

## SKBN CU Humanitarian Update

April 2017

### Overview

- Severe lack of water caused temporary displacements of entire villages throughout both areas as early rains did not adequately replenish water sources.
- Agricultural land lost to frontlines and previous conflict is likely to hinder cultivation in 2017, similarly to 2016, as fields preparation work has started in both areas.
- In some areas, food stores are now fully depleted and people are subsisting on wild foods and handouts where possible. This trend is likely to continue, with food stores expected to deplete throughout the region by the end of May.
- Cross line markets remain functional as relative peace allows traders better access and allowing communities to dedicate time to resolve long-standing conflicts.
- Medical supplies and drugs are critically low in supply in all Secretariat of Health clinics.

### Food security and markets

#### South Kordofan

April is a valuable time for trade between herders and farmers, both within the SPLA-N controlled area and in markets along conflict lines. Relatively improved access by traders to these markets in South Kordofan was reported, leading also to improved relationship between communities living cross line.

April is also typically the start of full field preparations for staple crop cultivation, with the heaviest preparation work taking place in advance of the rains. This month has already highlighted the effect of land lost to insecurity from the fighting of 2016. The following locations have either lost access to a portion or all of their farmland due to conflict or proximity to unstable front lines.

*Table 1. Agricultural areas with some or all land not accessible for cultivation due to frontlines or conflict*

#### *Central Region*

<b>Heiban County</b>	<b>Delami County</b>	<b>Um-Dorein County</b>	<b>Buram County</b>	<b>Western Kadugli County</b>
Al Azraq	Merdes	Umserdiba	El Taice	Miri
Angartu	Sarafaya	Karkaraya		Kega
Dandur	Abri	Daldako		Kanaga

#### *Western Jebels*

<b>Lagawa County</b>	<b>Al-Sunut County</b>	<b>Delling County</b>	<b>Habilla County</b>
Laderi	Umkraisha	Jamdra	Habilla
Hadabat Al-tair	Jouk Swamps	Yasu	Angarko
Kurmadi		Majda	

As there is no peace deal or cease-fire which spans the growing season, cultivating these lands presents a serious risk of loss for potential farmers. Exact acreage or number of affected households could not be directly assessed. Reports of households attempting to prepare their traditional farmland dangerously close to frontlines are common, but key informants and anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of households previously depending on this more fertile land are not able to prepare this year's crop.

Conflict related food insecurity is severely impacting Heiban county. The last FSMU survey reported 15% severely food insecure during the last harvest season due to the loss of farmland in the 2016 conflict.<sup>1</sup> In some areas, food stores are now fully depleted and people are subsisting on wild foods and handouts where possible. This trend is likely to continue, with food stores expected to deplete throughout the region by the end of May.

As food stores from staple crops are diminishing, many households are reporting selling economically productive animals from their herd. In the Central Region of South Kordofan 15% of households reported selling their last female, draft, or transport animal as a coping mechanism. This number was 22% in the Western Jebels.<sup>2</sup> This coping mechanism will diminish the food security and livelihoods outlook over the next year.

The situation in Kao-Nyaro and Warni likely faces a worse situation. Direct access to the region for monitors remains impossible, so the only information available is from periodic contact with those risking their lives to flee the area. Key informants state that the situation has deteriorated in April, with malnutrition increasing and food stores nearly completely gone. Fighting along the southern and eastern border of this region has blocked a potential escape route for those trapped inside.

### Blue Nile

Lack of staple food supply in the markets presents a major challenge for the segment of the population not engaged in subsistence farming and those using trade to supplement staple food crops. As more and more households are trading livestock for the limited staple crops available in the markets, the value per head of livestock is decreasing. This is diminishing food available for households relying on livestock for lean season food, likely meaning households will need to utilize more extreme coping mechanisms in the next few months.

This is especially concerning as overall food insecurity for the monitored region was worse than those monitored in South Kordofan as of January.<sup>3</sup> If refugee camps in Maban were to face continued tensions or fighting, this could quickly escalate into emergency levels of food insecurity. With food stores projected to be finished in May, and many local markets reporting having insufficient or no supply of staple cereals, population displacements out of the region could become common. Furthermore, as field preparations begin for next season's harvest, the many returnees from the refugee camps in South Sudan are lacking seeds and tools to adequately prepare for the coming growing season.

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<sup>1</sup> FSMU March 2017 Report

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

## **Health**

### South Kordofan

A new independent report reveals that clinics managed by the local secretariat are severely lacking drugs and supplies.<sup>4</sup> Humanitarian monitors with the SKBN CU verify this in all areas where regular monitoring takes place. Insufficient access to medical care, little to no ambulance support, and little availability of basic vaccines puts the population at an elevated risk of death from treatable diseases.

### Blue Nile

The population remains afflicted by common illness like malaria, diarrhea, and infections. A recent report from the local Secretariat of Health suggested that there are only 10 midwives in the area, serving a population of approximately 65,000 persons. Clinics in Blue Nile face a similar shortage of drugs and supplies across the whole region. No current information is available on the health services in Koma Ganza, Amora Hills, or Ingessana Mountains.

