



# MULTI-SECTOR OVERVIEW OF THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AKOBO EAST

**SOUTH SUDAN**

**PROFILE**

**MARCH 2016**

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## Geographic classifications

<b>State</b>	Highest form of governance below the national level.
<b>County</b>	States are divided into counties.
<b>Payam</b>	Counties are divided into Payams.
<b>Boma</b>	Payams are divided into bomas.
<b>Village</b>	Bomas are generally composed of between 2 and 10 villages.

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## Introduction

Since the beginning of the South Sudanese crisis in December 2013 more than 1.69 million have been internally displaced. The majority of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have fled to remote areas across the country, while more than 200,000 IDPs currently reside in UN Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites<sup>1</sup>. Following partial implementation of the peace agreement signed in August 2015, some areas have become more stable. This has triggered people to return to their areas of origin, including refugees who had fled to neighbouring countries such as Ethiopia and IDPs displaced elsewhere in South Sudan. Over the past months, increasing numbers of IDPs in Bor PoC are reportedly interested in returning to their areas of origin or willing to relocate to communities in the Greater Akobo area (Figure 1).

The Greater Akobo area, located on the eastern border of South Sudan in Jonglei State, is seen by many IDPs in Bor PoC as a potential safe haven where they may be able to resume something resembling their pre-crisis lives. In response to this shift in intentions, the Jonglei State Solutions Working Group (JS-SWG) deployed a team to Akobo to assess the possibility of communities there hosting voluntarily returned IDPs. To build this understanding, the JS-SWG team connected with local authorities and humanitarian partners on the ground to assess the availability of services in the area.

Akobo East has an approximate population of 62,359<sup>2</sup> individuals living in four Payams: Gagdong, Denjok, Bilkey and Nyandit. Settlement patterns are influenced by considerable host community seasonal movements from rural areas to the Sobat's riverbank and Akobo's urban area. Additionally, the area experiences regular movements of IDPs and returnees from Ethiopia, a total of 6,736<sup>3</sup> IDPs were recorded as living in the area from July 2015 to February 2016.

This report summarises the findings of eight focus group discussions (FGDs), and 77 quantitative key informant (KIs) interviews, which REACH conducted from 11<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> March. The FGDs were conducted independent of, but concurrent with, the Jonglei Solutions Working Group's (JS-SWG) mission in Akobo, with the intent of providing humanitarian partners further contextual information on the area and improve understanding of the capacity of the area to host additional IDPs and returnees.

This research fits into the wider framework of REACH's assessment of hard to reach areas in Greater Upper Nile State. The assessment furthers understanding of the pre-crisis and current humanitarian situation in Jonglei, Upper

Nile, and Unity States, through quantitative and qualitative interviews with KIs that have received up-to-date information about communities in the area.

The findings of this data collection in Akobo are outlined in the following sections. In particular, the report provides an overview of the population living in Akobo East, and the extent to which basic services, food, shelter, and livelihood opportunities are available. In addition, the final section of the report outlines how people are accessing information about the situation in Akobo East.

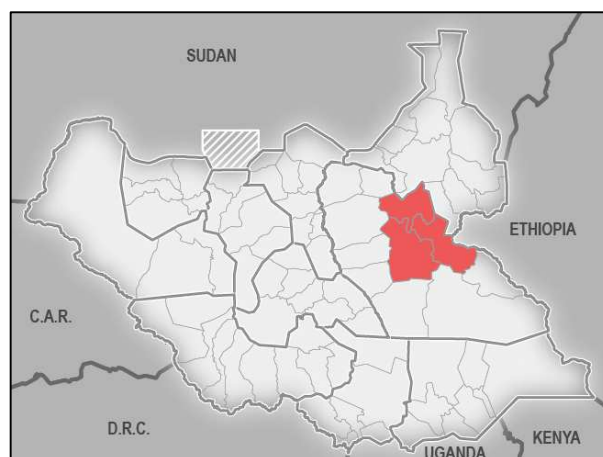


Figure 1: Greater Akobo area, Nyrol, Uror and Akobo counties.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iom.int/news/iom-targets-vulnerable-populations-remote-areas-south-sudan>

<sup>2</sup> Relief Organization South Sudan (ROSS, ex RRA)

<sup>3</sup> ibid

## Methodology

To effectively inform the relocation process of IDPs from Bor PoC to Akobo, REACH employed a mixed-methods approach to assess on-going population movements, living condition and available services in Akobo East. The closed ended key informant (KI) questionnaire, fits into the framework of the larger scale assessment of hard to reach areas and was developed in coordination with OCHA and the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster. In addition, an FGD question route was developed in consultation with the SWG, to provide additional details and contextual analysis.

