

# SUDAN OPERATIONS

SUDAN/CHAD SITUATION UPDATE 65

22 October 2006



A woman and her children arrive in Erap, near Yei, South Sudan, after years of exile in Uganda.

UNHCR/ J. McKissick/October 2006

# SOUTH SUDAN

## Security

The security situation in the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)-affected areas east of the Nile River deteriorated over the reporting period. Clashes between the LRA and the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) were reported in a number of locations south and south-east of Juba in Central Equatoria. Two ambushes targeting civilian vehicles were also reported on the Juba–Nimule road. The UPDF has deployed more troops in the areas along the Nimule–Juba road and the Juba–Torit road.

In Juba, the peace talks between the Ugandan Government and the LRA reached a crucial stage as the LRA joined forces with their leadership in designated assembly points. It was reported by the Ugandan delegation to the talks that LRA fighters left Owiny-ki-Bul, one of the two assembly zones on the east side of the River Nile in South Sudan, and entered their hideouts in Garamba National Park, northwest of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), joining forces with their elusive leaders. The estimated 200 LRA fighters were reportedly led to Garamba by several senior LRA commanders, including Dominic Ongwen, one of the five LRA leaders wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

During the movement of the group to Garamba, the LRA delegation in Juba said the rebels would not sign a peace agreement with the Ugandan Government if the international arrest warrants for their leaders were not dropped. The Government of South Sudan is trying to get the LRA to return to Owiny-ki-Bul assembly area and has deployed forces to secure the site. However, no movement of the LRA towards the assembly site has been reported. The main obstacle to the LRA's return to Owiny-ki-Bul seems to be the growing presence of UPDF within Central and Western Equatoria States.

Meanwhile, in Upper Nile, tensions in the Phom el-Zeraf–Atar area remain high. The Commander in Chief of the SPLA and ex-South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF) leader, General Paulino Matiep, has openly accused that his troops are being sidelined in appointments within the SPLA. The area has been re-assessed and all restrictions remain in place.

## Repatriation from the Democratic Republic of Congo



Repatriation continued from the DRC with 250 refugees returning from Aba on 11 October. Ms. Makila James, Consul General of the US Consulate in Juba, and Ms. Malfrid Anestad, Adviser on Humanitarian Affairs for the Joint Donor Team in Juba, accompanied the repatriation movement from the Sudan/DRC border and visited Alero way station in Yei.

**Photo:** The Head of UNHCR's office in Yei discusses UNHCR's funding crisis with Ms. Malfrid Anestad of the Joint Donor Team in Juba. These repatriation convoys are made possible by the generosity of donor countries. UNHCR/J. McKissick/Oct. 2006

On 18 October, UNHCR received the largest convoy yet this year, with 527 refugees returning to Yei from Aba (178 families). Rudu I settlement close to Aba in the DRC is

now officially closed. The vast majority of the returnees – 490 – returned to Yei, Otego and Tore *Payams*. A pregnant woman expecting to deliver within one week insisted on returning to Yei despite the risk of complications during the journey. She did not want to remain in Rudu I settlement after it closed and was adamant that she would receive better medical care in Yei with the new maternity ward at the hospital funded by UNHCR. She traveled in an ambulance ahead of the convoy, accompanied by a doctor from Aktion Afrika Hilfe (AAH). Shortly upon arrival, she delivered a baby boy.

**Photo: Moses (three hours old at the time the photo was taken) became the 528<sup>th</sup> returnee of repatriation convoy no. 23 from the DRC assisted by UNHCR. UNHCR/J. McKissick/Oct. 2006**



### **Repatriation from Uganda**

Repatriation from Uganda resumed on 13 October with the first organized convoy of refugee returnees from Kiryandongo settlement in central Uganda. The convoy of 155 returnees (38 families) departed from the settlement and traveled by road to Yei where the returnees spent two nights at Alero way station. There, UNHCR staff verified the final destinations of the returnees, paying particular attention to cases with special needs. The returnees received HIV/AIDS training and mine risk awareness before departing for their final destinations. The majority of the convoy – 148 individuals (35 families) – traveled to Juba on 15 October. UNHCR staff dispersed over half of the returnees to their homes in the Juba area on the same day and the remaining 68 returnees were accommodated at the way station in Juba, managed by GTZ.

Final destinations of the returnees included various districts in Juba town (Munuki, Tong Ping, Malakia, Kator, Lologo, Gabat), Gumbo village and Kapoeta. These were the first returnees to stay at the Juba way station, which is now fully operational. All returnees received a package of non-food items, seeds and tools and a three-month food ration.

