

IRNA Report: Initial Rapid Needs Assessment (IRNA) Nimni Payam, Guit County, Unity State 4 - 6 March 2015



This IRNA Report is a product of Inter-Agency Assessment mission conducted and information compiled based on the inputs provided by partners on the ground including; government authorities, affected communities/IDPs and agencies.

Introduction

An IRNA exercise comprising representatives of both ICWG-Juba and ICWG-Bentiu took place between 4 and 6 March 2015 in Nimni and surrounding payams. The sixteen-person IRNA team consisted of the following humanitarian agencies: NP, DRC, Mercy Corps, IOM (2 persons), WFP, Concern (2 persons), UNDSS, ACF, VSF-Suisse, NPA, UNMAS, CARE (2 persons) and OCHA.

Situation overview

Approximately 16,940 displaced people and vulnerable host community members have been identified by the SSRRA in Nimni payam, and an additional 71,000 in five payams within the immediate surroundings of Nimni. The most vulnerable members of the community are women and children, whose livelihoods pattern has been drastically undermined by the on-going conflict, and the related human rights violations and abuses, as well as food insecurity in the region. Flooding in August 2014 further exacerbated and made complex the overall humanitarian situation, and exposed them further to extreme vulnerability. The scars of the conflict remains conspicuous, with several shelters burnt as a result of the fighting in January 2014 remaining in ruin; and population movement amongst the payams within Guit County is evident. People are surviving on wild foods including water lilies, lalob fruit, and very limited fish. Large scale animal morbidity and mortality has meant diminishing milk production and unfavorable terms of trade for herders. Men are idle and women left with very limited coping mechanisms including harvesting water lily, visiting relatives and friends in Leer and POC in Rubkona for trade and assistance, and bartering or selling animals at unfavorable prices.

Context Analysis

War and flooding have devastated the livelihoods of the population in Nimni and four other adjacent payams in Guit County. These catastrophic events have caused massive displacement, and unprecedented food insecurity situation in the region. The floods that occurred in 2014 were, according to the population, the worst since 2007, and as a result the last season crops were destroyed. In 2007 the population was able to survive by going to Bentiu Town and seeking out alternative sustenance and support from the government. However in 2014 that coping mechanism did not exist due to the conflict. The payams have witnessed significant cattle deaths as a result of disease outbreak, and low animal productivity. The lack of proper health care has meant high morbidity and mortality amongst the population, particularly women and children. The prospect of recovery amongst the people is daunting as food security situation worsens and displacement inside and outside of the payams increases. According to SSRRA officials, besides 2540 vulnerable host population in Nimni, the payam is paying host to about 14,000 IDPs, most of them women and children. Nimni and the four adjacent payams are also hosting an aggregate of approximately 70,000 IDPs, also according to SSRRA officials.

Recent statistics compiled by the CCCM Cluster appears to reveal that a large part of the population could have moved from Guit County to the POC. The CCCM new arrivals tracking sheet recorded a total of 6,208 households as new arrivals in the POC between 16 February and 6 March 2015, of which an average 36.5 percent came from Guit County, the second highest next to Rubkona County. Guit County recorded the highest of 41 percent of a total 1121 new arrivals registered in the POC between 2 and 6 March. Also on 11 January, IOM biometrically registered an outstanding caseload of some 10,500 new arrivals in the Rubkona POC and found that about 35 percent originated from Guit County. The reasons for the increased numbers of arrivals into Bentiu POC from Guit County since December 2014 are the better accessibility of the POC due to the dry season, increased food insecurity and physical protection as the SPLA shelled into Guit in January 2015. Focus group discussions with new arrivals from Guit County state that the majority of the new arrivals are coming to the POC for food assistance, with some seeking protection over the dry season from payams affected by shelling.