### Key informant interviews

Quantitative data collection was conducted in Akobo town by trained enumerators. KIs were selected on the pre-condition that they had knowledge of the humanitarian situation in at least one community outside of the assessment site. Further, to increase the reliability of results, enumerators endeavoured to interview KIs from a range of ethnic sub-groups and professional backgrounds. All quantitative data was collected using open data kit (ODK) collect

This report analyses the data provided by 77 KIs with knowledge of at least one community in Akobo East, with the aim of providing baseline data on the situation. It is important to note that these findings refer to a limited dataset generalized at the entire Akobo East area and are therefore only indicative of the humanitarian situation in the region. Further interviews will be conducted during April 2016 and a more in-depth analysis will be shared at the end of the exercise.

### Focus group discussions

Qualitative data collection was conducted by REACH staff in Akobo, supported by a local facilitator who knew the context and the area. The area of interest was planned prior to each FGD to ensure coverage of communities around Akobo town (see Map 1).

Each of the eight FGDs included six participants belonging to the host community in Akobo East (See Map 1 for assessed locations). Due to the absence of a phone network and physical distance of some locations it was not possible to pre-select participants; instead participants were selected at each site upon arrival. When possible there was a gender balance in the group to ensure a range of perspectives.

The question route included a set of core questions, each of which with one to five probing questions designed to provide further details. The analysis of the FGDs relied on field notes taken by moderators and were manually

coded. After each FGD a debriefing form was completed by the facilitator.

## Findings

### Population in Akobo East

#### Settlement patterns of host communities in Akobo East

**Settlement patterns of the civilian population in Akobo East are informed by ongoing seasonal movements.** The vast majority of the inhabitants of the interior Payams move from their settlements to the riverbank during the peak of the dry season in search of water and food (fish). At the beginning of the wet season these people will go back to their settlements to cultivate. A second large seasonal movement follows the migration of cattle herds from the communities in Akobo East to grazing lands located in the area called Toch on Gile River in Ethiopia.

It was frequently reported by participants informing on areas close to Akobo town that residents of Nyandit and Bilkey Payam, who often face the most severe security issues, moved closer to Akobo town and the river bank during the dry season. They will go back to their settlements at the beginning of the wet season when security in that area is predicted to improve due to the impassability of local roads. During seasonal movements, most people are hosted in tukuls belonging to the relatives, in temporary structures, or under trees.

The dry season migration phenomenon, directly informed by the fear of attacks from neighbouring communities to Akobo, has a substantial impact on people's daily life. Isolated villages (such as Mer) as well as villages relatively close to Akobo town (Okaw), which are considered as vulnerable to possible attacks, are temporarily abandoned during the dry season by the majority of the population, particularly women and children. FGD participants in Mer reported that some children were currently being hosted by relatives in Akobo Town for fear of abduction. Dry season abandonment of outlying villages coupled with the temporary closure of local facilities, such as schools and clinics, increases the pressure on Akobo town's facilities. Dry season migration routes are represented in Map 1.

Nearly all of the population was reported to undertake the seasonal migration movements by foot due to the relative short distances covered and the lack of other means of transportation.

## Settlement Patterns of IDPs in Akobo East

**The vast majority of respondents reported to be aware of movements of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees<sup>4</sup> within the Greater Akobo area.**

The majority of IDPs come from the counties of Nyirol, Uror and Akobo West in Jonglei State. The specific communities that IDPs are reported to be coming from are outlined in Map 2. Smaller proportions of IDPs were reported to come from more distant locations, including Ayod, Malakal, Maiwut, and Nassir in Upper Nile State.

During the last blanket food distribution registration in June 2015 a total of 62,359 individuals were registered as living in Akobo East area<sup>5</sup>. A total of 6,736 IDPs were recorded as new arrivals in the area by the local authorities from July 2015 to February 2016<sup>6</sup>, however this figure could be underestimated due to the fact that registration is on voluntary basis so there is no certainty that all new arrivals has been recorded.

