

South Sudan

February/March 2020

POPULATIONS OF CONCERN

300,451

Number of **refugees in South Sudan**. 93% come from Sudan, 5% from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1% from Ethiopia, and 1% from the Central African Republic.

1.67 million

Number of **internally displaced persons (IDPs)** in South Sudan, 11% of which are staying inside five UNMISS Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites and one area adjacent.*

71,606

Number of **South Sudanese refugees who have spontaneously returned** since the revitalized peace agreement was signed in September of 2018. **2.2 million remain in neighbouring countries.**†

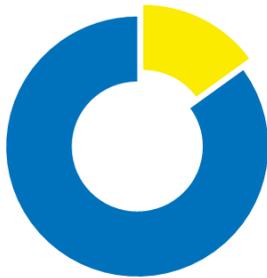
FUNDING

\$177.8 million

requested for the operation in 2020

68% unfunded
\$157.2 M

12% funded
\$20.6 M



Sudanese refugees help each other during a food distribution in Unity State. © UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira

In this issue

- UNHCR launches **COVID-19 prevention activities** in refugee and IDP areas. (Page 3)
- More than **450 households supplied relief items**, such as plastic sheets, blankets and buckets, **after fire destroys their homes** in Western Equatoria and Upper Nile states. (Page 4)
- **35 Congolese and Sudanese refugees impacted by clashes** between the government and hold out opposition groups near Yei town, Central Equatoria, **were safely, and voluntarily relocated** to refugee camps in Unity and Western E, quatoria States. (Page 4)
- **232,368 persons of concern** were served by UNHCR **water systems**. (Page 7)

Operational Context



Refugee and host community primary school students in Makpandu refugee settlement, Western Equatoria. © UNHCR/Elizabeth Marie Stuart

Armed conflict in South Sudan has declined since the parties to the civil war signed a peace agreement in September 2018; however, implementation of the deal is not yet complete, the political situation remains fragile, and millions remain displaced both inside and outside of the country. Meanwhile, tenuous rule of law and easy access to arms has resulted in an increase in inter- and intra-communal violence that continues to force people from their homes. Still, the South Sudanese are hopeful and, despite UNHCR's non-return advisory for refugees, many displaced persons are showing interest in heading home.

At the same time, insecurity in neighboring countries has pushed nearly 300,000 refugees into South Sudan. UNHCR South Sudan supports refugees in 21 camps and settlements across the country, and is heavily involved in aiding IDPs and IDP returnees through the country's protection and camp management clusters.

UNHCR is also working with South Sudan's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) and other partners to monitor spontaneously returning refugees' protection needs, and advocate for the vulnerable among them to be included in existing aid mechanisms.

Key Updates

- On 22 February, the revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity was formed with the swearing in of 4 of the 5 vice-presidents. It was done amidst continuing discussions on outstanding issues: cantonment and training sites, National unified protection force, VIP protection, and boundaries of the states and administrative areas.
- On 12 March, President Salva Kiir issued a decree naming national ministers and deputy ministers. However, the national legislature and state governments have yet to be formed.
- As peace talks between the Sudanese government and opposition forces progressed, Sudanese refugee leadership organized peace rallies in Upper Nile refugee camps.

February/March Highlights

Refugee Response

UNHCR launches COVID-19 preparedness activities

No cases of COVID-19 were recorded in February and March among the refugee population; however, following the World Health Organization’s declaration of a pandemic, UNHCR and partners launched prevention activities in earnest. Activities ranged from prepositioning essential medicines and life-saving supplies in anticipation of movement restrictions, to expanding healthcare facilities and communication with communities. Highlights included:

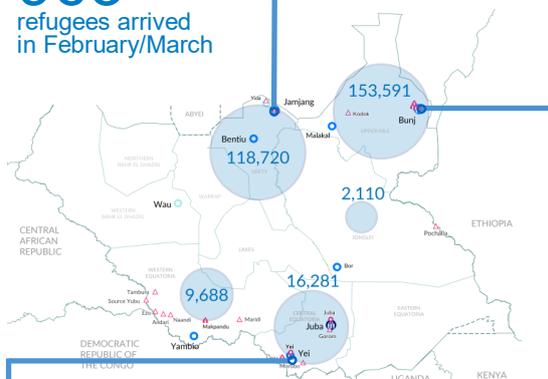
- UNHCR and CRA instituted COVID-19 screening protocols in February, including a temperature check, at refugee reception centres. All personnel at the centres, including interpreters and other support staff, were sensitized on COVID-19 risk and prevention measures. Posters were put up and leaflets supplied in multiple languages to inform refugees and asylum seekers approaching the centre.
- In March, as a precautionary measure to limit the spread of COVID-19, South Sudan’s Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA) temporarily suspended registration and refugee status determination activities at reception centres. To ensure refugees and asylum seekers maintain access to assistance with acute protection risks and concerns, UNHCR and CRA introduced two helpline numbers.
- Handwashing facilities and soap were installed in key locations, such as refu-