Location map



Drivers and underlying factors

The main drivers of the crisis are conflict, resulting in displacement, destruction of lives and properties as well as wanton abuses and violation; flooding and food insecurity have exacerbated and increased the complexity of the crisis. A strange livestock disease outbreak has caused large scale morbidity and mortality amongst animals, and the lack of food stock at household level as well as the lack of access to market has further exacerbated the humanitarian situation for the most vulnerable people.

Scope of the crisis and humanitarian profile

The overall outlook of the crisis is precarious, as flooding has added to the misery of the people who are already affected by the ongoing conflict. Strains on the host communities by influxes of IDPs have increased the overall vulnerability and eroded fragile coping mechanisms of both communities.

Current population figures¹

County/Payam/Boma	Location	Host population	Displaced population	Source	Notes
Nimni		2940	2940		
Nyothear		5320	5320		
Wathnyotna		3300	3300		
Bil		2520	2520		
Kuerguina		2200	2200		

Status of the population in the affected area

The conflict has affected the entire of Guit County, and seasonal flooding in 2014 also overwhelmed most of the County. The five payams above including Nimni are amongst the most affected. These events have resulted in massive displacement in and out of Guit County, eroding coping mechanisms, and constrained food and livelihoods security.

The total number of people in need according to the SSRRA is 87,000 (IDPs 71,000; Host community 16,280). The majority of those affected are reportedly women and children. Some have undergone multiple displacements, having left homesteads because of conflict and having had to move to higher grounds because of flooding.

Women and girls survive mainly on the leaves and roots for food; some survive on very low and poor quality milk; young men depend on fishing and do minor chores to earn their living, but fishing equipment are in limited supply. Some have joined the military to be able to support their families.

¹ Based on best available figures for initial planning purposes, valid until independent registration is completed.

Key response priorities

FSL

- Immediate blanket food assistance for both IDPs and host community in Nimni, and for the surrounding payams. Nimni is the main payam and food assistance to this payam will also service four other payams within the county
- Urgent need to establish cattle disease and follow-up with necessary veterinary intervention.
- Urgent livelihoods support, including distribution of fishing kits.
- Seed distribution for the coming planting season that starts in May.

Health

- Strengthen PHCC in Nimni with equipment and trained health workers.
- Deploy midwives to the health facility and ensure a system for 24 hours delivery.
- Strengthen EPI by providing cold chain and ensuring routine immunization.
- Ensure timely submission of the weekly IDSR - (Integrated Disease Surveillance Report) to the WHO/MoH outbreak surveillance unit and Health Cluster by establishing an internet system in the humanitarian compound.

Logistics

- Set up a humanitarian semi-permanent base to service Nimni and four other payams in the area.
- Provide means of telecommunication/internet communication.
- Provide basic transportation means for aid workers.
- Ensure schedule UNHAS flight to Nimni (once a week).

Education

- Learning materials, notebooks, text books, and curriculum.
- Teacher stipends.
- Capacity building of teachers and trainings.
- Proper monitoring.

NFIs and Emergency Shelter

- The distribution of mosquito nets and blankets (contingent on verification of the prevalence of malaria and ART with PHCC in Nimni).
- Distribution of kitchen utensils.
- Coordination with other clusters to distribute fishing nets and jerry cans.

Nutrition

- Ensure access to the population by facilitating nutrition outreach to payams outside of Nimni.
- Include supplementary and other nutrition related program materials such as CSB, sugar and oil etc. for malnourished mothers.
- Strengthen nutrition services by including other activities including stabilization centre for acute malnutrition cases amongst children.
- Promote breast feeding amongst mothers through community mobilization and outreach services.

Protection

- Investigation by human rights advocates into claims of SGBV, torture, and killings along the Bentiu to Kuerguiny road. This area is also reportedly mined, but due to its position as a front-line, may remain inaccessible for some time.
- Establish referral pathways for new arrivals to Bentiu PoC, especially those from opposition territories, who may need psychosocial support.
- Establish consistent distribution centers throughout Unity State. The last food distribution was reportedly in November 2014. The current pattern of beneficiaries cycling throughout the state to access distributions is unsustainable and a serious protection concern.
- Additional assessments to Toic in order to verify further protection concerns of vulnerable populations who may be difficult to access. At the moment, there is not enough of a case load to justify a protection response in the site's current situation, this may change if beneficiaries leave Bentiu PoC to return to Guit County.