The primary push factor for IDPs to travel to Akobo East was reported to be a lack of food in their place of origin while the reported pull factor to Akobo East area is the presence of relatives and who can give hospitality.

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<sup>4</sup> In this assessment returnees were defined according to the UNHCR definition: an individual who was displaced to a location abroad and has since returned to South Sudan.

<sup>5</sup> Relief Organization South Sudan (ROSS, ex RRA)

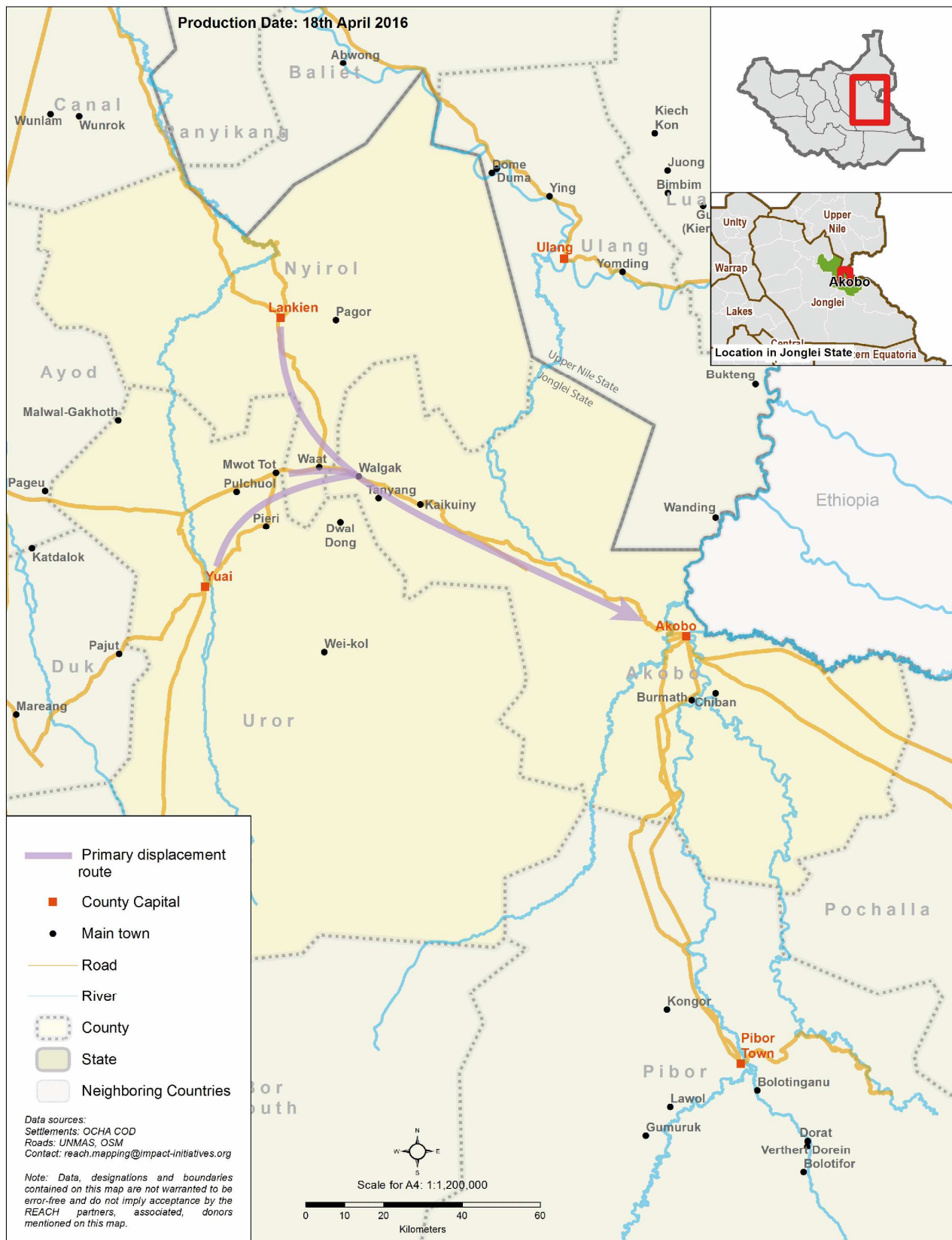
<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



