



On July 11, 2023, the Protection Cluster South Sudan (PC) and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, conducted a rapid protection assessment exercise in three locations identified as arrival points for South Sudanese returnees who recently arrived from Sudan in Juba County. The teams consisted of UNHCR staff members and UNHCR's implementing partner staff from the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Humanitarian Development consortium (HDC).

The team used the Protection Cluster's standardized tools for protection monitoring at key informant interview level and an observational-based tool developed by UNHCR in partnership with the Protection Cluster.

#### MANGATEEN IDP SITE

**SITE DETAILS**-The returnees are reportedly sharing shelters with their relatives or friends at the site since they do not have plastic sheets or shelter materials to build their own. Some returnees are using abandoned shelters by IDPs who have moved out of the site. The site is overpopulated and has poor drainage system which exposes it to the risk of flooding during heavy rainy season. All the public latrines are full, and no WASH actors are present at the site. Community members do not have the capacity to pay for the cost of dislodging, resulting in open defecation, which exposes them to high risks of disease outbreaks such as cholera, typhoid, diarrhea and others. No bathrooms exist at the site, and people bathe in their shelters or outside their rooms at night, which exposes the women and girls to GBV risks.

*PHOTO: UNHCR/HDC Returnee woman in Mangateen site*

There is no functional water source at the site and poor garbage disposal and management cause blockages in the drainage system and a bad smell. The garbage is accumulated within the sites in an open space near the playground and the same space is also used for open defecation which increases the health risks for the children.



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There is no functional health facility at the site, and the IDPs and returnees access health services from the nearby commercial clinic, while those who cannot afford it go to public facilities in the Juba Teaching Hospital or PHCC in Munuki, which are about 10–25 kilometers from the site. Those who cannot afford transportation costs use traditional medicine. The security situation in the location was reported to be good, although a few incidents of criminality caused by the gang groups are sometimes reported, and such incidents are normally addressed by community structures and local police. There are no reports of movement restrictions at the site or in the entire neighborhood. Both the IDPs and returnees, or members of the Host community, move freely in and out of the area.

**POPULATION DETAILS** - It is difficult to estimate the number of returnees at the site because they are integrated within the IDPs and host communities. However, based on interaction with a few returnees' and UNHCR protection partner staff on the ground, their number may be about 2,000 individuals. Out of this number, only a very few are living with their relatives at the site, while the others have joined their relatives or friends within the host community. The camp management reportedly registered about 490 newly arrived returnee HHs at the site. Based on the observation, the number of returnees staying at the site may be around 1,000 individuals or less. Most returnees appear to be women and children, and many appear traumatized and hopeless.

**ACCESS TO SERVICES** - Currently, there is no humanitarian assistance in the form of food, shelter, health, NFIs, water, and sanitation provided for IDPs and returnees at the site, except for protection activities. UNHCR, through HDC, is implementing protection activities, including protection monitoring, GBV, HLP, and legal aid. Light for the World is aiding persons with disabilities through livelihood activities, the provision of supportive devices, and awareness. NCA, through a local Community Based Organization, is implementing GBV activities, including establishing women's and girl-friendly spaces. REALS is implementing peacebuilding and early warning activities. There is a football playground on the site where the youth and teenagers from the site and Host Community meet to play and perform traditional dances or other social activities.

**ACCESS TO LIVELIHOOD** – Women are involved in small businesses like selling food items, vegetables, and tea. Some children work in the market as porters, while others work as waiters or waitresses in the local restaurants to earn money to meet their needs or support their families. Some returnee women reported selling some of their personal belongings, such as phones and clothing, to meet their needs. Some children are involved in illicit activities, including substance abuse and some reported to be joining criminal gang groups. Elderly persons and persons with disabilities rely on support from their caregivers. Some of them, who have children under their care, send the children to work in the market to support their families.

**SOCIAL COHESION** – Returnees reported tension building up with their host families (IDPs) due to limited space at the site as they are sharing shelters and limited resources.

**OTHER CONCERNS** - The protection partners reported a suspected case of measles outbreak among the returnees' children, with a fatality report of four children (all girls) at the site. The outbreak reportedly started in late May following the arrival of the first group of new arrivals at the site. The infection rate is said to be increasing, with over 80 cases so far recorded. Last week, over 20 new cases were reported on the site. HDC reported the case to the health cluster/WHO, and last week a medical team from the Ministry of Health visited the site and collected samples for investigation and further action (vaccination of children) if samples confirmed positive. Currently, all the reported cases are being managed locally within the site by their parents or host families.