WASH

- Rehabilitation of 4 water yards and repairing of 42 hand pumps across the 5 payams in Guit County, namely: Nimni, Wathnyotba, Kuerguina, Nyathor & Bill payams.
- In order to repair the broken hand pumps, fast moving spares for Indian mark II hand pumps: pump connecting rods, piston seals, gears, foot valves, o-rings, etc. needs to be quantified and tools for maintenance should be deployed in the response.
- Provision of refreshment training and supply of standard and special tool kit for pump mechanics to make sure sustainability of borehole maintenance.
- Distribution of WASH supplies: collapsible water jerry-cans, water buckets, soap as per SPHERE standards, water purification chemicals, jugs, cooking pots, should be integrated in the response, in order to ensure availability of water both in quantity and quality depending on the family size, and also to promote good hygiene practices.
- Schools latrine maintenance, Nimni and Denbo headquarters schools.

Humanitarian access

Physical access

There is no means of motor transport. Movement within and outside of the payams is by footing. There is an airstrip that can accommodate fixed wing aircraft during the dry season and helicopter during both dry and rainy season.

There was no indication of presence of land mines or UXO in Nimni and the other payams visited. Security is relatively stable, and the locations appeared to be at an acceptable distance from the frontlines at the time of the assessment.

Key findings

FSL

Key findings

- The food security situation in Nimni is precarious; there is no availability of cereals and the whole population currently depends on coping strategies, reportedly reducing the number of meals per day, and living on wild foods such as water lilies, water lily roots, and some limited fish and milk
- It was evident during the assessment that some of the food assistance distributed at the Bentui PoC find itself in Nimni (relative help and begging), another coping strategy.
- There is no market in Nimni, however people walk for days to access Bentui PoC, Leer, Nhildui and Pagak markets
- Fish is available in rivers surrounding Nimni, but the community currently lacks fishing kits, limiting their ability to make best use of this resource

Priorities for Immediate Humanitarian response

- Immediate blanket food assistance for both IDPs and host community in Nimni, and for the surrounding payams. Nimni is the main payam and food assistance to this payam will also service four other payams within the county
- Urgent need to establish cattle disease and follow-up with necessary veterinary intervention.
- Urgent livelihoods support, including distribution of fishing kits.
- Seed distribution for the coming planting season that starts in May.

Health

Key findings

- CARE is running the only Primary Health Care Center (PHCC) in Niemi that also serves four Payam, but the facility is ill-equipped and lacks adequate number of qualified staff.

- There is a good level of involvement by the County Health Department and the Village health committees in the management of the PHCC . A good number of community members interviewed in the Boma levels have knowledge of the ongoing free Health services provided by CARE supported Nimni PHCC, but lament of the frequent shortage of oral medical drugs.
- The clinic receives on average 40 to 50 consultations a day (about 1500 a month). Drug supply was as low as less than a week supply during the time of assessment; and the pipeline is challenged by the lack of transport (both air and road) to the area.
- The lack of cold chain in the facility means no routine immunization takes place. The last and only campaign was the Polio and measles vaccination that took place in November 2014, according to PHCC staff and communities interviewed.
- The closest referral clinic is in the Bentiu POC, which takes two walking days to get there. Four neonatal deaths occurred in the health center last week alone; and there could be more unreported ones as most deliveries are carried out by untrained traditional birth attendants at household level. This is further aggravated by the lack of trained midwife and absence of 24 hour delivery services
- The most common ailments by order of ranking are ARI, malaria and AWD. There were no records of unusual increase of morbidities nor rumors of outbreak of human disease within the past 7 days of the visit.
- Emergency preparedness and response in the event of outbreak is low. Timely submission of the weekly IDSR - (Integrated Disease Surveillance Report) to the WHO/MoH outbreak surveillance unit and Health cluster is not possible due to lack of provisions of internet services coupled with challenges of access

