registration** – 90% of the 251 newly arrived refugees were registered at the Meri site (Haut-Uélé province), and 10% at the Biringi site (Ituri province). Meri counted 24,744 South Sudanese refugees, and Biringi 2,873 as of 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017.
- **Cooperation with Caritas** – UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Caritas Mahagi-Nioka for assistance at the Biringi site, which will include the provision of food for 2,000 vulnerable refugees and hygiene kits for 1,400 women and girls, instruction of 2,000 refugees on how to build fuel efficient stoves and 10 health staff at the local hospital on how to assist victims of rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence.
- **Birth certificates** – Over 100 refugees in Dungu were sensitized on the importance of declaring their children’s birth at the civil registry and the importance of making use of the health facilities for prenatal consultations and giving birth. The three newborn in Meri were correctly declared at the civil registry which promptly issued birth certificates and UNHCR followed up on the timely registration of the two newborn in Biringi. In June 2017, in response to significant delays in the issuance of birth certificates UNHCR introduced a set of procedures for birth registration.
- **Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)** – The SGBV focal points in Meri were trained on how to improve data collection of SGBV cases. During the week, 3,800 refugees and members of the host community were sensitized to the prevention and response to SGBV in Meri and Biringi.

**Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps**

- **Specific needs** – During the social screening in Meri, a large proportion (38%) of the newly registered refugees were identified as having specific needs and therefore requiring additional assistance such as medical care, food and non-food provisions, counselling and placement in host families. Overall, 18% of the refugees in Meri have specific needs.
- **Security** – Continued acts of vandalism were reported in Biringi, reflecting on the one hand the refugees’ dissatisfaction with the lack of shelter and building material, and on the other the understaffed security forces at the site. Four additional police officers are urgently needed in Biringi and 55 in Meri.

**EDUCATION****Achievements and Impact**

- **New school building** – The construction of a new primary school in Meri was in its final phase with the doors, windows, painting and drainage remaining to be finished.

The school can accommodate 300 pupils, 50 in each of the six classrooms, and will open its doors for the beginning of the new school year in September.

- **Enrollment** – UNHCR’s social partner continued its campaign in Biringi, Meri and Dungu persuading parents to enroll their children in school with door-to-door visits, messages at church services and on the radio. During the first semester of 2017, merely 16% of the children of primary school age in Biringi and 17% in Meri attended school.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Additional school buildings** – 15 additional schools are needed in Meri to accommodate the 4,500 children currently not attending primary school. In Biringi, two additional primary schools are required to accommodate the 620 children who are not enrolled.
- **Hangars** – The hangars serving as classrooms for French language courses required urgent rehabilitation in order to start the third round of classes, after they were taken apart and the material stolen due to the lack of available construction material in the vicinity of the site for the refugees to build their shelters. Since the beginning of the year, 754 children have participated in the language classes.



#### HEALTH

#### Achievements and Impact

- **Health promotion** – Community health workers in Meri reached over 900 refugees in a door-to-door campaign on preventing malaria through the correct use of mosquito nets and avoiding waterborne diseases through food hygiene. A campaign on how to avoid sandflies reached almost 300 refugees in Biringi. In addition, 600 condoms were distributed in Biringi.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Health status** – A fifth of the newly arrived refugees in Biringi required medical assistance upon their arrival and UNHCR’s health partner attended to them.
- **Pathologies** – Acute respiratory infections remained the most common pathology in Biringi (25%), followed by malaria (20%). In both Meri and Biringi, more than half of the refugees do not have a mosquito net; leaving a gap of 12,500 nets in Meri and 1,570 in Biringi. In Dungu, malaria remained the most prevalent disease with almost 50% of all pathologies, followed by acute respiratory infections (20%).



## FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

### Achievements and Impact

- **Hot meal distribution** – 135 refugees with specific needs, the hospitalized, the detained and the newly arrived received hot meals in Biringi and in the transit center in Aru. Two meals per day were served to the in-patients and one to the other refugees.
- **Food distribution** – Corn flour, beans, oil, salt and high-energy biscuits were distributed to 470 refugees in Meri and 40 in Biringi, including the newly arrived and the refugees with specific needs. Following UNHCR's intervention, pre-registered refugees in Bitima and Duru received food supplies from the World Food Programme (WFP) for the first time. UNHCR continues advocating to ensure that the pre-registered refugees in Dungu and Moroko are also taken into account for the next food distribution.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Malnutrition** – 3.3% of Biringi's and 2.1% of Meri's refugee population were malnourished. Overall, 94 cases of malnutrition were registered in Biringi and 526 in Meri; all of them received food supplements, including *plumpy nut*, *plumpy sup* and a *corn-soy blend*.



## WATER AND SANITATION

### Achievements and Impact

- **Water** – A water pump was maintained, the two available sources rehabilitated and 1,670 water purifying tablets distributed in Biringi. The average water supply in Biringi amounted to 16, 8 liters per person and day (16% below UNHCR's standard).

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Water** – Average water supply remained significantly below the 20-litre-standard in Meri with 12 litres per person and day. An additional 36 water points are required in Meri and three in Biringi.
- **Latrines** – In Meri, 900 latrines and 1,270 showers were functional for the 8,100 households, leaving a need for over 7,000 latrines and 7,000 showers. An average of 27 refugees share one latrine in Meri. The first bloc of the 125 communal latrines in Biringi had to be closed because they were full. 1,200 family latrines are needed in Biringi; 18 refugees on average sharing one latrine.

**SHELTER AND NFIS****Achievements and Impact**

- **Cash distribution** – UNHCR and the WFP conducted their quarterly evaluation of the cash distribution in Biringi and Meri to ensure that the sum distributed is sufficient to purchase goods at the local market price and to warrant that the distributions are conducted according to the protocol.
- **Non-food items (NFIs)** – Caritas distributed clothing to over 5,000 refugees and a range of NFIs (kitchen sets, mats, blankets and soap) to 1,000 refugees in Meri. At the Nambili site, 630 households received a mosquito net and 730 households a jerry can; the beneficiaries were households with pregnant women, small children and persons with otherwise specific needs. In Biringi, solar lamps were distributed to 380 households (30% of all households); in addition, the newly arrived refugees and 10 separated children received blankets, mats, jerry cans, kitchen sets, plastic buckets, soap and mosquito nets.

**Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps**

- **Shelter** – In Biringi, 360 refugees live in the transit hangars due to the lack of adequate shelter and building material. Some of them stay there for over six months. These refugees do not have access to mosquito nets which increases the prevalence of malaria; moreover they are highly exposed to respiratory infections, water borne diseases, cholera and typhoid. UNHCR's social partner sensitized them to the importance of hygiene in these precarious living conditions. The situation is even more precarious in Meri where over 5,000 families urgently require shelter.

**Working in partnership**

- UNHCR coordinates its assistance with a variety of humanitarian actors, working together to ensure refugee benefit from dignified and efficient protection mechanisms.
- For this operation, UNHCR's partners are: ADES, ADSSE, AIRD, CNR and INTERSOS. Other partners include FAO, WFP (with its partner TSF), MALTESER and TROCAIRE/CARITAS.

## External / Donors Relations

### **Donors for SSD refugee response in DRC in 2017**

United States of America (6.2 M) | Belgium (0.3 M)

### **Other donors for UNHCR operations in DRC in 2017**

United States of America (22.2 M) | Japan (2.5 M) | Sweden (1.1 M) | DRC Humanitarian Fund (0.8 M) | Canada (0.7 M) | France (0.5 M) | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints (0.2 M) | U.N. Foundation (0.2 M) | Private Donors Spain (0.07 M) | Vodafone Foundation (0.05 M)

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### **LINKS**

[Regional portal for SSD situation](#) - [DRC page for SSD situation](#) – [DRC Facebook page](#)