### Key findings from the Key Informant interviews

- **ACCESS TO JUSTICE** – There is limited functionality in the formal access-to-justice mechanisms in place. People normally prefer alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms or customary law because they are accessible, rapid, and inexpensive. Nevertheless, a lack of information on legal procedures, the unavailability of courts in the area, and a lack of funds to facilitate the justice system are major obstacles for the population at the site. Family disputes, physical violence, and HLP issues or claims are among the most reported incidents.
- **CIVIL DOCUMENTATION** – Is an issue for most due to lack of money to acquire the documents or due to a lack of information on the importance of having documentation. Bureaucratic impediment and complex process make acquisition of civil documents including identity cards, passports and birth certificated difficult. Birth certificates are only issued to a few children because most parents do not know the importance or value of acquiring birth certificates for their children. Secondly, many women prefer to deliver at home; hence, it becomes difficult to acquire a birth certificate since such documents are only given to children born in hospitals, or they must pay 3000–6000 SSP to process them, a cost that most vulnerable families can hardly afford.
- **ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE** – No real challenges are identified as obstacles to accessing humanitarian aid, so long as it is available. Nevertheless, the most basic assistance required by the community is not available, so many people engage in cheap labour, child labour, and other negative coping mechanisms that sometimes also result in school dropouts, early marriages, sex work, etc.
- **CHILD LABOUR** – Many returnee households are child-headed. Many families require all members to provide, so child labour is omnipresent in the community.
- **FAMILY SEPARATIONS** – Displacement caused family separations, particularly affecting children, and the elderly. Nevertheless, voluntary separations of caregivers in search of work are also well documented.
- **SEXUAL VIOLENCE** – Fear of stigma, gender and social norms, and a lack of knowledge of rights are the most common reasons for not reporting sexual violence. According to the key informant, the majority of violence occurs among host communities; however, the lack of reporting mechanisms and support for survivors does require further analysis.
- **HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY** - Unlawful occupation of land/property may become an issue with the new arrivals.
- KIs in this community did not have any knowledge on **CHILD RECRUITMENT** or **EXPLOSIVE HAZARDS** matters, which are likely not occurring at this site.

### IDP CAMP III

**SITE AND POPULATION DETAILS** - During the observation exercise, the UNHCR/IRC team noted that returnees are sheltered together with the IDP population and have not settled in a specific section. While there are partners responsible for WASH in the camp, most latrines are not in use due to congestion, and some are locked and privatized. UNICEF is providing water that is accessible to everybody in a limited quantity, and the team observed long lines at the water points. Health points are run by IMC and are operational. However, community members complain of a lack of medications. The security situation appears normal. South Sudan's police services have a checkpoint less than one kilometer from the Camp and are more responsive to calls by Camp leadership. IRC, operating the protection desk, recorded 3,000 individual PSN returnees between May and July 2023. The community leadership estimates that the site hosts some 5,000 individuals; however, team observation does not corroborate those claims at the time of the visit. Among people identified as returnees, the team observed mostly women and children showing signs of stress and looking withdrawn.

**ACCESS TO SERVICES** - IMC is currently providing health services at the site, and IRC is distributing dignity kits through women's and girls'-friendly spaces (WGFs). Food distribution has come to an end, and, according to WFP, no subsequent support is planned. There are five protection agencies providing other general protection services. Shelter provision is no longer available. The existing shelters show signs of wearing out, and there is a great need for additional materials. Some recreational facilities for children are available and in use.

**ACCESS TO LIVELIHOOD** - Women were observed carrying charcoal, firewood, and vegetables brought from outside the host community. Some women sell dry fish and vegetables and own small tea shops. Some children are pushing heavy wheelbarrows full of charcoal and bags of food from the traders to earn a living. Some children are boda-boda riders, while others hang around small markets closer to the camps, cleaning plates at restaurants. Some people with disabilities were seen inebriated.

**PHISICAL SAFETY** – no immediate major threats were observed.

**SOCIAL COHESION** – Tensions were reported between the youth groups. There are several young males between 15 and 25 causing a disturbance and fighting among themselves, causing injuries.

