

SKBN CU Humanitarian Update

June 2017

Overview

- Conflict in Blue Nile continues to affect nearly all aspects of life. A complete cessation of hostilities is needed to address the critical humanitarian situation in this area.
- New food security data from FSMU shows deteriorating food security in all monitored areas, with months remaining until next harvest.
- Lack of medicines and medical supplies are increasingly critical throughout both areas, and the threat of cholera remains a serious concern in South Kordofan.
- Cross line violence threatens important livelihoods and the security of communities as looting and raiding continues cross lines.

Food security and markets

South Kordofan

Moderately and severely food insecure populations increased in the monitored areas of South Kordofan since the last assessment. The FSMU's recent report on data collected in April 2017 shows moderate and severe food insecurity rose to 62% and 9% respectively in the central region. This represents a significant deterioration since January and an even larger increase since the same time in 2016. The Western Jebels faces a worse situation with higher rates of both moderate and severe food insecurity, with severe food insecurity reaching 16% across that region.¹ As the prospect of a sufficient external intervention to these populations is unlikely, the condition is expected to worsen. Note that these numbers reflect the situation in mid-April, now two months have passed since this measurement and the situation is believed to have deteriorated since.

Consistent with seasonal norms, rains have limited access to cross-line markets for both buyers and sellers. Prices have skyrocketed, with some markets experiencing a 80% increase in the last month.² In many markets, staple food commodity simply is not available. As much of the population will be supplementing their harvest during July and August through market activity, this will cause a serious challenge for many communities.

Reactions to food insecurity in these areas are increasingly severe, as more and more people are relying on wild foods or needing to relocate completely in search of food. In the central region, 74% of respondents reported having no food in their home and 55% reported having at least one member of the household to go a whole day and night without eating at least once in the last 30 days. These numbers were 81% and 49% respectively for the Western Jebels.³

Qualitative information from Rashad, al-Abbassiya, Kaw, and Nyaro, which cannot be regularly monitored, suggest a worse situation. While population movements cannot be directly assessed at this

¹ Food Security Monitoring Unit, May 2017 report. This report references data collected in April of 2017.

² Ibid

³ Ibid

time, it is understood that significant portions of the remaining population are now attempting to cross lines to refugee camps.

Rains through May were slightly better than historical norms and continued on this pace through June. If this trend continues, the coming harvest will not be negatively affected as in the previous two years. However, substantial amounts of agricultural land are still not able to be cultivated due to military front lines. A bilateral cease-fire which allows the full resumption of livelihoods is urgently needed for the population in SPLA-N controlled areas to regain self-sufficiency.

Blue Nile

Blue Nile is facing a critical food insecurity outlook as the conflict disrupts normal livelihoods and weather threatens the ongoing cultivation. While the area has better access to markets and a proportionately better harvest from the last season, the area-wide insecurity is likely to reduce participation in agricultural activities. There are also reports of looting by armed groups taking civilian food resources.

Early rains were consistent with historical norms through May, but substantially decreased during June. This unseasonably long dry spell is causing area-wide concerns of a failed early harvest. This follows the pattern of South Kordofan in 2016, which led to an approximately 40%⁴ reduction in agricultural production the following season. This is likely to reduce food production in 2018 and prolong the usual lean season in 2017.

Staple commodities in markets were reportedly decreasing in availability throughout the area as conflict limits the movement of traders. Those which are still operating reporting between 33% and 167% price increase since the outbreak of the violence in May.⁵

In line with these findings, it was reported that severe food insecurity reached 14% throughout the region and moderate food insecurity reached 49%.⁶ Note that these figures were assessed before the outbreak of conflict, and it is assumed that the situation has since worsened.

Health

South Kordofan

As the number of cases of cholera continues to increase in the rest of Sudan,⁷ it becomes increasingly likely that South Kordofan will be affected. This is compounded by a severe lack of drugs, medical supplies, and trained practitioners throughout the area. In a limited assessment of Secretariat of Health facilities, all clinics visited were found to have insufficient drugs, and no clinic had any stocks of antibiotics, antimalarial drugs, or oral rehydration salts. As the rainy season increases the risk of both

⁴ SKBN CU Humanitarian Update, April 2017

⁵ SKBN CU June 2017 field monitoring activities.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ UN News Center: "Rising cholera, diarrhea and malnutrition 'deadly' for children in Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and Sudan, warns UNICEF" accessed at "<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57114#.WW4XamKGOUk>" on July 15th, 2017

cholera and malaria, the population is now highly vulnerable. Medication and trained clinicians are desperately needed throughout the area.

Local Secretariat of Health run clinics in Lagawa, Rashad, and Al Abassiya counties have reported cases of cholera, with the cumulative reported number of suspected cases at 171 in South Kordofan.⁸ This is especially concerning, as a malnourished population is likely to suffer a higher mortality rate from cholera.

Blue Nile

The ongoing conflict has exacerbated the already limited access to health care for Blue Nile. While no assessment was possible since the outbreak of conflict, health facilities in Blue Nile already faced substantially more challenges than in South Kordofan. Desperately needed drugs are unlikely to be available in the region while malaria and water-borne disease is expected to increase during the rainy season. Persons remaining inside will have little ability to move to better equipped clinics in the Maban refugee camps due to conflict, and will have highly limited access to medical care inside Blue Nile.

Animal Health

South Kordofan

Conditions in for this important livelihood are expected to improve as the rainy season replenished animal food sources. No major changes to this sector since the last report.

Blue Nile

As conflict has limited the movements of herders, large amounts of cattle are reported to have been moved from Blue Nile to nearby refugee camps in South Sudan. This has the potential to limit animal food resources and facilitate the spread of disease.

