

CONFLICT ANALYSIS: LAKES, NORTHERN BAHR EL GHAZAL AND WARRAP STATES – SOUTH SUDAN

AUGUST 2014

SUMMARY

This report analyses the crisis in South Sudan since the outbreak of the current conflict in December 2013. The conflict began under unclear circumstances in Juba, the capital city, and the violence quickly spread across the country, internally displacing an estimated 1.1 million people.¹ Though not all states have witnessed fighting directly related to the conflict, the magnitude of the displacement has affected all regions. For aid actors in South Sudan, the outbreak of violence has had an immense impact on field operations, as the deteriorating security situation has caused widespread population displacement and constricted humanitarian access.

Between June and August 2014, **REACH undertook this research to identify and describe the causes, dynamics and potential triggers of conflict in South Sudan**, with a focus on Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states, where activities are planned between 2014 and 2016 as part of the Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters programme (BRACED), funded by the United Kingdom (UK)'s Department for International Development (DFID).

With an understanding of structural and proximate drivers of conflict at both the national and state level, the research identified the following as potential triggers for violence escalation:

- **Lakes State:** The three key concerns are inter- and intra-communal violence; proxy violence from armed non-state actors; and tensions between the Lakes State Governor and the youth. Additional concerns include potential discontent between the host community and internally displaced populations (particularly the settlement of 138,000 displaced individuals in Aweril County); displacement and hostility spill-over from Unity State; and cross-border cattle-raiding and the movement of deserting troops traveling west across the state from Jonglei and Upper Nile states.
- **Northern Bahr el Ghazal State:** The three key concerns are food insecurity; population influx and troop movements; and border disputes. Additional concerns relate to the state's history of conflict and its proximity to conflict areas in East Darfur and South Kordofan.
- **Warrap State:** The key concerns include intensification of cattle-related violence; proxy violence from armed non-state actors; and spill-over of IDPs from neighbouring Unity State. Additional concerns include cattle-raiding, particularly in Tonj South and Tonj East, flooding and reduced accessibility in the north, Abyei-related conflict and displacement and conflict points along the border with Unity State, especially in Gogrial East and Twic counties.

In addition, the research found a number key features of the current conflict in South Sudan that may have a significant impact on BRACED project activities. **Food insecurity** will continue to be of paramount concern, as fighting and large-scale population displacement have disrupted the cultivation cycle and traditional market networks. **Ethnic identities** will remain an important element of the current crisis. Much of the violence has occurred along ethnic lines and the traditional boundaries of the two dominant groups border BRACED areas of implementation. Finally, the **proliferation of weapons**, mostly small arms, is a worrying trend in the current crisis, as it leads to an escalation in existing cycles of violence, such as cattle-raids or inter-clan conflicts.

To mitigate the negative impact of these challenges, BRACED partners should continue to assess and monitor these potential conflict triggers and key features throughout the inception and implementation phases. To this end, REACH developed recommendations which are included in the conclusion of this report.

¹ UNOCHA, South Sudan Crisis Situation Report No. 44, July 10, 2014, <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/south-sudan-crisis-situation-report-no-44-10-july-2014>

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About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organizations – ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives – and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH was created in 2010 to facilitate the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. All REACH activities are conducted in support to and within the framework of inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. For more information, please visit: www.reach-initiative.org. You can write to us at: geneva@reach-initiative.org and follow us @REACH_info.

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ACRONYMS

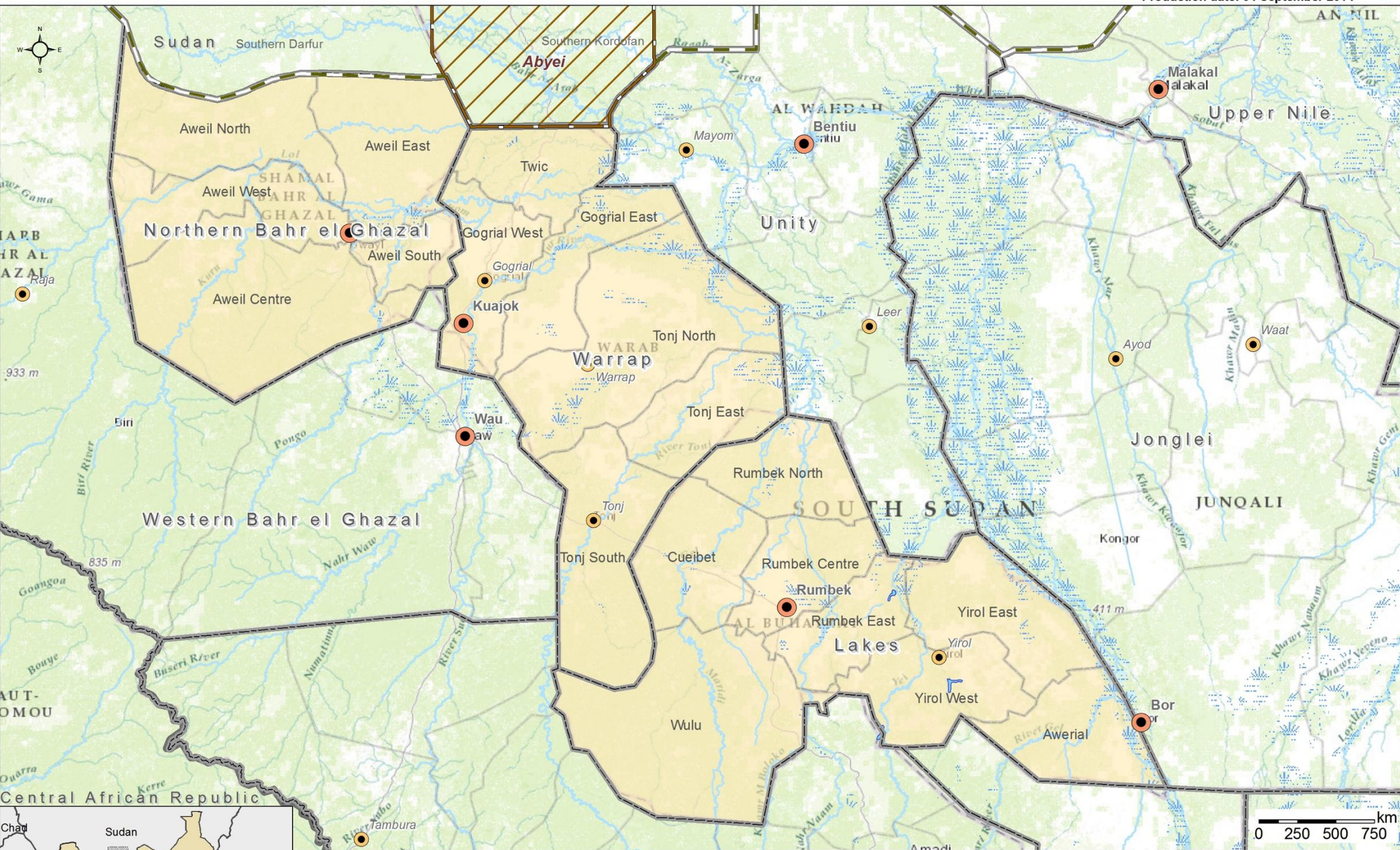
| | |
|------------------|--|
| BRACED | Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters programme |
| CPA | Comprehensive Peace Agreement |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| GoSS | Government of the Republic of South Sudan |
| HSBA | Human Security Baseline Assessment |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority for Development |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| IPC | Integrated Food Security Phase Classification |
| JEM | Justice and Equality Movement |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| OCHA | UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| PoC | Protection of Civilians |
| SAF | Sudanese Armed Forces |
| SPLA/M | Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement |
| SPLA/M-IO | Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement-In Opposition |
| SSP | South Sudanese Pounds |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNMISS | United Nations Mission in South Sudan |
| US | United States of America |

GEOGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATIONS

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Boma | Lowest level of local government administration |
| Payam | Intermediate administrative level including several bomas |
| County | Primary administrative level below the state including several payams |
| State | Highest form of governance below the national level |

BRACED States of Implementation

For Humanitarian Relief Purposes Only
Production date: 04 September 2014



- Country Capital
- State Capital
- County Capital
- Undetermined boundary
- Abyei - Undetermined area
- BRACED state of implementation
- National boundary
- State boundary
- County boundary
- Fresh water marsh
- Lake
- Waterways

Data Sources:
Administrative boundaries: UNOCHA; Roads: WFP LogCluster
Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, TomTom, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Coordinate System: GCS WGS 1984
File: REACH_SSD_BRACED_States_29Aug14_A4L_v2
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Note: Data, designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by the REACH partners, associated, donors mentioned on this map.

INTRODUCTION

On December 15, 2013, fighting began in Juba, predominantly targeting ethnic Nuer, including many civilians. Violence erupted around the country as well, driving over 400,000² people out of South Sudan, many living as refugees abroad, and resulting in an estimated 1.1 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).³ Among the displaced, over 90,000 individuals fled into United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) bases.⁴ As the United Nations (UN) is mandated to support non-combatants in conflict, these UNMISS bases have become Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites. The conflict between the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GoSS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-in opposition (SPLM/A-IO) affects populations across the country.

Internationally, the South Sudanese conflict has drawn interest from a variety of stakeholders that fall into the following generic categories: 1) the United Nations; 2) humanitarians and donor government agencies; and 3) private sector actors. As previously mentioned, the UNMISS deployment is now home to several PoC sites, requiring UNMISS to be directly involved in humanitarian operations and placing them in the global spotlight for the unique situation. Second, over 150 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are present in the country, and the GoSS is largely dependent upon donor government funding. The United States (US) government recently committed US\$180 million in humanitarian aid.⁵ International private sector interests also play an important role in the conflict, as much of the violence has occurred to gain control over the oil fields. In a country where the national debt hovers around US\$10 million⁶ and 98 per cent of the economy comes from oil,⁷ oil will continue to exert significant influence on the South Sudanese political economy for years to come.

