Uprooted by Conflict

South Sudan's Displacement Crisis

International Rescue Committee | NOVEMBER 2014

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

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FRONT AND BACK COVERS: More than 100,000 displaced civilians have sought refuge inside U.N. bases in South Sudan, including the Tomping camp in Juba, the country's capital.

OPPOSITE PAGE: South Sudanese children carry water at the Kiryandongo refugee settlement in northern Uganda. Compared to camps in other countries, Kiryandongo offers refugees greater opportunities for self-reliance.

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INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

Executive Summary

Thousands of people have been killed and nearly 2 million people have been driven from their homes in South Sudan since civil war erupted in December 2013, sparked by a political rivalry between the country's president, Salva Kiir, and Riek Machar, the former vice president. The fighting brought an abrupt end to three years of relative stability following South Sudan's separation from Sudan. Now the world's youngest nation is facing a humanitarian catastrophe.

A tipping point could come soon, when the rains end, the roads become passable and armed groups are expected to resume fighting, resulting in further displacement and food insecurity. The fighting throughout 2014 has already disrupted planting and harvests and pushed up food prices. Millions are facing the threat of famine and as many as 50,000 children are at risk of dying of acute malnutrition,[1] according to the United Nations.

Civilians have historically borne the brunt of violence in South Sudan and the current conflict is no different. Both government and opposition forces have committed extraordinary abuses of civilians, often deliberately targeted along ethnic lines, including mass killings, disappearances, torture and gender-based violence (GBV) such as rape. An upsurge of ethnic violence between the country's two largest ethnic groups, the Dinka and the Nuer, threatens to further tear the country apart.

Despite the scale of the crisis, South Sudan has faded from the news and the acute attention of policymakers has waned as newer humanitarian emergencies capture headlines. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is issuing this report with the intent of putting South Sudan back as a priority on the international agenda. Action is urgently required. Although the immediate threat of famine has been averted thanks to successful deliveries of food aid, a lull in the fighting and the extraordinary resilience of South Sudan's people, a resumption of the conflict could push the country into famine in 2015. Humanitarian assistance is needed to respond to the anticipated slide into a new cycle of violence and displacement. But ultimately peace is the only solution. A series of on again, off again peace talks have resulted in ceasefires that have not been respected. On October 22, 2014, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), an East African regional organization, announced a "breakthrough" in negotiations between the parties. It is to be hoped that this positive development will lead to an all-inclusive peace agreement, though it must be noted that previous peace agreements have not been upheld and renewed fighting has already erupted. Furthermore, even if a peace agreement is reached, it will still take a long time for the nearly 2 million people displaced by the conflict to feel enough confidence in the restoration of security to return to their homes.

The IRC and its aid workers are firsthand witnesses to the dire effects this crisis is having on the people of South Sudan. With 25 years of experience working in South Sudan—both before and after independence—and a longstanding presence in some of the hardest hit areas of the country, the IRC is able to provide on-the-ground evidence and informed policy recommendations that if implemented will save lives and improve conditions for millions of people.

This report focuses on the needs of the 1.4 million people who have been displaced by violence inside South Sudan and the more than 455,000 refugees who have fled South Sudan for neighboring countries. It also examines the special problems confronting host communities in South Sudan and in neighboring countries that have taken in refugees.

Finally, the report offers proposals for responding to this crisis in ways that will help the international community avoid the mistakes of the past. In many other crisis settings, the IRC has seen how easily the weakest and most vulnerable displaced people—women, children, people with disabilities, the elderly and members of minority groups—can be ignored and overlooked. The IRC has also seen how a lack of planning to avert the long-term consequences of displacement can leave people living in limbo for decades without any hope for the future. Taking those lessons into account, the report offers initiatives and proposals for managing the South Sudan displacement crisis–proposals that can be built upon and implemented elsewhere.

This report is based on extensive IRC field research in South Sudan and the region, including interviews with refugees and displaced people, staff members of United Nations agencies

OPPOSITE PAGE: More than 100,000 civilians have sought refuge inside U.N. bases in South Sudan, including this one in Bentiu.

and nongovernmental organizations, and government officials.

The IRC has been shocked by the speed and scale at which the crisis in South Sudan has unfolded over the past year. It is addressing this report to policy-makers—in South Sudan, in countries hosting South Sudanese refugees, at the United Nations, and in regional and world capitals—because they are the ones who have the resources and influence to bring the conflict to an end and to respond better to its consequences. What is needed is the will and the political commitment to find a solution to the crisis while deploying humanitarian resources commensurate with escalating needs in South Sudan and of the region.

Summary of recommendations

Commit to and implement a political solution to end the fighting.

Humanitarian aid can reduce the suffering of civilians in the short run but it cannot bring an end to the conflict. The crisis in South Sudan is a man-made one, not a natural disaster caused by a storm or earthquake. Until the parties to the conflict agree on and implement a political solution, the suffering of the South Sudanese people will continue, including the risk of famine. The IRC urges the wider international community to redouble diplomatic efforts to put real pressure on the parties to the conflict to end the fighting.

Call on South Sudan fulfill its responsibility to provide for its people and encourage international donors to increase support for the aid effort.

Thus far the international aid effort, funded by the taxpayers of other countries, has saved thousands of lives. Everything must be done to increase the quantity and quality of that aid in order to protect civilians and meet their immediate needs. South Sudan has the primary responsibility to protect and support its citizens. It continues to accrue revenue from oil, but currently provides only 0.5 percent of the funding for the international response to the crisis.

Many more lives can be saved if donor governments fully support the United Nations' appeal for humanitarian aid for South Sudan and for neighboring countries struggling with an influx of refugees. To date, the U.S., the UK, Norway, and the EU have provided the lion's share of funding. Other governments should increase their commitment.

The U.N. Security Council has directed that U.N. peacekeeping troops in South Sudan make the protection of civilians a top priority.

Step up efforts by the United Nations to ensure protection of civilians.

Funding, while crucial, is not enough. Absolute priority must be given to protecting civilians displaced and affected by the conflict in accordance with the unanimous United Nations Security Council resolution of May 2014. That resolution called for the U.N. peacekeeping mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to concentrate primarily on protecting civilians. This includes displaced people living in hard-to-reach rural areas, in rural camps, in urban settlements or with host families, as well as people who have sought refuge inside U.N. peacekeeping bases. It requires that UNMISS conduct patrols outside their bases and start to re-establish security, consulting with civilians about what interventions by UNMISS would contribute most to help them feel safe.

Prepare for a protracted refugee crisis: seek alternatives to refugee camps and promote self-reliance.

The refugee crisis in the neighboring countries of Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan is expected to continue for months, if not years. Any increase in fighting in South Sudan can be expected to induce additional people to seek refuge

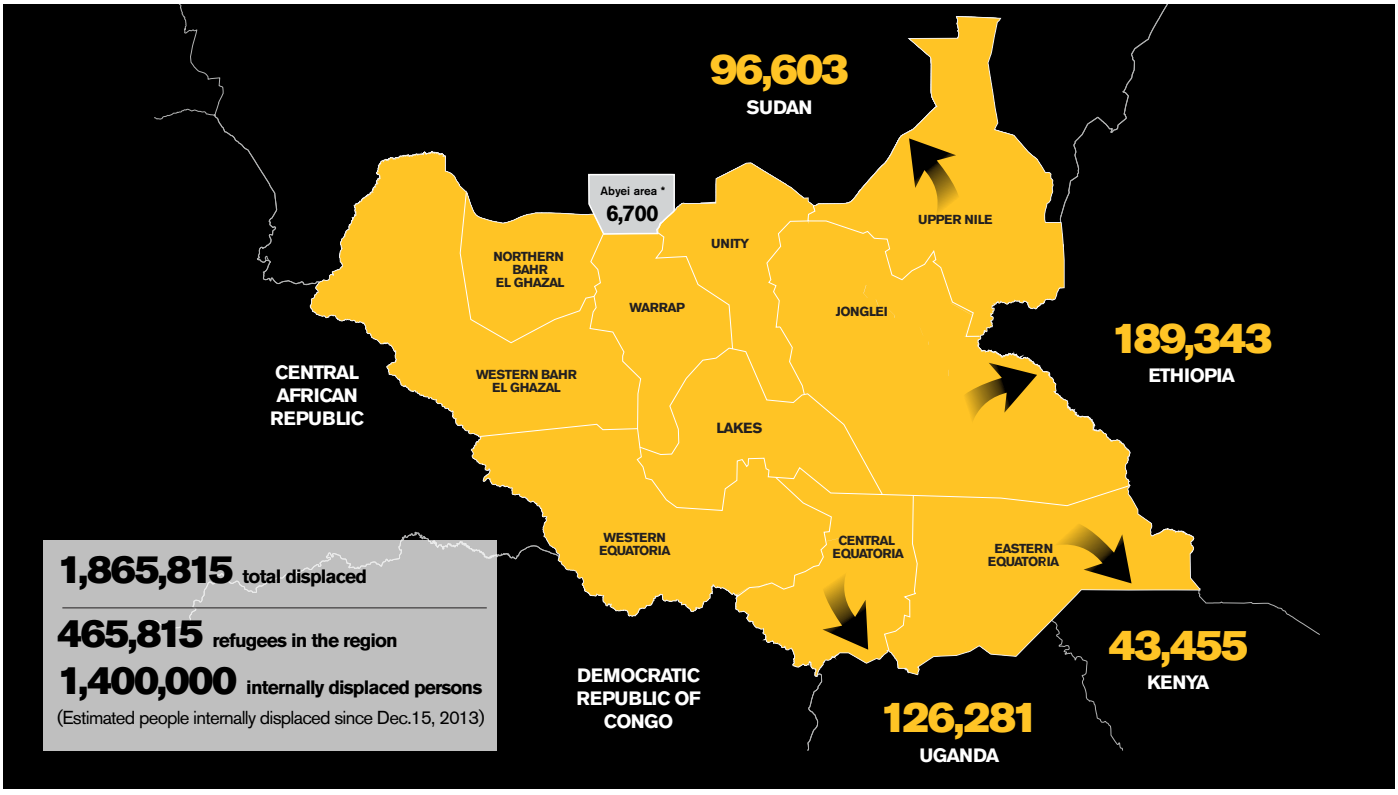
in neighboring countries. To avoid the creation of yet another refugee situation in which the international community is providing "care and maintenance" assistance to refugee communities for years on end while not enabling refugees to develop and utilize their skills, a new approach is required. This approach should focus on ensuring that in addition to refugees receiving the basic essentials of food, water, protection and medical aid that they are also given the tools and resources—land, skills development and professional training, and employment and educational opportunities—to become self-reliant.

