

Joint Organized Return Operation - Re-start of Operations on 1 December

As part of the Joint Organized Return Plan coordinated and implemented by the Government of National Unity (GoNU), the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and IOM, the first overland IOM convoy assisting South Sudanese to return home since the end of this year's rainy season will depart early morning on 1 December from Omdurman El Salam Departure Centre on the outskirts of Khartoum. Buses and trucks will carry returnees and their belongings back home to Renk County in Upper Nile State.



All adults and children travelling on the convoy have been medically screened prior to departure and have received routine vaccinations against

Yellow Fever, Diphtheria/Polio/Tetanus (DPT/OPV) and Tuberculosis (BCG) by IOM medical staff with an IOM doctor and a nurse/midwife also accompanying the convoy. The IOM Migration Health Unit organized HIV/AIDS and other communicable disease education sessions in El Salam Departure Centre. In addition IOM's Protection Unit coordinated with the Norwegian Refugee Council to provide life-saving mine awareness training. The World Food Programme (WFP) has provided the returnees with a 15-day transit food ration to cover their travel needs. A further three-month WFP food ration will be distributed at final destinations where returnees will be met by government and UNMIS Return Recovery and Reintegration Unit reception committees.

At the Departure Centre, the returnees have also received a package of Non Food Items (NFIs) consisting of mosquito nets, blankets, plastic sheeting, soap, jerry cans, and sleeping mats from the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC). Wrapping up this year's return operations, subsequent IOM land convoys will also travel to Dilling and Kadugli counties in Southern Kordofan as well as to Koch and Guit counties in Unity State during December. A group of South Sudanese displaced will also be taken by barge from Kosti to Malakal Town. A total of 3,500 persons are expected to be assisted home by 31 December.

IOM and its partners are also preparing the return home of internally displaced people within South Sudan. A comprehensive internally displaced return registration exercise funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) is being conducted in Nimule (Eastern Equatoria), and will soon begin in Labone (Eastern Equatoria) and Kajo Keji (Central Equatoria).

Emergency funding of US\$2 million from the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) and additional funding by USAID has enabled IOM to complete this year's operations to return tens of thousands of internally displaced South Sudanese. However, US\$4 million is still urgently required for priority return operations scheduled for early 2008 and to establish a logistics infrastructure which entails the building or re-establishment and refurbishment of an extensive network of departure centres and way stations that were either dismantled or damaged during the long rainy season.

Basic Infrastructure Rehabilitation in returnee communities in Northern Bahr el Ghazal

In Northern Bahr el Ghazal as in other areas of South Sudan, IOM village assessments and returnee monitoring activities show that access to potable water remains one of the most pressing needs for both returnees and receiving communities. As part of its Reintegration and Community Stabilization Programme, and thanks to funding by the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), IOM and its partners have completed a range of water and sanitation interventions in under-served areas heavily impacted by returns in Northern Bahr El Ghazal. Some 20,000 individuals now directly benefit from IOM's interventions. Following completion of this basic infrastructure project, a total of 14



boreholes in 12 villages in Aweil North and East Counties are now operational in addition to a town water distribution system providing access to potable water throughout the town of Rumaker.

Projects in the Pipeline—ECHO/USAID/Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) supported:

Thanks to funding from the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF), the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), IOM is preparing to implement further quick impact water and sanitation projects in communities heavily impacted by returns in Northern Bahr El Ghazal, Warrap State and Southern Kordofan. In Northern Bahr El Ghazal community assessments were completed and project designs realized for a range of water and sanitation interventions. Thanks to ECHO support, a small town water distribution system will be installed in Mayen Ulem in Aweil North, a town that has experienced a high influx of returnees since the signing of the CPA. The water distribution system consists of 16 stand posts and is expected to serve the needs in water of 8,500 returnees and community members. IOM will also install a new borehole and a new hand pump in Aweil East County, Panapoth village of Mangartong payam.

Under the USAID-funded quick impact projects currently in the pipeline, IOM plans to complete 30 hand dug wells and install rope pumps in 14 villages of Aweil East and West counties in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. IOM will also complete a small town water system with 17 stand posts in Gokmachar, another town that has experienced a high influx of returnees. Finally one new borehole will be drilled and seven existing boreholes rehabilitated as well as new hand pumps installed in seven villages of Aweil East county.

Thanks to CHF funding in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, IOM will drill 15 new boreholes and install hand pumps in two villages of Aweil North county and in five villages of Aweil East county. In Warrap State and Southern Kordofan community assessments were recently completed; prioritization of needs and selection of interventions is ongoing. All IOM basic infrastructure interventions ensure the close participation of both community members and local authorities from the selection of project types and project sites to the realization and maintenance of the projects.

IOM forms and trains Community Water Boards in all the communities to ensure sustainability and maintenance of completed projects. Both returnees and community members are part of these Community Water Boards with women's participation being a key component. In addition, hygiene promotion activities targeting the community-at-large are an integral part of IOM's reintegration programming.