Priorities for Immediate Humanitarian response

- Strengthen PHCC in Nimni with equipment and trained health workers.
- Deploy midwives to the health facility and ensure a system for 24 hours delivery.
- Strengthen EPI by providing cold chain and ensuring routine immunization.
- Ensure timely submission of the weekly IDSR - (Integrated Disease Surveillance Report) to the WHO/MoH outbreak surveillance unit and Health Cluster by establishing an internet system in the humanitarian compound.

Education

Key findings

- Primary schools with gender sensitive latrines exist in Nimnim and other payams visited.
- The schools seen in three different payams in the area are all occupied by IDPs, mostly women and very young children.
- The limited number of children in the communities, and the very limited population overall, is said to be due to the epoch in which most members of the community move toward more lush environments such as swamps and rivers until May or June.
- Community leaders are confident that around May and June the large majority of community members will return to Nimnim as the water levels rise.
- There is a teacher available but he is currently not on government's payroll because he does not have certification and IDP card.
- Suggestion is that, based off of WFP registration figures (which will provide a more accurate picture of the total population of Nimnim and the surrounding payams,
- Education Cluster will run a more thorough assessment in June, when the population is said to be returning to seek higher ground and begin planting and constructing houses.
- The intervention would only be successful if the community decided to stay in Nimnim – which is contingent on a litany of other factors, including, but not limited to, the regularity of food, and livelihood and shelter NFI distributions

Priorities for Immediate Humanitarian response

- Learning materials, notebooks, text books, and curriculum.
- Teacher stipends.
- Capacity building of teachers and trainings.
- Proper monitoring.

NFIs and Emergency Shelter

Key findings

- Many huts were burnt during the conflict but most are being rebuilt using local construction materials.
- NFI stocks are inadequate, as people lost some of the household materials to the war, and most of the household do not have basic utensils and hygiene kits.
- While mosquito nets and blankets might be required, data from consultation from the PHCC run by CARE will be useful indicator in informing decision for NFI distribution.
- Other priorities requirement amongst both IDPs and vulnerable host communities include fishing nets, and jerry cans.

Priorities for Immediate Humanitarian response

- The distribution of mosquito nets and blankets (contingent on verification of the prevalence of malaria and ART with PHCC in Nimni).
- Distribution of kitchen utensils.
- Coordination with other clusters to distribute fishing nets and jerry cans.

Nutrition

Key findings

- Under CARE International health program, the PHCC runs nutrition program in three payams, however; most beneficiaries in the program are from only one payam.
- The main services include OTP, TSFP both for under-fives and PLW malnourished cases.
- A rapid MUAC conducted during the assessment amongst twenty eight pregnant and lactating mothers revealed eleven (with proxy 39%) were found as MAM (≥ 21 -, 23 CM) and one SAM. However, there are no supplementary materials such as CSB, oil, etc. for malnourished mothers.
- Children under-five screened showed, from 28 boys, three were moderately malnourished; and from 27 girls two were moderately malnourished while there was no SAM identified. This gives 10.7% and 7.4% both proxy MAM and GAM for boys and Girls respectively. The low under five children acute malnutrition finding might be attributed to mainly the feeding priority in the area—children are the first to be served meals, followed by the husbands and lastly the mothers. Moreover, under nutrition is considered only for children; while for mothers, this is not considered grave in the community.
- Mothers whose children are malnourished may either go to Bentu PoC or Leer. The limited number of children seen in the payam could also be a factor for low malnutrition prevalent rate.
- A total thirteen children were enrolled in February, and only one open carton of RUTF and RUSF each was seen during the visiting time.
- Mothers tend to start breast feeding after they expel the colostrum and while complementary feeding is started at seven to eight months.
- Community mobilization and outreach service are currently lacking

Priorities for Immediate Humanitarian response

- Ensure access to the population by facilitating nutrition outreach to payams outside of Nimni.
- Include supplementary and other nutrition related program materials such as CSB, sugar and oil etc. for malnourished mothers.
- Strengthen nutrition services by including other activities including stabilization centre for acute malnutrition cases amongst children.
- Promote breast feeding amongst mothers through community mobilization and outreach services.

