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# Ethiopia



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## The wave of South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia

South Sudanese refugees continue to arrive by the thousands in Gambella, Ethiopia, fleeing for their lives because of the violence and the intensifying food crisis.

The conflict in South Sudan has resulted in internal displacement of over 1,1 million people and nearly 440,000 seeking refuge in neighboring countries, with Ethiopia receiving the largest case load (UNOCHA 7<sup>th</sup> August).

**Ethiopia now hosts 600,000 refugees**

**Out of whom 184,000 are new arrivals from South Sudan**

**Planning figure of 350,000 by the end of 2014**

Since our last sitrep in May 2014, over 58,000 refugees have crossed into Ethiopia bringing the total number of registered new arrivals to 184,000 and every day, more people are arriving to entry points and onwards to camps. At the halfway mark, the planning figure of 350,000 by the end of 2014 sounds accurate. However, with renewed and escalating fighting in South Sudan, especially in Nasir and other key towns, the current planning figure would undoubtedly be revisited upwards.

The camps in Gambella are already severely overcrowded, with thousands of malnourished people pouring in. Two additional camps have been opened since

Leitchour camp was opened in early 2014. Leitchour is now home to 47,802 refugees, well beyond its ideal holding capacity of 20,000. With around 50,000 refugees respectively, Kule and Tierkidi camps are now full. In addition, there are over 10,000 refugees awaiting relocation to camps in reception and transit centres. The plan is to relocate some 20,000 refugees to Nip Nip that will be newly established camp 6 km from Leitchour. ARRA, the regional Government and UNHCR are working to identify additional land to establish the fifth camp in Gambella to cope with the large influx expected to continue over the next six months.

**Tierkidi  
50,453**

**Kule  
48,437**

**Leitchour  
47,802**

## Rainy season worsening humanitarian situation

The Kremt or big rains from June to September have arrived, heralding good crops and a bumper harvest in the food producing regions of Ethiopia. In Gambella however, the ominous clouds followed by heavy downpours signify threats of added misery and disease to over 180,000 refugees who sought refuge and protection in Ethiopia. The camps get submerged in mud and water, resulting in deplorable water and sanitation conditions, which provide fertile ground for diseases.

For humanitarian workers, this also means challenges in the provision of basic services and the construction of basic infrastructure due to the rising water and floods in this severally flood-prone region of Ethiopia. As the rainy season turns the roads into muddy, cratered, slippery tracks, the logistical challenges are exacerbated by 800-1,000 daily new arrivals through Akobo, Burbiey and Pagak entry points, making the relocation of refugees from entry/transit centres to the camps extremely difficult.

The refugees in Pagak entry point are relocated to the new Pamdong transit centre, which is under construction.

Aid workers fight an uphill battle against the communicable diseases caused by the existing harsh conditions. The arrival of the rains coincided with the outbreak of hepatitis E in Leitchour camp where LWF is operational. Also suspected cases of yellow fever are being reported, and there is a high risk of an acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) outbreak.

The poor nutritional status of the refugees puts them increasingly at risk of contracting diseases. Nutrition surveys from Gambella revealed that prevalence of global acute malnutrition among children in the Leitchour and Kule camps remains around 30%, which is twice as much as the emergency threshold of 15%. Over 40 % of children under 5 -year old have anemia. Similarly, mortality rates (4 per 10,000) substantially exceed emergency thresholds (1-2 per 10,000/day), which means that approximately four children below the age of five are dying each day.

### WASH provision in Leitchour camp

LWF Ethiopia is the lead agency in permanent water supply and one of the partners accountable for other WASH activities in the Leitchour camp. In May-June, LWF also engaged in the provision of the emergency water services in Burbiey operation for two months, as per the request of UNHCR.

Clean water is a critical priority for the crowded camps to cook, drink and wash. To provide water for the expanding refugee population, LWF is in the process of constructing a third borehole. The plan is to construct 5 boreholes in total, including 2 located in the new Nip Nip camp. The 2 already completed boreholes have been utilized for emergency water supply to reduce the distance and costs of water trucking. Currently, the construction of 5 water points is fully completed. As of end July, 11 litres of clean water were supplied per day compared to the minimum international standard of 15 litres. With the 3<sup>rd</sup> borehole, funded by BandAid / Christian Aid, LWF Ethiopia is aiming to increase the water provision to meet UNHCR standards of 20 litres per person per day.



The priority for all WASH partners has been to increase response activities to mitigate Hepatitis E cases. LWF Ethiopia is conducting community outreach work activities with several other partners, who have a harmonized implementation approach, delivering tent-to-tent messages about water and sanitation, health and nutrition. In addition, the pool strategy of outreach workers includes mass sensitization activities, clean ups of environments and data gathering. Heavy rains and muddy soil pose challenges for water and sanitation teams trying to expand and maintain critical infrastructure, as well as dispense sanitation and hygiene awareness information.

A rapid need assessment was conducted in Leitchour and surrounding community by LWF in May, to provide LWF Ethiopia with a detailed snapshot of the current WASH interventions and relevant livelihoods opportunities, including needs and gaps indicated by the respondents, in order to support planning efforts move forward.

LWF is also responsible for the waste management in the Leitchour camp, and has procured and placed 602 waste receptacles in the camp, with donkey carts transferring the waste to final disposal pits. The waste disposal pit was excavated outside the camp, and LWF is working to strengthen the monitoring system for proper utilizations.

In order to strengthen the presence and implementation at the field level, LWF has been recruiting qualified WASH technical staff members and constructing office and staff

residence structures. A sub-hall and a multipurpose training center were completed to cater for the WASH committee trainings.

Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) supported LWF with the deployment of a WASH expert and provision of a subhall for storage purposes. Currently, LWF is cooperating with NCA experts at the field level and constructing hand washing facilities and providing hygiene and sanitation promotion in connection to every emergency latrine erected by NCA.

LWF Ethiopia is part of the Partnership for South Sudanese Refugee Response, with LWF, EOC/DICAC, IOCC, DCA and NCA coming together to enhance the Gambella response.

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