ONGOING CHALLENGES

Maintaining the civilian character of asylum

When refugees first fled conflict in Sudan’s South Kordofan State in 2011, they spontaneously settled in Yida. Because of Yida’s proximity to the border – just 20 km from Sudan – and the associated protection risks, South Sudan’s government has been encouraging refugees to relocate to Ajuong Thok and Pamir camps since 2016. In February and March, UNHCR assisted 3,746 individuals in making the move.

963
 refugees arrived
 in February/March



Armed conflict

Fighting is ongoing between government forces and armed groups that didn’t sign the 2018 peace deal.

Flooding

200,000 people (150,000 refugees) are still struggling to recover from devastating 2019 flooding.

COVID-19

No cases of the virus were detected in February and March in South Sudan; however, the pandemic gained a foothold in neighboring countries.

gee reception centres, health facilities, and food distributions centres in Maban (Upper Nile State) and Jamjang (Ruweng Administrative Area).

- UNHCR assessed the WaSH needs of health facilities serving refugees and host community members in Maban, Upper Nile, focusing on water supply, sanitation (latrines, waste management), hand washing facilities and soap. Need was identified for additional latrines and hand washing facilities.
- UNHCR constructed two semi-permanent expansion wards in Ajuong Thok and Pamir refugee camps in Jamjang. The wards can accommodate up to 24 beds.
- COVID-19 information, education and communication materials were distributed in refugee camps and the surrounding community. Radio spots were recorded and broadcast.
- UNHCR employed a number of different community outreach methods to raise awareness amongst communities about prevention measures, such as proper handwashing and social distancing. Examples included: mobilizing community health promotion volunteers to canvas communities and mainstreaming COVID-19 sensitization into ongoing programmatic activities. In Maban, 14 village-level meetings were conducted in the camps, reaching 1,048 refugees (594 women, 298 men, 157 children). UNHCR also engaged refugee leaders in spreading awareness about COVID-19. Also, UNHCR and Danish Refugee Council (DRC), recruited 137 refugee leaders (46 women, 91 men) to sensitize in their turn their communities on safety measures.
- UNHCR in partnership with DRC distributed hygiene supplies to 148,420 refugees and host community members in Maban County, Upper Nile State. In Makpandu refugee camp and the surrounding area, UNHCR partnered with World Vision International (WVI) to distribute 8,854 pieces of soap to 4,427 individuals (1,124 households).



KEY PROTECTION ACHIEVEMENTS

SGBV PREVENTION

118 survivors of sexual-and-gender-based violence (SGBV) received psychosocial counseling

26 SGBV survivors received medical assistance

215 SGBV survivors and refugee women and girls at risk received basic material support

15,652 refugees were reached through advocacy activities to improve knowledge of SGBV prevention and response

2,700 refugee households were visited to disseminate information on available SGBV services

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

139 refugees received legal assistance or counseling

195 detention monitoring visits were conducted

CHILD PROTECTION

80 best interest assessments were conducted for children with protection concerns

403 unaccompanied or separated children were identified and referred for case management

161 separated children were visited and supported



Refugee builders laying brick as part of a healthcare centre expansion project in Ajuong Thok refugee camp, Ruweng Administrative Area, intended to increase capacity to respond to COVID-19. © UNHCR/Elizabeth Marie Stuart

- Ongoing income-generation-related training activities in Jamjang refugee camps, such as the Village Saving and Loan Association, the Learn to Earn Programme, were re-designed to enable adequate physical distancing. Most notably, larger groups were divided into subgroups. To accommodate to this change, UNHCR and partners doubled the number of training sessions conducted. All vocational training programs that were slated to begin in April were suspended.