Regionally, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, and Sudan, are now hosting around 400,000 South Sudanese refugees in their borders.⁸ The Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), an east African group of states, has been hosting the peace talks in Addis Ababa since early in the conflict, including the January 23 signature of the Cessation of Hostilities from both parties.

At a national level, the conflict has significantly impacted all parts of South Sudan's political, economic and social life. The country recently celebrated its third year of independence, and many of the nascent institutions have been negatively affected by the conflict and political dissensions within the SPLM since December 2013. Economically, the majority (85 per cent) of the population is engaged in non-wage, low-productivity agro-pastoralist work.⁹ According to the World Bank, outside of the oil-dominant economy which accounts for 8.9 billion South Sudanese pounds in revenue this fiscal year,¹⁰ South Sudan received US\$1 billion in development aid and another \$300 million in humanitarian assistance prior to the outbreak of the recent crisis.¹¹

² UNHCR, South Sudan Situation, Regional Overview, July 14, 2014, <http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/regional.php>

³ UNOCHA, South Sudan Crisis Situation Report No. 44, July 10, 2014, <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/south-sudan-crisis-situation-report-no-44-10-july-2014>

⁴ IOM, South Sudan Crisis Response Displacement Tracking Matrix Round III, May-June, 2014 <http://southsudan.iom.int/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/DTM-Round-III-Report-May-June-2014.pdf>

⁵ World Food Programme, United States Government Contributes US \$180 Million to Help Prevent Famine in South Sudan, August 12, 2014, www.wfp.org/news/news-release/united-states-government-contributes-us180-million-help-prevent-famine-south-sudan

⁶ Sudan Tribune, "Global Witness Rings Alarm over South Sudan Finances," July 10, 2014, www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article51644

⁷ World Bank South Sudan Country Overview, www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview

⁸ UNHCR, UNHCR Seeks Massive Boost in Funding for South Sudan Refugees, July 11, 2014, www.unhcr.org/53bfdc1a6.html

⁹ World Bank South Sudan Country Overview, www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview

¹⁰ Wudu, Waakhe Simon, Voice of America, South Sudan Finance Minister Seeks More Non-Oil Revenues, July 3, 2014 www.voanews.com/content/south-sudan-budget-oil-revenues/1949437.html

¹¹ World Bank South Sudan Country Overview, www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview

South Sudan is a young country (72 per cent of the country is under the age of 30.3¹²), familiar with conflict and displacement after two civil wars against Sudan. Ethnic rhetoric and lack of a strong educational system are drawing idle youth with few economic options to enter the conflict.

Sub-national regionalism and state level challenges also affect the conflict. The traditional regions of Greater Upper Nile (Unity, Upper Nile, and Jonglei), Greater Bahr el Ghazal (Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Warrap, Western Bahr el Ghazal and Lakes) and Greater Equatoria (Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria and Western Equatoria) have faced unique challenges since the conflict began.

The analysis provided in this report will focus on the context, trends and causes of conflict in Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states, with particular attention to the recent crisis that began in December 2013 (see Map 1 for location of these three states in South Sudan). Map 2 below shows the fighting points and large internal population displacement trends across the three states.¹³

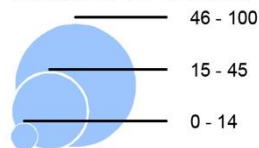
The objective of the analysis is to provide greater contextual understanding of potential challenges to the proposed activities in the Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters programme (BRACED), funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), that will take place in these three states from 2014-2016. During the pilot phase of BRACED project activities, it became apparent to the team that more information was needed on the conflict in the three states of implementation. While media and academic sources examine the conflict at the national level, current conflict analysis at the sub-national level is sparse. The Juba-based REACH team carried out this desk review to learn more about trends and elements of the current South Sudanese conflict in these three states and the potential impacts they could have on BRACED initiatives and targeted beneficiaries. The REACH team plans to continue this research in displacement and conflict analysis across the country in 2014.

The report begins with a review of methodology designed and applied by the REACH team, followed by a discussion of both the structural (root causes) and proximate (emergent trends) drivers of conflict in South Sudan. Next, the report provides a detailed analysis of the situation in Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states. For each state, the report focuses on a conflict profile that analyses the relevant political, economic and socio-cultural context of the state, as well as trends, recent history and potential triggers for conflict. The third section of the report addresses key themes and information gaps identified through the research. The conclusion provides recommendations for how to mitigate the negative impacts of the conflict on BRACED project activities.

¹² World Bank South Sudan Country Overview, www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview

¹³ The map is not exhaustive and does not identify if fighting in each location is still active or if populations are still moving in great numbers.

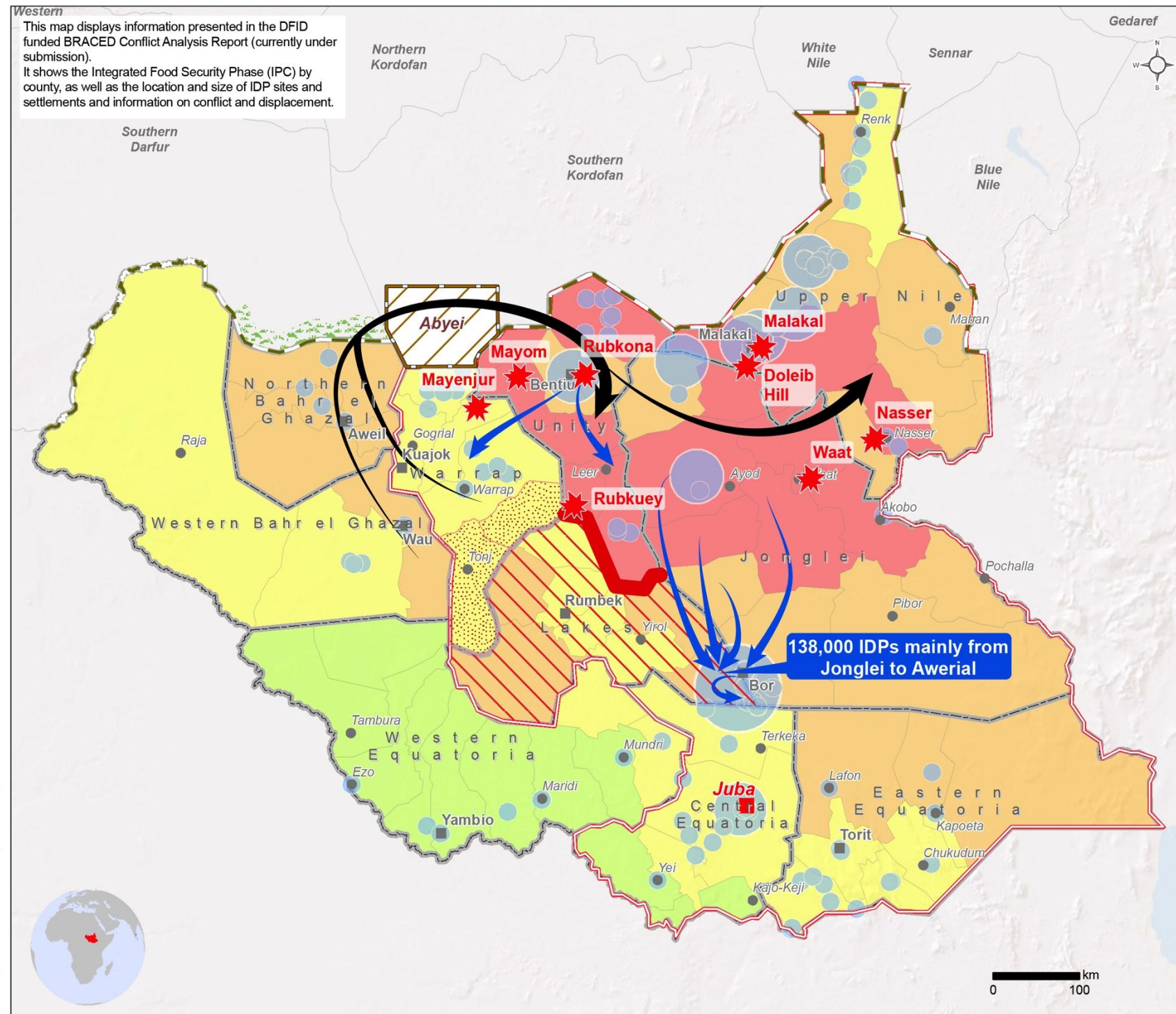
Population of IDP sites ('000)



- Frequent security incidents
- Potential for hostility/spill-over from Unity State and cattle raiding
- Inter-communal violence in Lakes (Dinka Clans)
- Major IDP movements
- Deserting troops from Greater Bahr el Ghazal move to Unity and Upper Nile through Sudan, Abyei and the Heglig training grounds
- Cattle raids reported with high frequency
- 14 mile grazing lands disputed area
- Conflict affected states
- IPC phase - Emergency
- IPC phase - Crisis
- IPC phase - Stressed
- IPC phase - Minimal
- Country Capital
- State Capitals
- County Capital
- Undetermined boundary
- Abyei - Undetermined area
- State boundary
- County boundary

Note: IDP sites data is from IOM DTM assessment round 3, last updated August 2014. IPC data is from the IPC FAO projection for May to August 2014.
[Data, designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by the REACH partners, associated donors mentioned on this map.]

Data Sources: Conflict and displacement: OCHA, April 2014; Administrative boundaries: OCHA
Basemap: ESRI
Coordinate System: GCS WGS 1984
File: REACH_SSD_IDP Population Displacement And Conflict Analysis_21Aug2014_A3_EN.mxd
Contact: reach.mapping@impact-initiatives.org



METHODOLOGY

The research for this report was conducted through a desk review in Juba from June 15 – August 15, 2014. The purpose of this desk review was to facilitate the production of this brief report which synthesizes the relevant information into a user-friendly reference text that can be of use to both BRACED activity implementers and an international audience unfamiliar with the current conflict in South Sudan.

