

UNHCR's role

- Co-ordination of responses to the refugees' needs, with regular consultations at both point of delivery and national levels.
- Protection monitoring, registration, dealing with child separation and the high incidence of unaccompanied minors are among the protection activities being carried out. Identifying and addressing concerns of persons with special needs including prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence are also key priorities.
 - The principal cause for alarm is the proximity of refugees in Yida a volatile conflict zone. This raises grave concerns about security of refugees (and humanitarian workers) as well as the need to maintain the civilian character of refugee settlements.
 - The imperative of providing education cannot be overstated. Well over half of the refugee children is under 18 years of age.
- Dialogue with refugees to relocate to safer areas away from the border. Refugees wish to remain close to their homeland, the Nuba Mountains. Moreover, they are not accustomed to living in flat lands and prefer the Yida landscape. This notwithstanding, the security of refugees is paramount.
- Negotiate with the authorities to provide land for settlement and cultivation by means of promoting refugee self-reliance.
- Coordinate with UNMISS/UNMAC regarding transportation of refugees from Yida and de-mining of travel routes.
- Provide basic life-sustaining assistance to all refugees, including protection, food, water-sanitation-hygiene, nutrition and health services. In Nyeel and Pariang, refugees also have access to basic as well as expanded services in primary and secondary education along with support to engage in agriculture.

Operational constraints

- Security of refugees and humanitarian workers.
- Delivery of humanitarian aid during the rainy season conditions deteriorate and roads become impassable.

New developments (April 2012)

- **UNHCR is deeply concerned about the security of refugees and humanitarian workers in Unity state. A worsening security situation could put them in harm's way and seriously hamper the delivery of humanitarian aid.**
- Unity state bore the brunt of the recent upsurge in hostilities between Sudan and South Sudan, notably through multiple incidents of aerial bombardment in different locations.
- Refugee settlements in Yida, Pariang and Nyeel were not directly affected. UNHCR and partner staff continue to conduct protection and assistance activities for refugees in these locations.
- Staff have reported the situation in all three settlements has remained relatively calm despite the hostilities.
- In the month of April there has been a notable increase in the number of new arrivals, with an average of 234 per day as compared to 84 per day in February and March.
- New arrivals cite the following as the causes of flight:
 - food shortages in Southern Kordofan (among new arrivals there has been a marked increase in cases of malnutrition);
 - anticipation of the rainy season and concerns that they may not be able to reach Yida after the rains begin. During the rainy season, which lasts from May to October, roads become impassable. Last year, logistical and security constraints led to interruptions of food distribution on several occasions during the rainy season.

Operational responses

- Registration of new arrivals .
- Agencies are addressing cases of malnutrition.
- Refugees receive regular one-month full food rations. WFP is setting up additional rubhalls for storage of food in all three locations.
- UNHCR has pre-positioned non-food items including mosquito nets, soap and used clothing; agencies are discussing ways to prioritize/assist the vulnerable. There are large numbers of unaccompanied minors.
- Modalities for medical evacuation of refugees are also being discussed as the rains approach.