

13 August 17

## **COUNTRY DIRECTORS' WEEKLY UPDATE**

### **1. Key Meeting Takeaways.**

- ★ Operationally, all NSS-related issues should be addressed to RRC Registrar General, Deng Kenjok Tong. He can be reached through the cell phone 0923111824 or email [deng2kenjok@gmail.com](mailto:deng2kenjok@gmail.com). The Secretariat already informed of some NSS personnel seeking accommodation in NGOs' compounds as well as the demands by NSS in Boma State that NGOs register with them at a fee. He gave assurances that both of these issues will be addressed and advised that NGOs report any NSS-related issues of concern to his office for purposes of engagements with relevant duty bearers. The matter of NSS seeking accommodation in NGOs' compounds was also raised to SRSG at the HCT meeting, an issue that he promised to follow up with the Director of NSS.
- ★ The Humanitarian Coordination Forum Chaired by the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Co-Chaired by the Acting Humanitarian Coordinator was held on August 9. At this meeting the Minister confirmed that that PIT for national staff is handled at national level – and that the states cannot ask for PIT directly. He further observed that the Minister of Finance is due to send a circular on this to clarify the issue. Also the Minister mentioned that the proposed fee for NGOs registration in the draft budget is USD 2000 for INGOs and USD 250 for NNGOs, figures to be confirmed or amended by the Parliament during the passage of the budget.
- ★ The SRSG confirmed that the Regional Protection Force is a part of UMISS (so not a separate entity); this falls under the force commander and hence the SRSG. So it is not stand alone. Some additional troops have arrived that will enable UMISS to increase capacity outside of Juba including patrols on the Juba/Bor road, the Equatorias and a move back to Yei.
- ★ The Secretariat raised with the Deputy Director of NSS the matter of CID requiring additional documentation for moving bulk cash even after RRC has given a clearance letter. He advised that NGOs follow the following procedures: a) they get the relevant RRC letter; b) they notify NSS Economic Division in Konyokonyo about the transfer of funds, preferably the day before; and c) on the day of transportation of cash, they go to NSS office at the Airport with the RRC letter as well as the letter from the NSS Economic Division. NSS will then escort the money directly into the plane. This will process will not require CID involvement.
- ★ Bureaucratic and Access Impediments to Humanitarian Operations in South Sudan report is out. It is shared with this update.

## 2. Bureaucratic Impediments.

### Latest developments:

#### **Operational interference issues raised with RRC**

The Secretariat communicated with senior leadership of RRC a number of issues touching on PIT for national staff, NSS seeking accommodation in NGO compounds and National Communications Authority charging NGOs for possessions of communications equipment, for their actions. RRC provided the following responses:

- ★ In relation to PIT of national staff collection, RRC is discussion with ministry of Finance and other concerns institution to clarify whether the National Government or states are responsible for collection of PIT. RRC promised to get back to the NGO Forum with a formal response though no date is given.
- ★ On National Security Personnel asking to be accommodated in NGOs compound, the agencies affected by this problem should contact RRC so that it handled with National Security from outside.
- ★ On National Communication Authority levying fees on all VSATs, VHF radios plus administrative fee, RRC had communicate to them to stop charges because such material are for humanitarian purpose and should not be tax, we are yet to wait for their respond in writing.

#### **Incident Reporting**

- ★ We request members to use the Incidents Reporting Form available on the Forum website to report any bureaucratic and access impediments experiences. Some issues have been reported have they have taken hold on NGOs. Transparency in reporting will support timely efforts in addressing matters that arise promptly. The Secretariat intends to start a bi-weekly review of incidents reported to inform considerations for a collective response.

## 3. Security.

The key risks to NGOs operating across South Sudan include (not in any priority):

- ★ Fighting can be expected to continue between SPLA and SPLA-IO at any me.
- ★ Cattle raiding and inter-communal fighting is expected to continue - NGOs are not a direct target, but should take extra precautions.
- ★ Continued warehouse / compound break-ins country-wide as people become more desperate for food and possibly fuel.
- ★ The general threat of ambushes and robberies on road movement remains high

### Highlights

- **Security Relocation:** NGOs in Boma state conducted a self relocation from Boma secondary to fears of a large armed group headed in their direction. The large migrating group, believed to include opposition soldiers reportedly outside Kapoeta in Eastern Equatoria last week, may have moved into the southern area of Jonglei state. While the group's movement through Eastern Equatoria did not reportedly cause any major incidents, it did raise concerns in the area for local authorities and community groups.

- **UNMISS Mission Wide Table Top Exercise:** The NGO Forum, IMC and OXFAM participated in a mission wide TTX at the UN HOUse on 11 Aug. The pupose of the TTX was to rehearse coordinated responses to a series of scenarios playing out in various locations across the country. The outcomes of this TTX will be shared with the NGOs once they are released.
- The ongoing contest between government and opposition soldiers for control of Pagak is likely to persist. The clashes also raise concerns for a fresh wave of displacement into Ethiopia, which may include armed actors establishing permanent bases.
- On Friday 11 August, government security forces established a new checkpoint outside the Protection of Civilian site 3 (POC) at UN House. All humanitarian vehicles were subjected searches and trucks not allowed to enter the POC site until the contents were searched. The new checkpoint comes after several incidents of men in uniform targeting humanitarians along the road between Juba centre and UN House.
- NGOs have also reported what they believe to be surveillance of NGO compounds. There is a likelihood it could be linked to opportunistic theft.
- There have been three deaths reported in Akobo as the result of tensions between local communities. Local authorities have reportedly engaged the groups involved to arrest the revenge cycle

#### **4. Information / communications.**

- Information Manager is on leave until August 21. Please contact the Information Officer or Secretariat in case of inquiries.
- New website has been launched. Please continue to review and share your feedback with the Information Manager through the email address, [Infomgr@southsudannngoforum.org](mailto:Infomgr@southsudannngoforum.org) so that necessary improvements may be made.

#### **5. Training.**

- Security training: the next SSAFE training is planned for:
  - 29-31 Aug.
- There will be NGO Forum-Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility presentation on Aid, Governance (including the new administrative structures) and Livelihoods in Northern Bar el Ghazal on **Friday August 25 at the Secretariat from 10:30am -12:00 noon.**

#### **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.
- Secretariat Director will be on R&R and leave from August 12-Sept 11. In his absence, Hafeez Wani, the NNGO FP will be the Acting Director.

## 7. Forward Look.

- World Humanitarian Day celebrations will be held at OCHA on Aug 18 at 14:30 hours. **All are invited and the Steering Committees' Chairs are lined up as speakers to give voice to Forum members.**
- OFDA DART Team Leader will attend the INGO SC meeting tomorrow August 15.
- Jonglei North and Jonglei South Skype groups are now live. Lakes and Warrap skype groups are live as of August 14.
- Every Thursday at 13:15 hours, HCT representatives for the NGOs hold a pre-meeting to which all NGOs are welcome. Come and make your voices and concerns heard.
- Elections for Steering Committee members for the period October 2017 to September 2018 will be held on October 6. All positions except for Host Agency will be up for elections. We continue to receive self-nominations from members, including from current Steering Committee members.

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