This desk review also provides the REACH research team and other BRACED partners with the opportunity to identify information gaps and specific research questions to determine potential adaptations to planned BRACED activities or subsequent areas of future research.

The process followed for this desk review was to conduct an intensive literature search, review and synthesis of all relevant documents concerning political, military, economic and socio-cultural conditions, events and trends in Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states, with particular focus on the current crisis that began in December 2013.

Sources used in this desk review include recent situation reports and “snapshots” from UN organizations and inter-governmental organizations, such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and International Organization for Migration (IOM). Additional information gathered from foreign-based advocacy NGOs such as Global Witness and Reporters without Borders also contributed to the analysis. Due to the recent nature of key events, local media reports guided much of the analysis, particularly on political and military events.

The nature of the desk review and the specific context in South Sudan yield a number of important limitations to this conflict analysis.

- This report did not use primary data and could only collect sparse information from the predominantly rural and low-populated states of Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap, particularly in areas far from urban centres.
- As South Sudan is a new country, the media landscape is sparse and many news outlets are relatively unestablished. Critical media have been quieted in recent months, particularly those operating outside of Juba.¹⁴
- As the crisis is only in its ninth month, and it retains a highly dynamic nature, there has not been sufficient time for stakeholders to conduct significant critical analysis.
- This dearth of analytical material requires a reliance on media reporting rather than more in-depth intellectual works typically used in a conflict analysis.
- In the absence of well-established communications and transportation infrastructure, much of the available analysis is speculative; yet rumours and perceptions are often just as important to understanding conflict dynamics in South Sudan.

¹⁴ Reporters Without Borders, Media Freedom on Hold in South Sudan because of Civil War, 11 July 2014, <http://en.rsf.org/south-sudan-media-freedom-on-hold-in-south-11-07-2014,46620.html>

CAUSES OF CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN

To fully understand the current context in South Sudan, it is necessary to identify potential and existing causes of conflict. For the purpose of this study, causes of conflicts were grouped into the following categories:

- **Structural causes** of conflict are elements present throughout society and institutions that have the potential to motivate violent conflict, such as economic inequality, lack of access to political participation or ethnic discrimination.
- **Proximate causes** of conflict are emergent social, political, economic and environmental issues that contribute to a climate favourable to violent conflict, such as decentralization, deteriorating security in a neighbouring country or reform processes.
- **Triggers** for conflict are specific events that have the potential to escalate violent conflict, such as elections, natural disasters or the death of a leader. Because triggers are often specific and localized, this report discusses potential triggers at the state and sub-state level in the sections that follow.

STRUCTURAL CAUSES

The key sources of tension and root causes of the conflict in South Sudan are diverse. This section will touch upon the interwoven political, social, economic and environmental issues that undermine peaceful progress.

The current conflict originates in a struggle for political power and weak political capacity. As the country itself is only three years old, political institutions are underdeveloped and police and employees of the judicial system are inadequately trained. While the political system is inclusive, the president and previous vice president (now leader of the SPLA/M-IO) represent the two largest ethnic groups in the country, Dinka and Nuer, respectively.

According to Human Rights Watch, the GoSS has failed to appropriately deal with human rights infringements such as illegitimate arrests and detentions, and unlawful killings, often at the hands of security forces.¹⁵ The group also cites the stalled legislative developments in the country, which include media protection and international human rights instruments.

Structural causes of conflict related to social issues in South Sudan are closely tied to ethnic identity, the large youthful component of the population and a culture of violence.

In South Sudan, ethnic identity is often linked to geography, and much of the fighting since the crisis began has been ethnically motivated. Decades of conflict and the impact of cattle-raiding have resulted in a pervasive culture of violence throughout the country. In parts of South Sudan inter-clan violence has been present throughout history and violent cattle-raids are an important part of the community and economy, particularly in the east (Jonglei and Eastern Equatoria states) and central-north (Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Unity, Lakes and Warrap states).

¹⁵ Human Rights Watch, World Report 2014, www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/south-sudan

Furthermore, the country's population is extremely young, with over 65 per cent under 24,¹⁶ and with few economic and educational opportunities, a young unemployed population can serve as a catalyst for violence.¹⁷

As noted in the Introduction, economic factors are extremely relevant to the current crisis in South Sudan. Pervasive corruption and poor infrastructure create tensions by stifling economic growth, particularly in areas outside the capital. In fact, many political elites with alleged corruption cases against them were removed from the government and therefore lost access to their money prior to the outbreak of the conflict.¹⁸

Additionally, the crisis has negatively affected markets across the country that supplied food and livelihoods assistance to rural areas, especially in Greater Upper Nile. For the majority of the population who engage in agro-pastoralism, the recent fighting and associated displacement has disrupted their ability to plant or to move their cattle, resulting in further economic loss. At a national level, as previously mentioned, the GoSS is highly dependent on oil exports for financing their projects which makes the country vulnerable to global commodity price fluctuations. The focus on oil exports has come at the cost of the development of alternative economic sectors—sectors that could support engagement with the global economy, therefore reducing the economic vulnerability of the country.

Structural causes of conflict related to the environment have been a source of tension in South Sudan due to the high level of dependence on the natural ecosystem. The country is vulnerable to environmental shocks, such as floods and droughts, partly resulting from its predominantly flat topography, with the exception of the southern region and the country's mountainous neighbours. Due to the abundance of agro-pastoralists, the environment plays a large role in the vitality of a community and can influence livelihoods, health and displacement. Extreme climate shocks, such as excessive rainfall, can lead cattle herding communities into new areas, which can generate tensions.

PROXIMATE CAUSES

Similar to structural causes of conflict, the emerging trends and factors that have contributed to a climate conducive to conflict are diverse. A brief description of the current crisis dynamics and types of conflict will support a greater understanding of the proximate causes of conflict in South Sudan and how they have the potential to exacerbate the crisis. Following the brief over-view of conflict dynamics, this section introduces the proximate political, social and economic issues that have undermined peaceful progress in the past few years.

Crisis Dynamics and Types of Conflict

The specific interaction of conflict actors will be discussed in detail at the state level, yet it is important to first address national-level elements of the crisis. Violence against civilians continues to be a feature of the conflict in South Sudan, including destruction of property and livelihoods, recruitment of youth into armed groups, arming of non-trained fighters and widespread sexual and gender-based violence. As fighting continues, resources are continually diverted into security rather than basic service provision.

¹⁶ CIA World Factbook, South Sudan, 20 June 2014, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/od.html

¹⁷ Lionel Beehner, Council on Foreign Relations, The Effects of the 'Youth Bulge' on Civil Conflicts, 27 April, 2007, www.cfr.org/world/effects-youth-bulge-civil-conflicts/p13093

¹⁸ AllAfrica, "South Sudan: Rebel Leader Should Face Corruption Charges – Kiir," July 19, 2014, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201407211186.html>

Nine months into the conflict, secondary displacement continues to be a concern, as floods and violence force further population movements. Food insecurity is another driver of displacement, as violence disrupted the planting season and traditional market chains. With this displacement comes increased health risks as overcrowding and poor sanitation are prevalent in displacement sites across South Sudan. Health concerns are exacerbated by the arrival of the rainy season, when threats of epidemic outbreaks, such as cholera, increase. Violence against aid workers and impediments to humanitarian action, such as conflict- and infrastructure-related access concerns, also compound these challenges. It is important to note that all three states analysed in this report are currently under government control and have remained so since the start of this conflict. Fighting has primarily occurred to the east of both Warrap and Lakes states, in Unity, Upper Nile, Jonglei and Central Equatoria states.

Political, Social and Economic Drivers of Conflict

Recent political trends in South Sudan have contributed to an environment conducive to violent armed conflict. Increasing military conscription is one such trend, as SPLA enrolment rose between the signature of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 and independence (2011).¹⁹ Another emergent issue that undermines peace is the increasing ethnicization of the political environment. Additionally, the increasing amount of weapons in the country, particularly the uncontrolled spread of small arms, has escalated the existing tensions in many places and increased proxy fighting, as armed individuals capitalize on cattle-raiding culture.

From a social perspective, the aforementioned role of ethnic identities in recent political events has inhibited cohesion. In a country with weak property rights, the increasing number of returnees following the CPA and independence generated tensions in rural communities. Following the outbreak of the current crisis, the large-scale displacement occurring across the country has upended traditional community structures and many who fled have been separated from support groups and formal leadership. The violence that came with the outbreak of the crisis has supported a culture of fear, with many civilian victims, human rights abuses and violence against women and children on both sides of the conflict.

Economic trends that have fomented conflict in recent years are focused on the lack of economic diversification and poor infrastructure. The over-reliance on oil has led much of the fighting to occur in regions of the country where oil is found, particularly in Upper Nile and Unity states, which has spilled over into neighbouring areas. Furthermore, the recent violence and displacement has disrupted the planting season and traditional market networks, leading to serious economic decline for farmers and traders, as well as significant food insecurity across the country (see Box 1). As violence and seasonal rainfall continue to cut off access across the country, food insecurity is increasing, and many analysts suspect that parts of the country may fall into famine soon.

¹⁹ Small Arms Survey, Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, The SPLM-in-Opposition, April 1, 2014

Text Box 1: Food Security

According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), an estimated 3.9 million people are projected to experience crisis or emergency food insecurity levels between June and August 2014, most extremely in areas where fighting has taken place. As people leave home to search for food, they are increasingly vulnerable to crime and health concerns. A rise in reports of gender-based violence across the country is associated with food insecurity, as women and girls become isolated in search for firewood or wild foods to eat.