A comprehensive effort should be undertaken to avoid repeating the same mistake that has been made for decades in refugee crises: inadvertently forcing refugees into long-term dependence on international aid in refugee camps. In June, the U.N. refugee agency, UNHCR, adopted a new policy "to pursue alternatives to camps whenever possible."[2] Nongovernmental aid organizations and refugee-hosting countries should support UNHCR's new policy by working together to find positive alternatives to camps and to provide assistance that supports both refugees and the communities where they are living.

Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected.

The success of the humanitarian aid response will be judged by how well it meets the needs of the most vulnerable—children separated from their families, women and girls, the urban displaced, and refugees from other countries trapped in South Sudan. Government leaders, community representatives, donors, U.N. agencies and nongovernmental aid organizations must ensure that the most vulnerable displaced people are able to receive assistance. It is also imperative that aid organizations avoid inadvertently creating harm through ill-conceived and badly executed programs. For example, during the current crisis, women and girls in camps and displacement sites have been put at risk of sexual violence from a lack of attention to the most basic security measures, such as locks on latrine doors. Given the high number of unaccompanied and separated children and female-headed households among South Sudanese refugees in neighboring countries, UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies need a boost in staffing to address the protection of children and violence against women.

South Sudan: Refugees and internally displaced persons (As of Oct.16, 2014)



Sources: UNHCR: Refugees; OCHA: IPDs; *Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.

Part 1: **The Crisis Inside South Sudan**

Overview and key issues

Conflict and displacement

The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement brought an end to decades of war between the north and the south and paved the way for a referendum on independence. Southern Sudanese voted overwhelmingly in favor of independence, and in July 2011, South Sudan became the world's newest state. One of the world's most underdeveloped countries, and rife with ethnic divisions left unresolved in the midst of efforts to prepare the country for independence, the nascent South Sudan was an extremely fragile state. It received a significant amount of support from the international community, but this was directed principally at "state-building" (establishing government institutions) rather than "nation-building" (forging a meaningful state-society interaction).

International support and the long lead-up to independence did not provide insulation against political and ethnic divisions. In mid-December 2013 the country was again plunged into crisis, following a power struggle between President Salva Kiir and his deputy, former Vice President Riek Machar. Fighting erupted between the government Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) forces and forces loyal to Machar—later dubbed the SPLA-in-Opposition. A conflict with political roots has since taken on a dangerous ethnic dimension, as the violence has broken out along ethnic lines in many parts of the country, pitting forces loyal to Kiir, a Dinka, against those backing Machar, a Nuer.

Since the outbreak of conflict in mid-December 2013, tens of thousands of people are estimated to have been killed. Of a total population of 12 million, 1.4 million people have been displaced inside the country, and nearly half a million have sought refuge outside the country. Those displaced by the conflict are scared to return to their home areas, electing instead to endure appalling conditions, a dearth of basic services and other threats in areas of displacement. Even in the event of a political agreement between the two parties to the conflict, the displaced are unlikely to return home quickly given the ethnic nature of the conflict and the likelihood of continuing violence against and between communities. Land has been taken during the conflict and boundaries have been re-drawn: many displaced people may never return to their homes.

OPPOSITE PAGE: A woman builds a makeshift shelter at a camp for displaced people outside the town of Ganyliel in South Sudan where thousands of people have taken refuge. .

Of those displaced inside South Sudan, less than 10 percent—over 100,000 people—are residing in United Nations "protection of civilian" sites (PoC sites) in peacekeeping bases. The vast majority of displaced people are living outside these sites, many of them in remote areas where accessing basic services and assistance is much more difficult.

A cessation of hostilities agreement was signed in January 2014, and other ceasefire agreements have followed. In June the parties to the conflict agreed to form a transitional government within 60 days. Yet these ceasefires and commitments have not been upheld. Despite a reduction in large-scale military confrontations since May (during the rainy season), all parties to the conflict—including militias and self-defense forces—continue to target civilians, often on the basis of their ethnicity.

Food insecurity

The nexus between conflict and food insecurity has long been established. The end of the rainy season is expected to bring a further deterioration of conditions for South Sudan's displaced. Fighting is likely to intensify, and the impact of worsening food insecurity is expected to hit hard.

Conflict exacerbates food insecurity, and it is harder and more expensive to prevent or respond to a famine during a conflict**.** During the rainy season, some South Sudanese were able to survive by means such as fishing and harvesting waterlilies from rivers and ponds. To pay for their basic food needs, some families have already been forced to sell off their assets—for example, their livestock. In the coming months, without these assets, families will be hard pressed to obtain food. Furthermore, because the planting season was disrupted by fighting, harvests—which supply 70% of household food—will be diminished. The markets, which provide the remaining 30%, will continue to suffer. These and other factors could result in famine conditions in 2015.

