

In light of the on-going humanitarian emergency in Jonglei State, the ISWG echoes concerns raised by other humanitarian actors: the window for opportunity in providing much needed assistance to over 120,000 vulnerable persons in Jonglei is narrowing. The beginning of the rainy season signals decreased humanitarian access and risks the isolation of those who have fled into deeper rural areas, while increasing their exposure to additional health and protection risks.

During the rainy season, access difficulties for humanitarian agencies are likely to become even more acute and risks the isolation of people within Jonglei who have been displaced by violence between the SPLA and SSDA and other non-state armed actors; had their property destroyed; and have had their assets looted and vandalised, from essential and life-saving assistance. Similarly, populations who have been displaced from Jonglei into neighbouring states and countries continue to be separated from their families and homes and will require sustained support.

Since the last Communication of the ISWG to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) on 17 May 2013, the situation in Jonglei State has continued to deteriorate. While the ISWG recognises key efforts being made to secure humanitarian access into Jonglei state, in particular Pibor country, conflict between the Government of South Sudan and non-armed state actors (primarily SSDA) continues unabated and humanitarian access remains limited. The ISWG also welcomes the participation of the SSRRC and other state actors visiting locations for needs assessments and advocating for improved humanitarian access to key sites.

Patterns of violence, destruction and targeting of civilians have continued. The ISWG reiterates our commitment made to recommendations on the 17 May 2013 Communication. Given the pressing nature of the emergency, the ISWG is calling for three immediate steps to be taken by all actors to enable lifesaving assistance to conflict affected communities.

- 1. Humanitarian access:** All parties to the conflict must respect the independent and impartial delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout Jonglei and refrain from restricting humanitarian access. Humanitarian actors must be allowed to provide assistance without condition.
- 2. Ceasefire:** Political actors should pursue a parallel track of advocacy for a humanitarian ceasefire to allow for secure longer term assistance.
- 3. Amend security procedures:** Given the erratic security situation and short windows of time for safe access in certain locations, and in light of newly-available helicopters for humanitarian transport, humanitarian actors are requested to assess and amend as appropriate their security procedures to enable more rapid mobilisation of staff should the opportunity for safe access arise.

For the information of the HC, the ISWG are continuing to compile *indicative examples* of the reports we are receiving. While there remain issues of verification due to limited humanitarian access, these examples have been triangulated across clusters, locations and partners. ISWG have confidence in the integrity of these general sources, despite potential political motivations of all stakeholders. If true even in part, these events point to a broader pattern of human rights violations being committed by the SPLA, which are also consistent with the reports from international human rights actors during previous SPLA disarmament campaigns in 2012.

**On-going displacement of civilians:** Since the last ISWG Communication, civilians in Jonglei continue to be displaced the six largest settlements- Pibor town, Lekonguele, Boma, Maruwa, Manyabol and

Gumuruk and throughout Pibor County. The Murle community in particular is reportedly almost wholly displaced from these urban and peri-urban areas.

Humanitarian agencies report that numbers of persons affected by displacement arriving into EES, CES and into neighbouring countries is increasing. This is often after long journeys on foot, as in the case of those displaced into Kapoeta, CES where IDPs travelled for seven days on foot.

Statistical reporting from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia confirm continuing arrivals of asylum seekers. The ISWG notes with concern that the Government of Kenya may prevent access to persons claiming asylum and reiterate that all state parties must adhere to their obligations under international humanitarian and refugee law.