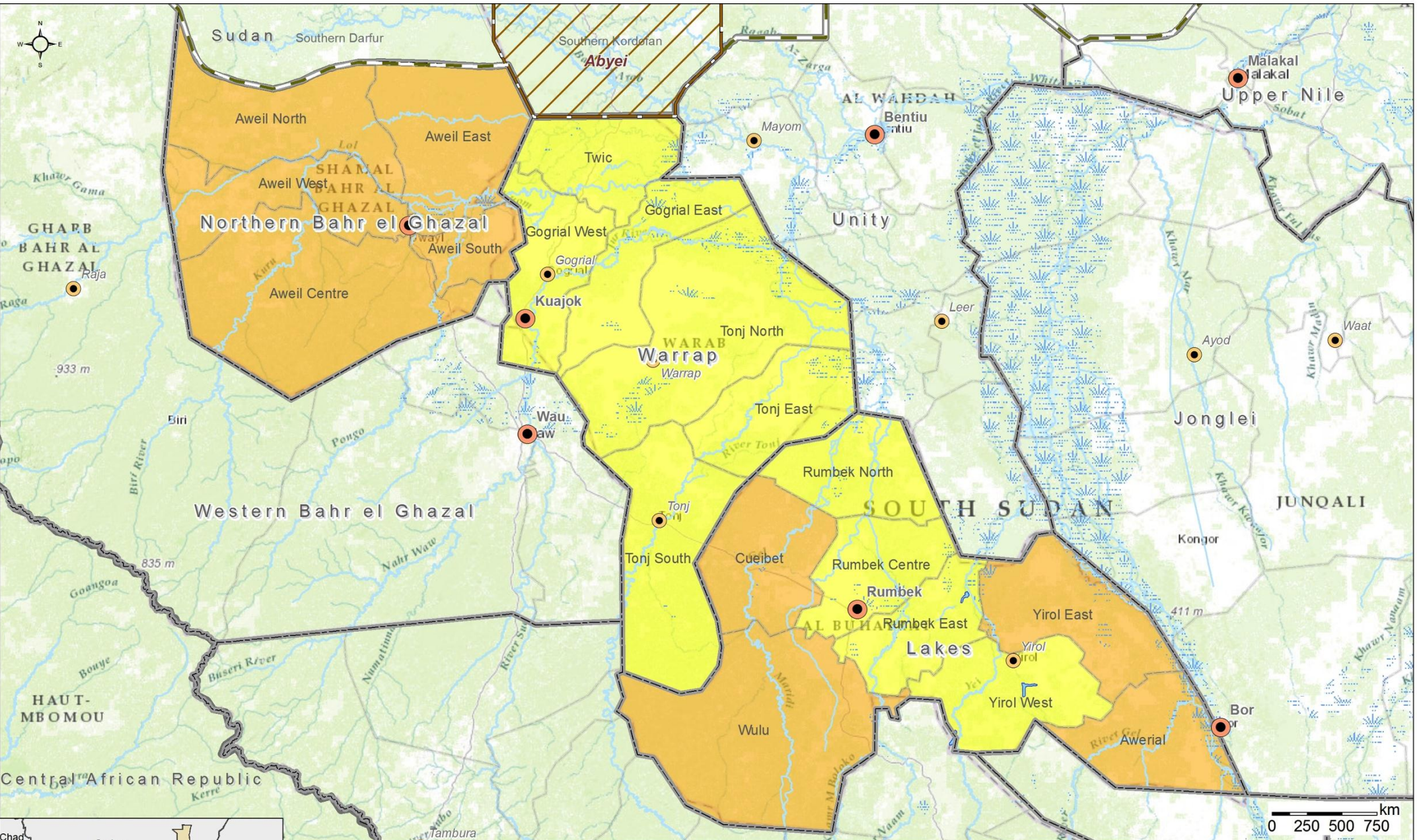
Map 3 (below) shows the IPC for the BRACED areas of implementation. As the map indicates, Warrap State is at a "stressed" level of food insecurity, while the east and west counties in Lakes State and all of Northern Bahr el Ghazal are in "crisis" level. Beyond "crisis" the IPC identifies two additional levels: "emergency," which bordering Unity State counties are experiencing, and "famine" which no county in South Sudan has yet reached.

It is important to note that food security varies by livelihood type. The IPC report for May to June 2014 indicates that pastoralists are faring adequately, as livestock body conditions are good following water availability and pasture access and quality thus far in the year. Another key element of food security is seasonal variation. Food prices increase during lean season, which particularly affects displaced individuals and low income and urban populations.

Source: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Acute Food Insecurity Overview, April 30, 2014, www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/South%20Sudan_IPC%20May%202014_Projected_Situation.pdf

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (June-August 2014)

For Humanitarian Relief Purposes Only
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- IPC phase - Crisis
- IPC phase - Stressed
- Country Capital
- State Capital
- County Capital
- Undetermined boundary
- Abyei - Undetermined area
- National boundary
- State boundary
- County boundary
- Fresh water marsh
- Lake
- Waterways

Data Sources :
IPC Phases: FAO, June 2014; Administrative boundaries: UNOCHA; Roads: WFP LogCluster
Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, TomTom, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community
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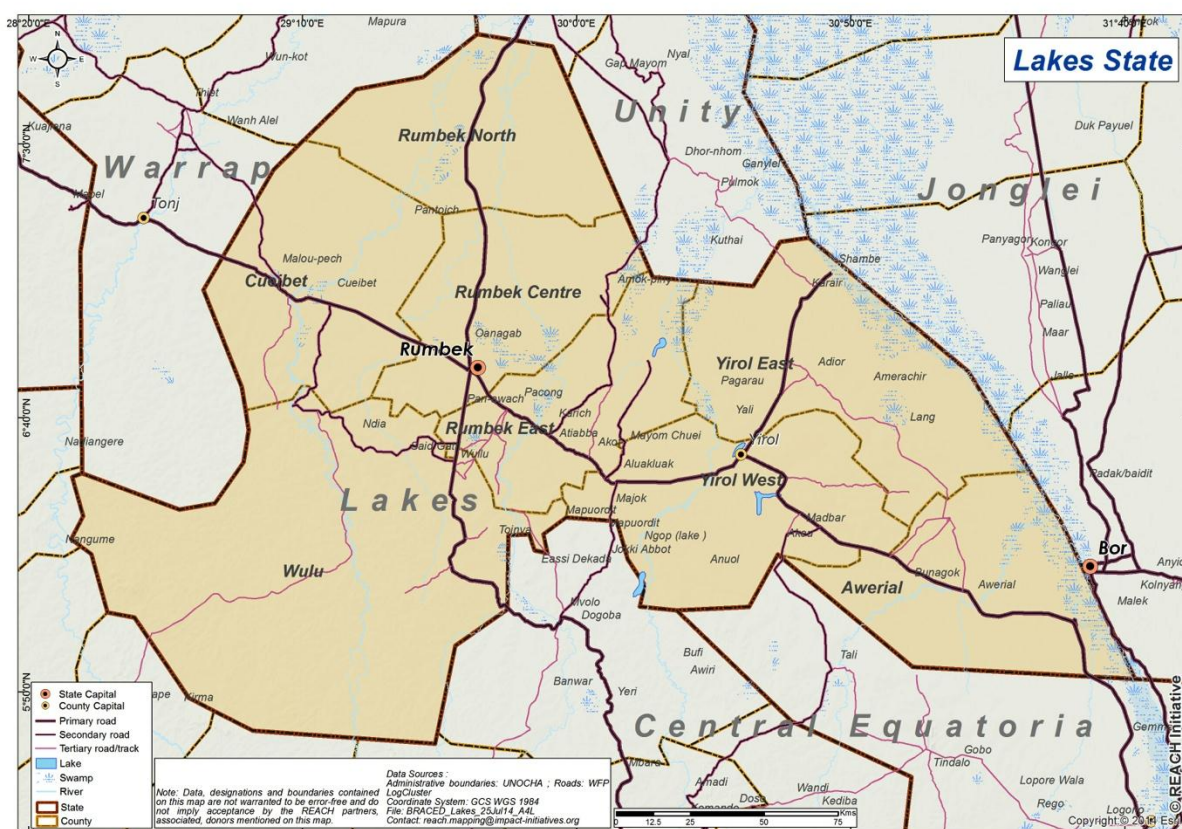
File: REACH_SSD_IPC_States_28Aug14_A4L_v2
Contact: reach.mapping@impact-initiatives.org

Note: Data, designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by the REACH partners, associated, donors mentioned on this map.

LAKES STATE

This section discusses the conflict profile of the centrally located Lakes State, including a discussion of the political, economic and socio-cultural context of the state. Next, this section describes conflict trends of inter-communal violence and recent history, particularly the large influx of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) from eastern Jonglei State. Finally, this section identifies the potential triggers that could escalate the violence in Lakes State, mostly related to inter- and intra-communal violence, proxy fighting and political leadership in the state.

Map 4: Lakes State Reference



CONFLICT PROFILE

Lakes State is located in the centre of South Sudan and is the only state without international borders (see Map 4). Geo-strategically, Lakes State holds an interesting position in South Sudan, as it borders the White Nile River, an essential transportation route, for much of its eastern boundary. Its central location makes it a transit hub for the country, with many domestic flights traveling through Rumbek town, and road transport between the northern states and the capital Juba, located to the south in Central Equatoria. Lakes State also shares a border with two states to the east and north (Jonglei and Unity, respectfully) that have seen some of the worst fighting since December 2013, and it has therefore become a host to many IDPs.

