

# LEER TPA RAPID ASSESSMENT SNAPSHOT

GPS N 8.308 // E 30.119

SOUTH SUDAN // 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2018

Continued violent clashes in Southern Unity State have resulted in a devastating impact on thousands of civilians and on humanitarian agencies trying to provide urgently needed assistance to vulnerable people. Koch, Mayiandit and Leer are the most affected locations with current widespread fighting around Leer. The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) through its Mobile team conducted a rapid protection assessment in IDPs in Leer town and Temporary Protection Area (TPA) between May 11-18 to identify the main protection concerns of the IDPs with aim to inform humanitarian planning.

## 1'995

Individuals have been displaced and currently sought refuge at the TPA in Leer as of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Estimates vary between 1900 and 2,700 however.

## 100-150

Individuals arriving daily to the TPA

## 30+

girls reported abducted by armed groups as of 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2018

## 11

rape cases have been voluntarily reported in the past weeks with over 40 SGBV cases identified by humanitarian actors

## 30

missing children cases have been reported as of 17<sup>th</sup> may 2018



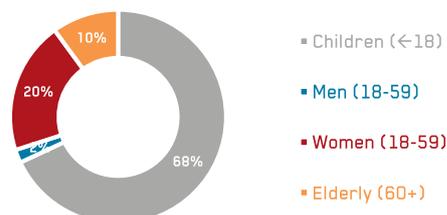
LEER TPA, LEER TOWN, UNITY, SOUTH SUDAN  
GPS N 8.308 // E 30.119

**CONTEXT** Leer encountered fighting in late April 2018 when hit and run attacks were launched on different rural areas. The recent waves of violence started around the 21st of April and are predominantly perceived to be motivated by a revenge attack and monetary gain through looting of civilian properties and assets. However, a significant number of serious human rights violations were reported during this fighting including extrajudicial execution, abduction, arbitrary arrest, detention, rape, and banditry. The increased insecurity due to such actions results in displacement of an estimated number of more than **8,000 people from locations of Gandor, Mirimiri, Rubkoy, Payak, Piling, Tonyor, Bow, Sonyor, Ruopnor, Kaigai, and Turiak to Leer Town, Mer, Koch, Nyal, and Mayendit**. An estimate of 60% of the affected communities are believed to be displaced to Mayendit, Mer, and Koch while around 2000 decided to flee to Leer TPA. Some interviewed IDPs indicated civilians also fled to Malakal and Bentiu while some are believed to have crossed river Nile to Fangak.

**CIVILIAN CHARACTER** Leer Town is a strong SPLA-controlled area with opposition forces in the surrounding villages. The town is highly militarized with virtually no civilian character, civilians surrounded with army barracks and military bunkers. Many of those responsible for serious abuses committed against civilian are armed youth groups allied to the warring parties in the local area.

## POPULATION FIGURES

There has been an increase in arrivals to the TPA and Leer town. According to the joint headcount conducted on the 16th May, 1,995 IDPs are in the TPA. This indicates a 300% increase from the beginning of April (575) and a slight increase from 5th May (1,774). Headcounts from Hope Restoration indicate that the population rose to 2,170 in early May and the community suggested the number is as high as 2,700. Significant influxes are seen when specific areas are attacked – on 12th May, 800 civilians have believed to have arrived in the TPA for example. The average number of arrivals is estimated at **100-150 a day** to the TPA currently.



With the fear of harassment by the military and armed youth groups, civilians who fled to Leer town preferred to stay in the TPA next to UNMISS without any shelter and humanitarian assistance. However, some civilians who have relatives reported being living with host communities within the town of Leer. Some IDPs are also seen leaving the TPA due to a lack of shelter or sanitation, particularly with increasing rains. Those who left the TPA have reported occupying a school in Bul, a small village 1-2 km away from the TPA. In some cases, IDPs buried food during the last distribution and unconfirmed reports of people leaving the TPA at night to dig up the food.

## MULTI-SECTOR NEEDS

There are incredibly limited services of any type. Many residents do not have access to basic **shelter** and are living in flooded areas. **Water and sanitation** is well below minimum standards with only 10 latrines for 2,000 people, no water points in the TPA and no access to soap. Two semi-functional boreholes are present in Leer town. **Education services** are not available with schools in Leer and surrounding villages not open due to the crisis. There are significant reports of a **lack of food** since the last GFD in Jan 2018 with the population lacking viable coping mechanisms. **Health facilities** are extremely limited or non-functional.