47 asylum cases approved

The inter-ministerial Refugee Eligibility Committee adjudicated 43 requests for asylum in February and March, granting 47 individuals refugee status. Among the cases, 25 are from Burundi, 21 are from Eritrea, and 1 is from Chad. In 2020 so far, a total of 67 cases (77 individuals) have been decided and all have

been granted refugee status. Since August 2018 when the Refugee Eligibility Committee first convened, 235 cases (280 individuals) have been granted refugee status and 2 have been rejected.

New Refugee Appeal Board oriented

UNHCR and CRA conducted an introductory meeting with the members of the new Refugee Appeal Board (RAB), which the Ministry of Interior established in January 2020, to familiarize them with asylum procedures in South Sudan. The RAB was briefed on UNHCR's mandate and operation, as well as the works of the CRA and the REC. To facilitate capacity building, UNHCR supplied the RAB members with self-learning materials on international protection and refugee status determination. The Refugee Appeal Board is a body of independent lawyers mandated to review asylum cases the REC rejected.

Support continues for flood-affected communities in Maban

UNHCR continued its support to communities impacted by heavy flooding in late 2019 in Maban, Upper Nile State. Highlights of the February and March response include:

- **Core Relief Items.** In February, UNHCR and partners DRC and Human Development Consortium (HDC) distributed core relief items consisting of plastic sheets, kitchen sets, mosquito nets, collapsible jerrycans, sleeping mats, blanket, and soap to flood affected households in Doro refugee camp and the surrounding community. This brings the total refugee households assisted so far in greater Maban to 25,556 (123,437 individuals). The total number of host community households assisted is 5,484 households (27,420 individuals). The core relief items will assist the families as they rebuild.
- **Shelter.** UNHCR in partnership with DRC constructed 27 emergency shelters for persons with specific needs.
- **Infrastructure repair.** UNHCR in partnership with Africa Action Help International (AAHI) rehabilitated and performed maintenance on more than 15 km of flood-damaged roads, improving humanitarian access. To mitigate damage in the future, the team also installed steel culverts.

60% of Maban refugee businesses show signs of recovery after flood

In Maban refugee camps, UNHCR partners, ACTED and Relief International (RI) monitored the performance of 82 existing businesses after the flood. The results showed that more than 60% made a slight improvement in overall performance after

the flood while 40% of the businesses had declined due to destroyed stock and high cost of operating. Supporting existing businesses will be a critical part of flood recovery efforts.

Refugees relocated from Yei amidst ongoing tension

UNHCR helped 24 Congolese refugees and 11 Sudanese refugees relocate voluntarily from Yei town and Lasu refugee settlement, in Central Equatoria State, to refugee camps in Western Equatoria and Unity States in February. Most of those relocated were women, children and persons with specific needs. Vulnerability of refugees in the Yei area has increased over the years due to protracted insecurity, resulting in limited humanitarian access and service provision.

UNHCR assists fire survivors

During the reporting period, wildfire devastated several bomas in Nzara County, Western Equatoria – a refugee hosting area. Following a needs assessment by the RRC, UNMISS and UNOCHA, UNHCR provided 441 households (2,621 individuals) with sleeping mats, plastic buckets and plastic sheets.

Meanwhile, UNHCR also provided life-saving support to 11 refugee households whose homes were destroyed by fire in Maban's Kaya and Yusuf Batil refugee camps (8 households/52 individuals), and Makpandu refugee settlement in Western Equatoria (3 households/9 individuals). They all received plastic sheets, family tents, jerrycans, buckets, blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, kitchen sets and clothes.

School supplies distributed

In Maban in March, UNHCR and partners Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) distributed scholastic materials to students as well as teacher trainees. Items distributed included: 13,967 exercise books, 12,218 blue pens, 11,590 pencils, chalk, paper, box files, and more. School uniforms were distributed to 1,184 (612 girls, 572 boys) learners. Schools were stocked with feminine hygiene products and soap.

Forty-one refugee teachers-in-training complete final examination

In Maban, UNHCR and partner JRS collaborated with the Solidarity with South Sudan Teachers' Training college Yambio, to proctor the final teachers' training examination for 41 (35 men and 6 women) teacher trainees in February. The teacher trainees were then distributed to various schools to complete student teaching.

New youth centre completed

A new youth centre was completed and handed over to the community in Maban's Kaya refugee camp in March. Activities at the youth centre kicked off with a debate on the topic "knowledge is better than ignorance."