Repatriation from Moyo, northern Uganda, to Kajo Keji resumed on 17 October. A total of 206 refugees arrived at Kangai way station where they spent the night before being dispersed to their final destinations on 18 October. A group of donor representatives, organized by UNHCR Uganda and accompanied by UNHCR's Director of External Relations, witnessed the repatriation movement. Another convoy of 200 refugees was about to leave Moyo for Kajo Keji on 20 October, but was cancelled due to security incidents reported in the area east of Juba.

### **Returns from the Central African Republic**

A total of 44 spontaneous returnees from the Central African Republic (CAR) were received at Tambura way station during the period under review. Since early August to date, a total of 946 spontaneous returnees from CAR have been registered and assisted.

Meanwhile, final preparations are underway for the resumption of organized voluntary repatriation from CAR. Two pilots from the new air charter company, Denim Air, visited Tambura on 18 October to assess the condition of the airstrip prior to resumption of the repatriation operation. They found the runway appropriate and the main recommendation included clearing grass and bushes alongside the airstrip.

Despite the ongoing pre-registration of refugees for organized repatriation by the UNHCR team on the other side of the border in Mboki, CAR, some families decide to continue to return spontaneously. This is a strong indication of the desire of the refugees to return home.

### **Returns from Ethiopia**

Some refugees in Ethiopia who have lost hope in organized repatriation have started taking an individual decision to return to South Sudan on their own. On 6 and 11 October, a total of 15 Uduk refugees (five families) left from Bonga camp and 16 refugees (five families) departed from Fugnido camp after surrendering their ration cards and collecting voluntary repatriation forms. A family of three from Yarenja camp also left for South Sudan after handing over their ration cards and collecting voluntary repatriation forms. With these repatriation forms, returnees can receive assistance upon arrival in South Sudan, following registration by UNHCR.

Meanwhile, the next cross-border meeting on the upcoming organized repatriation operation from Yarenja and Sherkole refugee camps is scheduled to take place in Kurmuk, Blue Nile State, starting on 27 October.

### **Returns from Egypt**

Large numbers of Sudanese, particularly from the South, continued to approach the UNHCR office in Cairo requesting assistance and wishing to repatriate. UNHCR continued to provide information on the procedures for voluntary repatriation (documentation, exit visa, etc.). It was observed that an increasing number of persons approaching UNHCR for assistance to return have already undertaken the necessary paperwork and have travel documents in hand. It appears that this is the result of information regarding the voluntary repatriation procedures now being increasingly disseminated throughout the community. Counseling was postponed for a number of reasons, including the possibility of having to suspend assisted return, given the austerity measures adopted by UNHCR due to serious financial constraints.

In light of the number of Sudanese approaching the office for assistance to return, which currently stands at processing roughly some 100 persons per month, there is the risk of losing the momentum for return during the upcoming dry season due to the funding shortfall. Until further funds can be secured, UNHCR has slowed down receiving new applicants and has suspended the more costly return by air for the vulnerable, in particular medical cases.

### **Intention survey in IDP villages in Damazin and Rosaries**

The joint registration and monitoring mission to the IDP villages in the accessible areas around Damazin and Rosaries continued. Currently, 5,932 households (31,382 individuals) have been interviewed. A total of 3,675 families (18,998 individuals) declared their intention to return to their places of origin; 1,970 families (10,817 individuals) will stay in their areas of displacement near Damazin; and 287 families (1,587 individuals) have not yet taken a decision.

The main reason for wishing to return to places of origin is that land for settlement in the areas of displacement has been allocated temporarily and the people fear being relocated by the Government. Farm land has to be rented and many cannot afford the lease. In addition, basic infrastructure in the IDP settlements is below standards. For the most part, clean drinking water is not available and the main water source remains the Nile River. Health care units are 45 minutes walking distance and schools, if available, are ill equipped.

Of concern is that Kurmuk and Geissan locality (return areas) have been significantly affected by the war and absorption capacity is therefore minimal. It has become obvious that a large percentage of the IDPs, particularly the IDPs of southern Blue Nile, have no information about their areas of return. An information campaign is therefore needed.

### Registration and verification of IDP/refugee returnees in Kurmuk locality

UNHCR has been having problems with registration and verification of IDP returnees from the Mabaan community. The *Sheikh* claims that he does not recognize the list of names that has been submitted to UNHCR as the person who has been submitting the lists is not one of them and does not have the authority to register the IDPs. The Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SRRC) has also submitted names of Mabaan IDPs in Gemasy village (Kurmuk *Payam*) – 65 families or 281 individuals. These IDPs have not yet been verified by UNHCR because of the poor road conditions leading to the village.