The role of the international community and the government of South Sudan

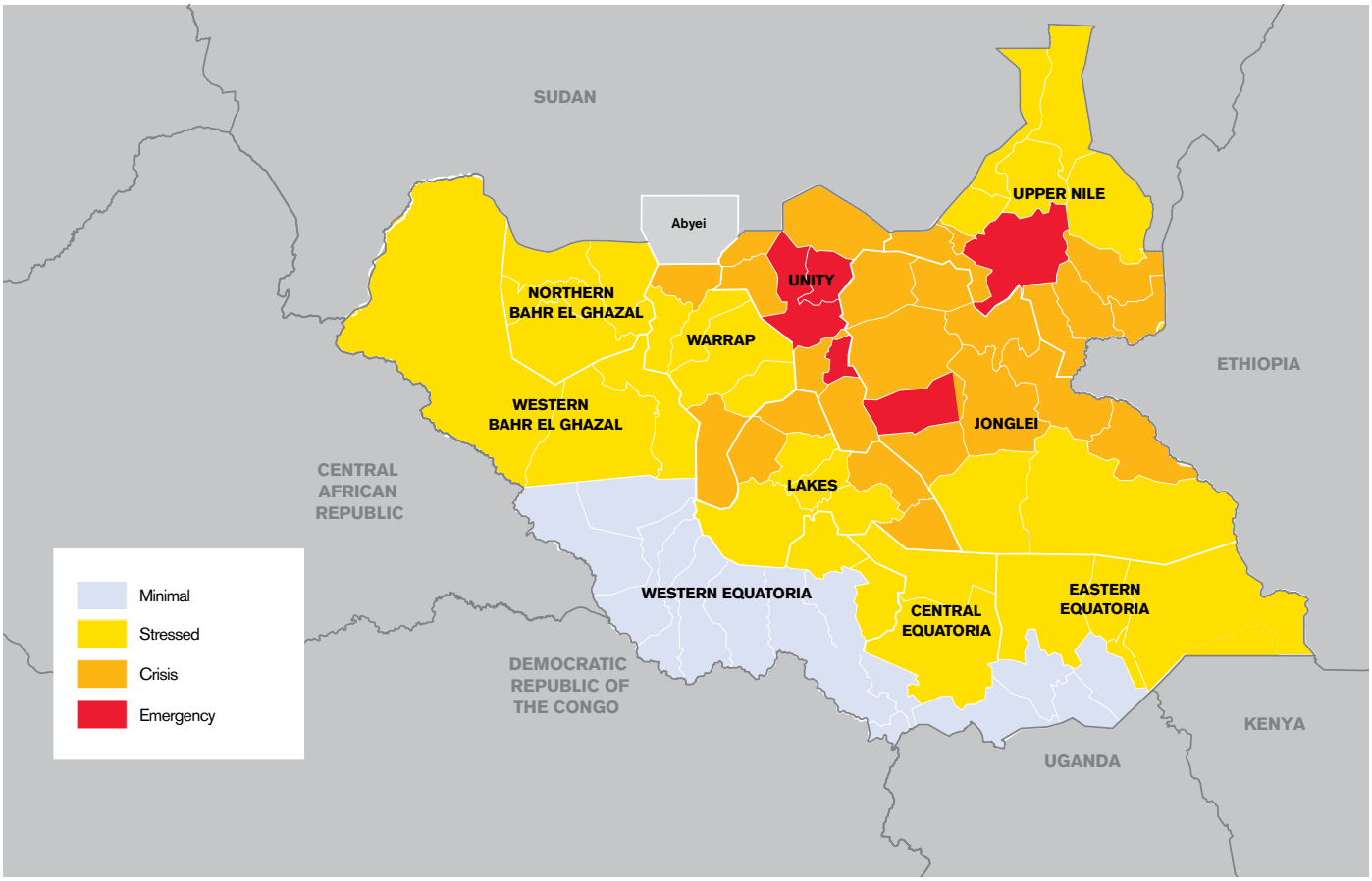
Despite the overwhelming need, the U.N. appeal for $1.8 billion for South Sudan[3] to pay for operations in 2014 and for pre-positioning some supplies for the first three months of 2015 has only been 61% funded as of Nov. 1, 2014. The international community continues to bear the burden of financing and supporting humanitarian assistance and basic services in South

The Crisis Inside South Sudan (continued)

Sudan.[4] Even before the current conflict, there was limited opportunity for public review of South Sudan's national budget. Accordingly, it is not clear what the government has contributed to basic social services and according to OCHA's financial tracking service it has contributed $5 million to the humanitarian response—0.5% of the total required. The vast majority of South Sudan's national revenues come from oil resources and, even with disruptions resulting from the armed conflict, South Sudan's oil output has averaged 150,000 barrels per day during the first half of 2014.[5] Given the scale of need and suffering in South Sudan and the importance of oil resources and public revenue in an ultimate political solution, the national budget must be public and transparent. Clarity must be provided regarding the government's contribution to the humanitarian response and to basic services across the country and its contribution should be increased. Funding from the international community should supplement not replace spending by South Sudan on its own people.

Humanitarian assistance can minimize the suffering created by this conflict, but it cannot solve the crisis. Only a full cessation of hostilities and a peace agreement can do that. The regional Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has been conducting mediation between the parties to the conflict and seeking implementation of multiple ceasefires and peace process commitments, none of which have been upheld thus far. An inclusive peace process leading to an end to this conflict is vital. As IGAD's press release of October 5, 2014 stated: "The people of South Sudan are yearning for peace. . . . The war must stop and the war option must be abandoned. The only viable solution to this crisis is peaceful political negotiation around the table." The announcement by IGAD on October 22, 2014 of a "breakthrough" in negotiations between the parties offers some hope if the resulting agreements are actually implemented unlike previous agreements.

Food insecurity in South Sudan



Source: IPC Technical Working Group in South Sudan, September 2014

Leadership on the humanitarian response to internal displacement

In contrast to refugee emergencies, there is no one U.N. agency charged with leading the humanitarian response in internal displacement crises. Different agencies lead "clusters" of work on different sectors, such as food security, nutrition and health, without critical focus on the particular safety needs of IDPs. In the early days of the crisis, UNHCR in South Sudan was mostly focused on continuing to provide services to Sudanese refugees from the north living in South Sudan, despite the much larger emerging internal displacement crisis. Globally there are huge demands on UNHCR's resources due to the increase in refugee crises; this is impacting UNHCR's ability to deliver on its global commitments to engage in the protection of IDPs as well as in shelter and camp management for IDPs. UNHCR has since developed a strategy on internal displacement in South Sudan that has led to a scaling up of UNHCR staff focused on IDP protection. Given UNHCR's role as a protection agency, it is essential that it demonstrate effective leadership on IDP protection, vigorously advocating for it and actively representing the views of the "clusters" that it leads on IDP issues in the humanitarian country team. The U.N.'s operational peer review recommended that a rigorous protection analysis should be conducted to underpin the overall humanitarian response and the 2015 strategic response plans.

Hard-to-reach internally displaced people

The humanitarian response has had a disproportionate focus on IDPs sheltering in protection-of-civilian sites and camps, who are easier to reach. The vast majority of people displaced are outside bases and formal camps: many are in remote areas and face continued threats to their security, resulting in repeated displacement. This fluid displacement in rural areas has made it difficult for humanitarian agencies to reach all those in need of assistance.

These displacement patterns have had a severe impact on the availability of food. Farmers were forced from their land before they could plant, and markets have been disrupted. According

Some 200,000 refugees who have fled conflict in Sudan live in camps in Unity and Upper Nile states in South Sudan.

OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: A malnourished boy eats fortified peanut paste in an IRC feeding center in Ganyliel, South Sudan.

OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM: Food shortages in South Sudan caused by fighting have brought people to the edge of starvation. The crisis has forced people to harvest water lilies from ponds for food.

TOP: A family sits in front of their shelter in a field in Ganyliel where thousands of displaced people have taken refuge.

BOTTOM LEFT: Water distribution at the Ganyliel camp.

BOTTOM RIGHT: An IRC health worker measures a child's upper arm to determine whether she suffers from malnutrition. Over 40 percent of the children under age 5 seen at the IRC clinic in Ganyliel are malnourished.

The Crisis Inside South Sudan (continued)

to the IPC[6] (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification) of September 2014, 1.5 million people are projected to remain in Crisis (phase 3) and Emergency (Phase 4) levels of food insecurity through December 2014 and 2.5 million people are projected to be in Crisis or Emergency levels of food insecurity between January and March 2015. The IPC noted that the food situation had improved since May and that in the areas it has reached, humanitarian assistance has reduced the number of people in the Crisis and Emergency phases. However it also found that "the situation is much worse compared to a typical year at harvest time" and "the overall nutrition situation remains dire for September to December."[7] IRC surveys also point to dire conditions in South Sudan. Surveys conducted by IRC nutrition teams in April 2014 in Aweil South and Panyijiar counties found that malnutrition rates were around 30%,[8] double the level at which the World Health Organization considers an emergency to be "critical."

Humanitarian access

Responding to these trends and averting famine is very costly, due to South Sudan's geography, climatic conditions (flooding affects large swathes of the country for half of the year) and under-developed transport systems, roads and landing strips. Transportation for humanitarian organizations is costly and hard to obtain.

> "Local populations are scavenging in forests seeking berries, twigs and bark. People are wading into chest-high water to gather waterlilies, which contain no nutritional value, as their only source of food. The lives of tens of thousands of children under 5 are at risk due to malnutrition. Without more assistance and a cessation of violence, the food crisis can only get worse."
>
> **—Wendy Taeuber**
> IRC SOUTH SUDAN COUNTRY DIRECTOR

Apart from these problems, humanitarian agencies have also faced difficulties in reaching areas in need of assistance because of the shifting of frontlines in the conflict, the looting of aid by parties to the conflict, and the imposition of bureaucratic impediments, such as customs duties and taxes that are taking too long to process. Furthermore, although both parties to the conflict have publicly committed to permitting full humanitarian access, high-level commitments are not always adhered to by lower-level officials in the field. For example, soldiers in remote locations often block humanitarian convoys despite agreement to their passage by their leadership.

These are shelters for displaced people at the U.N. base in Bentiu.

To address immediate needs and mitigate the worst-case food scenario, the World Food Program (WFP), working with nongovernmental organizations, has been distributing food across the country. However, the need far outstrips capacity, and food distribution increasingly has to be accompanied by complementary interventions, including health care services and therapeutic feeding programs.

Recognizing these challenges, the humanitarian community has established 18 rapid response mobile teams to complement WFP's food distributions. Since August, these teams have been deploying on four- to eight-week stints to provide assistance to the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations. These mobile teams are a key tool in expanding the availability of services to displaced and conflict-affected communities in hard-to-reach areas. The U.N.'s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is best placed to provide stronger leadership in order to maximize their effectiveness.