## **Animal Health**

### South Kordofan

Livestock trade is generally used to cover the seasonal food gap of households during the lean season, as cattle may be traded for a net greater amount of food in cereals or other crops. As the lean season is beginning earlier more livestock is leaving the region to be traded cross lines to access the excess harvest in the rest of Sudan. This will result in the net number of livestock in the region decreasing, as households are forced to sell more than added in the previous year, and even need to sell productive members of the herd. This trend must be monitored to assess future food security in the region.

### Blue Nile

The same trends as noted in South Kordofan are present in Blue Nile. Similarly, livestock continue to be affected by lumpy skin disease in cattle, diarrheal disease in small ruminants, Newcastle's disease and chronic respiratory syndrome in poultry. There is currently insufficient access to vaccines and treatment for these conditions.

## **Water**

### South Kordofan

April saw little to no rain in much of the Nuba mountains, leading to a desperate water situation in many communities. Affected villages completely relocated to areas with functioning boreholes or wells while awaiting rains to return. In Buram county, one large reservoir completely dried for the first time since its creation. This season has highlighted areas within Nuba which are in desperate need of improved water sources to sustain any population. The southern regions in particular were affected by the poor rains, but information is not available for all counties, as monitors were not able to reach every location.

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<sup>4</sup> Used with permission, sources withheld.

*Table 2: Villages facing substantial population displacements due to water shortage in April 2017*

<b>Buram County</b>	<b>Western Kadugli County</b>
Fama	Kurisi
Dabakia	Tuma
Shat Safaya	Dulli
Thobo village	Miri
Angolo	Jebel Kuwa
Tesse	
Sogoli	

Blue Nile

Large geographical areas are reported to have no access to water, and populations had to temporarily relocate. The population in Gosha, Komo Ganza was reported to relocate entirely until water sources were replenished. Early rains in May have begun to alleviate this challenge, and if they continue, the problem should be resolved by the end of May. It is likely that insufficient access to water has limited the ability of the population throughout Blue Nile to fully engage in land preparations for the coming planting season.

There are no current figures available on the proliferation of water-borne disease in Blue Nile, but as water resources are increasingly stretched, particularly in population centers along the diminished rivers, it is expected there will be an impact on health conditions. Filters or improved water systems are needed in the area to help avoid sickness spreading through over-utilized water sources.

**Education**South Kordofan

A local teacher training institute recently graduated 52 new teachers. This will greatly help improve the quality of education, but these teachers will still face poor facilities, little to no funding for teacher salaries, limited educational supplies, insufficient food to keep children in school for a full day, and no internationally recognized curriculum. More assistance is needed to keep children in schools and support local teachers.

Blue Nile

Student participation will decrease in the coming months as field preparations begin in full. The situation is generally worse than what is described in South Kordofan. Resources for education are more limited, and there is no local teacher training institute in the region.

**Protection and security situation update**South Kordofan

While localized conflict incidents were reported along the front-lines between nomadic and agrarian communities, improvements from previous months were apparent. The time of relative peace created an

opportunity for pastoralist and agrarian communities to work together to avoid cattle grazing related conflict and engage in mutually beneficial trade. This is critically important to the region, as these markets represent an important means of food security for the households that rely on trade and craftsmanship for their food security. This is a positive development, but there is still a significant need to provide mediation to longstanding, localized conflicts.

Explosive remnants of war have posed a serious threat to the population in all areas. Unexploded aerial armaments and land mines continue to injure and kill herders, farmers, and children. As soon as possible, dedicated education and clearance programming will be needed.

### Blue Nile

Tensions in Maban and surrounding areas in South Sudan remain high, increasing numbers of refugees are expected to cross into Blue Nile. As resources in the region become increasingly scarce, these communities are not always welcomed into traditional social structures. It is possible violence or other desperate action between these groups could develop. The SKBN CU is monitoring the perception of these refugees from host communities through key informant interviews, and it is becoming clear that there is a strong need for peace keeping programming in the area. Also, in Blue Nile relations between communities living on both sides of the frontline remain extremely limited and this will have long-term effects on the stability of the area should peace come.

### Annex I: Security Incidents March 2017

<b>Date</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Payam</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Incident</b>	<b>Impact</b>
14 April 17	Buram	Kulu	Kulu	Cattle Raiding	301 head of cattle reported stolen
15 April 17	Heiban	Um-Durudu	Um-Durudu	Cattle Raiding	26 head of cattle reported stolen
16 April 17	Heiban	Al-Azaraq	Al-Azaraq	Cattle Raiding	37 head of cattle reported stolen
17 April 17	Lagawa and Dilling	Abujunuk	Abujunuk	Market Looting	Market raided by militia group
17 April 17	Dilling	Julud	Julud	Raiding	154 head of sheep and goats
25 April 17	Lagawa	Tulishi	Shuwa	Explosive Remnants of War	Three children were killed and three more injured when playing around an unexploded aerial bomb
25 April 17	Delami	Um Hitan	Kubla	Raiding	45 head of goats were raided, reportedly in a revenge attack