### Information to returnees

The Sudan Information Campaign for Returnees (SICR), led by UNICEF, has established a working group in the South. The SICR has been present in the North for over a year to provide information to IDPs in Khartoum on return to the South. UNHCR will be an active member of the SICR working group in the South and has volunteered to co-chair it because of its expertise in obtaining and providing information to potential returnees.

### Bor Dinka IDPs

15 November has been confirmed as the start up date for movement of the 1,000 Dinka IDPs currently residing at Lologo transit centre in Juba to Bor. The way station in Bor will be functional by then and access to the *Payams* should be possible. UNHCR has developed a repatriation plan by *Payam* and will begin to make preparations with its partners. The Lologo IDP population will be verified to prepare the movement plan with IOM.



Bor way station. UNHCR/G. Muya and M. Smith/Oct. 2006

### Mondikolok IDPs

Through the SRRC and UNHCR, soap assistance was provided on 13 October to 553 individuals currently living in Mondikolok IDP camp. The distribution was planned following the report of the joint hygiene assessment which had been carried out on 19 September by the county health department and which had indicated poor hygiene and sanitation problems at Mondikolok IDP camp. One bar of soap provided by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) was distributed to each of the 553 individuals living in Mondikolok in order to

minimize a skin disease which was noticed during the assessment. Sensitization on hygiene and sanitation were also carried out before the distribution.

### **Assessment mission to Jonglei counties**

From 1 to 14 October, UNHCR conducted an assessment mission to three counties in Jonglei – Akobo, Wuror and Nyirol. A rough estimate is that up to 10 percent of the population are returnees (having returned in 2006), of whom a notable amount were refugees in neighbouring countries. It was reported that many trekked for approximately one week from Malakal or the Ethiopian border to their communities of return. The difficulty of this journey, coupled with concerns about insecurity and lack of water and food, is probably dissuading return. There is no assisted return in the area and an insufficient number of private vehicles to offer transport, partly because local roads are suspected of being mined and are in bad conditions. A possible means of support would be to either set up a way station in Walgak *Payam*, Akobo County, as it is a transit stop for returning IDPs and refugees coming from Malakal or the Ethiopian border, or to reinforce the SRRC in the area to provide such assistance.

The areas are under-developed and access to basic needs and services is insufficient. More support is needed to ensure successful reintegration and avoid conflict over limited resources. There is a continued need for food aid in all three counties as families are not producing sufficient quantities through their farming activities, partly due to this year's flooding which damaged much of the crop. There is also a significant need for agricultural support, especially provision of training, seeds and tools. Food security is a major problem for returnees, as they have not had the opportunity to plant for this season and are thus entirely reliant on aid.

County authorities informed UNHCR that they did not expect that the returnees would have difficulties accessing land and assured that the authorities would be able to successfully deal with any problems. However, they recommended that UNHCR provide land and property workshops and assist the authorities in completing land surveys of their areas and establishing land registries to ensure property rights.

Insecurity continues to be a problem, especially in Akobo, as the neighbouring ethnic group, Murle, which resides in Pibor and Pochalla Counties, has not been disarmed. There is cattle theft and other banditry.

### **Ethiopian Anuaks in Pochalla**

From 7 to 17 October, UNHCR, together with UNMIS RRR, traveled to Pochalla County and undertook a separate field mission. UNHCR visited the refugee resettlement camp in Alari *Boma* to assess the living conditions of the Ethiopian Anuak refugees there. It was noted that the refugees are not locally integrated in the community as they live in an isolated place, nine kilometres away from the town. They receive food from WFP, but no assistance is provided to them by the local authorities due to lack of resources. The refugees do not have access to clean water, sanitation, health, education, shelter and security. The county authorities officially recognised the Ethiopian Anuaks currently settled in Alari camp as *prima facie* refugees because they were not individually interviewed through the refugee status determination process.

### **Mission to Chukudum return area**

On 9 October, UNHCR traveled to Chukudum (Budi County), Eastern Equatoria, to assess the road conditions in the context of future repatriation from Kenya. From the junction with the main road, the road to Chukudum is 42 kilometres. Under normal conditions it takes an estimated three hours to travel from Kapoeta to Chukudum. During the rainy season, the road deteriorates significantly. The team found that the road was full of pot holes and large rocks and that it would be difficult, if at all possible, for vehicles without four wheel drive to pass. There are however, no suspected mines or UXOs along the road. Information from the Commissioner, the *Payam* administrator and individuals suggests that the security situation in Chukudum, as well as along the road Camp 15–Chukudum–Lotukei is stable. The area of security concern is from Lotukei to New Kush up to Natinga where cattle raiders are more active. The recommendation from the team is that repatriation to Chukudum can resume provided that there is no rain in the days prior to the movement and that only four wheel drive vehicles are used.