Refugees allocated land, tools for farming

In February, 37 interested refugee farmers were allocated plots of land in Makpandu refugee camp in Western Equatoria. Some of the farmers received 200 by 100 m plots, while others received 100 by 100 m. Some

farmers have started clearing their plots at the farm site in preparation for the first season of planting. So far, in 2020, a total of 88 new farmers received land.

Meanwhile, UNHCR and partner WVI distributed agricultural tools to 105 refugee households farmers (68 men and 37 women). The tools distributed included hoes, machetes, slashers and axes.

Training strengthens refugee-led clean energy initiatives

UNHCR and partner RI provided refresher training to refugees involved in environment projects in February and March.

In Upper Nile refugee camps, more than 80 women who were previously trained to make energy-efficient mud stoves, reviewed techniques for mixing rations of soil, sand, and manure, molding, firing and smothering. The production groups, located in Gendrasa, Kaya, and Yusuf Batil refugee camps, built 3,354 fuel efficient stoves over the course of the two months.

Meanwhile, in Doro, Gendrasa, and Kaya camps, refugees managing tree seedling nurseries received capacity development training. Topics covered included: nursery construction, potting and planting, watering, pricking out, hardening off and root pruning.

Together, the projects aim to cut down on the environmental impact of wood burning and strengthen refugees' livelihood skills.

Ensuring Access to Basic Services

Enabling refugees to meet their basic needs is an integral part of protection as it decreases the risk for negative coping mechanisms. As such, UNHCR employs a multi-sector response, working with government and partners to ensure refugees are sheltered and fed, and have access to education, health care, and adequate water and sanitation services. Key sectoral highlights are listed below.

(UNHCR strives to strengthen inter-communal bonds, so numbers include both refugees and host community members unless specified.)



A distribution of feminine hygiene products to Sudanese refugees in South Sudan's Unity State. © UNHCR/Hathaimat Purnananda

ACCESS TO ENERGY

3,354 fuel efficient stoves produced

43,378 tree seedlings produced in refugee-run nurseries

9,318 tree seedlings distributed to communities for planting

EDUCATION

25,779 children enrolled in early childhood development programmes (20% are from the host community)

71,400 students enrolled in UNHCR-supported primary schools (30% are from the host community)

17,169 students enrolled in UNHCR-supported secondary (30% are from the host community)

 **FOOD SECURITY & NUTRITION**

15,531 counseling sessions conducted on best practices in infant and young child feeding

4,442 children aged 6-23 months benefitted from a supplementary feeding programme to prevent malnutrition[†]

3,906 individuals received care through the Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition programme

 **HEALTH**

92,660 people consulted with healthcare professionals at UNHCR-supported facilities (20% and 25% were from the host community in February and March, respectively).

2,944 patients were admitted for inpatient care (26% and 46% were from the host community in February and March, respectively)

191 pregnant women received treatment to prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS from mother to child

829 patients were counseled/tested for HIV

514 patients living with HIV/AIDS received anti-retroviral treatment

81 major surgical operations were performed

1,458 babies were delivered at UNHCR-supported obstetric and newborn care facilities

102,312 persons of concern were reached through health education initiatives

 **SHELTER & NON-FOOD ITEMS**

7,617 households received core relief items, such as plastic tarpaulins, blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, and kitchen sets

748 households received tents or shelter materials, such as plastic tarpaulins, corrugated metal roofing or other materials

155,204 individuals received water and sanitation related items, such as soap, jerricans or buckets

 **WATER & SANITATION**

467,170 persons of concern were served by UNHCR water systems in refugee-hosting areas

260 household and community latrines were constructed, bringing the ratio of persons per drop hole to 1/16

96,052 people were reached through hygiene promotion and safe-water chain campaigns

IDP Response

COVID-19 response

UNHCR's IDP response in February and March was characterized by preparations to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on persons of concern. Most notably:

- UNHCR collaborated with government authorities, the UN Humanitarian Country Team, and persons of concern to prepare a contingency plan stipulating measures for the delivery of key protection activities. Prioritized/minimum activities in UN PoC sites and other IDP sites and collective centres include: response to protection risks of persons of concern, community empowerment to mitigate protection risks and strengthen community resilience and peaceful coexistence and pursuing sustainable solutions (including protection-centered returns according to international principles and guidelines).
- UNHCR has also stepped up engagement with IDP community leadership on COVID-19 risk communication. The office initiated the procurement and distribution of megaphones, lanterns and bicycles to: (i) enhance community structures response to COVID-19; (ii) keep the leadership accessible in the event of restricted movement; (iii) enhance communication between community leaders and IDPs on major developments and critical needs; and (iv) facilitate referrals to service providers where necessary.
- COVID-19 information, education and communication materials were distributed in PoC sites and other IDP sites and collective centres across the country.