Map 1: Assessed locations and seasonal migration in Akobo East

## South Sudan - Jonglei State - Akobo County

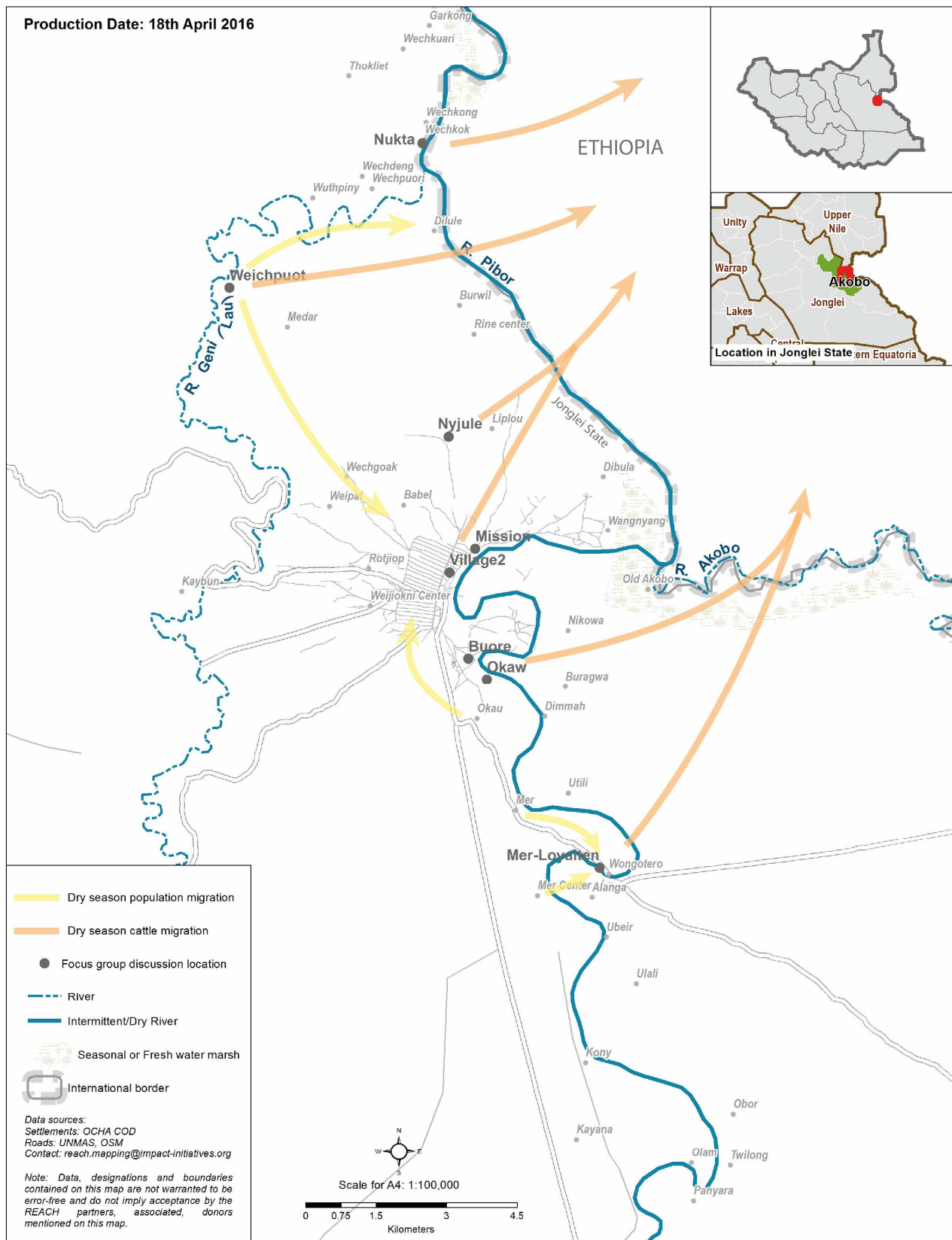
Primary Pre-displacement Locations of IDPs in Akobo East



Map 2: Primary pre-displacement locations

## South Sudan - Jonglei State - Akobo County

Focus group discussion locations and seasonal migration routes



**Table 1: Primary pre-displacement locations of IDPs currently in Akobo East**

Pre-displacement locations		Current location
County	State	
Nyirol	Jonglei	Lankien Waat
Uror	Jonglei	Yuai Mow tot Pieri
Akobo West	Jonglei	Walgak Kaykuny

### Means of travel for IDPs

IDPs from Akobo West reported in the FGD that they had come directly to Akobo East by foot without stopping in other displacement locations. Similarly, respondents reported that the IDPs are travelling longer distances by foot to reach Akobo East and are organizing themselves for the journey by storing additional food, water, and NFIs.