#### Key findings from the Key Informant interviews

- **SAFETY AND SECURITY** - 80% of KIs note that killings or injuries due to violence happens very rarely.
- **RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENT** - All KIs agree there are no restrictions of movement at their present site.
- **ACCESS TO JUSTICE** - 80% of KIs see customary law as the preferred justice mechanism in their community. All of them agree that lack of funding and lack of information are obstacles to accessing formal mechanisms. 20% of KIs reported clan affiliation, stigmatization, and fear of intimidation as obstacles to accessing justice. 80% of KIs see children, youth, and returnees as the most affected population, while the most cited reasons for seeking justice are physical violence, theft, and extortion, family disputes (80%), and HLP claims (20%).
- **CIVIL DOCUMENTATION** – 60% of KIs agree that many people experience issues obtaining civil documentation. For the most part, the documents community members were unable to obtain were: 60% birth certificates and travel documents; 40% title dee sans 20% death certificates; identity cards; marriage certificates; death certificates; and inheritance certificates. They all see as a major barrier the lack of understanding of the process of obtaining documents, while 80% also believe that unreachable or unsafe travel to registrars and unaffordable fees are also substantial obstacles to obtaining legal documentation. They all agree that a lack of documents impacts their ability to seek employment, while 60% believe it also negatively affects opportunities for banking and increases the risk of statelessness. 80% agree that the most appropriate immediate measure would be the presence of legal clinics for support.
- **ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE** – 60% of KIs note unequal or denied access to humanitarian services to be mostly related to education, food security, shelter, and non-food items. 30% of them flag a lack of access to HLP services and the legal aid/formal justice system. As the most affected population groups, 80% report elderly people to be most affected, followed by women and girls (40%). 80% of KIs report a lack of presence of humanitarian actors, while many (between 40 and 60%) believe food card registrations or other types of documents represent a barrier to accessing humanitarian assistance. The most cited negative coping mechanisms for the lack of access to humanitarian assistance are cheap labour (80%), school dropouts (60%), GBV, including intimate partner violence (60%), and some criminal activities, including stealing (20%).
- **CHILD LABOUR** – 80% of KIs mention child labour as a protection challenge. For the most part (80%), the KIs perceive it as part of a family-level coping mechanism whereby every single family member needs to work or contribute to meet the family's needs. 60% of KIs note the widespread presence of child-headed households, and 40% note a lack of consideration by families to perceive education as important. 80% of KIs see the effect



of child labour in their community as leading to exploitation and abuse, increased violence, and psychosocial trauma for children.

- **FAMILY SEPARATIONS** – All KIs agree family separation is a major protection issue in their community. It affects particularly children, and it is caused by involuntary separation during displacement (all KIs agree), followed by the death of the caregiver (20%) and the disappearance of the caregiver (30%).
- **SEXUAL VIOLENCE** – KIs in this community believe sexual violence happens to very few people. 40% of them believe community members would report instances to health centers, humanitarian actors, or the police. However, 80% believe reporting would not occur due to fear of stigmatization and a lack of knowledge of associated rights. 40% of KIs point to business owners and traditional leaders as increasing the risk of sexual assaults or preventing survivors from accessing assistance. Interestingly, 60% of KIs report the establishment of reporting mechanisms with humanitarians, police, and community-based protection mechanisms as an improvement in the community in the past month.
- KIs in this community did not have any knowledge on **CHILD RECRUITMENT** or **EXPLOSIVE HAZARDS** matters, which are likely not occurring at this site.

#### **IDP CAMP I**

**SITE AND POPULATION DETAILS** - During the observation exercise, UNHCR received information from the camp chairman that currently there are 5,017 returnees living at the site. No refugees or third-country nationals reside in the camp. The nearby health center run by the International Medical Corp and the school operating on the site and catering for the local population and IDPs are under pressure due to the recent influx of returnees and heavily challenged to provide them services. No shelter support was provided thus returnees are sharing the meager resources available to camp residents. While UNICEF provides potable water, no other WASH services are available including maintenance of congested latrines which in turn creates a health risk.

**ACCESS TO SERVICES** – Protection services, including GBV support are provided by IRC and IsraAID, however no child protection support is available on the site.

**SPECIALISED PROTECTION NEEDS** - Most people observed collect firewood for own use and to gain income. Children are seen providing manual work including in Juba while some work in local businesses and selling small items on the road. Some elderly and adults are also observed idling around the camp. Local women group leader flagged to UNHCR the need for support for the elderly and people with disabilities, as their caregivers and families are struggling to provide appropriate care. Similarly, children of younger age are also at risk due to the same reasons.

**PHISICAL SAFETY** – no immediate major threats were observed except the danger for women and girls, are water points and makeshift bathing facilities at night as well as wood gathering areas as gangs are reportedly prying on them. Nevertheless, gang fights occurred on site in the early weeks of returnee influx.

**OTHER CONCERNS** - Returnees have told UNHCR they are actively seeking a better place to stay as current accommodation is not suitable. They are in urgent need of food assistance, NFIs including household items and WASH services to avoid spreading of disease.

#### **Key findings from the Key Informant interviews**

- **ACCESS TO JUSTICE** – Key informants agree that access to customary law justice is available at the site but heavily defendant on bribes. HLP issues have been sited as most requiring resolution to enable returnees to begin their reintegration process.



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- **FAMILY SEPARATIONS** – All KIs agree family separation is a major protection issue in their community. It affects particularly children, and it is caused by involuntary separation during displacement.
- **SEXUAL VIOLENCE** – apart from imminent risks at wood gathering and WASH points, sexual assault is present in the community. Addressing is increasingly difficult due to fear of stigmatization.

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