> "Women venture into the forest to gather edibles and even walk for up to 10 to 14 days to bring back food for their families. In the process they are subject to violent attacks and rape. Families are being forced into making the most torturous of choices. Women see no other choice, saying that it is better for women to venture out in the bush as they 'only get raped' while men are often tortured or killed."
>
> —GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE HUMANITARIAN "SUB CLUSTER" BRIEFING NOTE

In all cases, these mobile teams must include protection teams focused on mitigating the risks to the most vulnerable, especially women and children, and making sure that all people in need can access registration, services and assistance. Sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) is widespread in South Sudan, and especially so in the current crisis. Numerous field assessments include accounts of rape, abduction, sexual slavery, mutilation of sexual organs, forced marriage, sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment. Women take serious risks just in the effort to feed their families, including attack or rape, by walking long distances and foraging for wild foods. Children, meanwhile, often join armed groups as a means of survival. Preventing such atrocities must be an urgent priority. As the food security situation worsens, the risks of gender-based violence and of child recruitment will increase for displaced people in these hard-to-reach areas.

The mobile team model is not the only solution to expanding the reach of the humanitarian community. Humanitarian agencies are also trying to open offices in more remote areas and establish regional coordination hubs to ensure continued access to remote areas. Despite the obstacles—security concerns, significant costs and a fluid displacement situation—it is essential for NGOs to establish a more permanent presence in remote areas if the humanitarian community is to reach those in greatest need.

Internally displaced people on peacekeeping bases

More than 100,000 civilians are seeking refuge inside the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) peacekeeping bases, many of them since December 2013. This phenomenon is unprecedented: the U.N. has never taken so many civilians into its bases for protection and never for so long. UNMISS should be commended for opening its gates to civilians under imminent threat of physical harm and for continuing to host IDPs. The vast majority of civilians in these sites remain there because there has been no improvement in basic security outside the bases. Events have shown, however, that the bases are not impermeable to violence—in April 2014 dozens of IDPs, including two IRC staff members, were killed during an attack inside the UNMISS base in Bor.

Living conditions for IDPs in many of the UNMISS sites, which were not set up with the intention of hosting internally displaced people, are extremely poor. Most are overcrowded and some, such as Tomping in Juba and the base at Bentiu, have flooded at times. UNMISS has also had great difficulty maintaining law and order in the sites.

Because IDPs may not be able to leave the protection of the bases in the foreseeable future, there has been renewed debate among agencies and donors about how best to meet their needs and over responsibility for their protection and assistance. There is growing concern about UNMISS wanting to reduce the number of displaced people living on their bases to more "manageable" levels. The U.N. has suggested it would support the "voluntary" return of displaced people to their homes. But given that UNMISS has forcibly relocated IDPs in Tomping by destroying their shelters—and given a lack of reliable information about displaced people's wishes—any voluntary return must reflect accepted humanitarian practice. If IDPs do move out of a peacekeeping base, their decision to

The Crisis Inside South Sudan (continued)

do so must be free and voluntary. UNMISS should also make investments in infrastructure and other necessary civil works projects to ensure that conditions on the bases do not put the health, safety and well-being of IDPs at further risk.

In May 2014, the U.N. Security Council called for up to 12,500 troops and up to 1,323 police to be deployed in South Sudan. It also called for UNMISS to change the priority of its mission from building state institutions to protecting civilians, monitoring human rights abuses, and creating conditions for the successful delivery of humanitarian assistance. UNMISS has been slow to put this new mandate into action. Further, UNMISS has demonstrated a reluctance to focus on protecting IDPs in its sites, even though it falls squarely within its mandated duties. IDPs continue to face the risk of rape, abduction, assault and, in some cases, death when they leave UNMISS bases. While humanitarian agencies should provide humanitarian assistance and ensure IDPs have access to humanitarian protection, UNMISS must meet its responsibility for the physical protection of IDPs on and around its bases.

It is also essential that UNMISS police (UNPOL) maintain law and order at its sites. A June 2014 assessment by the IRC highlighted the growing threat of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, sexual exploitation and abductions inside or close to peacekeeping bases. Women and girls who took part in focus group discussions reported that rape was a common occurrence, was perpetrated by all sides in the conflict, and was a continuing threat both inside and outside peacekeeping bases where IDPs are living.

UNPOL could do far more work with the communities in the sites to prevent violent incidents. This includes establishing effective mechanisms to deter perpetrators and responding to calls for help when incidents occur. Not only would this provide additional, critical protection for IDPs, but it would also enable NGOs (some

Coffee is served at an IRC-run women's center in the Bentiu camp. Women and girls in camps and displacement sites are especially vulnerable to sexual violence and other abuse.

of which have had staff threatened or attacked at the sites) to continue providing services.

UNMISS has also demonstrated a reluctance to significantly extend its patrolling beyond its sites, although it has begun limited patrolling outside its bases. UNMISS could do more to build confidence by consulting with IDPs and host communities to identify priority interventions that would increase the sense of security of both groups. These interventions would likely include providing protection within and around bases and along key routes (e.g. to markets). Such patrolling would serve to build communities' confidence in UNMISS' ability to extend basic security outside of its bases. Such confidence would, in turn, serve as a key building block toward the eventual, voluntary return of IDPs to their communities.

It is also vital that UNMISS maintain a strict distinction between itself and humanitarian agencies. UNMISS has had to use lethal force in self-defense and in line with its mandate

> "I've been living in a tent on the church grounds for three months. There are about a thousand of us staying here. I had to run from my home because of the war and I'm scared to go back. My husband is a soldier and I don't know where he is or if he is alive. I came to Juba because I thought I could find out where he is. Every time they bring injured soldiers to the hospital I go there to ask if they have heard about my husband. I'm grateful to the church for letting me stay here. They have even given us food. But I hear we may be asked to leave and I have nowhere else to go."
>
> —A WOMAN LIVING IN A CENTER FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE IN JUBA

Thousands of displaced people have taken shelter in schools, churches, on open plots of land or on the streets of Juba, the capital of South Sudan.

to protect civilians, and it may have to do so increasingly. If this distinction is not clear, access for humanitarians will be further limited and assistance to civilians more restricted.

Internally displaced people in rural camps

As people across the country have fled fighting or threats of violence, in some areas they have gathered together in what have become de facto camps. The largest of these is Mingkaman in Awerial County in Lakes State, where 100,000 IDPs are currently living.

> "We heard gunshots in the town. Gunshots cannot differentiate between soldiers and civilians. We ran to the bush and were followed. The only alternative was to cross the river. Some people drowned and some were eaten by crocodiles. We came [to Mingkaman camp] empty-handed. People were living under trees. There was not any water. There were so many diseases. … We were given a few rations so that we could survive. If there is not good care, people will suffer."
>
> —A DISPLACED PERSON LIVING IN MINGKAMAN CAMP

In an attempt to discourage encampment, no collective IDP sites have technically been recognized as camps by the South Sudanese government or the U.N. and therefore their boundaries have not been demarcated. To reduce the risk of conflict between host communities and IDPs, relations between the two need to be analyzed and considered.

Refugees and asylum-seekers

Another feature of displacement in South Sudan is the approximately 200,000 Sudanese refugees who live in refugee camps in northern Unity and Upper Nile states. They fled the conflict in Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States that began in 2011 and fear returning home. Since the current conflict broke out, the humanitarian community has had limited access to distribute food and provide other basic services in some of the camps. Resources that were previously dedicated to the refugees' needs have been diverted to respond to the internal displacement crisis.

The IRC in South Sudan

The IRC has been one of the largest providers of aid in South Sudan since 1989. It currently provides services in Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Unity and Lakes states, working with refugees, internally displaced people, communities affected by conflict and food insecurity, people who returned from Sudan and other neighboring countries after the 2005 peace agreement, and with communities that host displaced people. The IRC delivers primary and reproductive health care, water and sanitation services, livelihoods support, food security and nutrition services, and works to strengthen community protection and to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and child protection concerns. In the current crisis, the IRC leads two mobile teams that can deliver services anywhere in the country.

Refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants from other countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia also live in South Sudan's capital city, Juba. Many of them have ended up seeking protection on the UNMISS bases, having been targeted during periods of violence. Many third country nationals on the bases now say that they want to seek asylum. UNHCR is revising its urban refugee strategy. This revised strategy should clarify how refugee status determination for third country nationals will be addressed, as well as how urban refugees will be provided with documents and how UNHCR can ensure regular engagement with the urban refugee community.