The Commissioner of Budi County has asked UNHCR to organize a visit to Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya to meet the refugees from Budi and inform them about the situation in the county. The Commissioner is a former refugee leader from Kakuma camp.

### **Mission to Ikotos County**

UNHCR carried out a field mission to Ikotos County in the period 11-13 October. The objective was to look into the return situation from Uganda in order to complete the information gathered on the return situation in Magwi County. The Ikotos corridor is one of three return corridors from Uganda into Eastern Equatoria. The road from Uganda towards Ikotos town is good and commercial traffic is relatively large. The team found that 16,279 spontaneous returnees have been registered from May 2005 to date. The large majority returned in 2006. Registration is carried out by the SRRC, with support from Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The county also has a large number of IDPs (20,766), the majority of whom are from Ikotos County, but also from Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal States. The IDPs are concentrated in four locations, i.e. Ikotos town, Momoria Ngaluma, Chilok and Tsertsenya.

The county has two primary health centres and 24 primary health units, but no hospital. Of the 49 schools (47 primary and two secondary), 42 are "under the tree" schools. While many needs were identified, a major concern among the returnees was the lack of water. A programme for providing more functioning boreholes would be a priority, along with protection monitoring and facilitation of return.

### **Funding shortfall**

On 21 October, UNHCR held a coordination meeting in Yei with senior managers of implementing partners. The partners were informed of the serious lack of funding for UNHCR's South Sudan operation and were requested to immediately suspend all activities not directly linked to repatriation, i.e. reintegration projects, funded by UNHCR. The partners expressed concern about the serious implications of such a suspension of projects. UNHCR urged them to maintain their true sense of partnership with UNHCR and face together the challenges posed by the current financial difficulties.

### **Update on funding situation as at 12 October 2006**

2006 Requirements for South Sudan/countries of asylum: US\$ 65,863,243

2006 Contributions: US\$ 42,277,505

# DARFUR

## Security

The general security situation in West Darfur remained volatile and unpredictable. It has been reported that the Government of Sudan is implementing a new policy with regard to the movement of humanitarian workers within its territory. According to the new policy, humanitarian workers should get clearance from the Humanitarian Affairs Commission (HAC) before traveling to the field and National Security officers will make sure all travelers are cleared before being allowed to access roads and airports. Commercial trucks hired by UN agencies and NGOs should also be cleared by HAC.

Serious clashes between Sudanese armed forces and rebel factions around Kulbus, 100 kilometres north of El Geneina, prompted international NGOs operating in the area to request an immediate evacuation of their staff. It was reported that loud explosions and exchange of gun fire were heard during the night. The UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) coordinated the evacuation of 18 INGO staff to El Geneina with UNMIS and WFP.

On 15 October, a four wheel drive vehicle belonging to an INGO was hijacked by five gunmen inside Dorti IDP camp, 12 kilometres north-east of El Geneina. The car was parked in front of a meeting room, when gunmen surrounded the area and asked for the key before driving away. Staff were not harmed as they handed over the key without resistance.

Tension is rising in the area of Jabal Marra due to the heavy presence of SLA (Abdul Wahid), SLA (Minni Minawi) and the Shafi faction. In the most recent direct contacts with the SLA, the majority seemed still to identify with Abdul Wahid as the primary leader. With the end of the holy month of Ramadan approaching, there is apprehension that there may be an outbreak of fighting in Jebel Marra. Basic contingency planning has been undertaken in Zalengei to cater for the eventuality of a new influx.

Credible reports suggest that Chadian rebels are heavily concentrating forces in the area of Jebel Merfain. It is expected that they may soon launch another attack across the border against FANT (Chadian Armed Forces).

Concern has been expressed in South Darfur where the SLA is occupying the town of Gereda. Cases of rape and abductions have been reported. UNDSS has given assurances that the trapped vehicles of FAO, IOM and UNFPA are still safe and intact at the AU base in Gereda since the last reported clashes and eventual evacuation of humanitarian workers.

## ***WEST DARFUR***

### Arrivals from Chad

During the reporting period, UNHCR received information about small numbers of new arrivals of Chadian refugees in Habila locality; however, the information could not be confirmed due to restrictions on movement. A few families presented themselves to the UNHCR office in Habila as Chadian refugees in need of assistance. It turned out, however, that most of these families had arrived in Habila more than a year ago, had not managed to receive WFP food ration cards for various reasons and hoped that UNHCR could include them in the WFP food distribution list. The families were referred to WFP for possible inclusion in the distribution list.

