

30 August 17

COUNTRY DIRECTORS' WEEKLY UPDATE

1. Key Meeting Takeaways.

- Monday **July 31** is a Public Holiday.
- We advise that members do not respond directly to any formal communication from a government entity or agency without consulting RRC either directly or through the Secretariat. Both the NGO Forum and the RRC would like all government entities and agencies to communicate to NGOs through the RRC, the legal mandated entity to handle all NGOs issues.
- In a number of areas of operations, local authorities have come to consider it normal to seize or confiscate NGO assets. We notice that this has been partly due to a certain lack of transparency of reporting of incidences. As a result, we are beginning to see in a number of areas local authorities laying claims to NGOs staff and operational activities. **We encourage members to report incidences through the security incidence reporting forms available on the Forum's website.** This will enable the Secretariat to facilitate collective response through area-based approach in tackling bureaucratic and access impediments. The Secretariat is happy to facilitate this.
- A Joint assessment team that was to visit Pagak on **July 26** was unsuccessful due to lack of safety assurances from parties on the ground. Maiwut reported as being under government control.

2. Bureaucratic Impediments.

Latest developments:

- TO BE AWARE: additional documentation are being requested from NGO workers and their visitors in Aweil airport: Passport, Visa, Yellow Fever Vaccination Card, Work Permit.
- Last week, in a meeting chaired by the Governor and attended by a number of senior officials of the state, Aweil state decided last week to impose taxation on locally recruited staff members of INGOs and UN agencies based in Aweil state. The taxation is only for staff members whose monthly payment is above 300 SSP and the staff member will be required to pay 10% of their salary. Officials from the Revenue Authorities will visit INGO offices end of every month to identify locally recruited staff who have paid their tax or those who did not. The Revenue Authority Commission officials will be requiring that agencies share with them the list of their locally recruited staff. Based on the list, the Commissioner Revenue Authority will issue invoices to the respective organizations indicating the account numbers to deposit the money. Agencies are given 10 days to communicate/notify their offices in Juba, and there will be no further debate or dialogue on this issue. For partners who are paying centrally, the state will need evidence of payment so that they can engage the centre to remit the money.
- For fingerprinting, CID office is asking NGOs for the following documents: Copy of RRC certificate; Tax identification certificate; Tax clearance certificate; Registration certificate

(former one issued by Ministry of Justice); Copies of international staff work permits; and Staff list both national and international plus nationality. The Secretariat will follow up on this matter with RRC on Tuesday August 1.

3. Security.

- The key risks to NGOs operating across South Sudan include (not in any priority):
 - o Resumption of 'SPLA / SPLA-IO' fighting across the country.
 - o Road ambushes and robberies - continued insecurity.
 - o Country-wide compound/warehouse intrusions.
 - o Cattle raiding season

4. Information / communications.

- Due to the fact that July 31 is a public holiday, the SMS test will be carried out on August 7.
- The NGO Forum Secretariat will present monthly briefings to newly arrived CDs, Deputy CDs and Security Advisers (or their equivalents) on the first Monday of each month at 1400. These will commence on **7 August** in the Forum Conference Room.
- The Unity-North and Unity-South Skype Groups will go live from 31 July. The procedure for changeover will be as for all other Groups: renaming of profiles and vetting by Forum Security Team before adding members. Only NGOs with representation in the areas will be members. The next skype group will be Jonglei-North and Jonglei-South that will go live on 7th August
- A new interactive website was launched on 21 July. It has a design, improved functionality and enhanced rich content focused on improving the user experience on computers, mobile and tablets. Please review our website here <http://southsudanngoforum.org/> and other forum products here <http://southsudanngoforum.org/resources/> We ask members to share their comments for purposes of improving the website with the Information Manager through the email <infomgr@southsudanngoforum.org>.
- Members as requested to provide alternate (**MTN/Zain**) phone numbers for the various mailing-list contact details. We noticed non-delivery of SMS on **vivacell network** on several SMS tests done earlier in the month.

5. Training.

- Security training: the next SSAFE training is planned for:
 - o 15-17 Aug
 - o 29-31 Aug.

6. Secretariat Staff Issues / Movements.

- The Security Focal Point is on leave Wednesday 26 July - Monday 21 Aug. Deputy SFP will be main point of contact for all security issues.
- The Information Manager is on leave Monday 24 July - Monday 21 Aug. His roles will be shared between the Director and NNGO Information Officer.

7. Forward Look.

- The Secretariat will seek further clarification from RRC regarding the new Number Plates for NGO vehicles. Last week the Registrar General was out of the country on a duty trip.

- INGO SC meeting will take place on Tuesday **August 1**. If you have any pertinent issue that you would like the SC to discuss, please do not hesitate to let the Secretariat Director know.
- Next CDG meeting will take place this Friday **August 4**.
- The Secretariat will send out an online self-nomination link for members' self-nomination to be elected on the INGO SC in September. We shall request the five organisations that had self-nominated for the one slot that had opened up (in fact we have two slots with the departure of Golam Azam this weekend) to re-nominate themselves again through the online link that will be shared with members this week.

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