**Targeting of civilians:** The status of civilians in terms of mortality and morbidity is largely unknown due to access restrictions and the continued displacement of the civilian population. Yet, there continue to be reports of targeting of civilians. The ISWG reiterates the concern that civilian casualties will increase as the conflict becomes more protracted- including through conflict, lack of food and health deterioration. The current real or perceived absence of distinction between the Murle community and the NSAA, is posing serious risks and concern with regards to the deliberate targeting of Murle civilians in retaliation for the actions of the NSAA, as well as Murle being subject to a general perception of culpability on the basis of belonging to one ethnic community. This adds serious protection concerns to the already existing risks for the population being caught in cross-fire. Within this context, the following reports of **killing of civilians** can be noted since the last ISWG Communication:

- 26<sup>th</sup> May: SPLA alleged to have opened fire on Murle civilians attending a court session in Manyabol Boma. 14 individuals are killed- 12 male, 2 female. Four civilians were reportedly local community leaders.
- Late May one woman and child shot and killed by SPLA soldiers in Pibor market whilst searching for food and other goods at night.
- 18-21 May: 12 Murle SPLA (Division 8) accused of desertion and executed in front of SPLA camp in Upper Boma. As many as 38 persons are believed to have been extra-judicially executed.
- 17 June: Inter-ethnic conflict between Lou Nuer and Murle resulted in the death of 4 people.

Protection actors also continue to receive reports from displaced persons of **rape and sexual abuse** experienced by women and girls during their displacement, as well as reports of **arbitrary arrest and detention** in the case of Rev Idriss Nyalos and David Gayin, who have been illegally arrested by Military Intelligence and detained incommunicado.

**Possible re-laying land mines:** In addition to previous reports of potential re-laying of mines in Pibor country, further allegations were recorded of new mine-laying in Lekongole, Kong Kong River, Gichirege, Gumuruk and Lukurnya. It was not possible to access these areas to carry out technical and/or non-technical survey to verify the claims of new mine-laying. While UNMAS has been able to conduct assessments in limited areas in Boma to assess the possible Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), the SPLA has not allowed access to Murawa Hills.

**Health:** The sole primary health facility available in Pibor Town- normally serving approximately 120,000 people- was destroyed and looted in late May. With the systematic looting of healthcare facilities that also targeted Boma, there are currently no functional healthcare facilities in all of Pibor county, with the exception of a very basic primary health post in Gumuruk. Additionally, the rainy, malaria and flooding

season is fast approaching, and expected to further exacerbate the high need for medical and health care presence in the State.

**Wanton destruction of property:** Interagency needs assessments have confirmed the reports of destruction of civilian and public property, including:

- Civilians report being subject to looting by both DYY forces and SPLA.
- Destruction of community water system in Boma, which is the primary water source for Boma town.
- SPLA observed looting property from NGO compounds in Boma during a humanitarian assessment on 6-7 June.
- Humanitarian agencies have reported more generally damage or destruction of their office property and premises in various towns across Pibor county.
- Military use of civilian property reported in Gumuruk, including the use of a school.

**Closing of Humanitarian space in Jonglei:** Restrictions on humanitarian actors, pervasive insecurity, and the absence of substantial civilian populations in settlements that are accessible militate against any effective humanitarian response. The heavily militarized nature of Pibor County (Pibor town, Lekonguele, Boma, Muruwa, Manyabol, even Gumuruk) means that humanitarian agencies can only be on the ground for a limited time. Currently the distribution of large scale humanitarian assistance is not possible- due to logistical challenges and no guarantee that populations will be safe and assets are not looted. The only humanitarian assistance that has reached populations has reportedly been basic health services to approximately 3,000 individuals in Gumuruk.

While protection actors have been able to conduct some assessments, humanitarian actors recently allowed into key have not been allowed free and unfettered access

- 14<sup>th</sup> June: members of the interagency mission in Pibor were not allowed to move freely in town, and to visit and assess the status of their own compounds in the location.
- 17<sup>th</sup> June: interagency humanitarian mission to Manyabol posed serious potential security risks for the humanitarian team.
- 16-18 June: active fighting and shelling in Pibor town blocking all humanitarian access.

Furthermore, humanitarian actors have not been able to conduct free discussions and assessments with the reported 666 civilians present in the County Commissioner's compound in Pibor- noting that the County Commissioner's compound and SPLA compound now share a common defensive barrier and are essentially within a single militarised compound, placing civilians at extreme risk especially in light of the recent upsurge in fighting. Access has also been restricted to freely discuss with 35 Murle women in the SPLA compound in Boma.