### Means of travel for people in transit

When asked about the travel of people to and from Ethiopia, respondents reported that such movements were ongoing. All the communities interviewed reported having knowledge of people who left for Ethiopia since the beginning of the crisis. Part of those people are now coming back as returnees and according to the information collected during the ACTED/ CCCM port monitoring activity the three most important reasons to come back are:

- Lack of food in the Ethiopian camps, both basic food and specific foods such as milk and fish
- Scarce availability of shelters
- Signing of the peace agreement

Movements to and from Ethiopia are made by foot or using commercial boats that leave weekly to transport goods and people. Since July 2015 ACTED/ CCCM port monitoring activity recorded more than 2,600 returnees coming back from Ethiopia expressing the intention to stop and settle in Akobo; however, no official information about these movements is available.

The host community, who never left, remained in the area mainly to continue cattle herding activities.

### Means of travel for host community members

All FGD participants reported that since the beginning of the crisis in 2013 the primary form of travel across Akobo East is by foot along traditional footpaths, regardless of

distance. The second most frequently cited form of travel was river; however, this is restricted to those who still possess a canoe or can afford to pay for a boat ride.

Before the crisis primary modes of transport were slightly different, with more pronounced use of canoes and boats for crossing main rivers and travelling from one village to another. According to respondents the number of canoes has decreased since the onset of the conflict due to different reasons, including a lack of availability of the tree trunks used to make the canoes, which in pre-crisis Eastern Akobo were cut in Nyandit Payam, in Alali pajam, or imported from Ethiopia. Lack of availability of wood for canoes is contributed to security issues, decreased accessibility to wood harvesting areas, and a reduction in the proportion of the population possessing the financial resources necessary to purchase the raw materials needed to construct a canoe.

**Prior to the crisis, the entire area of Akobo East was reported to be generally more secure, especially areas bordering with neighbouring counties belonging to different ethnic groups.** Besides a variety of external menaces, revenge killings among members of the same community were reported to have become an increasingly important cause of insecurity since the onset of the crisis. This change was largely attributed to an increase in the amount of available guns and a weakening of the political institutions across the area.

During the wet season, overland movements in Akobo East reportedly become increasingly difficult due to mud and the presence of large pools of water and flooded areas, which leave many commonly used paths in the dry season impassable. However, although the decrease in passable roads negatively impacts freedom of movement, it was reported to increase overall security of many areas. This increase in security is largely due to the restricted travel opportunities decreasing attacks from cattle raiders coming from outside the Greater Akobo area, and reducing levels of inter-clan fighting and revenge killing. Additionally, for the people of Buore village a positive effect of the wet season is that the increase in water levels facilitates transport of wood/grass and other rough materials downstream from Nyandit Payam to Akobo town.

**In the past two years, freedom of movement in the dry season radically decreased for Akobo East inhabitants, which in turn has impacted the population's lifestyle.** For the reasons mentioned above people reduce movements in inland areas, losing access to natural resources, or reduce movements in specific areas as they fear that they will be a target of revenge killing. The latter, in particular, is becoming a limiting factor for NGOs and INGOs that are employing



local personnel, who cannot always safely access specific locations where activities are implemented.

### Social cohesion between host community and IDPs

**Regarding the IDPs coming from the cited locations in Greater Akobo, respondents reported to accept and host them as members of the same broad community.** Further, the respondents believe that these people will remain in the area as long as they get support from both the local community and NGOs in terms of food and shelter. No particular points of tension were reported, however, participants in one FGD in the urban area of Akobo perceived that living conditions had worsened since the arrival of IDPs, particularly in terms of food availability. Further, it was noted that in general IDPs who are hosted by relatives are usually better supported in their needs than those who do not have relatives that can host them in the area.