Radio spots were recorded and broadcast.

- To facilitate hygiene efforts, handwashing stations were installed in key locations in IDP-hosting areas.

Durable solutions

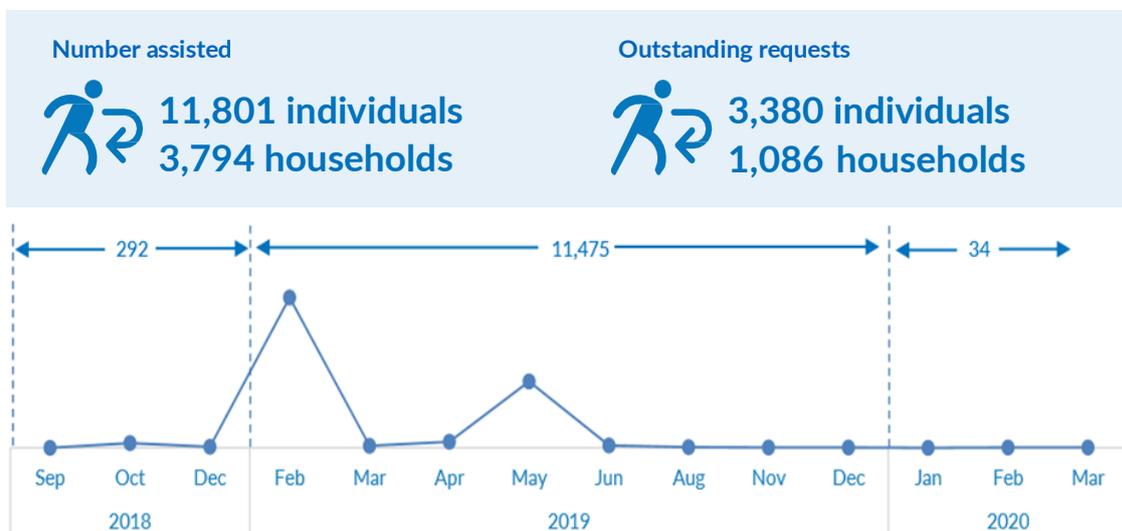
Central Equatoria

- As a part of the COVID-19 preparedness and response measures, UNHCR is coordinating with the UN Humanitarian Country Team and Advisory Group on Solutions (led by the Protection Cluster) to expedite support for IDPs who have indicated a desire to return to their areas of origin. Voluntariness, informed decision, safety and preserving of family unity are some of key considerations.

Upper Nile:

- On 25 February, UNHCR, RRC and UNMISS's Relief, Reintegration and Protection team in Malakal received 13 IDP returnees (4 households) from a Juba PoC site. Upon arrival, UNHCR briefed the returnees on available services, provided transport from the airport to their final destinations in Malakal town and core relief items including blankets, buckets, mosquito nets, soap, mats, plastic sheets, kitchen utensils and solar lamps. The NGO Solidarity South Sudan provided rice to the newly returned families as well as previous returnee families who arrived to the area earlier in 2019 (7 households/39 individuals).
- From 19 to 22 February, UNHCR con-

HUMANITARIAN SUPPORTED IDP RETURNS*



ducted a mission to Melut to verify IDPs intentions in Dingtoma 1, Khor Adar and Malek IDP settlements (Melut County) to return to their areas of origin in Baliet County. Among their reasons for return, IDPs indicated improved security in Upper Nile, freedom of movement from Melut to Baliet, and economic difficulties and tensions with host communities in Melut. About 2,600 individuals were verified, and it was confirmed that their decision to return to the payams of Baliet, Adong and Riangnom was well-informed, voluntary and not coerced.