Internally displaced people in urban centers

Since December 2013, thousands of IDPs have been residing in South Sudan's capital, Juba, taking shelter in schools, churches, on open plots of land or with host families. There are now more than 200 collective centers of IDPs (such as groups living in schools or churches) in Juba alone. The

People who fled the fighting have gathered in de facto camps. The largest of these is Mingkaman in rural Awerial County, where 100,000 people have taken shelter.

displaced population is mainly made up of Juba residents who, while not at high risk of targeted violence due to ethnicity or political affiliation, have fled their homes due to generalized violence. Displaced people also come to Juba from other states in South Sudan. Although displaced people continue to arrive, efforts to plan a response to this growing population's needs have been minimal. It is a positive development that UNHCR now has staff members dedicated to working with the urban displaced.

The IRC is one of a small number of organizations providing services to IDPs in and around Juba outside of U.N. bases. During the first half of 2014, the IRC assessed needs and concerns of displaced people living in collective centers in Juba. The greatest fear cited by these IDPs was for their security (especially after dark). Most participants expressed concern about the potential for renewed fighting and indiscriminate shooting. The majority were also concerned by the extremely limited support for displaced communities outside UNMISS bases, particularly livelihoods support.

As noted, there are IDPs currently residing in schools, which of course has an impact on availability of education. This is not only an issue in urban settings, but the Education Cluster has found that more than 90 schools in the country are occupied by fighting forces and by IDPs.[9]

Based on the IRC's work with the urban displaced in many countries, it has concluded that an integrated approach towards addressing the needs of all vulnerable urban people, including the urban displaced, is the most effective. Given that urban displacement requires a longer-term approach, the resources and involvement of development agencies as well as humanitarian agencies are needed.

Part 2: **Exodus From South Sudan**

Overview and key issues

Between December 2013 and October 2014, nearly half a million South Sudanese crossed borders to become refugees in neighboring countries. UNHCR predicts that 715,000 South Sudanese will be living as refugees in the region by the end of 2014.

The countries hosting these refugees—Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan—should be commended for keeping their borders open to people arriving from South Sudan despite the pressures that this inevitably places on their own populations and on the environment, on land and on stretched public services. Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda automatically grant refugee status to refugees arriving from South Sudan, which means that they do not need to go through a legal process of determining their status as refugees (formally referred to as Refugee Status Determination [RSD]). All of the host countries have played an important role individually, and via the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), in attempts to resolve the political crisis inside South Sudan.

Governments in the region have come under political pressure internally and externally as a result of their decision to honor their obligation under the 1951 Refugee Convention to provide asylum to those fleeing South Sudan. The international community should provide support to these governments and hosting communities, and encourage them to continue to keep their borders open.

Additional financial support is obviously needed. Of the funding UNHCR estimates is required to respond to the needs of these refugees, only 43 percent had been secured as of October 27, 2014.[10] This lack of funding has real consequences on the ground. Services for refugees are severely overstretched. In some places, refugees are not able to meet their basic needs.

More money is not the only requirement. The next section of this report identifies opportunities to ensure that refugee protection is maintained in the region, particularly given the pressure of new arrivals and the risks posed by governments' responses to other threats in the region—e.g. terrorism. Maintaining asylum space in refugee-hosting countries and ensuring that refugees' receive proper assistance are critical if refugees are ever to return home or settle permanently elsewhere. Protection and assistance can also guard against refugees' presence becoming a source of destabilization.

As the South Sudan crisis deepens, UNHCR together with the neighboring governments should prioritize contingency and preparedness planning for an even larger refugee influx. As with most refugee crises, the first arrivals were those with greater resources, who could afford to escape. As the influx has continued, poorer refugees in worse physical condition (e.g. with higher rates of malnutrition) and with fewer resources to meet their basic needs have arrived. If the crisis in South Sudan continues and conditions deteriorate as anticipated, it is likely that refugees will arrive in increasingly worse condition, requiring

Country	South Sudanese refugee arrivals, Dec.15, 2013–Oct.16, 2014	Projected number of South Sudanese refugees as of Dec. 31, 2014
Ethiopia	**190,326**	**300,000**
Uganda	**128,964**	**150,000**
Sudan	**102,695**	**165,000**
Kenya	**43,830**	**100,000**
TOTAL	**465,815**	**715,000**

Source: UNHCR

NOTE: 96,603 South Sudanese refugees have sought shelter in Sudan since December 2013. This report does not cover their situation because the IRC has not had access to Sudan since 2009, when the government of Sudan closed down IRC programs—along with those of 12 other aid agencies.

OPPOSITE PAGE: South Sudanese refugees cross the border into Ethiopia. Ethiopia has seen the largest influx of South Sudanese refugees, some 245,000.

Exodus From South Sudan (continued)

ever-greater assistance. There is also a risk that other crises in the region will reach boiling point, such as famine in Somalia and increased conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which could create further refugee influxes and demand additional resources from host governments and donors.

The influx of refugees from South Sudan is likely to turn into a protracted crisis, making all the more imperative efforts to ensure that they are provided with assistance in forms that help them support themselves. The Ugandan government's self-sufficiency approach to hosting refugees provides a model that could be mirrored by other countries in the region. The strategy includes allocating land to refugees for cultivation, providing some—albeit limited—opportunities for employment outside of designated camps, and supporting opportunities for education and formal training. In contrast, other host countries severely restrict refugees' movement outside of camps, limiting opportunities for livelihoods and skills-development.

In order to expand and deepen a self-sufficiency strategy across the region, multi-purpose, multi-year refugee program funding is necessary from donors to support programs that bolster self-reliance and enable built-in transition planning. Current short-term funding cycles from some donors make it impossible to plan for work with refugees that does more than react to the immediate emergency. Furthermore, UNHCR should advocate for the legal right of refugees to work and for other opportunities for access to markets and resources, in line with its new Alternatives to Camps policy. Donors and humanitarian and development agencies should avoid mistakes made in other settings by planning for a protracted situation from the outset.

Development agencies need to be engaged from the beginning of this crisis to avoid the need for years of care and maintenance support that is so common in protracted refugee situations. Livelihood programs and refugees' skills-building (ideally leading to full certifications) should be supported. A shift from general food distributions towards a cash- or voucher-based system would further enhance refugees' self-reliance. The WFP's gradual move towards a cash/voucher-based distribution system should be encouraged and accelerated.

A striking feature of the South Sudanese refugee influx in the region is the extremely high proportion of women and children who have crossed borders. There are reported cases of men being turned back by parties to the conflict inside South Sudan before they reach the border, as well as many cases of soldiers (both SPLA and SPLA-in-Opposition) bringing their families to safety in neighboring countries before returning to conflict-fronts. The unusually high number of female-headed refugee households, unaccompanied refugee children and children who have been separated from parents or relatives greatly increases the need for women and child protection and family tracing and reunification services.

Host communities are the most affected by the refugee influx. In many areas host communities have less access to services than refugees. This leads to tension and potential conflicts between refugees and host communities. Humanitarian agencies should articulate the needs of host communities to host-country governments and to humanitarian and development donors. Where possible, support should be provided simultaneously to host and refugee populations together. This "area-based approach" assesses the needs of communities in which refugees are residing and provides assistance to all without regard for refugee status. It reduces tensions between refugees and host communities and provides refugees with more opportunities for self-sufficiency through potential increases in economic activity.

> "It's so hot and dusty here. I came alone, and it's very difficult for me to make all the bricks I need to build a shelter on my own. It's very difficult for those of us who are alone."
>
> —UNACCOMPANIED 17-YEAR-OLD REFUGEE BOY IN THE KAKUMA CAMP, KENYA

Importantly an investment by donors in peace-building work is essential to avoid conflicts between South Sudanese ethnic groups spilling over into host countries.

The African Union has just committed to its Agenda 2063,[11] which sets out an ambitious development agenda for the continent over the next 50 years. But the aspirations in that laudable document—such as ending poverty and building educated societies—will not be achieved if refugees and displaced people are left to languish in long-term displacement camps and not given the opportunity to contribute to their host countries or to their future communities.

In the following sections we analyze how these issues are playing out in the areas of Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda hosting South Sudanese refugees, particularly as they relate to land issues, refugee influxes stretching resources, protection, host communities and self-sufficiency.

Over 42,000 South Sudanese refugees have fled to the Kakuma camp in Kenya since December 2013. One of the largest refugee camps in the world, Kakuma houses 177,000 people, nearly double its original capacity.

Kenya

Prior to the current crisis in South Sudan, a silent influx of refugees into Kakuma camp in Kenya had been taking place over several years, without an accompanying increase in space and resources. In 2012 and 2013, approximately 35,000 refugees arrived in Kakuma, nearly 20,000 of them from South Sudan. Since December 2013 there have been a further 43,000 new arrivals from South Sudan, bringing the number of refugees in Kakuma to its current total of 177,000 people (in a camp designed for 90,000 people). A high birth rate in Kakuma (approximately 400 children are born in the camp each month) has also significantly increased the camp's population.