## Humanitarian Situation

Participants of both the key informant (KI) interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were asked about the humanitarian situation within the communities of their knowledge. In particular, respondents were asked to provide information about the livelihood opportunities in the area, food availability and coping strategies, access to basic services, and shelter conditions. The following section outlines the findings for these sections.

### Livelihood opportunities

**Land cultivation and cattle herding were reported to be the main livelihoods prior to the crisis.** Additionally, it was reported that some farmers supplemented income using contributions from relatives, who earned an income from casual labour or professional occupations. Following the onset of the crisis, farming continues to be a primary source of income; however, substantially fewer farmers receive assistance from relatives, as employment opportunities in the area have significantly declined: with the beginning of the crisis all public sectors employees in opposition controlled areas have reportedly ceased to receive their regular salary. Further, it was reported that since the beginning of the crisis the continued displacement and movement of large numbers people has consistently interrupted the cultivation cycle, and thus lowered farmers' yields. Additionally, it was reported that possession of farming assets has decreased in the region, as regular movements of people have caused many farmers to lose their tools.

Reported coping strategies to deal with reductions in income, earning opportunities and farming yields include<sup>7</sup>:

- Collecting firewood and timber
- Collecting grass for roofing
- Collecting various building materials (straight wood sticks, sorghum stalk)
- Selling cattle or domestic animals
- Catching and selling fish (for those close to the river)
- Starting any small business activity when possible (i.e. local alcohol production)

It is important to note that such coping strategies were also employed prior to the crisis; however, the frequency with which they are now used to counteract the effects of a low income has increased.

FGD participants confirmed that **all livelihood activities have been affected by the perception of an insecure environment, especially for women.** Activities involving collection of raw materials, such as grass or wood, are limited to areas close to the villages with few exceptions. Many respondents reported that they had not yet started usual activities such as land clearing and preparation for the incoming planting season, due to insecurity in farming designated areas.

### Food availability and coping strategies

**In all FGDs respondents reported that access to food (own food plus food coming from food distributions) is not sufficient to cover family needs.** As a result households are reported to be regularly employing coping strategies to compensate for insufficient food, with such coping strategies most frequently applied at times when no food assistance is available.

Reported coping strategies for dealing with a lack of food include:

- Reduction in the number of meals eaten per day
- Reduction the number of meals for adults to give priority to children;
- Consumption of wild food
- Consumption of bush meat
- Reduction of meals per day to one
- Consumption of stocks of seeds

Reductions in the number of meals and giving priority to children were reported to be the most frequently applied coping strategies across region together with consumption of wild foods and bush meat. This changes slightly during the wet season, when participants reported that they would be able to supplement their diet with other leaves and with the first crop of the season when

<sup>7</sup> A clear order of prominence of coping strategies was not established during the FGDs; however, they have been listed here according to the frequency with which they were cited.

available. Slightly fewer families reported the consumption of seed stocks and adults only eating one meal a day as coping strategies. Further, an increase in the quantity of bush meat sold in the market was reported, indicating that food shortages in the area are putting increasing pressure on wild animal populations in inland Akobo East.

**According to respondents, host community members perceive the presence of IDPs and returnees to play a fundamental role in worsening the food security situation**, due to competition they create for already limited food supplies. In Okaw village, where none of the respondents reported to be sharing UN food rations with IDPs or other members of the community, all respondents reported to only apply less severe coping strategies, such as reducing the number of meals per day to two.

However, **according to key informants, most interviewees reported a similar access to adequate amounts of food before and after the crisis**. While it is possible that focus group discussion members exaggerated problems related to a lack of food, it is clear that food sources have changed significantly since prior to the crisis. 97% of KIs responding for the pre-crisis situation reported that in their area of knowledge the main source of food was subsistence farming before the crisis, while 95% of KIs responding for the present situation reported food distributions as the main source today.

#### **Access to safe drinking water**

78% of KIs responding for the present situation reported communities in their area of knowledge having access to safe drinking water through boreholes connected to hand pumps or solar pumps as the only type of sources. The remaining 22% of those KIs reported that communities in their area of knowledge could not access safe water and instead used water from rivers. 98% of KI respondents responding for the present situation reported an average walking time of 30 minutes or more to reach the nearest safe water source. No significant differences in access between IDPs and host community were reported.