Western Bahr El Ghazal

- A [household intention survey and persons with specific needs profiling exercise](#) was conducted in the five collective sites of Masna, Cathedral, Nazareth, Lokokolo and St. Joseph. A total of 1,800 households comprising of 8,474 individuals were assessed, of which 420 households were identified as vulnerable with specific needs. Priority needs at the five collective sites included: food, water, basic domestic items, health services and shelter.

Protection activities

National

- On 25 February UNHCR with co-facilitation of DRC, LWF and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) National Task Force Coordinator, organized a roundtable with NGO partners. 33 senior managers of 20 agencies and PSEA focal points from partner organizations participated in this roundtable which touched upon sexual exploitation and abuse risk assessment and management, real scenarios from their practice and minimum PSEA standards for partners. UNHCR is following up to ensure that PSEA is integrated across all programs and assist partner NGOs to develop internal complaint, reporting and investigation mechanisms.

Central Equatoria

- On 13 March, UNHCR and partners conducted an assessment in Lujulo County following media reports of more than 1,000 returnees who have become dis-

placed in the region. Displaced returnees, mainly from DRC and Uganda, reported cases of detention. Other protection concerns expressed by the displaced returnees included domestic violence as a result of alcoholism, lack of schools, child pregnancy and child marriage. The office is coordinating response with relevant stakeholders.

- UNHCR Field Office Yei participated in a two-day joint mission to Rasolo, Tore Payam on 5 and 6 March to assess the situation of vulnerable people in the re-

gion. The assessment came in the aftermath of an armed attack on civilians on 23 January 2020. Major protection concerns include burning of shelters, the death of a child and sexual violence. The major needs assessed include shelter, non-food items (NFIs) and WaSH material.

Jonglei

- UNHCR conducted awareness sessions on protection risks and sexual exploitation and abuse to 351 individuals (198 men and 153 women), and provided non-

(Continued on page 13)

Advocating for the displaced through the Protection Cluster

UNHCR co-leads the South Sudan Protection Cluster with the Norwegian Refugee Council, which is the coordination mechanism for all humanitarian agencies administering protection-focused activities. Key national-level coordination and advocacy activities in February and March included:

- Since January 2020, there has been a substantive increase in inter communal violence and cattle raiding, displacing over 80,000 persons (according to IOM / DTM data as of April 2020). Areas affected remain Jonglei, Unity and Lake States, the Equatorias and Western Bahr Ghazal. Given the restrictions of movements as a result of COVID-19, humanitarian agencies have had very limited access to displaced populations in deep field locations and many IDPs remain stranded without adequate protection and assistance. State level local NGO protection cluster partners have been mobilized to support immediate protection assessments and light assistance response in a few areas, but many areas remain largely inaccessible. With the impending rainy season, this will further impede any movements by humanitarians to reach populations in need. In line with the Secretary General's call to silence the guns to allow for a response to the pandemic, the Protection Cluster met several times with the Humanitarian Coordinator, the Humanitarian Country Team, and the National COVID-19 Steering Committee, calling for the immediate cessation of all inter communal fighting. UNHCR, UNFPA and the Humanitarian Coordinator during a meeting with the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management on the sudden increase of gender-based violence cases affecting women and girls in Bentiu, Juba and Wau, had requested for his support to call to an end all inter communal violence as the impact on women and girls and communities at large including their livelihood, is devastating.
- The Protection Cluster and OHCHR issued a [joint paper](#) in March 2020 on Human Rights and Protection Considerations during the pandemic. The joint paper was also published and acknowledged by the GP 20 High level forum, including several other country operations adopting a similar approach together with OHCHR. Monitoring of violations as a result of COVID-19 measures continue between the Protection Cluster and OHCHR and four updates have been issued to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator and Humanitarian Country Team in this regard, bringing to their attention violations by law enforcement officers when enforcing restriction measures, lack of preparedness and access to safe health care at state and county levels, illegal taxations at certain inter-state and intra state border posts. Advocacy with relevant government authorities have been undertaken, as necessary.