Socio-Cultural, Economic and Political Context

The population of Lakes State is primarily comprised of members of the Dinka ethnic group. According to a 2010 report by the UN Mission in Sudan (stationed in Rumbek town at the time), the ethnic composition of Lakes State is as follows: "Rumbek Central, Rumbek North, and Rumbek East counties are purely inhabited by the Dinka section. Cueibet County is home to the Dinka Gok, Yirol West is inhabited by the Dinka Atuot, and Yirol East by the Dinka Ciec. Awerial County is inhabited by only the Dinka Aliab."²⁰ Much of Wulu County is populated by members of the Jur-Bel and Bongo ethnic groups.²¹

The majority of the population in Lakes State engages in cattle herding for their livelihood, and a smaller portion are agriculturalists, located mostly in the southern part of the state. In mid-December 2013, as a response to the fighting in neighboring Bor town, tens of thousands of mostly Dinka IDPs crossed the Nile River into Awerial County in eastern Lakes State. The total number of IDPs in Lakes State is now up to 138,000,²² and is significantly straining the use of natural resources.

Economically, the conflict has disrupted markets and supply chains across Lakes State. Increased insecurity and proliferation of light arms has ruined business for many involved in cattle-related economic activity, such as herders and butchers.²³

Politically, the population has grown increasingly frustrated with the new acting military governor appointed by Presidential Decree in January 2013. The recent political reforms and changes in judicial affairs in Lakes State are causing growing dissent among the population. This is compounded by newly-enacted security reforms, causing political disagreement among state commissioners, as well as resentment among youth in the state.

²⁰ UNMIS, Lakes State Briefing Pack, June 17, 2010.

²¹ UNOCHA, Map: Distribution of Ethnic Groups in Southern Sudan, December 24, 2009.

²² UNOCHA, South Sudan Crisis Situation Report No. 44, July 10, 2014, <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/south-sudan-crisis-situation-report-no-44-10-july-2014>

²³ Radio Tamazuj, "Lakes Butchers Say Insecurity Ruins their Business," March 31, 2014; <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/lakes-butchers-say-insecurity-ruins-their-business>

CONFLICT DYNAMICS

Conflict Trends and Recent History

The reintegration of returnees has been a challenge for Lakes State residents. Many cross-border displaced populations who fled north during the civil war have now returned to Lakes State since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005) in advance of the nation's independence (2011).²⁴

Historical cycles of inter-communal violence continue to plague Lakes State, much of which occurs in the central and northern parts of the state.²⁵ This fighting is sometimes related to women, revenge killing and dowry disputes. Traditionally, violence has resulted from cattle-raiding from neighbouring Unity State.²⁶ Recent events in the state, described in more detail below, have exacerbated this trend of inter- and intra-communal attacks, often manifesting as cattle-raids or increased sexual violence.

The recent crisis has had a significant impact on Lakes State residents. Owing to its central location, many deserting soldiers cross into Lakes State en route home from Upper Nile and Jonglei states.²⁷ While fighting has concentrated in the surrounding states, recent accusations of rebel attacks in Yirol involving cattle theft may indicate that the conflict may have a more direct impact on Lakes State in the future.²⁸

Increasing food insecurity across the country continues to provoke large-scale internal displacement, and population movements into Lakes State has further strained the food supplies and natural resources of host communities. In Mingkaman, Awerial County, the area with the highest concentration of IDPs in the BRACED area of implementation, IOM registered a host community population of 7,700 in a space now occupied by over 100,000 IDPs. While some IDPs have returned to Bor, the numbers are unknown and many in Mingkaman report that Jonglei is too insecure to return.²⁹ Insecurity and roadblocks have disrupted access to many markets across the state, which has led to rapid economic decline. Another attack in Bor, Jonglei State may cause a further influx of IDPs, as occurred following those in December and April 2014.

As indicated in Map 3, most people in the western and eastern counties in Lakes State are experiencing “crisis” levels of food insecurity. According to the IPC, 26 per cent of the population in Lakes is at the Phase 3 “crisis” level, the fourth worst in the country, after Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei.³⁰ Yet the report also indicates that only 4 per cent of Lakes State is at the “emergency” food insecurity level—placing it among the Equatorial States and Warrap State in the lower percentages for the country. The eastern counties of Yirol and Awerial have greater food shortages in part due to the presence of thousands of IDPs from Jonglei State.

²⁴ Stein, Anna. “Security: Lakes State, Sudan—Rapid Needs Assessment” NP, early December, 2010. www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/security-lakes-state-sudan-%E2%80%93-rapid-needs-assessment

²⁵ Radio Tamazuj, “Inter-Communal Clashes Kill 25 People in Lakes State,” June 17, 2014 <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/inter-communal-clashes-kill-25-people-lakes-state>

²⁶ Radio Tamazuj, “Inter-clan Fighting Breaks out in Lakes State,” March 25, 2014, <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/inter-clan-fighting-breaks-out-lakes-state>

²⁷ Sudan Tribune, “Lakes State Soldiers Return Home After Deserting Positions Over Unpaid Salaries,” June 13, 2014 www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article51347

²⁸ Sudan Tribune, “South Sudan Accuses Rebels of Attacking Lakes State Village,” August 6, 2014 www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article51942

²⁹ As reported by protection partners working in Mingkaman and Bor at the Protection Cluster meeting in Juba, South Sudan on August 19, 2014

³⁰ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Acute Food Insecurity Overview, April 30, 2014, www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/South%20Sudan_IPC%20May%202014_Projected_Situation.pdf

Potential Triggers

A variety of events or decisions could serve as an accelerating factor or catalyst for violence in Lakes State. The three most relevant triggers for Lakes State are: inter- and intra-communal violence, proxy fighting spill-overs from Unity State and the relationship between the youth and the Lakes State Governor.

Inter- and Intra-Communal Violence

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons has increased as a result of the national conflict, intensifying traditional cattle-raids. In early August, unknown gunmen killed a prominent community leader, prompting a series of violent attacks between local clans.³¹ The retaliatory attacks have spread into neighbouring states and resulted in numerous reports of sexual violence and destruction of property.³² The incidents are characteristic of both increased militarization in the area and its ability to escalate violence. The escalation in inter- and intra-clan violence, and associated cattle-raids and sexual violence attacks, have the potential to trigger increasingly destructive retaliation.

Proxy Violence from Non-State Armed Actors

Proxy fighting has the potential to spark greater violence, as reprisals may be more heavily armed than previous years and the geographic location of the fighting is expanding. Increasing destabilization and violence in Unity State, where fighting has been active since the start of the conflict, is a particular concern. The area hosts armed non-state actor groups, such as the JEM, that have participated in hostilities and there is a potential that this violence could spill-over into Lakes State.³³

Tensions between Lakes State Acting Governor and Youth

One key trigger for violence in Lakes State is the tension between the authorities and increasingly critical rhetoric of the youth in Lakes State. This escalating tension has driven thousands of young men away from the cattle camps and into the bush, reportedly due to lack of justice for revenge killings in cattle-raids.³⁴ The youth have threatened to carry out attacks if a contentious disarmament plan is implemented and if criminality is not adequately addressed by the authorities.

³¹ Sudan Tribune, "Rumbek East County Paramount Chief Killed by Unknown Gunmen," August 8, 2014, www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article51960

³² Radio Tamazuj, "Lawlessness in Lakes State after Chiefs Murder," August 19, 2014, <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/s-sudan-lawlessness-lakes-state-after-chiefs-murder>

³³ UNMISS Conflict in South Sudan: A Human Rights Report, May 8, 2014

³⁴ Sudan Tribune, "Lakes: Pastoralist Counties Youth Desert Counties, Threaten Attacks Against State," June 24, 2014

NORTHERN BAHR EL GHAZAL STATE

This section discusses the conflict profile of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, including a discussion of the political, economic and socio-cultural context of the state, followed by a description of conflict trends and recent history. Finally, this section identifies the potential triggers that could escalate the violence in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, related to population influx from neighbouring areas, food insecurity, troop movements and border disputes.

Map 5: Northern Bahr el Ghazal State Reference



CONFLICT PROFILE

Northern Bahr el Ghazal is the smallest of South Sudan's ten states, yet it is also the most densely populated, following Central Equatoria, where the capital is located.³⁵ Conversely, the state is the most rural as well, with 92 per cent of inhabitants living outside of urban and peri-urban centres.³⁶ The state borders Western Bahr el Ghazal to the west and south, and Warrap to the east. It shares its northern border with the South Darfur region of Sudan, as well as the contested area of Abyei in South Kordofan.

Socio-Cultural, Political and Economic Context

Northern Bahr el Ghazal is primarily populated with Dinka sub-tribes. The Dinka sub-tribes include the farming Dinka Malual, which dominate the northern to eastern parts of the state, and the Dinka Abiem and Dinka Palieth in the southern and eastern parts of the state.³⁷ The Luo, also known as Jur Chol, which have linguistic links to the Shilluk, Pari, Acholi and Anyuak (groups located in eastern part of South Sudan), are concentrated in the central part of the state.³⁸

Historically, the proximity of Northern Bahr el Ghazal to Sudan has had a significant impact on peace and conflict in the state, particularly due to the rich agricultural land and the presence of different agro-pastoralist groups. The seasonal migration of the Messiriya Arabs into the area has caused clashes with the local Dinka Malual. Another key border issue is the 14-Mile Area, which Human Security Baseline Assessment (HSBA) for Sudan and South Sudan describes as "located on the border between Northern Bahr el Ghazal and East Darfur, the 14-Mile Area is a strategically important strip of land below the river Kiir that contains important grazing territory for both the Malual Dinka, the area's principal occupants, and the Rizeigat, the largest cattle-owning group in East Darfur, which annually migrates into the territory."³⁹ It also serves as a strategic transportation route between the two countries.