FGDs findings are largely congruent with those from quantitative data collection with the vast majority of FGD respondents reported to have access to safe drinking water collected from a borehole nearby. They used river water only for washing clothes and personal hygiene, and in some cases, also for cooking. However, FGD participants from Denjok Payam reported that the number of functioning boreholes is not sufficient for the entire

community and often get overcrowded resulting in an increase of the waiting times; as a result many residents in this area are fetching drinking water from the river instead.

In Weichpuot village, which experiences high levels of seasonal migration, respondents reported to use exclusively safe drinking water during the dry season while during the wet season respondents reported to fetch water from the adjacent swamp, due to the increase in population and consequent increase in waiting time at boreholes. Further confirmation of this seasonal migration was given during the FGD in Mission Village in which respondents reported to cultivate land nearby Weichpuot village during the wet season, residing there for longer periods.

Respondents in Mer village, where a large proportion of the community is currently residing on the river bank, reported not being able to use the closest borehole (40 minutes away by foot) due to insecurity en-route. They are therefore using untreated river water to cover all water needs, including drinking and cooking, indicating that this village is at high risk of illness resulting from water borne diseases.

#### **Available services**

FGD participants reported that most available facilities in Akobo East are in a critical state. During the wet season access to services was reported to be more difficult due to the impediment of movement caused by excessive muddiness, stagnant water, and the total absence of tarmac roads.

#### Education:

Comparing reported pre-crisis and current education services availability, a decrease between 10 and 20% in availability of education services has been calculated.

**Since the beginning of the crisis the education system in Akobo East has seen a reduction in available classes or “grades”.** It was reported that the grades now available are from grade 1-7, while before the crisis grade 12 was also available<sup>8</sup>. The majority of children that want to proceed with the study after grade 7 are now obliged to cross the border river to attend school in Ethiopia, since grade 8 is offered in only one school in Akobo town. In March the schooling system faced a teacher strike that lasted for 15 days<sup>9</sup>, which resulted in many teachers changing occupation. The strike seems to have affected rural villages around Akobo town to a lesser extent, as teachers in these areas usually come

<sup>8</sup> The organization managing the education program confirmed the didactic offer, reporting that grade 8 is also available but only in town for approximately one hundred pupils.

<sup>9</sup> The organization managing the education program reported as three weeks the duration of the strike.

from the village and are willing to continue to work even if not well paid. Education opportunities were reported to be limited further by the lack of stationery and learning materials on sale in Akobo market.

For rural areas it was reported that during the dry season, due to the abandonment of the villages for security reasons, lessons are given in improvised locations in the open, often under a tree (Okaw). In some cases children from rural areas are joining education facilities available in Akobo town instead

#### Health:

Almost all KIs responding for the pre-crisis situation (97%) reported that health care facilities were available in their area of knowledge while only 71% of KIs responding for the present situation reported that health care facilities are now available. General insecurity in the area was the main cited reason causing this reduction in access to healthcare facilities.

In the majority of FGDs, **local health clinics were reported to have been in a critical state since 2014, largely due to a lack of available medicine.** However, private pharmacies in town were reported to have some drugs and medical goods in stock, largely from Ethiopia. Nevertheless, some respondents reported the variety of medicines available as very poor.

#### Markets:

72% of KIs responding for the present situation reported the presence of a functioning market in their area of knowledge and out these 55% reported the market to be within 15 minutes and one hour walking.

The main market in Akobo town is functioning all year long and supplied by Ethiopian traders. Almost all the goods and food in the market are coming from Ethiopia. Akobo market appeared to be an important centre of interest for the surrounding population: participants frequently reported purchasing goods or carrying out small business activities in Akobo market during both wet and dry seasons.

#### **Shelter**

In terms of dwellings, in the quantitative data collection 92% of KIs reported host community to be living in their own shelter located in the villages. Further, 60% of KIs reporting presence of IDPs in their area of knowledge reported less than 25% IDPs living outside with no shelter and as the most common shelter type for IDPs rakooba/tukul (75%); with only 25% using improvised structures.

Similarly, all FGD participants reported to live in traditional tukuls. When asked if shelters in their community needed any particular intervention

respondents mentioned the need for usual maintenance, such as roof reparation or roof substitution, which is necessary to keep the structure well-functioning and able to withstand the incoming rainy season.