UNHCR conducted a field mission to Um Dukhun, where it was noted that the number of refugees and returnees remains unstable due to regular cross-border movement. There are 12,998 refugees and returnees registered for food distribution, including the 6,100 recent arrivals that came during the last six weeks. New families arrive every day. The majority of the arrivals are women and children, fleeing from poor conditions



and insecurity in their home villages in Chad. Security remains a major problem as they are crossing into Chad to harvest their crops and are being harassed by Arab militia and Chadian rebels. Most of the men stayed behind in Chad.

In two transfer exercises in June/July of this year, UNHCR transferred a total of 127 refugees from Um Dukhum to Mukjar refugee camp. Others opted to remain in Um Dukhun to harvest their farms in Chad. Since then, a few families have arrived in Mukjar spontaneously. The total number of refugees in Mukjar refugee camp is now 226. There are indications that many Chadians in Um Dukhun will seek to be relocated to Mukjar after the harvest. It is noted that there are certain individuals in the refugee community who are actively campaigning against the move because they want to have assistance in Um Dukhun and to keep an eye on their farms and land near the border. This seems to be having a "spoiling" effect on the decision of others. It is likely that organized transfers will initially proceed with small numbers and gradually increase as acceptance grows.

### **IDPs in Foro Baranga**

There is an ongoing intimidation of the IDP population in Foro Baranga and the surrounding villages. The level of fear among the people has increased since the attack on the police post in Jimeiza on 2 September. There is also an increase of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) incidents. The road between Foro Baranga and Jimeiza is considered too dangerous to travel on and IDPs request more regular and serious patrols and security on the road to allow people to go to town for supplies. Some farming is being undertaken close to the villages, but because of ongoing harassment by Arab militia, most people have given up. Farmers anticipate they will suffer loss of their crops in the coming month when the cattle herds are scheduled to migrate and will pass through the area. Conflict over crop destruction is expected.

More attacks in the region could result in the displacement of the IDPs to Chad. All the *Sheikhs* and IDPs near the border have indicated that they will move to Chad if attacks occur. With a total IDP population of around 10,500 in the area, this could present a significant problem for the Chadian villages of reception – around Mongororo, which already hosts some 6,000 refugees who are locally integrated since 2004. Discussions indicate that the IDPs would be willing to go to Gaga camp if transport is provided, especially the group of disabled people.

### **Zalingei IDP camps**

Follow up meetings between the IDPs and the AU to iron out problems with the firewood patrols took place as planned on 20 October. The IDPs reiterated their firm request that the AU provide transport for the accompanying *Sheikhs* and youth leaders. This request was fully supported by IDP women who attended the meetings in equal numbers to the men (approximately 40-45 IDPs at each meeting in Hamediya and Hassa Hissa). Despite earlier declarations of an insurance impediment barring the IDPs from traveling in AMIS vehicles, the AU representatives at the meetings promised to consult further and revert with an answer on this point.

## ***SOUTH DARFUR***

### **Influx of IDPs to Nyala and Otash camp**

Primary and secondary movements of IDPs from the affected areas of conflict continued to take place. A very worrisome trend is that large numbers arrive in Nyala on a daily basis. The UN Country Team (UNCT) has estimated the probability that only 20 percent of the affected population actually find their way to Nyala.

Many IDPs fled to Otash IDP camp (Nyala). On 15 October alone, 1,800 new persons arrived in the camp. The numbers of new arrivals has now reached 10,800 individuals since 5 October. If this figure is added to the original figure of the camp population, the current total population of the IDP caseload stands at 40,800 individuals. The IDPs come from affected areas between Cessabane and Buram locality including Gereda.

Many agencies and NGOs are providing assistance to the group. Registration to update statistics is conducted and will be useful for consideration of further assistance.

**Camp management workshop**

UNHCR was a co-facilitator with Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in conducting an OCHA-organized camp management and coordination workshop for NGOs in Nyala on 14 October. The target group was the local NGOs.