Economically, Northern Bahr el Ghazal is the poorest state in South Sudan, with a 76 percent poverty rate—the highest in the country—and an average per capita consumption rate of 60 South Sudanese Pounds per month—the lowest in the country.⁴⁰ The state's distance from the capital and its history as a location of violence during the civil wars with Sudan have challenged market development. Furthermore, trade routes between Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal State and Rumbek, Lakes State are less reliable than those to Darfur and Kordofan, through which the state acquires clothing, food, and fuel as well as tax payments.⁴¹ The key market towns of Warrawa and Gokk Machar continue to provide trade between Sudan and South Sudan, which, as of May 2014, the recent conflict has not destroyed.⁴²

³⁵ Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation, Statistical Yearbook for Southern Sudan 2010.

³⁶ National Bureau of Statistics, Key Indicators for Northern Bahr el Ghazal, October 2011, http://ssnbs.org/storage/key-indicators-for-southern-sudan/Key%20Indicators_82.pdf

³⁷ Concordis International Sudan Report, More Than a Line: Sudan's North-South Border, September 2010.

³⁸ Concordis International Sudan Report, More Than a Line: Sudan's North-South Border, September 2010; and UNOCHA, Distribution of Ethnic Groups in Southern Sudan, December 24, 2009.

³⁹ Small Arms Survey, Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, The 14-Mile Area, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/facts-figures/borderdisputed-areas/14-mile-area.html

⁴⁰ National Bureau of Statistics, Key Indicators for Northern Bahr el Ghazal, October 2011, http://ssnbs.org/storage/key-indicators-for-southern-sudan/Key%20Indicators_82.pdf

⁴¹ Spittaels, Steven and Yannick Weyns, International Peace Information Service, Mapping Conflict Motives: the Sudan – South Sudan border, January 2014.

⁴² Small Arms Survey, Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, The 14-Mile Area, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/facts-figures/borderdisputed-areas/14-mile-area.html

CONFLICT DYNAMICS

Conflict Trends and Recent History

As can be expected in the northern parts of the country, Northern Bahr el Ghazal State has received a significant influx of returnees from Sudan following the signature of the CPA and independence. Many settled in Aweil town, prompting serious land use issues and challenges linked to rapid unplanned urbanization, such as increased criminality and the presence of street children.⁴³ Many returnees had difficulty moving beyond Northern Bahr el Ghazal, as they experienced transportation challenges and reluctance to leave large transport hubs.

As mentioned previously, the northern part of the state has seen conflict as a result of clashes between the two Sudan-based pastoralist groups and the local Dinka Malual during seasonal agro-pastoral migrations. Yet despite this contentious migration, cattle rustling is not a significant concern in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State in comparison with other areas, namely Unity and Warrap states.⁴⁴ In fact, until military desertions and defections began to rise in April and May, the area was fairly peaceful with respect to the national conflict.⁴⁵

Potential Triggers

Of the three states discussed in this report, Northern Bahr el Ghazal is the least affected by the current crisis thus far. Though the situation across the country remains volatile, this report outlines four key potential triggers for violence that are currently most relevant for the state: food insecurity, population influx from neighbouring areas, troop movements and border disputes.

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is a serious concern for inhabitants of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, as access to markets are increasingly limited due to fighting and the rainy season began early this year. Map 3 shows that all five counties of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State are at a Phase 3 “crisis” level of food insecurity according to the IPC. Of the three states for BRACED implementation, Northern Bahr el Ghazal State is faring the worst in terms of food security. This region has been prone to flooding and inaccessibility and reduced trade flow as a result. Additionally, the IPC reported increased livestock diseases in the area, such as anthrax and foot and mouth disease, which could further destabilize food security (although vaccination campaigns have covered 20,000 animals).⁴⁶

⁴³ Danish Demining Group, Promoting the Peace: Ensuring conflict-sensitive development in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, 2011, www.danishdemininggroup.dk/fileadmin/uploads/pdf/DDG_PDF/Promoting%20the%20Peace%20report.pdf

⁴⁴ Spittaels, Steven and Yannick Weyns, International Peace Information Service, Mapping Conflict Motives: the Sudan – South Sudan border, January 2014.

⁴⁵ Sudan Tribune, “Another Army General Defects in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State,” May 2, 2014, www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article50844

⁴⁶ Food Security Technical Secretariat of the Republic of South Sudan, South Sudan: Food Security Update, June 3, 2014.

Population Influx

Both physical and food insecurity continue to generate displacement in neighbouring states and the area is seeing an increased amount of tension. As the security situation in Unity State worsens, both Warrap and Northern Bahr el Ghazal states will receive IDP spill-overs. Northern Bahr el Ghazal is known as a traditional land of the Dinka community, which could serve as a target for future violence. Unity State is also affected by severe food insecurity; the entire western part of the state is at a Phase 4 “emergency” level according to the IPC.⁴⁷

Troop Movements

Third, the aforementioned defecting soldiers in the area are increasingly a cause of concern for Northern Bahr el Ghazal State. As SPLA-IO uses South Kordofan as a base, defecting troops often cross through the state to reach the Sudanese border.⁴⁸ In July, defecting troops from Western Bahr el Ghazal clashed with pro-government forces causing the death of 60 individuals as they moved through the state to cross the border into Sudan.⁴⁹

Border Disputes

Finally, border concerns with South Sudan present a source of tension, albeit to a much lesser extent than the triggers outline above. While the 14-Mile Area has not seen heightened political tension since the start of the conflict, it does remain militarized and is still an area of contention and strategic value between northern and southern political groups.⁵⁰ Additionally, the annual Rizeigat migration is underway peacefully thus far in 2014, and animal grazing in Northern Bahr el Ghazal continues without large-scale violence.

⁴⁷ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Acute Food Insecurity Overview, April 30, 2014, www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/South%20Sudan_IPC%20May%202014_Projected_Situation.pdf

⁴⁸ Small Arms Survey, Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, The SPLM-in-Opposition, April 1, 2014

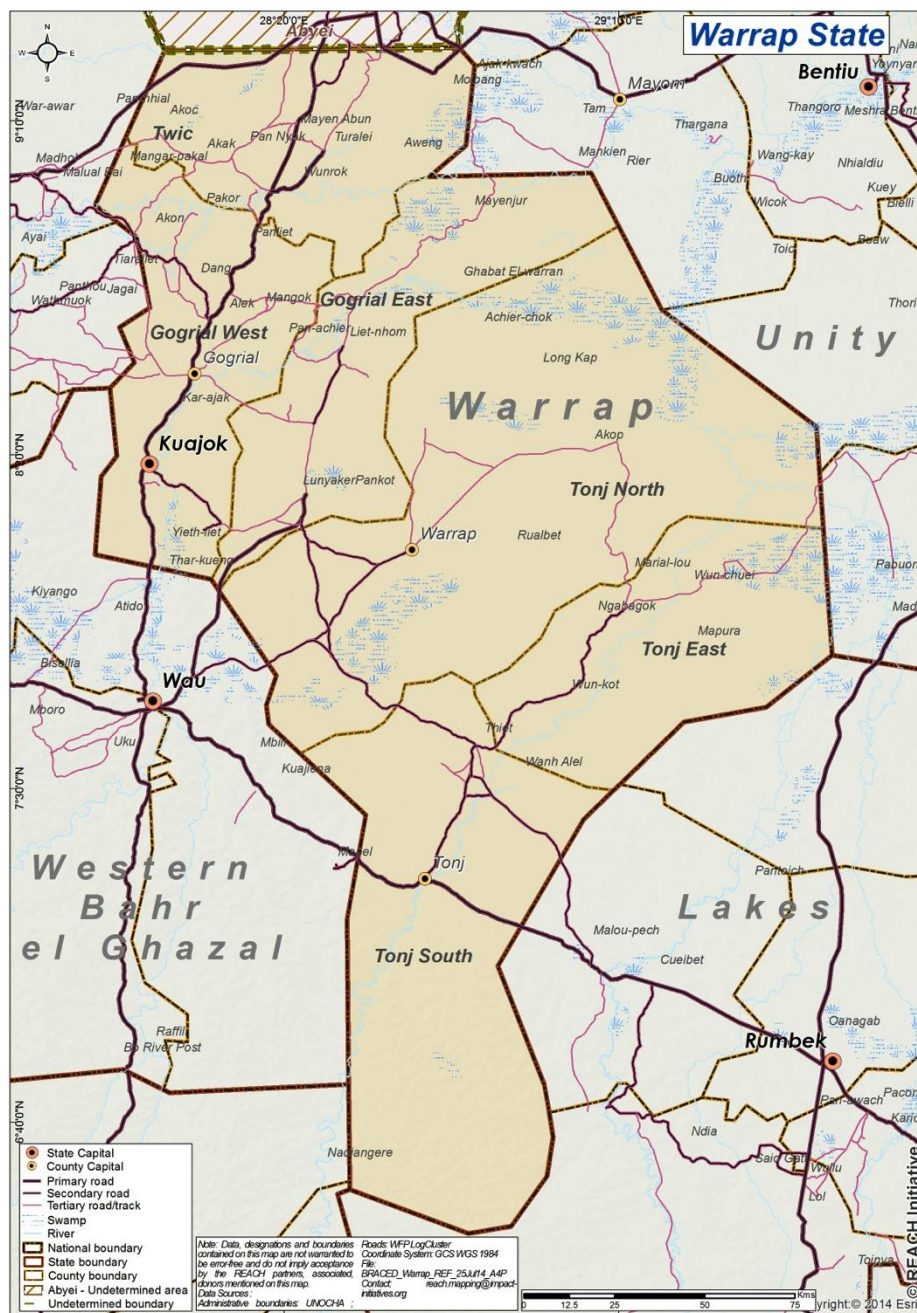
⁴⁹ Sudan Tribune, “Over 60 killed as South Sudan Rivals Clash in Northern Bahr el Ghazal,” July 18, 2014, www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article51726

⁵⁰ Small Arms Survey, Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, The 14-Mile Area, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/facts-figures/borderdisputed-areas/14-mile-area.html

WARRAP STATE

This section discusses the conflict profile of Warrap State, including an introduction to the political, economic and socio-cultural context of the state. Next, this section describes conflict trends and recent history, focusing on cattle-raiding violence and border disputes. Finally, this section identifies the potential triggers that could escalate the violence in Warrap State: the intensification of cattle-related violence, particularly on ethnic lines, proxy violence from armed non-state actors, and an influx of IDPs fleeing Unity State.