#### **Humanitarian needs**

When asked to prioritize humanitarian needs in order of importance, FGD participants largely considered food as the most important, followed by health (See Table 2).

**Table 2: Perceived importance of humanitarian needs, ranked by FGD participants**

Rank	Humanitarian needs
1 <sup>st</sup> Most Important	Food
2 <sup>nd</sup> Most Important	Health
3 <sup>rd</sup> Most Important	Education
4 <sup>th</sup> Most Important	Shelter

Safe drinking water was reported as a critical need in Denjok, the only location where it is not currently always available. Non-food items were mentioned as the second most important need by one community, though this could be related to expectations regarding future distributions. Participants in Mission Village mentioned drainage and sanitation as fourth most important need, possibly recalling previous humanitarian projects conducted there that specifically addressed this need.

#### **Flooding impact**

FGD participants frequently reported that large proportions of the region will be inundated for considerable periods of time during the wet season. The most commonly reported impact of flooding was an increase in the time required for the movements, resulting in difficulty reaching local services, such as schools, health centres, and boreholes.

FGD participants in one assessed community reported that domestic animals can be gravely affected if flooding is severe, due to a higher incidence of disease, which they attribute to stagnant water and a lack of available grass. Additionally, respondents report that flooding reduces the space for new vegetable gardens, which further reduces already limited access to food. Almost all FGD participants reported that in case of severe flooding they will leave their homes and move to the highlands, where they will shelter in tukuls belonging to other members of the community or in the open. Despite annual flooding, communities are not taking measures to mitigate the possible impact of flooding for the coming rainy season.

## Access to information

To better understand the current means of communication and the barriers to communication, the participants of the FGDs were asked about mobile network coverage in the area and the main means of communication between communities. The responses of the participants are outlined below.

Before the crisis, network coverage extended across almost all of Akobo East area from an antenna installed in Akobo Town. However, soon after the onset of the crisis in the region the network stopped functioning and has not yet been repaired. Some respondents still reported they possessed mobile phones while others had lost or sold their phones.

Currently, the most common means of sending and receiving information was reported to be by messenger. Three important triggers, mentioned by participants in Nyjule, for sending a messenger are: incidence of revenge killing, weddings and community gatherings. FGDs highlighted that women are sometimes seen as a neutral vector of information that can safely move in case of frictions between communities.

Another commonly cited source of information was through word of mouth, with both acquaintances and strangers frequently exchanging information from different areas across Akobo East. In particular, it was reported that people – particularly traders and community leaders – are regularly moving into, through and out of the areas about which they provide information. This first-hand experience of conditions in a given area facilitates reliable exchange of information across Akobo East.

Other means of communication, such as VHF and Thuraya, are present; however, it was reported that these are almost solely used by the authorities and NGOs, and rarely by residents of the area. Further, it was observed that small numbers of people who possess a smartphone or laptop communicate with relatives residing in other parts of the country or abroad using NGOs' internet connection. This phenomenon was reported to be limited to specific categories of people who have direct access to NGO compounds, such as national staff or casual labourers.

## Conclusion

In the framework of the possible voluntary return of residents of Bor PoC to Akobo East, REACH conducted an assessment independent of, but concurrent with, the Jonglei State SWG mission.

The ongoing movements of people across Grater Akobo area testify how the broad community living in this territory is accustomed to receiving IDPs, who were unable to meet their basic needs in their area of origin as well as returnees and other people in transit.

**Food security appears to be the single largest concern in the Akobo East area.** While FGDs point to a situation of relative stability in which host community members and IDPs are able to subsist between scheduled food distributions, many negative coping strategies are currently employed to maintain this. In addition, host community members perceive that IDPs and returnees have a negative impact on food security in the area, which is a key point of concern.

**While basic service infrastructure, such as markets, schools and some health facilities, was reported to function across the assessed area, capacity has reportedly decreased since the onset of the crisis.** Intervention appears necessary in order to reinforce the available facilities serving the area, particularly health care and education, where the biggest gaps were reported. Without additional support, any new arrivals are likely to overwhelm these already limited services.

In summary, findings from FGDs and key informant interviews indicate a somewhat stable situation in most Akobo East communities. **However, the possibility of community tensions is highlighted by some striking fragilities, such as access to food and basic services, which should be addressed prior to the facilitation of any relocations.**