Land issues

The vast majority of South Sudanese refugees in Kenya are hosted in Kakuma camp. Kakuma is now overcrowded, with inadequate space for the construction of new shelters or facilities for services. The camp has an insufficient number of safe shelters for the current refugee population, let alone for any new influx; its protection area and shelters are full to overflowing. Now, people who do not feel safe joining the larger refugee community have no option other than to stay for extended periods in the reception center, which is full beyond capacity.

UNHCR is negotiating with the local government and host community for an extension of Kakuma and/or a new camp, but progress on these negotiations has been very slow. Kenya's communal land system means that communities must reach a collective decision on the use of land agreements, and—since devolution of powers in Kenya—local politics plays a significant role in decision-making. While some extra land was given to extend Kakuma in January to accommodate around 30,000 new arrivals, this extension is now full. The identification of more land for a further extension or a new camp is an urgent priority. The host community has, however, been reluctant to give up more land for refugees. Whatever the hurdles, ongoing negotiations must be completed before an expected influx of arrivals from South Sudan. In addition to new arrivals, the new camp (or extension) is intended to accommodate approximately 70,000 refugees relocated from Kakuma.

Exodus From South Sudan (continued)

Stretched resources

Services in the camp, including IRC-run health services, are already severely overstretched, and facilities are overcrowded, with insufficient staff, supplies and equipment. For example, the IRC-run pediatric ward is the only such facility in the entire camp. It has 35 beds, but often serves 100 patients; children with serious medical conditions have to sleep outside.

Humanitarian agencies fear the spread of disease from South Sudan; overcrowding in Kakuma increases the risk. (The IRC has managed to control one measles outbreak). South Sudan is within the meningitis belt; meningitis could be imported into Kenya from South Sudan, as could polio. These problems can be contained if newly-arriving refugees are screened and vaccinated at the border; if water and sanitation conditions in Kakuma are kept at an acceptable standard; and if adequate preparations are made to ensure that isolation areas can be provided in the event of an outbreak.

Protection

Many South Sudanese entering Kenya are facing significant risks to their personal safety. UNHCR has only six staff members dedicated to identifying and addressing protection risks. They are overwhelmed by the demands of the current situation. For example:

- A high number of unaccompanied and separated refugee children have arrived in Kakuma since December—25% of the 28,000 children who have come to the camp have arrived without a parent or guardian.
- Schools in the camp are now full and there is no space for most new arrivals.
- Many refugees from South Sudan face life-threatening problems within their community (such as blood feuds or the possibility of child abductions). In such cases, the affected refugees may have to be separated from the community for their own protection.

Host communities

Turkana County—where Kakuma camp is located—is the poorest area of Kenya. Malnutrition levels among the host population are very high, with a Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate of between 17% and 28% in June 2014[12]—above emergency levels and a serious deterioration since last year. The host community—particularly pastoralists, who need grazing land—has been and will continue to be severely affected by drought. Over the coming year, conditions are expected to worsen to full drought, driving pastoralists to urban centers, increasing already high malnutrition rates, heightening insecurity and decreasing water availability.

Given these circumstances, the government of Kenya and the international community cannot focus on improving conditions for refugees without addressing similar needs in the host community. Ignoring those needs would increase tensions and resentment. For example, only 20% of refugees' firewood needs are met by UNHCR and NGOs. Communities in Turkana County are able to earn income by selling firewood to refugees, and they object when refugees collect firewood independently. Further, refugee women are obliged to walk long distances to find firewood, risking sexual and physical assault. The depletion of natural resources with refugees cutting down trees for firewood exacerbates tensions between the refugees and the host community.

Furthermore, Kenya's decentralization process has created more demand for development among the host community; the negotiations over the new camp demonstrate the weight of their voice and demands. There have been some promising attempts to address refugee needs in ways that take into account their relationship with the host communities. These should be expanded to encompass comprehensive efforts to meet the needs of both refugee and host communities. To address the firewood problem, UNHCR has piloted a program to distribute some fuel-efficient stoves; this program could be expanded and coupled with livelihood programs that provide alternatives to the sale of firewood—to benefit both refugees and host communities.

The IRC's work with refugees in Kenya

The IRC is the principal provider of primary health and nutrition services for refugees in the Kakuma camp, as well as providing health care in two of the Dadaab camps that are principally hosting Somali refugees. It serves Kakuma's local host community through its Lodwar office, responding to their varied needs with programs in nutrition, livelihoods, HIV prevention, water and sanitation, women's protection and empowerment, and governance. The IRC also works with urban refugees in Nairobi.

Refugees walk in front of a settlement at the Kakuma camp in Kenya.

Self-Sufficiency

The refugee response has been significantly impacted by the broader trends in Kenya vis-à-vis the presence of refugees. In March 2014, the government of Kenya renewed an earlier directive requiring all refugees to take up residence in Dadaab camp—another major refugee-hosting site—on Kenya's border with Somalia or in Kakuma camp. As a result of these efforts by the government, it has been much more difficult for refugees in Kakuma camp to move freely. Refugees now face greater difficulties in obtaining passes authorizing movement outside the camp; they are therefore restricted to the camp and cannot move further than Kakuma town. Since April an increasing number of refugees have been arrested for being outside the camp or Kakuma town without proper documentation. This is undermining refugee efforts to build self-reliance and is slowing economic activity and entrepreneurship.

Kenya's Refugee Act permits refugees to work if they obtain a work permit. However, in practice it is difficult for refugees to obtain work permits. Given government restrictions on refugees' right to work, NGOs cannot formally employ them. Thousands of refugees do receive incentive payments for work with NGOs in the camps, and their role is vital to the humanitarian operation. The training they receive—in health care, women's and children's protection and more—builds their skills, but these trainings are expensive. Funding for dedicated training staff and for outside courses is needed, as is a system of standard certifications and—ideally—funding to support government training schools with refugees allocated a percentage of new student places.

If negotiations lead to the opening of a new camp, donors and humanitarian agencies should ensure that it provides much better livelihood opportunities than the existing Kakuma camp. They should press for land to be allocated for cultivation by refugees and host communities, and they should invest in irrigation schemes to make this possible, as well as in other livelihood programs.

WFP is moving toward a partial cash- or voucher-based distribution system following its successful (but limited) Fresh Food Voucher Pilot for Refugees program in Dadaab. A similar shift in Kakuma from full general food distributions to more provision of assistance through cash or vouchers would also enhance refugees' self-reliance.

Ethiopia

The highest influx of South Sudanese refugees so far has been into Ethiopia. There are currently 245,000 refugees in the Gambella region, which borders South Sudan in the north; more than 190,000 have arrived since December 2013. The size of the refugee population almost matches the size of the 300,000-strong host community.

Land issues

Land that has been provided to refugees in the Gambella region is flood-prone; many of the refugee camps there are now under water. The government refugee agency, ARRA, has to negotiate with the regional government over land and faces difficult issues concerning land availability. Most non-flood-prone land in the area has been allocated to investors for commercial farming.

The water-logged conditions in the camps are detrimental to refugees' health and well-being and expensive for humanitarians and international donors to operate in. Limited options are made available for sites, and humanitarian agencies have had to invest resources in camps that are then evacuated due to flooding. The government has put forward alternative site options for refugee camps, but these initially focused on Okugo in the Dimma area, which most refugees reject because of concerns over security. The government has allowed refugees to try to secure their own shelter until alternative camps are made available. As more refugees arrive from South Sudan, pressure on land availability will only increase.

Stretched resources

There are serious concerns that funding shortfalls will prevent humanitarian agencies from responding to refugees' needs. Apart from the fact that UNHCR has only received 36% of the funding it urgently requires, the World Food Program is anticipating significant funding shortfalls and NGOs are not receiving the same level of emergency funding that they have received in the past for refugee crises in Gambella. Many NGOs are using their own private funds for the refugee response in Gambella rather than donor government funding. For many NGOs, this private funding is running out.

Shelter is lagging behind the numbers of new arrivals. There is a high rate of malaria among refugees in these camps—50 per cent of refugee patients are currently receiving medical care for malaria, largely due to conditions in the camps (stagnant water is all around). Diarrheal diseases, hepatitis E and measles are also prevalent, and there are fears of disease outbreaks.

Protection

More than 70% of refugees arriving in Gambella are children, and over 90% are women and children. Humanitarian agencies have not had the resources and capacity to comprehensively identify the overwhelming numbers of unaccompanied and

> "My children and I walked for 12 days to get to this camp because of the war. We feel safe here, but my children are sick all the time because of the conditions."
>
> —REFUGEE MOTHER, TIERKIDI CAMP, ETHIOPIA

Refugees at the reception center of the Lietchuor refugee camp, host to thousands of South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia's Gambella region.

separated children arriving. There is a huge gap in child protection services and child- and youth-focused programming. UNHCR should prioritize protection staffing, and adequate structures for children's and women's protection must be established.