Map 6: Warrap State Reference



CONFLICT PROFILE

Like the two other states covered in this report, Warrap State is a part of the traditional Bahr el Ghazal region, so named for the Bahr el Ghazal River that originates in the Sudd swamps and runs through Warrap State. Warrap State is situated between the Greater Bahr el Ghazal States to the west (Northern and Western) as well as Western Equatoria to the southwest, and Lakes State to the southeast. To the northeast, Warrap State shares a border with Unity State, the site of much of the violence since the outbreak of the crisis; as well as a northern border with the disputed area of Abyei.

Political, Economic and Socio-Cultural Context

Similar to Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Warrap State is dominated by Dinka sub-tribes and enjoys relative ethnic homogeneity, with the exception of the southern part of the state which hosts the Luo (Jur Chol) and the Bongo.⁵¹ The state is the homeland of President Salva Kiir, who was born in Akon village, in Gogrial West County in the northwest part of the state. Like its neighbouring states, it is a largely rural society with 87 per cent of the population engaged in animal husbandry and crop farming for livelihoods.

To the north of Warrap State lies Abyei, a disputed area claimed by both Sudan and South Sudan that is largely populated by the Ngok Dinka. The fate of this area has been a source of contention for both governments and a referendum was originally scheduled for 2011, yet political disagreements have postponed it. The seasonal migration of the estimated 50,000 Arab Missyria into Abyei and Warrap State during the dry season often causes clashes between the two groups, and has displaced some 110,000 Ngok Dinka.⁵² In addition to water and grazing lands, Abyei also hosts an oil field, which is currently under military protection from the Sudanese Air Force (SAF), contrary to UN Security Council agreements that prohibit their presence.⁵³

After Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Unity states, Warrap is the third poorest state in South Sudan, with 64 per cent of the population living below the poverty line.⁵⁴ The fighting has had an impact on markets and food availability, particularly in Gogrial West County,⁵⁵ yet food insecurity in Warrap is not as critical as in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and parts of Lakes states. Warrap State is known to be a relatively productive area, yet it is also flood-prone.⁵⁶

⁵¹ United Nations Development Programme, Community Consultation Report, Warrap State, South Sudan, May 2012.

⁵² Small Arms Survey, Human Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, The Crisis in Abyei, March 1, 2013, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/facts-figures/abyei/HSBA-Crisis-in-Abyei-March-2013.pdf

⁵³ Small Arms Survey, Human Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, Update on Abyei, May 16, 2014, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/de/facts-figures/borderdisputed-areas/abyei.html

⁵⁴ National Bureau of Statistics, Key Indicators for Warrap, October 2011, http://ssnbs.org/storage/key-indicators-for-southern-sudan/Key%20Indicators_82.pdf

⁵⁵ Radio Tamazuj, "Food Shortages Among Warrap IDPs," July 25, 2014, <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/food-shortages-among-warrap-idps>

⁵⁶ REACH Initiative, Flood Vulnerability and Contingency Plan: Warrap State, South Sudan, December, 2013

CONFLICT DYNAMICS

Conflict Trends and Recent History

The current conflict in South Sudan has reached Warrap State, albeit largely through minor clashes, particularly near the border with Unity State.⁵⁷ Displaced populations began arriving after the onset of the conflict; many have crossed over from Unity State, and settled in the western and northern part of Warrap State, particularly in Gogrial West and Twic counties.⁵⁸ One key element to note is that the population of Warrap State is mainly Dinka while the population of Unity State is predominantly Nuer.

The greatest conflict trend in Warrap State is the increasing incidence of cattle-raids.⁵⁹ Conflict over cattle-related issues such as access to water and grazing lands is also a significant source of tension in the area. Both inter- and intra-clan fighting has occurred related to cattle. Conflict-prone areas have historically been along the borders with Unity and Lakes states, often between Tonj South and Tonj East Counties in Warrap State, and Cueur County in Lakes State.

The border with Unity State has been a challenging area both because of this cattle rustling, as well as the ethnic division between the predominantly Dinka Warrap State inhabitants and the majority Nuer in Unity State border counties. More specifically, the relationship between the two groups has deteriorated in recent years in both Gogrial East and Twic counties in Warrap State, which border Mayom County in Unity State.⁶⁰

In addition to border challenges with Unity State, peaceful relations in Warrap State have also been affected by the conflicts along the northern border with Abyei. The fighting between the SAF and the SPLA, and armed non-state actors, such as the Messiriya and the JEM, has militarized the area. Increased presence of small arms and light weapons was perceived by the community in Warrap State to be one of the predominant causes of conflict across the state even prior to the outbreak of the current crisis.⁶¹ Additionally, following fighting in Unity State, the humanitarian situation in the southern part of the Abyei has worsened as South Sudanese IDPs flee north, further straining resources.⁶²

A UN Development Programme (UNDP) report also cites the following as drivers of conflict in Warrap State, which were identified through community-level consultations: “lack of effective governance at the grassroots level, youth unemployment/lack of alternative livelihood, tribal alliances to acquire resources and power and the influx of returnees.”⁶³

⁵⁷ Radio Tamazuj, “8 Killed 11 Wounded at Mayen Jur in Warrap,” July 4, 2014, <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/8-killed-11-wounded-people-mayen-jur-warrap>

⁵⁸ Radio Tamazuj, “Food Shortages Among Warrap IDPs,” July 25, 2014, <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/food-shortages-among-warrap-idps>

⁵⁹ Spittaels, Steven and Yannick Weyns, International Peace Information Service, Mapping Conflict Motives: the Sudan – South Sudan border, January 2014.

⁶⁰ Mayai, Augustino Ting, The Sudd Institute, International Peace Information Service, Mapping Conflict Motives: the Sudan – South Sudan border, Chapter 9, January 2014.

⁶¹ United Nations Development Programme, Community Consultation Report, Warrap State, South Sudan, May 2012.

⁶² Small Arms Survey, Human Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, Update on Abyei, May 16, 2014, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/de/facts-figures/borderdisputed-areas/abyei.html

⁶³ United Nations Development Programme, Community Consultation Report, Warrap State, South Sudan, May 2012.

Potential Triggers

Warrap State is perhaps the most at-risk of the three BRACED areas of implementation due to its border with Unity State where much of the violence has taken place during the current conflict. While a number of factors compound the likelihood for violence in South Sudan, the following three elements are the most relevant triggers for an escalation of conflict in Warrap State: the intensification of cattle-related violence, particularly on ethnic lines, proxy violence from armed non-state actors, and spill-over of IDPs fleeing Unity State.

Intensification of Cattle-Related Violence

As previously described, violent cattle-raiding, and fighting over access to water and grazing lands is prevalent in Warrap State. The population displacement and disruption of the planting season has strained the already sought-after natural resources in the area. The existing inter- and intra-communal conflicts have the potential to become more violent, as nearby fighting in Unity State may inject more small arms into the area and security forces are diverted to main conflict zones. As fighters in neighbouring counties go without salary, cattle-raiding becomes an increasingly attractive option. The border with Unity State also represents a militarily strategic area, as it divides traditional Dinka and Nuer land, as well as government- and SPLA-IO-held areas.

Proxy Violence from Armed Non-State Actors

Another potential trigger for violence is the presence of armed non-state actors in the area, such as the JEM, the Missyria, and the SPLA-North. In recent months, the relationship between the Ngok Dinka and Missyria has worsened in Abyei,⁶⁴ and, according to an UNMISS report on human rights, JEM fighters have been a part of the violence in Unity State since the beginning of the crisis.⁶⁵ With armed non-state actors present in the bordering areas, proxy fighting between these groups, the SPLA and the SPLA-IO, could trigger conflict in Warrap State. Like Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, the movement of these groups through Warrap State between Unity State and South Kordofan can increase tensions as well.

Spill-over of Internal Population Displacements

IDPs fleeing Unity State have already begun to cause challenges for Warrap State residents, and, as their conditions worsen, the risk for tension will likely increase.⁶⁶ If the frontline moves closer to Mayom, eastern Warrap State may receive an influx of IDPs. Yet, it is important to recall that displaced populations from Unity State would be largely Nuer, and therefore may be reluctant to flee into Dinka territory. Additionally, violence in Abyei has historically driven people south into Warrap State, thus, if tensions rise in that area, Warrap State may see additional displaced population flows.⁶⁷ If the displaced population does grow, tensions may rise between IDPs and host communities, exacerbating existing strains on scarce resources. Following poor crop production in 2013 due to flooding,⁶⁸ all counties in Warrap State are at a Phase 2 “stressed” level according to the IPC. Yet, 9 out of the 11 counties that surround the state are at Phase 3 or 4.⁶⁹ The entire western border of Unity State has reached a Phase 4 “emergency” level—just one level below Phase 5 “famine.”

⁶⁴ Small Arms Survey, Human Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, Update on Abyei, May 16, 2014, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/de/facts-figures/borderdisputed-areas/abyei.html

⁶⁵ United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan, Conflict in South Sudan: A Human Rights Report, May 8, 2014.