## POPULATION SNAPSHOT:

**TOTAL POP: 1,995**  
in Leer TPA

Other populations in Leer town and collective centers



## SECTOR SNAPSHOT:

**COORDINATION & ASSESSMENTS**  
● RED - HIGH NEEDS

**WASH**  
● RED - HIGH NEEDS

**S/NFI**  
● RED - HIGH NEEDS

**FOOD SECURITY**  
● RED - HIGH NEEDS

**NUTRITION**  
● GREY - NOT ASSESSED

**EDUCATION**  
● RED - HIGH NEEDS

**MINE RISK**  
● AMBER - MEDIUM NEEDS

**SGBV**  
● RED - HIGH NEEDS

**CHILD PROTECTION**  
● RED - HIGH NEEDS

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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## SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

including kidnap for rape and other rape cases have been reported since the start of the recent crisis. Rape is being used as a weapon of war by the armed youth groups. One FGD participant said, *FGD participants said they physically witnessed a gang rape perpetrated by ten armed youth in one of the surrounding villages*, which was a driving factor for people to flee the location. Women indicated that at the start of the crisis, a number of women and children were seen drowning in Mer and Adok River as they were attempting to cross the river and swamps due to fear of being killed and raped. *"I am even one of the IDPs coming from Mer, I witnessed children and women drowning as they cross the river"*.

**RAPE** in particular has been widely reported and at least 11 rape cases have been voluntarily reported to partners on the ground in recent weeks. It is likely the incidents of such cases are underreported due to cultural barriers as well as the lack of available services. There is currently no clinical case management service available to survivors of rape.

## KIDNAPPING OF CIVILIANS

has been reported in multiple locations which is limiting civilian freedom of movement within Leer and out of Leer TPA. Multiple reports of kidnapping of groups of girls have been confirmed with some still missing, but specific details are too sensitive to report more widely.

**CHILD PROTECTION** concerns are reported by the IDPs and host community. Three boys were arbitrary arrested and detained by the regular armed forces in Leer town at the start of the crises being claimed to be a spy for the Opposition forces. While two of them released recently after fine, one is still remaining detained.

FGD with the IDPs revealed the presence of Several cases of separated, unaccompanied and missing children in TPA. About 30 missing cases of children mentioned during the FGD. However, the scale of separated and unaccompanied and missing children could be higher as the fluidity continues.

**SAFETY AND SECURITY** is the main concern for the civilian population, which is significantly limiting freedom of movement in the area of origin but also in Leer town where they are displaced now. The new IDPs mentioned they could not move freely within leer town due to fear of harassment by soldiers and the armed youth who are also perpetrators of recent incidents. One IDP reported around 30 people, including women and men were killed by armed groups in affected locations and that indiscriminate extra judicial killing was being undertaken, including hanging civilians in trees. This information is unverified assessment team could not reach the locations for security reasons

**FAMILY SEPARATION** is indicated to be a significant concern, with women specified their men stay behind in the bush as they are afraid of being a direct target by the youth and other armed groups in the area. This is also in

support with the information from the headcount that men account only for 2% of IDPs in the TPA. Some IDPs indicated they are not aware of their husband's whereabouts and even afraid that they may have been killed in the bush. This is a clear indication that mass family separation as a result of the ongoing conflict in the area.

As the fighting intensifies it is likely mobilizations target children. The assessment team observed 9 children engaged with armed youth who are allies to the SPLA on their return from recent operations in the civilian locations. Due to high insecurity and restricted access, the assessment team could not able to verify the exact numbers of children associated with armed youth groups.

## EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR (ERW)

are present in Leer town and its surrounding areas. The Danish Demining Group (DDG) who is currently operational in the area with a semi-permanent base is doing clearance and mine risk education targeting IDPs and host communities. There were no any cases of explosions reported during the assessment period as a result of the presence of the ERW.

## THE VIABILITY OF MULTI-SECTOR RESPONSE

is a major concern as the last reported distributions saw a significant increase in fighting and conflict, worsening the protection situation for IDPs in the surrounding area. The humanitarian community needs to carefully consider how to meet very significant multi-sectoral gaps without putting people at risk. To date, HRSS and UNIDO (NNGOs) are currently present providing protection and child protection interventions, and UNMISS has provided some lifesaving assistance to IDPs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Protection cluster** to continue and scale up protection response, monitor the protection environment, and monitor the implementation of do-no-harm principles.
- **CCCM cluster** to consider launching an emergency team to support HRSS with rapid site coordination, assessment coordination and flow monitoring and to consider conducting a rapid assessment in IDP collective centers including Bul, School and Mer Iceland to understand needs.
- **OCHA and protection actors** to consider engaging with armed groups to follow up on cases of the abducted girls for their urgent release and reunification to their families.
- **Health and GBV actors** to immediately scale up clinical and case management responses for SGBV cases management coupled with psychosocial support for survivors.
- **Child protection actors** to follow up on cases of a child recruitment and detaining of children.
- **WASH, S/NFI and FSL clusters** to consider rapid assessment and emergency interventions for lifesaving needs.
- **Humanitarian actors** to consider an intentions survey of IDPs currently hosted in the TPA and as well others who are living in Leer town as part of wider assessments.