Protection

Key findings

- Very few people in the vicinity of Nimni. It was reported (and is historically true) that a great majority of people have gone to the toic, a swampy, low-lying area of land encompassing nearly the entire northern and eastern edges of Guit County.
- Respondents from Nimni declared that they had little intention of going to Bentiu to access food. They would prefer to travel as far as Nhialdu and Leer to access distributions, but would prefer consistent services closer to home.

- Several respondents avowed human rights abuses including rape, torture, and killings from Kuerguiny to Bentiu PoC. This corresponds to the front lines and was also reported as highly mined both with anti-personnel and anti-tank devices.
- Presence of young men with guns was noted, though with no witness of child soldiers present, nor was gunshots heard at night. This may be due to the extremely low population density of Nimni payam at the current time.
- Witness some few people with disabilities. These vulnerables typically do not move to the toic during the dry season due to the hardship of the trip.
- There are no recreational facilities or child friendly spaces in Nimni, but again, the population density is extremely low, and there are no educational activities ongoing.
- Unlike many other areas throughout the county, informants reported that there has been no forced recruitment in the area and that young children are turned away even if they want to fight. There was no way to corroborate this with limited population figures.
- There are reports of separated and unaccompanied children, however again, due to low population numbers, it is difficult to understand where these children are. Respondents reported foster care systems are in place for those who have lost relatives in the conflict.

Priorities for Immediate Humanitarian response

- Investigation by human rights advocates into claims of SGBV, torture, and killings along the Bentiu to Kuerguiny road. This area is also reportedly mined, but due to its position as a front-line, may remain inaccessible for some time.
- Establish referral pathways for new arrivals to Bentiu PoC, especially those from opposition territories, who may need psychosocial support.
- Establish consistent distribution centers throughout Unity State. The last food distribution was reportedly in November 2014. The current pattern of beneficiaries cycling throughout the state to access distributions is unsustainable and a serious protection concern.
- Additional assessments to Toic in order to verify further protection concerns of vulnerable populations who may be difficult to access. At the moment, there is not enough of a case load to justify a protection response in the site's current situation, this may change if beneficiaries leave Bentiu PoC to return to Guit County.

WASH

Key findings

Water

- From the observation and physical testing, in some of the boreholes, the water is saline.
- Durdur river is crossing and bisecting many of the payams and the villagers and it is the main source of water particularly for Nimni & Nyathor payams
- According to the WASH director, Mr. David Tungguar explanation many of the BHs were drilled in 2009 by PACT Sudan, Oxfam GB, MSF and some by Government. The borehole depth ranges from 35 to 75 meters.
- There were trained pump mechanics who were equipped with basic tools for maintenance, however due to the crisis the working tools and spares had been looted and trained staff had been displaced.
- During house to house visits and focus group discussion, beneficiaries are asked about any water treatment techniques that they are using in purifying the Durdur river water, and they said none. Among the visited HHs no one knew how to boil and cool water for drinking.
- The water storage at the households is not enough to store water for a family size of 10 to 20 members. In some of the households, there is only one jerry can used to fetch water from river.

Sanitation and Hygiene:

- Except for the Nimni school latrine, the team did not see any single house hold latrine in the households, with people defecating openly in the bush.
- When asked about hand washing practices, households don't use soap for hand washing at critical times or for clothes washing on the side of the river.
- There is a very poor hygiene situation in the households visited.
- Plates, water jerry-cans, cooking pots etc. all looked very dirty. The utilities were not enough for the HH sizes.
- Knowledge of soap used as a substance for washing and cleaning or ash as a substitute of soap for hand washing practices is not known amongst the population.

