Brief Explanation:

Household survey methodology

From November 2017 to May 2020, UNHCR estimates some 289,560 South Sudanese refugees have spontaneously returned to South Sudan, 168,964 of them returned since signing of revitalized peace agreement in October 2018. To learn more about their return conditions and their future plans in return areas, UNHCR conducts in-depth household-level survey of returnees across the country.

UNHCR and partners, on quarterly basis collect information on refugee returns through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and partner monitoring reports. Jointly with Government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, UNHCR validates the reports by interviewing randomly selected returnee households in areas of return during the period.

Findings of periodic household-level Survey (January 2020 – March 2020) of South Sudanese refugees returned spontaneously or in self-organized manner to South Sudan

UNHCR, in coordination with South Sudan’s Commission for Relief and Rehabilitation and NGO partners, conducted a household survey of spontaneous refugee returnees who arrived between January and March 2020. In total, 1,621 households (10,169 individuals) were interviewed in high-return areas of: Eastern Equatoria, Unity, Northern Bahr El Ghazal, Western Bahr El Ghazal, Jonglei, Upper Nile, Central Equatoria. This survey is conducted on a quarterly basis.

Key findings include:
- The highest number of spontaneous refugee returnees surveyed came from Sudan (5,380), followed by Kenya (3,421)
- **Women and children** made up a majority (79%) of the population, 45% of households were Female headed households.
- More than half (58%) of the refugee returnees traveled by collective (pooled) or private cars, while 26% returned in buses, 10% returned by boat and others various means such as; bicycle, boda-boda, on foot etc.
- Most of the returnees paid by own means, their transport fares, some were supported by relatives and few returns via Panakuach border crossing were aided by Sudan authorities to cross into South Sudan at a reduced fee as public transport was restricted at the informal border crossing.
- Up to 92% of surveyed refugee returnees said they intended to stay permanently.

Main reasons for returns were:
1. Insufficient livelihood opportunities in country of asylum
2. Improvement of security situation in South Sudan
3. Reunite with family members
4. Insufficient access to basic services in country of asylum
5. Insecurity in country of asylum
• Majority (82%) of refugee returnees intended to remain in their return villages, 8% were undecided and 5% expressed desire to move to a different village within South Sudan.

• Overwhelming (99%) of the surveyed refugee returnees said they feel safe in their current location, 88% of those cited good relationship with their host communities.

• Most reported owning a house and/or land in South Sudan, but 8% and 7%, respectively, do not have access to house for various reasons.

• Sixty-eight percent (68%) of refugee returnees left immediate family members in the country of asylum. Majority mentioned their family members planned to join them in South Sudan within one to six months.

Contributing Partners:

RRC
Office of Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Government of South Sudan

ROSS
Relief Organization for South Sudan

ADRA
Adventist Development and Relief Agency

HDC
Humanitarian Development Consortium

SSOPO
South Sudan Older People’s Organization

CARE
CARE International

DRC
Danish Refugee Council

HRSS
Hope Restoration South Sudan

UMCOR
United Methodist Committee on Relief

WDG
Women Development Group
From November 2017 to May 2020, UNHCR estimates some 289,560 South Sudanese refugees have returned to South Sudan, 168,964 since October 2018 after signing of revitalized peace agreement. To learn more about the challenges they face and their plans for the future, UNHCR conducts an in-depth, household-level survey of returnees across the country.

UNHCR and partners, on quarterly basis collect information on refugee returns through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and partner monitoring reports. Jointly with Government’s Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, UNHCR validates the reports by interviewing randomly selected returnee households in areas of return during the period.

1,621 households out of 10,338 households that arrived from January to March 2020 were interviewed, mainly from Eastern Equatoria, Unity, Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal states.

THE RETURNES (44,078 refugees returned spontaneously between Jan-Mar 2020)

Sample size

Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-11</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-17</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-59</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Arrivals by County**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>5,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>2,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>3,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonglei</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Nile</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Equatoria</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final status of Abyei area is not yet determined. Source: Geographic data: UNHCR, UNCS, UNDP. Refugee Returnee statistics: UNHCR and Partners. Author: UNHCR Representation Office in South Sudan. Feedback: ssdjuimo@unhcr.org
**THE JOURNEY**

**Reported reasons for return**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reported pull factors</th>
<th>49%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of security situation in South Sudan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reunite with family members</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved availability of services in South Sudan</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One household reported one or more reasons for their return to country of asylum.

**Mode of transport**

- 58% returned by collective or private car
- 26% returned by bus
- 10% returned by boat
- 6% other

Other: on foot, bicycle, boda-boda, boat, airplane etc.

**Mode of payment**

- 97% paid with their own money
- 3% other

Other: assisted by CoA, paid by relatives, friends, no cost etc.

**Vulnerability**

- 1,077 children at risk
- 353 impaired/illness/disability
- 118 elderly at risk
- 43 women at risk

**FUTURE PLANS**

**Intended return duration**

- 77% permanently
- 11% less than 6 months
- 7% unsure
- 5% as long as peace continues

**Reuniting with the family**

- 86% said their family planned to meet them in South Sudan
- 68% of returnees left immediate family members in the country of asylum

**Permanent returnee’s intention**

- 87% want to remain in the same village
- 8% Undecided
- 5% want to move to another village

Other: move to other county, do not know, move to other state etc.

**Immediate family members return plan**

- 374 between 1 to 2 months
- 216 later than 6 months
- 192 between 3 to 6 months
- 168 within a month

**Relationship with host community**

- 99% feel safe in the current location
- 88% report a good relationship with the host community

**Housing in South Sudan**

- 81% of returnees own house
- 8% of those, do not have access to it

**Top 3 reasons for no access**

1. Destroyed
2. Damaged
3. Occupied by others

**Land in the South Sudan**

- 95% of returnees own land
- 7% of those, do not have access to it

**Top 3 reasons for no access**

1. Insecurity
2. Occupied by others
3. Other

Other: no available space, far from town, fear of previous fatigue, loneliness etc.

**Reported push factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reported push factors</th>
<th>57%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient livelihood opportunities in country of asylum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient access to basic services in country of asylum</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecurity in country of asylum</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Remaining immediate family members in Country of asylum**

1. Sudan: 3,895
2. Kenya: 890
3. Uganda: 212
4. Ethiopia: 133

**Top 5 reported protection incidents during travel**

1. Extortion money
2. Loss/theft of belongings
3. Confiscation of refugee card and/or ration card (Uganda)
4. Medical emergency
5. Psychological/emotional abuse

**No of times**

- 408 Extortion money
- 338 Loss/theft of belongings
- 134 Confiscation of refugee card and/or ration card (Uganda)
- 95 Medical emergency
- 25 Psychological/emotional abuse

**Author:** UNHCR Representation Office in South Sudan

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