Water

South Kordofan

Availability of water has improved throughout the area, though access to boreholes or filters remains a significant issue. Even while water is at its most plentiful, humans and animals commonly share stagnant water sources. Should cholera or other water-borne disease enter more communities, there will likely be insufficient improved water sources to prevent spreading throughout communities. More clean water sources and animal specific reservoirs are needed to improve health conditions throughout the region.

Blue Nile

Improved water sources are desperately needed throughout Blue Nile, as the previous war between SPLA-N and SAF destroyed much of the infrastructure in communities. Investment in this area is now more challenging as a new conflict has restricted access for potential humanitarian actors. Both sides to

⁸ Reported through SKBN CU humanitarian monitors from the Nuba Mountains Secretary of Health.

the current conflict must respect the limited infrastructure and not further reduce communities' access to water.

Education

South Kordofan

Schools are now out of session and most students will participate in cultivation. Without general access to an internationally recognized curriculum most students will have no access to higher education or other opportunities past the basic, under-resourced schools in the region.

Blue Nile

Resources for education in Blue Nile are even more scarce, likely creating a situation worse than South Kordofan for boys and girls. Added to this, the current conflict has the potential to affect boys of potential military stature. Progress made to keep children under 18 out of the military needs to be maintained, and educational opportunities respected.

Protection and security situation update

South Kordofan

Inter-community conflict and cattle raiding continues to threaten the security of civilians living or cultivating near conflict lines. In a recent cattle-raiding event, 16 armed men attacked a group of civilians with the purpose of stealing resources. In this attack, one person was killed and one taken to the local hospital for treatment. Stolen cattle from this raid were then taken across conflict lines, where it is reported these men were not held responsible for any criminal activity.

This kind of event is common, and as long as perpetrators do not face prosecution for crimes committed across conflict lines, and even allowed to profit, it is expected they will continue. These events not only have the direct consequences of death, rape, and injury to members of the community, but also create a pervasive sense of fear for those trying to work and trade in these areas. As many communities are dangerously food insecure, women and children will have no option but to work in these dangerous locations, putting vulnerable populations at an elevated risk of violence.

This not only threatens an important livelihood and means of food security, but is also threatens the lives of civilians working as traders and pastoralists. More investment is needed to bring these groups together, or this ever-increasing distrust could threaten the viability of a post-conflict society. This raiding has primarily taken place around markets, creating fear and disrupting the lives of a significant portion of the population. This needs to be addressed by authorities and perpetrators not allowed to profit from this activity.

Blue Nile

The area has now experienced two months of conflict, with nearly every aspect of life affected for certain communities. This violence has roots in both tribal tensions and broader political disagreement. It is imperative that both sides recognize the impact of the conflict on the humanitarian situation and avoid any further disruption to humanitarian assistance and the lives of civilians.

Regional clinics in Blue Nile and nearby Maban have reported cases of rape by armed soldiers. The SKBN Coordination Unit is not in a position to put estimates on lives lost or able to fully monitor the impact of this conflict on communities. However, it is apparent that women's and children's security have been broadly impacted by the fighting. Leadership needs to take all possible effort to stop this violence and minimize collateral damage to civilians.

The impact of this fighting will likely last well into 2018, as agriculture and livelihoods were disrupted in many population centers. The SKBN CU will continue to monitor the humanitarian impact of this conflict as security allows.

Annex I: Security Incidents June 2017

Date	County	Payam	Village	Incident	Impact
3 June 17	Heiban	Um Durdu	Near Kalkata Village	Cattle Rading	16 armed men, mounted on camels crossed into the area. 1 civilian was killed and 1 hospitalized as more than 100 head of cattle were stole
18 June 17	Southern Kurmuk	Wadega	20km north of Yabus	Armed conflict and looting	Sectarian clash between soldiers, exact outcomes not known.
20 June 17	Southern Kurmuk	Chali	Soda	Armed conflict	Sectarian clash between soldiers, exact outcomes not known.
22 June 17	Heiban	Kumbur	Laru	Cattle Raiding	13 head of cattle reported stolen
25 June 17	Delling	Julud	Kitongo	Cattle Raiding	65 head of cattle reported stolen

Annex II: Estimates of Populations in Severe and Moderate Need, from May 2017 FSMU Report

All figures reflective of Household Hunger Scale (HHS), based on April 2017 data. **Only regularly monitored areas are reported.** Kao, Nyaro, Warni, Rashad, Al Abassiya, Komo Ganza, and Ingessana Mountains are not reported, but expected to face a similar or worse levels of food insecurity.

Table 1: Central Region, South Kordofan State

Monitored Area	HHS	Estimated Population
Dellami	Moderate	42,900
	Severe	9,500
Heiban	Moderate	121,200
	Severe	26,400
Um Durain	Moderate	113,200
	Severe	7,500
Thobo	Moderate	109,700
	Severe	17,700
Western Kadugli	Moderate	21,400
	Severe	700
Cumulative Central Region	Moderate	408,300
	Severe	61,800

Table 2: Western Jebel Region, South Kordofan State

Monitored Area	HHS	Estimated Population
Al Sunut	Moderate	2,400
	Severe	2,000
Delling	Moderate	102,300
	Severe	31,200
Habila	Moderate	13,200
	Severe	200
Lagawa	Moderate	42,100
	Severe	8,000
Cumulative Western Jebel Region	Moderate	160,000
	Severe	41,400

Table 3: Southern Kurmuk County, Blue Nile State

Monitored Area	HHS	Estimated Population
Cumulative Southern Kurmuk County	Moderate	33,300
	Severe	9,500