- When asked about the diseases that households are frequently encountering, malaria, diarrhea, and typhoid fever were the top causes of disease, prevalent mainly amongst children. Poor sanitation and hygiene practices appear to contribute to the prevalence of these diseases in the community.

Priorities for Immediate Humanitarian response

- Rehabilitation of 4 water yards and repairing of 42 hand pumps across the 5 payams in Guit County, namely: Nimni, Wathnyotba, Kuerguina, Nyathor & Bill payams.
- In order to repair the broken hand pumps, fast moving spares for Indian mark II hand pumps: pump connecting rods, piston seals, gears, foot valves, o-rings, etc. needs to be quantified and tools for maintenance should be deployed in the response.
- Provision of refreshment training and supply of standard and special tool kit for pump mechanics to make sure sustainability of borehole maintenance.
- Distribution of WASH supplies: collapsible water jerry-cans, water buckets, soap as per SPHERE standards, water purification chemicals, jugs, cooking pots, should be integrated in the response, in order to ensure availability of water both in quantity and quality depending on the family size, and also to promote good hygiene practices.
- Schools latrine maintenance, Nimni and Denbo headquarters schools.

Next steps

Cluster	Priority actions	Human and material resources needed	Responsible entity	By when
FSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Immediate blanket food assistance for both IDPs and host community in Nimni and for the surrounding payams as per verified population figures -Urgent need to ascertain cattle disease and follow-up with necessary veterinary intervention -Urgent livelihoods support, including distribution of fishing kits. -Seed distribution for the coming planting season that starts in May 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -VSF Suisse will facilitate movement of more vet supplies to the area, -VSF Suisse will carry out thorough diseases interventions through mass vaccinations/ deworming. 	ASAP
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strengthen PHCC in Nimni with equipment and trained health workers -Deploy midwives to the health facility and ensure a system for 24 hours delivery -Strengthen EPI by providing cold chain and ensuring routine immunization -Ensure timely submission of the weekly IDSR - (Integrated Disease Surveillance Report) to the WHO/MoH outbreak surveillance unit and Health cluster by establishing an internet system in the humanitarian compound 			
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensure access to the population by facilitating nutrition outreach to payams outside of Nimni -Include in supplementary and 			

other nutrition related program materials such as CSB, sugar and oil etc. for malnourished mothers

-Strengthen nutrition service by including other activities including stabilization centre for acute malnutrition cases amongst children.

-Promote breast feeding amongst mothers through community mobilization and outreach services

WASH

-Repair of hand pumps and water yards.

-practical training of hand pump technicians

-purchase of mechanical tools for repair of hand pumps

-Distribution of House hold kits, water jerry-cans, buckets, soap, water purifier chemicals, jugs, cooking pots, etc

Hand pump technicians, spares for Indian mark II hand pumps, tri-pod and chain block assembly, mechanical tool kit etc

*PAH as a mobile WASH partner
Concern has shown interest to take over from PAH for WASH response*

Soon, following the RRM and after getting ECHO approval.

Education

-Learning Materials, notebooks, text books, and curriculum

-Teacher stipends

-Capacity building of teachers and trainings

-Proper monitoring

Protection

-Investigation by human rights advocates into claims of SGBV, torture, and killings along the Bentiu to Kuerguiny road.

-Establish referral pathways for new arrivals to Bentiu PoC, especially those from opposition territories, who may need psychosocial support.

-Establish consistent distribution centers throughout Unity State.

-Additional assessments to the toic in order to verify further protection concerns of vulnerable populations who may be difficult to access.

NFI & ES

-The distribution of mosquito nets and blankets), and kitchen utensils

Assessment information

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