IOM is fundraising to increase its basic infrastructure work to other sectors, such as health and education as well as geographic locations where the Organization plans to begin implementation of livelihood schemes in addition to its basic infrastructure construction / rehabilitation interventions.



Return and Reintegration of Qualified Sudanese (RQS) Programme:

In November, a further eight teachers and one health care worker joined the 140 candidates who have been successfully placed under the DANIDA funded programme since November 2006 in six States across Southern Sudan and in Khartoum State. IOM organized the return by air from Khartoum to Wau where they were met by IOM and Government representatives. They will begin their new employment immediately. IOM is currently planning the return of 25 teachers and their dependents to Aweil, in Northern Bahr El Ghazal. In addition, IOM is planning the return of two health care workers to Juba in Central Equatoria as well as the return of 14 candidates (teachers, health care workers, technicians, agriculture and finance professionals) by air to Western Equatoria. To find out more about the RQS programme and how to apply please go the programme's website: <http://www.iom.int/rqs/index.html>

IOM Village Assessments:

IOM's latest assessment report of 206 villages in Southern Kordofan and four States in Southern Sudan (Northern and Western Bahr El Ghazal, Warrab and Unity) reveals continuing shortfalls in basic services and infrastructure with particular needs in the water, shelter, health and education sectors. The total reported population within the assessed villages is 1,5 million persons of which returnees represent around 22 per cent (341,000 returnees). Data compiled by IOM and its partners shows that water is the main concern in almost 100 villages since more than 500 people use a single water point. The report establishes that more than 40 per cent of the assessed returnees live with relatives or friends, 38 per cent have their own shelter, which needs rehabilitation, and only 17 per cent live in new shelters. More than 55 per cent of the returnees say they want to rehabilitate or rebuild their shelter using grass or thatch and 23 per cent using plastic sheeting. Farming and the purchase of locally produced goods on the local markets remains the main source of food, although additional sorghum remains the greatest need for returnees. In the health sector, the main requirement is for medical buildings (29 per cent) followed by the need for more medical staff (26 per cent) and medicine (25 per cent). In the education sector, the total number of functioning primary schools is 188 of which 52 per cent are made of thatch and 20 per cent are 'under the tree' schools. The main educational needs are in order of priority: buildings, furniture, teachers and textbooks. "The assessments were conducted to identify shortfalls in basic infrastructure and needs for services," says Gerard Waite, IOM Senior Protection Officer. "This information will serve as the basis for interventions through IOM's own High/Quick Impact and Community Stabilization projects and will also be shared with Sudanese government partners and the international community working in these areas to coordinate reintegration assistance for returnees and to address broader protection concerns." While there are considerable difficulties in estimating the total number of returns to Southern Sudan and Southern Kordofan in 2007, the UN estimates that 1.2 million internally displaced people have returned to their former homes in the 10 states of Southern Sudan. Since 2006, IOM has assisted more than 60,500 South Sudanese internally displaced persons to return to Southern Sudan and Southern Kordofan by land, barge and air.



Solar Cookers for Darfur

A solar cooker is a device which changes direct sunlight into heat energy to cook food. Numerous attempts have been made in the past to disseminate solar cookers in Darfur and throughout Sudan. However the practical implementation of successful use of solar cookers in Sudan has not always produced the desired results. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has conducted a survey to attempt to resolve the numerous problems encountered with previous solar cooker projects and to produce viable solutions by developing a new prototype, which is more suitable to the Sudanese environment and culture. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in collaboration with UNICEF, are implementing partners for UNIDO's pilot phase of the project in South and North Darfur. The pre-pilot phase comes after the successful testing of the solar cooker with women's groups in Khartoum. The pre-pilot phase in South and North Darfur will take place in December 2007 and January 2008 respectively. IOM's main role is the selection of the sites where the project can be piloted, the monitoring of the use of the solar cookers and the evaluation of the first dissemination by mid-January, in cooperation with UNIDO. A three to four day training session by a Sudanese technical expert on the use of solar cookers is currently being organized for 10 women in South Darfur. It is expected that by mid-January 2008 the trained women will be able to successfully use the solar cookers. IOM and UNICEF expect to implement this project on a larger scale during 2008 where 500 women will be trained in the use of the solar cooker. The pre-pilot phase of this project was initially planned to be implemented in villages where returns have been assessed positively by IOM's Verification and Monitoring Unit (VMU) within in the frame of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between IOM, the United Nations (UN) and the Government of Sudan (GoS) in 2004; protecting IDPs from forced returns or relocations. However, due to current security constraints access to rural areas outside Nyala, selection of the sites have had to be re-assessed for the pre-pilot phase. IOM is now in the process of identifying a new target community in close collaboration with UNICEF and UNIDO. In the long-term, IOM expects one of the key results of this project to be a reduction in Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) women and girls are confronted while out looking for fire wood.

For further information, please contact Simona Opitz, (sopitz@iom.int), Public Information Officer at:
International Organization for Migration (IOM), Amarat, Street 47, Block 11, House 18, Khartoum, Sudan.
Tel: +249 183 570801/2/3/4 (Ext 250) or mobile + 249 (0)912339700 or see www.iom.int

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