Education facilities are extremely overcrowded. South Sudanese parents place a high value on education and are generally very anxious to enroll their children in school. Over the last few months children's enrollment in school has increased, but it is still less than 20% due to issues of space. There is no secondary, tertiary or vocational education available.

> "There is pressure on local communities, as refugees are sharing their natural resources. We need local community support to avoid conflict. Alternative energy is an important issue. Refugees are relying on nearby forests for firewood and deforesting them."
>
> —AN OFFICIAL OF ARRA, THE ETHIOPIAN REFUGEE AGENCY

Host communities

As with Kenya, the conditions for refugees should not be considered as separate from those of the host community. The host communities in the Gambella region have not been prioritized by development agencies. It is a poor region and the host community has limited access to services. Inevitably this situation has the potential to cause conflict with refugees. The IRC's work with host communities in the area has demonstrated the benefits that such activities can bring for refugees. For one of the minority groups amongst the refugees, the IRC worked with the host community, through the digging of latrines, to enable refugees to live outside camps. But this approach has not been repeated on a larger scale because the vast majority of refugees are encamped. Development interventions are essential—to reduce tensions and to better contribute to the future prospects of both refugee and host communities.

Firewood for cooking and selling is an issue for refugees and the local host community. The amount required is causing environmental degradation and women have to travel further for collection, putting them at increasing risk. Four thousand refugees have been given fuel-efficient stoves so far to reduce the amount of firewood needed. Although small, this is a positive move, but unless there are also livelihoods programs in place, refugees will feel obliged to continue to cut firewood to sell, and this will continue to cause problems for the host population.

Self-sufficiency

More needs to be done to promote refugees' self-sufficiency. Refugees are not permitted to work, except in certain specialized sectors for which they can get work permits. In some areas, where refugees are from the same ethnic group as the host community, refugees provide labor for the host community and share produce. Livelihoods plans for refugees would make refugees less dependent on food distributions and better prepare them for a long-term solution.

WFP has conducted a successful pilot program in Jijiga and Shire camps under which a percentage (20%) of distributions are made via cash. This should be extended to the Gambella camps.

> "When it's raining we get wet inside the tents. We are 10 people to a tent. Overcrowding like this leads to diseases."
>
> —REFUGEE, TIERKIDI CAMP, ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia has an out-of-camp policy, in practice mostly applied to Eritrean refugees, which includes impressive practices such as the enrollment of Eritrean refugees in Ethiopian university courses. The expansion of this policy to include other refugee groups should be encouraged.

The IRC's work with refugees in Ethiopia

The IRC provides water and sanitation in refugee camps, as well as for local host communities. The IRC has dug six boreholes in Gambella, which are providing a good water yield for the refugees. The IRC funds a local NGO working with refugees on HIV prevention in the Funeido camp.

Uganda

More than 128,000 refugees from South Sudan have arrived in Uganda since December 2013; UNHCR projects this number to increase to 150,000 refugees by the end of 2014. Seventy-five percent of refugees are hosted in settlements near the border of South Sudan in Adjumani, and 25% are hosted in settlements in Kiryandongo in the midwestern region of Uganda. The IRC works in Kiryandongo refugee settlement.

Land issues

Uganda has a policy of promoting self-reliance for refugees. Refugees are allocated land on arrival in Uganda, and the refugee settlement area in Kiryandongo is on very fertile soil. Because of the large number of new arrivals, the size of allocated plots has been reduced, and the government and NGOs are now focusing on how to make the land more productive. Moreover, because of the reduced land allocations, refugees must be assisted with other livelihood options in order to meet their basic needs.

> "We managed the refugee emergency when they suddenly arrived. Now how do we help these people realize their dreams? How do we help them move on to a normal life?"
>
> —AN OFFICIAL IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, UGANDA

Stretched resources

In Uganda, refugees are able to access public services in the host community. This provides a good model for a more sustainable approach to refugee programming: NGOs work with government officials and local social service providers to increase capacity of public services in the area to meet the greater demand brought on by the sudden arrival of refugees. This model is being put to the test as Uganda struggles to meet the needs of increasing numbers of South Sudanese refugees.

For example, refugee children are integrated into the existing public school system. In the refugee-hosting region of Kiryandongo, there are now more than 100 pupils per class. The Ugandan government supports universal primary and secondary education. In the Kiryandongo refugee settlement all four primary schools are government-run, but the only secondary school in the settlement is community-founded

> "It's dangerous to make refugees dependent. It's no good for when they go home."
>
> —AN OFFICIAL IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, UGANDA

and not government-supported, requiring the students to pay. Enrollment is low; few parents can afford the tuition.

The refugee influx has put significant pressure on health services. The IRC has supported local health services but they are still overwhelmed. There was a measles outbreak in February 2014 and a malaria epidemic in May 2014. Uganda has eliminated guinea worm and the parasitic disease Kala Azar and there is a fear that South Sudanese refugees may re-introduce these diseases. There is a risk of cholera if water and sanitation are not improved.

A South Sudanese refugee working a plot of land she was allocated by the Ugandan government.

Protection

As in the other neighboring countries, the overwhelming majority of newly arrived refugees are women and children; in Kiryandongo they constitute 86% of new arrivals. Most are relatives of army or rebel soldiers. About 15 unaccompanied children arrive per month, and there are significant numbers of separated children arriving.

There are no safe spaces or protection shelters in Kiryandongo. UNHCR sometimes moves refugees with particular protection problems to a different settlement. UNHCR is planning a women's safe house by the end of 2014.

> "My sister and I are looking after 19 children, most of them from other families who were left alone and need a home. School is more important than food—for a chance for a better tomorrow."
>
> —REFUGEE MOTHER, KIRYANDONGO REFUGEE SETTLEMENT, UGANDA

Host communities

There have historically been good relations between refugees and host communities in Uganda. The South Sudanese refugee presence creates a market for Ugandan goods in the north of the country, and it is therefore welcomed by many in the host community. However, recent developments—such as Uganda's military intervention in South Sudan—have strained relations somewhat. Many Ugandans working as traders in South Sudan were treated badly there at the start of the conflict, and there is some fear among the refugee community of retaliation.

In some areas the host community suffers higher levels of malnutrition than the refugees. The government, UNHCR and NGOs have been careful to ensure that host communities have access to services and programs designed for refugees, and it is essential that this continue.

At present, 65% of the IRC's work in Kiryandongo is with refugees and 35% is with host communities.

As in the other host countries, refugees' need for firewood is depleting the environment and requires intervention.

Self-sufficiency

Uganda should be commended for its liberal refugee rights policy, which enables refugees to live in greater dignity and develop skills that will enable them to contribute in the communities where they eventually reside. Unlike other refugee-hosting countries in the region, Uganda's laws permit freedom of movement and employment for refugees. It does not have an encampment policy: refugees stay in settlements or move to wherever they wish to settle (although permission of the settlement commander is required). Some refugees choose to stay in Kiryandongo town or other urban centers rather than in the settlements and some move to the capital, Kampala.

Recent reports have shown that the initial costs for donors of the humanitarian response for refugees in Uganda is more expensive per refugee than the response in other host countries in the region. However, this is a good investment that is justified by the longer-term benefits of the approach taken by Uganda. For example the World Food Program (WFP) provides full food rations to refugees initially for their first three years, and then provides half-rations for the next two years, and usually stops food distributions (depending on results of an assessment) after five years.

It is worth noting a recent economic study of refugees in Uganda found "a refugee community that is nationally and transnationally integrated, contributes in positive ways to the national economy, is economically diverse, uses and creates technology, and is far from uniformly dependent on international assistance."[13]

The IRC's work with refugees in Uganda

The IRC provides health, reproductive health, and water and sanitation services for refugees and host communities in Kiryandongo. The IRC also runs community savings and loans schemes with urban refugees in Kampala.

Recommendations

Displacement in South Sudan

Commit to and implement a political solution to end the fighting.

Thousands of people have been killed and nearly 2 million people have been driven from their homes in South Sudan since violence erupted in December 2013. While humanitarian aid can reduce suffering, it will not bring a solution to the conflict. The parties to the conflict, with the support of the international community, must find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

Peace process

- The parties to the conflict should honor their commitments to cease hostilities and should urgently find a political solution to the conflict.

The international community should hold parties to the conflict accountable to their commitments and ensure that they cooperate fully with ceasefire and access monitoring mechanisms.