**Update on funding situation as at 12 October 2006**

2006 Revised requirements for Darfur: US\$ 21,085,381

2006 Contributions: US\$ 19,848,958

# CHAD

## Security

The security situation in eastern Chad continued to be characterized by generalized insecurity and frequent banditry. Four wheel drive vehicles belonging to humanitarian agencies continued to be the object of robbery by armed groups. Between 21 and 29 September, one vehicle was stolen from the UNHCR office compound in Iriba and one was hijacked from ICRC on the road between Guereda and Am Zoer. Another attempt to steal a vehicle from an NGO compound in Bahai failed. The three incidents included aggression, beating and hostage-taking. The number of vehicles of humanitarian agencies that have been targeted in eastern Chad since November 2005 amounts to 39 as of 30 September, including failed attempts. Seventeen vehicles have been recovered, but none of the attackers have so far been apprehended.

UNHCR met with the Governor of Ouaddai, who reiterated his promise to inform humanitarian agencies of any deterioration of the situation so as to allow necessary preventive measures to be taken in time. Meanwhile, it was agreed that humanitarian work should continue normally, in full respect of security measures in force – with maximum vigilance and prudence on the Guereda – Abeche and Iriba – Biltine road axes.

In an effort to provide greater security for refugees, Chadian host populations and humanitarian personnel serving throughout eastern Chad, an additional Protocol to the Memorandum of Understanding of March 2006 was signed between the Government of Chad and UNHCR on 27 September, whereby a total of 75 additional Chadian gendarmes will be posted among UNHCR's five operational hubs serving the current 12 refugee camps, namely (from north to south) Bahai, Iriba, Guereda, Farchana and Goz Beida/Koukou Angarana. They will be joining more than 200 gendarmes already deployed throughout eastern Chad to ensure road patrols and patrols overnight in the main cities. Gendarmes deployed under these agreements will undergo standard training before assuming their duties. This will be reinforced by training sessions organized by UNHCR and partners on norms of international law and humanitarian assistance. While UNHCR welcomes this important development, it should be noted that it is far from sufficient to meet the current challenges of insecurity in eastern Chad.

Meanwhile in southern Chad, reports continued to be received regarding widespread road banditry in the north of neighbouring CAR. This phenomenon of road banditry is believed to have links to the rebellions in CAR, Chad and Sudan as civilians in northern CAR are targeted by "bandits" on allegations of alliance with rebels and/or the Government.

## ***EASTERN CHAD***

### Border monitoring

On 20 September, UNHCR Guereda conducted a border monitoring mission to the village of Seneit, passing by Koulbous and Birack, to verify information indicating new arrivals since mid-August of Sudanese families fleeing hostilities in Darfur. Together with a follow-up mission on 28 September, it was determined that several hundred, if not a thousand, refugees – new arrivals and longer-term residents – wished to be moved to the safety of refugee camps.

### Meeting with Minister of Territorial Administration

The UNHCR Representative, Serge Male, met with the newly appointed Minister of Territorial Administration, Ahmed Bashir Mahamat. The discussion focused on the volatile situation in eastern Chad, harassment of humanitarian workers, lack of respect of the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and the need for identifying sites for the relocation of the refugee camps of Oure Cassoni and Am Nabak. As a follow-up to this meeting, the Minister sent instructions to the three Governors of Ouaddai, Wadi Fira and Borkou

Ennedi Tibesti (BET) emphasizing the duty to maintain the civilian and humanitarian character of the refugee camps.

### **Relocation of refugee camps**

In a major new development, local and regional leaders in the Department of Wadi Fira have given UNHCR the green light to search for new refugee sites to host Sudanese refugees from Darfur. This is particularly good news in light of fact that an earlier request was refused by local leaders because of concerns about refugees (crime, damage to environment) and resentment that they had not been consulted. It is also important in view of the deterioration of the situation in Darfur and along the Chad/Sudan border. UNHCR deems some camps, especially Oure Cassoni and Am Nabak, to be too close to the border. Furthermore, Am Nabak has no source of water. Water must be trucked in, the cost of which is prohibitively expensive.

### **Refugee security**

Sudanese rebel presence continued to be a major problem in Oure Cassoni camp, much to the consternation of refugees and humanitarian agencies alike. Authorities are regularly informed of the situation and have done nothing to prevent it. Gendarmes are constantly reminded of the importance of maintaining the civilian nature of the camps and of prevention of recruitment activities. To this effect, a refresher course on the prevention of recruitment in the camps was organized on 29 September in Oure Cassoni by UNHCR, International Rescue Committee (IRC) and CNAR (the national refugee authority). All refugee leaders participated. More than 1,000 copies of Arab language documents emphasizing the importance of maintaining the civilian character of the camps were distributed to leaders for widespread distribution throughout the camp.