Recently returned IDPs pose for a photo outside their home in Wau, Western Bahr El-Ghazal, which was rehabilitated with support from UNHCR. © UNHCR

(Continued from page 12)

- food items to 300 flood-affected people in Twic East County. UNHCR continued to provide protection services to persons with specific needs in Pibor, Twic East, Pochalla and Akobo. A total of 5,853 persons with specific needs (2,274 men, 3,579 women) have been reached since January 2020.
- The Bor office distributed need based NFIs and dignity kits to 1,500 vulnerable newly displaced people in Pibor town and in Manyabol area. About 8,490 people have been displaced by intercommunal violence in Kongor, Likuangole and Manyabol areas. The interventions were part of UNHCR direct response to the emergency in Pibor that aimed at improving the living conditions of the vulnerable families who are living/sleeping in an open place.
 - In Pochalla, UNHCR supported 200 persons with specific needs (70 men, 130 women) vulnerable individuals with protection based NFIs, non-cash and sanitary materials. The beneficiaries were of different vulnerability categories identified from the localities of Greater Pochalla Payam.
 - UNHCR supported 214 households with need based NFIs including sanitary kits to 100 women and girls in Anyidi- Bor South County. Each kit contains 1 bucket, 2 underwear, 1 packet of sanitary napkin/pad and 2 soaps bars. A group of 50 persons with specific needs, including unaccompanied children and elderly, were supported with solar lanterns and 64 households were provided with jerrycans and kitchen items.

Upper Nile

- Following an interagency assessment and recommendation made by the Upper Nile Solution Working Group to assist IDP returnees in Wau-Shiluk, West Bank, UNHCR jointly with DRC assisted 478 persons with specific needs (187 men and

291 women) with NFIs on 11-13 March 2020. In addition, 414 women of reproductive age were assisted with dignity kits.

- UNHCR provided dignity kits to 140 vulnerable women, including SGBV survivors, in Alel and Jekou with the assistance of UNMISS Human Rights Division.

Western Equatoria:

- UNHCR supported 114 persons with specific needs (26 men and 88 women) with core relief items, such as blankets, buckets, mosquito nets, soap, mats, plastic sheets, kitchen utensils and solar lamps, in Ikpiro residential area in the outskirts of Yambio town. Beneficiaries included people with disabilities, elderly persons, IDP returnees and people living with HIV/AIDS.
- UNHCR joined an Inter-agency assessment mission to Mundri, Maridi, and Mvolo from 16th - 27th March 2020 for conducting cross sectoral humanitarian needs assessment among IDPs and IDP returnees by assessing existing services and gaps in addition to sensitizing the populations on the preventive measures against COVID-19. UNHCR also collected numbers of spontaneous refugee returns in Mundri and Maridi.

Protection monitoring

Upper Nile

- On 10 March 2020, UNHCR together with HDC conducted post distribution monitoring exercise of NFIs distribution in Malakal town. The exercise included home visits in areas of Mudiria, Ray El Misri, Malakia, Hai Jalaba and Hai-

Television. During visits the IDPs expressed their appreciation for support.

- UNHCR partner DRC established a community-based protection network in Baliet town. More than 280 individuals (97 men and 186 women) participated. These groups will serve as community action groups providing protection information to UNHCR, partners and resolving issues of the most vulnerable community members.

Unity

- Following UNHCR advocacy, Bentiu mobile court scheduled 11 cases to be heard starting in March 2020.

Western Equatoria

- Ongoing UNHCR protection monitoring in Ezo, Tambura and Yubu Counties recorded the spontaneous self-organized return of 128 IDPs from Tambura to Kuajina.

Spontaneous refugee return monitoring

Return overview

UNHCR, South Sudan's RRC and NGO partners monitored the return of 17,004 refugees. The highest number of returns (12,792) were from refugee camps in Adjumani, Rumanji and Moyo in Uganda to Kajo-Keji, Central Equatoria. Movements from Sudan through Panakuach border points into Rubkona in Bentiu were next most common (3,177). Most commonly, returnees attributed their decision to move back to increased optimism as a result of the formation of Unity government in February, sustained stability since the signing of the 2018 Revitalized Agreement to Resolve the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) and shrinking livelihoods opportunities in refugee camps in countries of asylum.

