IOM Kenya’s Assistance to Refugees from South Sudan

EXTERNAL SITUATION REPORT  7 - 13 July 2014

OVERVIEW

Kenya has received the least number of South Sudanese refugees; 40,196 refugees have been registered to date (Source: UNHCR Sitrep, 11 July). During this reporting period, 523 refugees entered the country, compared to 650 refugees in the last week.

The number of sick refugees arriving in Kenya is increasing with malaria, and malnutrition being the most common challenges. Cases of ophthalmia in small children have also been reported. Kenya’s Ministry of Health has been providing refugees with medical support at the border since May 2014.

TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE

IOM continues to provide transportation assistance to South Sudanese refugees from Nadapal border point to Kakuma Refugee Camp. The cost of transportation to the Kenyan border coupled with heavy rains in South Sudan continue to hinder the movement of refugees. Additionally, seasonal rivers are now full as a result of the rains, and are blocking the paths refugees take to reach Kenya.

There are increasing incidences of bandit attacks on refugees making their way to Kenya being reported by the refugees. The attacks tend to happen in the evening, thereby forcing the refugees to travel during the day. Unable to travel at night, the journey takes more than 11 days.

HIGHLIGHTS

• Cases of Bandit attacks reported among refugees travelling into Kenya

Okot** arrived at the Nadapal border with his sister in tow. They had met in Nisitu, a town in South Sudan, and trekked to Kenya together. His wife and children had escaped to Kenya’s Kakuma Refugee Camp in March and he was hoping to reunite with them.

I could not come with them because I was unwell and could not move fast. So I hid until I got better. I chose to come to Kenya because I had been to Nadapal before and I know most of my relatives escaped to Kenya when the conflict started. I wanted to be close to them. I also think that I may be able to access school and continue with my studies here at the University of Nairobi. I heard that they have a campus here in Turkana. Back in Juba I was a Human Resource student.

Before he left UNMISS in Juba, Okot took with him what he considered most important. His academic certificates and a notebook that has his telephone contacts. He requests for a phone to call his family to notify them of his arrival in Kenya and that he is well. He tries two numbers until he reaches his family. He seems a bit relieved now and walks to board the IOM bus.

** Name has been changed to protect his identity