### **Registration**

The registration committee in Abeche met again on 21 September for the first time in several months. The members of this body, who provide oversight to the registration committees active in each of the field offices, include representatives of UNHCR, WFP, CNAR and the implementing partners responsible for camp management. During the meeting, a brief overview of the registration updates was provided, followed by discussions on how this relates to distribution, methods of determination and verification of refugee population numbers, activities planned until the end of the year, possibilities of statistical reports created from proGres (refugee population database) and the needs of partners. The next meeting is planned for the end of November.

Meanwhile, the taking of photographs of individual refugees – the last part of the registration process before the printing of ID cards – continues in Iridimi and Touloum (UNHCR Iriba), while planning has started for Oure Cassoni (UNHCR Bahai). In Bredjing, the photo-taking process is accompanied by interviews and regularization of the status of refugees not yet registered – 24,288 refugees have been filmed thus far and 1,037 regularized.

### **IDPs**

Implementing partner Intersos reported that the five sites near Goz Beida currently host an estimated 15,429 displaced people, while another 28,680 are living outside of these sites, amounting to an estimated total of 44,109 IDPs residing in Sila Department.

During the last week of September, two IDP planning meetings were held with local authorities: one in Hadjer Hadid to cover the Assoungha region and one in Goz Beida to cover the Dar Sila region. The meetings provided an opportunity for humanitarian actors working with IDPs to present their activities and plans for 2007 to the local authorities. Such meetings form part of a policy of decentralization of decision-making to the local level. They are also intended to facilitate collaboration between agencies as well as between agencies and local authorities.

The Protection Working Group meeting met on 29 September in Abeche to discuss violations of IDPs' rights recorded over the month of September.

Two monitoring missions were carried out during the reporting period – to Dogdore on 24 and 25 September and to Alasha and neighboring villages on 26 September. UNHCR and UNICEF were able to confirm a number of incidents of rapes of IDP women in Dogdore (four confirmed, 11 reported). Other protection concerns included insecurity for women in all sites who venture out to collect firewood and disputes over access to water. IDPs also complained of lack of access to arable land.

In Alasha and surrounding villages, there are an estimated 1,500 IDPs. With the support and close collaboration of local communities and authorities, the IDPs have been able to cultivate and find pasture for their livestock. However, they have problems due to the lack of potable water, the long traveling distance to the health centre and the inability to send their children to primary school – the existing local school is already filled to maximum capacity by local children. Further, the situation of some 250 IDPs settled near Goz Bagar, between Alasha and Arkoum, remains extremely precarious. Although the most vulnerable among them have benefited from a distribution of plastic sheeting, cooking utensils, mats and blankets, UNHCR is trying to organize a general distribution of non-food items and to work with WFP to conduct a food distribution.

### Detention

Food was delivered to prisoners from Guereda and Iriba camps being held in the Biltine prison. UNHCR staff were able to meet with the new prosecutor, who promised to move swiftly in processing cases which had been put on standby in the absence of a prosecutor and investigating judge for the past six months or more (for security reasons).

### Health

The previous reported occurrence of hepatitis E in Gaga camp (UNHCR Farchana) is now under control. In Am Nabak camp (UNHCR Iriba), it was confirmed that an earlier suspected case of avian flu was not founded.

### Sexual and gender-based violence

UNHCR organized a two-day workshop on clinical and psychosocial care of SGBV survivors. Participants included implementing partner staff working in protection, community services, health and social affairs.

### Community services

Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) exercises are ongoing in all field offices in eastern Chad, with a final evaluation due in October. Results will be incorporated into the 2007 planning.

Implementing partner HIAS organized a familiarization session for camp block leaders in Goz Amir (UNHCR Goz Beida/Koukou). Among the topics addressed were stress and grief management, consequences of violence against women, SGBV and conflict resolution. Also, to better target future responses to refugee community needs in Goz Amir camp, HIAS conducted a survey of refugees and humanitarian personnel working in the camp.

### Education

UNHCR organized a two-day training-of-trainers workshop for field offices in Goz Beida and Farchana. All 34 trainers working in GTZ vocational training centres were instructed on how to implement peace education. Subsequently, all participants made a commitment to incorporate peace education in the curricula that are structuring the various vocational subjects.

During the reporting period, summer courses were begun for students in Goz Amir camp who either did not attend classes regularly throughout the past school year or who had poor results. A total of 1,673 children are enrolled.

### Income-generation

The first round of micro-credits for refugee women came to completion during the reporting period in Djabal and Goz Amir camps (UNHCR Goz Beida/Koukou). The project proved to be quite successful at Goz Amir camp, where 98.5 percent of women repaid the credit they had been given three months earlier. However, results in Djabal proved rather disappointing, as only about half of the women repaid their credits, yielding a combined average total of somewhat higher than 70 percent repayment for the two camps combined. The poor performance in Djabal is attributable to interference by certain male members of the camp population who discouraged women from repaying the credits they received.