Key protection activities

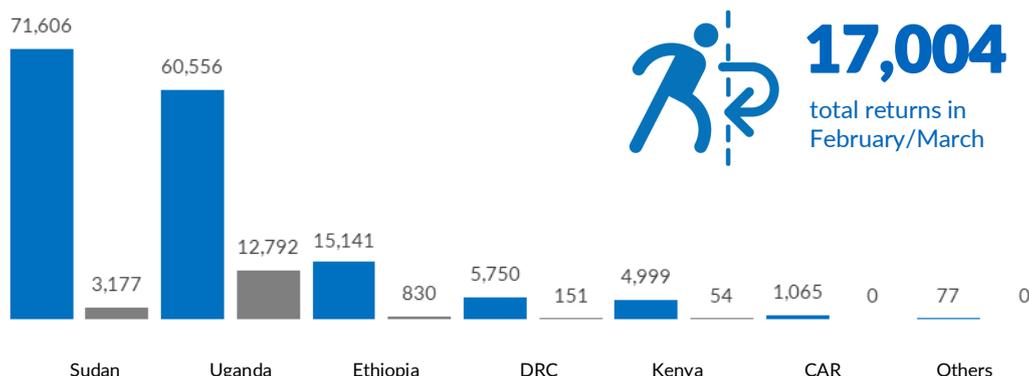
- UNHCR and senior RRC leadership traveled from Juba to Bentiu to sensitize local

authorities, including police and border officials, on the return situation.

- UNHCR and partners launched construction on a maternity ward and a community access road in Agoro, Eastern Equatoria, and Leer, Unity State, in February. Both are both high return areas. The projects aim to encourage peaceful co-existence between returnees and the existing population.
- From 5-8 March, UNHCR conducted a monitoring and program support mission from Juba to Northern Bahr El-Ghazal to assess conditions for returns from Darfur and Khartoum, through the Abyei region. The mission updated local government, protection actors, coordinated by NRC and UNICEF, on return trends, and UNHCR's non-return advisory and its implications for self-organized refugee returns. The majority of movements observed were pendular due to family visits and livelihoods opportunities.

RETURNS BY COUNTY OF ASYLUM

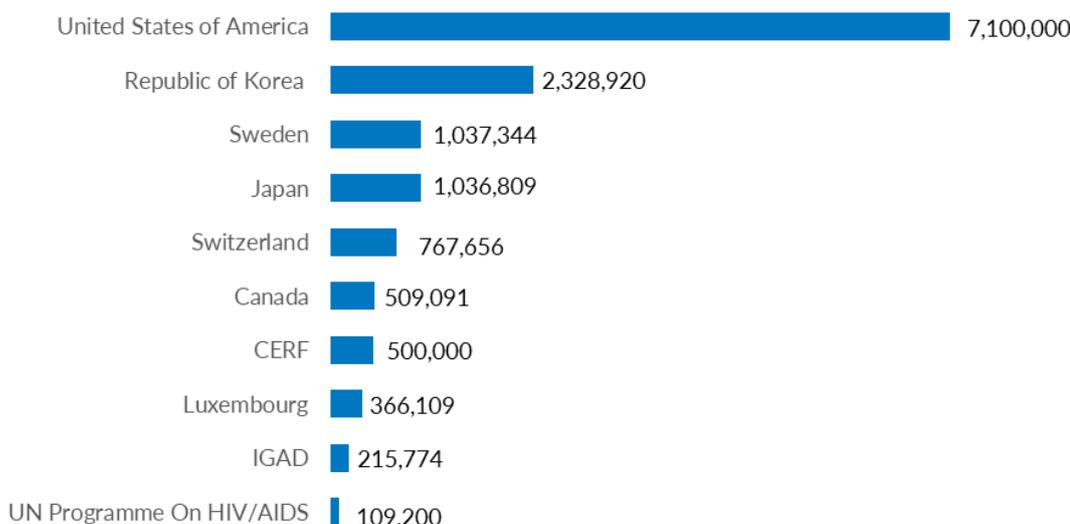
■ October 2018 - March 2020 ■ February & March 2020



Financial Update

2020 funding received for South Sudan Operation in USD

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to US \$20,691,724, as of 6 April 2020.



Contributions earmarked for the South Sudan Situation (including neighboring countries hosting refugees): United States of America 13.8 million | Canada 3.7 million | Sweden 2.9 million | Private donors Australia 2.9 million | Luxembourg | Morocco | Slovakia | Private donors

Unearmarked contributions to UNHCR's global operation: Sweden 76.4 million | Norway 41.4 million | Netherlands 36.1 million | Denmark 34.6 million | United Kingdom 31.7 million | Germany 25.9 million | Private donors Spain 20 million | Switzerland 16.4 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 10.5 million

Australia | Belgium | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Indonesia | Ireland | Kuwait | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | South Africa | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

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LINKS

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