Call on South Sudan to fulfill its responsibility to provide for its people and encourage international donors to increase support for the aid effort.

Given the scale of need and suffering, South Sudan and donor governments and humanitarian agencies must redouble their efforts to increase humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, all parties to the conflict must ensure unfettered humanitarian access.

Funding

- South Sudan should significantly increase the national budget transparency and expand its spending on basic services and humanitarian assistance. The international community should supplement—not replace—spending by the government of South Sudan on its own people.
- Donors should honor commitments made at the May 2014 Oslo conference and deliver all funds pledged without further delay. Donors that did not contribute should be encouraged to do so.
- Donors should ensure that there is adequate support for emergency food assistance complemented by support for livelihoods.

Access

- The parties to the conflict should give humanitarian agencies unfettered access to all those in need and allow the agencies to pre-position food and supplies during the dry season using all available routes, including cross-border routes from Ethiopia and Sudan.
- Donors should support an increase in staffing of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in order to facilitate humanitarian access. OCHA should take a strong leadership role in the management of the mobile teams.

Step up efforts by the United Nations to ensure protection of civilians.

The United Nations' Security Council has called for the U.N. peacekeeping mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to concentrate on protecting civilians. Carrying out that mandate is imperative—civilians, including women, girls and vulnerable urban populations, are at risk of horrific abuses if another cycle of intensified violence erupts in the coming months.

Reinforce the UNMISS mandate and posture.

- The international community should support UNMISS efforts to reorient its focus, structure and staffing to fully prioritize the protection of civilians.
- UNMISS must remain committed to hosting displaced civilians on its bases until they decide that it is safe to leave. Any relocation of civilians between sites must be informed, voluntary and dignified. UNMISS must also maintain law and order within the bases.
- UNMISS should call on the government of South Sudan to allocate additional land to expand the Bentiu base to mitigate the severely overcrowded conditions there.
- UNMISS should expand its ability to increase security outside of its bases, identifying through consultation with communities how best to improve security conditions.
- UNMISS should maintain a strict distinction between itself and humanitarian agencies.

OPPOSITE PAGE: A woman and her daughters prepare a meager dinner of cooked water lilies in a camp for displaced people outside the town of Ganyliel, South Sudan.

Recommendations (continued)

Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected.

Prevent and respond to violence against women and children.

- Donors should fund specialized gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection programming and ensure safe and timely access to quality reproductive health care, psychosocial support and family tracing programs.
- In line with international commitments, donors should require all NGOs to integrate GBV prevention into their humanitarian response.
- Donors must require that NGOs providing health services be prepared and equipped to respond to the clinical care needs of GBV survivors.
- GBV and child protection staff must participate in the rapid response teams to aid women and children in hard-to-reach and insecure areas.
- Ensure that the joint communique on addressing sexual violence in conflict signed by the special representative of the U.N. Secretary General and President Kiir of South Sudan on October 11, 2014 is implemented.

Protect and assist people displaced in urban settings.

- The international community should ensure that the treatment of individuals displaced in urban areas outside UNMISS bases is on par with that given to IDPs on UNMISS bases.
- Humanitarian and development donors should adopt an integrated approach toward addressing the needs of all vulnerable urban populations (including the urban displaced).

Support refugees and asylum seekers in South Sudan.

- Donors and humanitarian agencies should ensure adequate attention is paid to the needs of Sudanese refugees in camps in South Sudan. Assistance to these refugees should include the facilitation of work opportunities, skills trainings, further education and help in setting up small businesses.
- UNHCR should revise its urban refugee strategy in consultation with partners and clarify its strategy on addressing refugee status determination (RSD) in South Sudan, given the large numbers of third-country nationals in UNMISS sites seeking to claim asylum.

South Sudanese refugees in Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia

Prepare for a protracted refugee crisis: Seek alternatives to refugee camps and promote self-reliance.

The refugee crisis is expected to extend for many months, if not years. Any increase in fighting in South Sudan can be expected to induce additional people to seek refuge in neighboring countries. To avoid the creation of yet another refugee situation in which the international community is providing "care and maintenance" assistance to refugee communities for years on end and not enabling the refugees to develop and utilize their skills, a new approach is required.

Seek alternatives to refugee camps in the region.

- Host countries should rethink solutions beyond encampment for refugees and seek solutions that benefit both refugees and host communities. Where refugees are received into camps or settlements, host countries should allocate sufficient and adequate land for refugees.
- Host countries, nongovernmental organizations, and UNHCR must work together towards achieving implementation of the U.N.'s Alternatives to Camps policy and create the conditions necessary to promote refugees' self-sufficiency. This requires a two-pronged approach: 1. respecting refugees' freedom of movement and ensuring that refugees who can support themselves by working out of camps are empowered to do so; and 2. allocating land for agriculture as well as shelter.

Develop and fund plans and policies that support the longer-term needs of refugees and host communities.

- The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC) should support the inclusion by their member states of refugee-hosting areas in their national development plans and develop policies that enable refugees' self-sufficiency.
- Host countries should consider including refugee-hosting areas in their development plans and donor governments should insure such inclusion is part of development plans from the beginning.
- UNHCR should, on an ongoing basis, conduct inter-agency contingency and preparedness planning, with full regional coordination, for further refugee influxes.

This man, displaced by the fighting, has lived inside a classroom in a Muslim school in Juba for much of the last year.

Support initiatives that promote self-sufficiency.

- Donor governments should fund more area-based solutions that support both refugees and hosting communities.
- Donors should demonstrate support for Uganda's policies of freedom of movement and employment for refugees by:
  - **a.** Supporting initiatives to share evidence in the region about the positive benefits of such policies;
  - **b.** Providing multi-purpose, multi-year refugee program funding that enables support for self-sufficiency and built-in transition planning;
  - **c.** supporting programs that work with urban refugees and asylum-seekers.
  - **d.** supporting self-sufficiency programming, such as livelihoods programs, skills and entrepreneurship trainings for refugees (with a view to professional qualifications), and a shift towards cash or vouchers rather than general food distributions, wherever possible.

Step up efforts to ensure protection of civilians and that the most vulnerable are protected.

As the conflict and targeting of civilians in South Sudan continues, people fleeing their homes must be able to seek safety in neighboring countries. Furthermore, all efforts should be made to not only protect vulnerable populations, but also to prevent further outbreak of conflict among groups in the region.

- Host countries should continue to keep their borders open to refugees from South Sudan. Asylum in these countries is saving countless lives.
- Donor governments should support an increase in UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies' protection staffing. The South Sudanese refugee influx has an extremely high percentage of female-headed households and unaccompanied and separated children, all of whom face particular dangers.
- Donor governments should support peace-building work with refugees, in order to mitigate the risk of inter-ethnic conflict spilling over from South Sudan into host countries.

Endnotes

1 http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEF South Sudan SitRep23420-200720 Oct.20,2014.pdf

2 UNHCR policy on alternatives to camps - http://www.unhcr.org/5422b8f09.html

3 UN South Sudan Crisis Response Plan 2014: https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/Revision_2014_South_Sudan_CRP_June_2014.pdf

4 Prior to the Oslo Conference, the US, UK and European Union had collectively contributed 59% of the humanitarian funding, and these three donors—together with Norway—made by far the biggest commitments at the Oslo conference.

5 US Energy Information Administration – Country Analysis brief: Sudan and South Sudan (last updated September 3, 2014: http://www.eia.gov/countries/analysisbriefs/Sudan/sudan.pdf

6 The IPC is managed by a Global Steering Committee composed of CARE International, Action Against Hunger (ACF), the Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS), the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Food Security Cluster (FSC), the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC-EC), Oxfam, Save the Children and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). National IPC Technical working groups bring together national authorities, U.N., NGOs and key food security stakeholders that are supporting the IPC and conduct the IPC analysis with the support of the regional and global IPC bodies and partners.

7 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Republic of South Sudan Communication Summary, Sept 2014: http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_SouthSudan_Sept%202014_Communication_Summary.pdf

8 In March 2012 the global acute malnutrition rate in Aweil South was 18.6%.

9 Education Cannot Wait in South Sudan – South Sudan Education Cluster: http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/education_cannot_wait_in_south_sudan_2014.pdf

10 South Sudan refugee emergency revised regional response plan http://www.unhcr.org/53bf91879.html

11 Agenda 2063 – The Africa we Want: http://agenda2063.au.int/en/sites/default/files/agenda2063_popular_version_05092014_EN.pdf

12 Turkana SMART Nutrition Surveys Report June 2014, coordinated and implemented by Turkana Ministry of Health with the support of a number of NGOs, including the IRC

13 Alexander Betts, Refugee Economies: Rethinking Popular Assumptions, Univ. of Oxford Refugee Studies Centre, 2014: http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/refugeeeconomies

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