⁶⁶ Radio Tamazuj, “Hunger Among Displaced in Gogrial West,” July 15, 2014. <https://radiotamazuj.org/en/article/hunger-among-displaced-gogrial-west>

⁶⁷ Miraya FM, “Warrap State to Aid Return of Abyei Citizens,” July 31, 2013, <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan-republic/warrap-state-aid-return-abyei-citizens>

⁶⁸ Food Security Technical Secretariat of the Republic of South Sudan, South Sudan: Food Security Update, June 3, 2014

⁶⁹ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Acute Food Insecurity Overview, April 30, 2014, www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/South%20Sudan_IPC%20May%202014_Projected_Situation.pdf

KEY THEMES

Throughout the research a number of key themes arose as particularly important to understanding the conflict in South Sudan. Of critical importance to the future of the conflict in Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states are: food insecurity, ethnic identities and increased availability of weapons.

Food Insecurity

Droughts, violence and displacement have disrupted this year's planting season and cut off access to traditional markets for many across the country. Food security crises affect various livelihood groups differently; pastoralists may retain access to water and grazing lands in some parts of the country unaffected by violence, whereas IDPs form one of the most vulnerable parts of the population.⁷⁰ Malnutrition is widespread and food insecurity is worsening across many parts of South Sudan. All of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, and western and eastern counties of Lakes State, have reached what the IPC refers to as Phase 3 "crisis" and Warrap and central Lakes states have reached Phase 2 "stressed."⁷¹

Yet the real danger for these areas may lie not in their own food security, but in that of their neighbours. The eastern border of Warrap and Lakes states meets the greatest food insecurity belt in the country, with the largest percentage of inhabitants at Phase 3 or higher; Jonglei (52 per cent) and Unity (71 per cent) states. While certain technical thresholds must be met to declare a Phase 5 "famine," serious malnutrition, morbidity, collapse of livelihoods and associated mortality are underway in most parts of the country.

Ethnic Identities

Although the current conflict is largely political in nature, much of the violence has occurred along ethnic lines. The Dinka majority is primarily affiliated with the SPLA, and the second largest ethnic group, the Nuer, are affiliated with SPLA-IO. These groups have been both the perpetrators and victims of ethnically-motivated violence. Yet, both opposing parties comprise members of other ethnic groups, and both show dissent and fracturing. Greater Equatorians (a coalition of different ethnic groups situated in Greater Equatoria) have more recently begun to organize and speak out, and both the Murle and Shilluk have historical grievances with the SPLA.⁷²

Weapon Proliferation

According to the HSBA, as of 2009 there were an estimated 2.7 million small arms and light weapons in Sudan and South Sudan.⁷³ This number has likely grown as non-state actors have brought more into the region, either acquired through direct government support or through illicit trade. In early July, South Sudan received 1,000 tons of small arms and light weapons, reportedly worth US\$38 million.⁷⁴ The proliferation of weapons throughout the country has the potential to make existing clashes more violent and create new localized power dynamics.

⁷⁰ Food Security Technical Secretariat of the Republic of South Sudan, South Sudan: Food Security Update, June 3, 2014

⁷¹ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Acute Food Insecurity Overview, April 30, 2014, www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/South%20Sudan_IPC%20May%202014_Projected_Situation.pdf

⁷² Small Arms Survey, Human Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan, SPLM in Opposition, May 2, 2014, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/facts-figures/south-sudan/conflict-of-2013-14/splm-in-opposition.html

⁷³ Small Arms Survey, HSBS Small Arms Tracing Desk, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/facts-figures/arms-and-ammunition-tracing-desk.html

⁷⁴ Amnesty International, UN: South Sudan Arms Embargo Crucial After www.amnesty.org/en/news/un-south-sudan-arms-embargo-crucial-after-massive-chinese-weapons-transfer-2014-07-17

INFORMATION GAPS

While this report collates available information on issues affecting the conflict in South Sudan, there are still many types and topics of information that are not available. South Sudanese information and communications infrastructure is extremely weak, and challenges to media freedom limit the quantity and quality of available analysis, especially in rural or sensitive areas. This section provides an overview of information gaps identified during this research that, if filled, would further refine this conflict analysis.

Reliable Data

As mentioned, it has proven difficult to find reliable data on incidents and trends in areas far from urban centres. Furthermore, the data supplied are not always sex- and age-disaggregated, leaving information gaps related to the experiences of women, children, older persons and persons with specific needs, such as people living with disabilities, chronic illnesses, etc.

In addition to data collection issues, insufficient data sharing is also a research challenge. Much of the data collection is conducted at the sub-national level in an ad hoc manner, leaving few comparable datasets. Without a clear statistical picture of the country prior to the outbreak of violence, actors in South Sudan have a difficult time determining its impact—as evidenced by the inability to estimate the total killed by the conflict.⁷⁵

Types of Conflict

Much of the information about security and violence is sensitive and/or speculative and therefore not shared publicly. Yet the recurrence of violent attacks, often with differing motivations, leads to confusion regarding whether an attack is an expression of proxy fighting, cattle-raiding, inter-clan grievances or theft. More information about specific local groups and their (occasionally shifting) allegiances would help humanitarian actors understand the nexus between displacement related to food or physical insecurity.

Impact of Climate

Although the rainy season spans different time periods across the country, there is not yet an analysis that identifies the impact of the current rainy season on food security and the crisis. The most recent IPC food security analysis was released in April, at the advent of the rainy season. The data collection and analysis are currently underway for the next IPC report, which is due in September. The results of the process will support a greater understanding of the effects of the 2014 rainy season on the conflict in areas of BRACED implementation.

⁷⁵ Kulish, Nicholas, "New Estimate Sharply Raises Death Toll in South Sudan," New York Times, January 9, 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/01/10/world/africa/new-estimate-sharply-raises-death-toll-in-south-sudan.html

RECOMMENDATIONS

While the specific objectives of BRACED activities are not directly aimed at peace-building, in a time of crisis, such as the one ongoing in South Sudan, it becomes even more necessary to consider the impact of activities on the local context. To that end, the following section outlines several recommendations for ways in which BRACED implementing partners can incorporate conflict-sensitive initiatives into their existing programming.

Research and Data Collection

To mitigate negative effects during implementation, BRACED partners should focus on improved data collection at the field level. As mentioned previously, data collection should include women and all age groups, to ensure that the needs and experiences of entire populations are captured. Whenever possible, BRACED partners should collaborate on data collection exercises to encourage the development of comparable datasets for affected populations across all three states.

Data collection exercises that involve affected populations, such as participatory conflict mapping activities, should also be included to understand local security perceptions. For example, partners can encourage the creation of seasonal calendars, to be used as a tool that illustrates localized patterns of insecurity related to the arrival of the dry season, during which competition for water resources is heightened.

Security Monitoring

Understanding the security context will be key to BRACED operations.

First, understanding the local security context is important. In the areas of implementation, partners can conduct focus groups and participatory mapping exercises to identify key features of the area, such as roads, administrative boundaries, water points, and grazing fields. Following the identification of local structures, BRACED partners can encourage the community to identify various insecurity “hotspots” on the map. Once these conflict mapping activities have been executed, actors will have a greater understanding of local conflict drivers and trends. This report should be updated every six months to incorporate local changes and updated data.

Next, BRACED partners should develop information sharing mechanisms. As BRACED implementing partners work in their various regions, it will be important to standardize the sharing of security-related data with other partners, to identify regional trends or develop lessons learned. It may also be helpful to engage with other NGOs operating at state level.

Finally, BRACED partners should engage in the national-level security infrastructure to receive timely security information and report incidents. Juba-based groups such as the NGO Forum and the Protection Cluster may provide valuable information for BRACED partners.

Community Engagement

To improve local support for proposed activities, BRACED partners should inform and engage with local leadership as early and regularly as possible. Further, partners should encourage the participation of minority groups in programming. It is especially important to engage actively host communities in areas of large-scale population displacement such as Awerial County, Lakes State.

CONCLUSION

The main focus of this report is to analyse the conflict in the three states where BRACED programming will take place in South Sudan: Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states. The purpose of the research is to isolate potential trends and triggers of conflict at the state-level that may be relevant to BRACED activities. A secondary purpose of the research is to provide an introduction to the context at the national level and state level, for implementing actors to gain a better understanding of the impact of their activities on the communities in which they work. Finally, this report sought to identify information gaps to determine potential adaptations to planned BRACED activities, and to identify subsequent areas of future research.

The three states in South Sudan covered in this report have had relatively similar experiences during the crisis. All comprise Dinka majority and have remained under control of the SPLA since the outbreak of the conflict. With the exception of some isolated incidents of violence reported in Warrap State,⁷⁶ the states in which BRACED activities will be implemented have not hosted the frontlines or experienced direct fighting related to the conflict. However, that does not mean that they have been unaffected by conflict. Defecting soldiers move through the region, proxy fighting of non-state actors occurs in neighbouring areas, and the proliferation of small weapons is escalating local cattle-raids and inter- and intra-communal violence.

Furthermore, the proximity to the front lines on the western edge of BRACED project implementing areas means that the relative security of Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states make it attractive to IDPs fleeing food and physical insecurity. The fighting and displacement disrupted the traditional planting season for many across the country, and, as the end of the rainy season approaches, traditional harvests will not be as abundant as years past, further deteriorating the food security of the most vulnerable communities.⁷⁷

Since the onset of the crisis on December 15, 2013, the situation has already changed in Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states. For BRACED project partners, food security—food availability, market access, malnutrition, loss of livelihoods—will require attention as will the changing conflict dynamics described herein. Further, the security situation may constrain humanitarian access and the magnitude of the emergency may continue to divert attention and resources to locations outside of BRACED project areas of intervention.

This report has introduced the unique context of Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states, with the hope that BRACED partners consider the context and potential conflict triggers during the conception and implementation phases of the program.

⁷⁶ Sudan Tribune, "Fighting Spreads to Warrap State, Killing 2," January 17, 2014, www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article49591

⁷⁷ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Acute Food Insecurity Overview, April 30, 2014, www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/South%20Sudan_IPC%20May%202014_Projected_Situation.pdf