### Self-reliance

A coordination meeting with the three Governors in eastern Chad took place to focus on harmonizing the various activities in the camps. The issue of self-reliance was also discussed and it was unanimously agreed to launch such initiatives in the camps.

## *SOUTHERN CHAD*

### New arrivals

A border monitoring mission went to Bekonga and found nine Peuls from northern CAR who had installed themselves in a nearby school. They informed that at least 33 more Peuls were at the border and that they all had fled CAR due to general insecurity and the specific targeting that the Peuls as nomads are experiencing in the form of kidnapping of their children and stealing of their animals. Around 260 Peuls have arrived to southern Chad during the last three months. Interviews are being carried out to plan and ensure their protection.

### Specific individual situations

Four refugees were arrested – three for robbery and one for adultery – and their cases are now being investigated while they are detained in the Gore prison. UNHCR is following the cases in order to ensure that the follow-up and the investigations are carried out appropriately and that no abuse takes place.

### Food

From 26 to 27 September, a general food distribution took place in Yaroungou camp. Of the 15,099 planned beneficiaries, 14,930 (2,596 families) received supplies of grains, oil and salt.

Upon UNHCR's request, WFP has agreed to extend by three months its general food distribution for refugees while waiting for the recommendations of the Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) 2006. Meanwhile, although markets are well-stocked, prices have increased significantly from this time last year. For example, a 100 kg sack of peanuts that sold last year for FCFA 6,000 sells now for FCFA 14,000.

### Water and sanitation

The provision of water to the refugee camps of Gondje, Amboko and Amboko extension was rated as follows: 20 litres per persons per day (Gondje) and 16 litres per person per day (Amboko and Amboko extension).

CARE has trained the established sanitation committees, targeting 45 persons, of whom 24 were women.

### HIV/AIDS

Training-of-trainers on HIV/AIDS was organised for 110 persons from Gore and Kaba Rouangar. The success rate was high, which can partly be explained by the prior sensitization campaigns carried out by Red Cross Chad and other local associations.

The local association of persons in Gore living with HIV/AIDS received an amount of FCFA 259,000. These funds will facilitate the official registration of the association at national level and also the rehabilitation of the

premises of their office. This is a very active association involved in training and awareness-raising activities in different neighbourhoods in Gore and the refugee camps. The association also has members among the refugee population and takes care of orphans and widows.

### **Sexual and gender-based violence**

MSF-Holland (MSF-H) and COOPI held a coordination meeting on SGBV activities. MSF-H has carried out sensitization campaigns targeting more than 200 refugee women in Gondje camp and Amboko extension camp, which, in particular, focused on medical treatment and confidentiality. Sensitization activities will also be carried out in Amboko camp following training of the COOPI nurse.

### **Education**

School enrolment authorities in Maro stated that, as at 29 September, only 211 new enrolments and 136 re-enrolments had been registered – a very troubling statistic given that the region's school-age population is around 5,000 children. However, education authorities explained that this shortfall was due to the fact that children were still away working in their families' fields and that numbers would increase significantly in October.

Parents and children were mobilised for registration at the schools in the Amboko and Gondje camps and thus far 1,146 pupils were registered in Amboko camp and 1,226 pupils in Gondje camp. School started in early October.

UNICEF has expressed interest in taking the lead of the education sector at the pre-school, primary and secondary levels. Refugees and local populations alike in Grande Sido Department would benefit from the proposed interventions with regard to rehabilitation of existing structures and installation of latrines and boreholes for schools in need. Discussions between UNHCR and UNICEF for the school year 2006/2007 are underway.

### **Income-generation**

In Amboko camp, the micro-credit allocations committee examined the 24 submitted dossiers. Thirteen were accepted for receiving a micro-credit, of whom nine were women.

### **Assistance to local populations**

During a visit to Gore by the Governor of Logone Oriental, a meeting with the various agencies and NGOs and the local authorities was held. The discussion focused on the programmes of the agencies. The Governor's conclusion was that UNHCR and its partner organisations had to focus more on the local population and that there should be more specific interventions in the sectors of water, health, education and road network. The Governor's perception was that the presence of the refugees and the organisations serving them had exercised a negative impact on Gore and its surroundings.

### **Update on funding situation as at 12 October 2006**

2006 Requirements for Chad: US\$ 81,266,556

2006 Contributions: US\$ 59,727,084