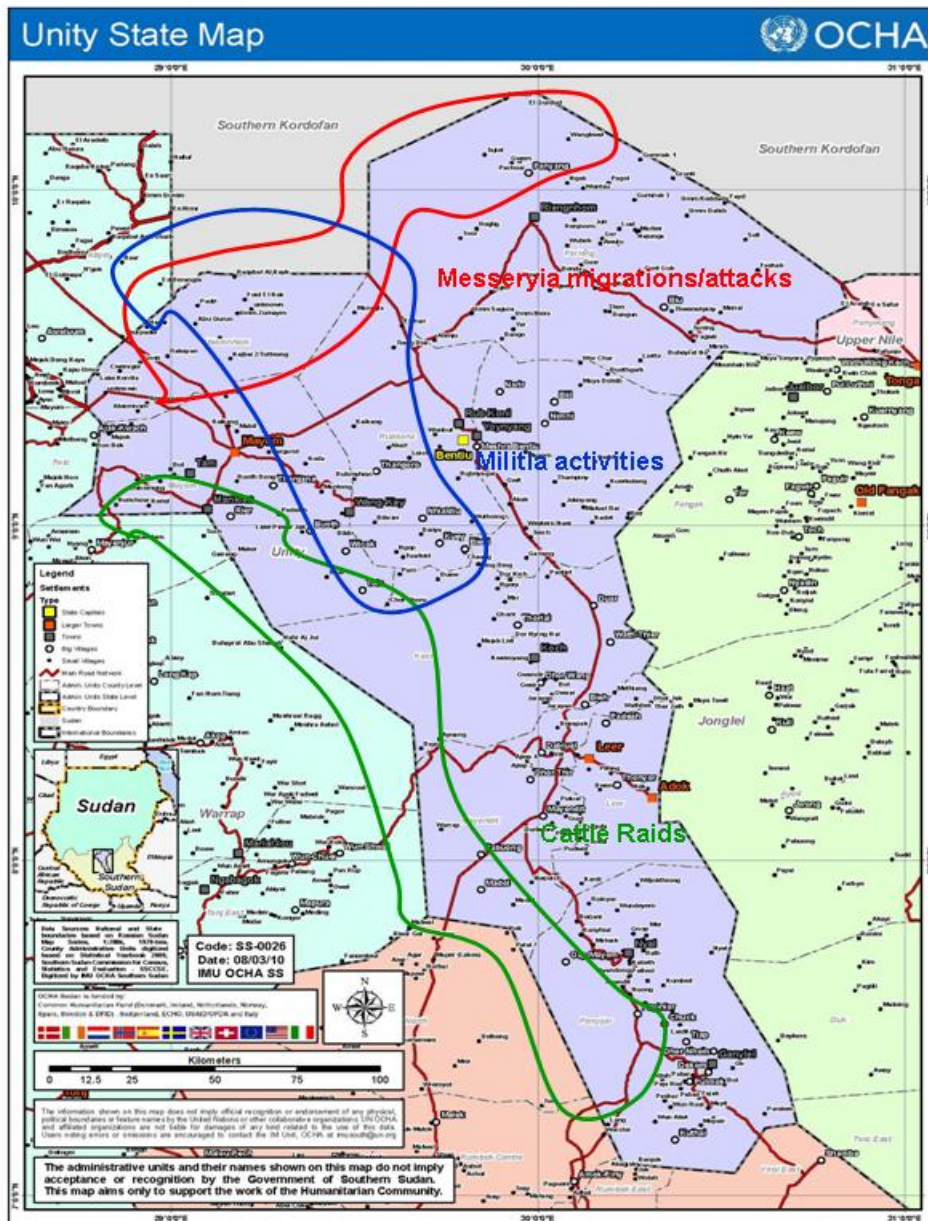


# Unity State, Southern Sudan

## Briefing Pack, June 2010

### 1. Map



## **2. Political Overview**

The defeat of current Governor Brigadier Taban Deng in the May 2008 SPLM State Congress led to a split in the state's SPLM leadership. Eventually, frictions and disagreements between the two factions led to a series of skirmishes, and at times violent confrontations, which characterized the 2010 pre- and post- election campaign for the gubernatorial post, in which former Governor Deng defeated the main contender Angelina Teny, wife of Southern Sudan Vice President Riek Machar.

Following the announcement of official results, security bodies tightened their control on dissent among opposition supporters and part of their leadership left the state. Recently, following General Athor's defection in Jonglei, hostile elements, led by renegade General Galwak Gai and allegedly formed by defecting SPLA/SSPA elements, formed militia groups and staged a series of attacks against SPLA garrisons and checkpoints in Abiemnom, Mayom, and Rubkona counties. Although the situation appears to be under control, one cannot rule out the rise of insecurity and conflicts in the coming months, should these groups gain more support and regroup.

## **3. Security Situation**

### Inter-tribal violence

A great concern within the state is the constant, longstanding and deadly inter-tribal violence that affects communities bordering Warrap State in the northwest and Lakes State in the south. Mostly in the form of cattle raids, the fighting causes casualties, insecurity, displacement and economic downturns on a yearly basis. Widespread tribal and other violence in Unity is also facilitated by the availability of small arms. The Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) has begun an extensive campaign to disarm the state's population, but has encountered major resistance, especially in Mayom and Panyijar counties, and weapons continue to flow in the region.

### Messeryia migrations

Messeryia are nomadic Arab tribes who seasonally migrate to Unity State's northern counties from Abyei and South Kordofan at the onset of the dry season, in search of water and grazing lands for their herds. Traditionally, and partly as a legacy of Messeryia involvement during the civil war, relations between host communities and Messeryia are characterized by a lack of trust and confidence, which at times leads to violent confrontations.

During the last dry season, Messeryia groups attempted on several occasions to cross the border and to move into the deep south of Unity State. After negotiations between Messeryia and the authorities in Southern Sudan failed, these attempts were more and more violently confronted by SPLA forces deployed along the border. GoSS and SPLA view this region as being crucial, due to its legacy as a corridor (northwest of Abiemnom and north of Mayom) for the supply of arms during the war, as well as the presence of oil companies in the area, and their proximity to the North-South demarcation line.

### Oil companies

Of greatest concern is the situation or future prospects of oil companies operating in the area, especially taking into consideration that oil rich Unity State is a net receiver of 2% of oil revenues. GoSS, the Government of National Unity (GNU) and companies themselves have concerns about the post-referendum/border demarcation final agreement impact on oil companies' operations/revenues, and for its effect on a wide array of different stakeholders.

#### **4. Humanitarian, Early Recovery and Development Highlights**

- IDPs

As of May 2010, there were 12,431 IDPs (2,566 households) registered in Unity State. The caseload includes 1,572 old IDPs in Abiemnom (following clashes in Abyei in 2008), and 10,859 new cases, as a consequence of insecurity and inter-tribal cattle raids along Unity/Warrap (in particular Mayom/Gogrial East counties) and of the clashes between Messeryia and the SPLA in northwest Abiemnom County. 3,153 IDPs are located in Abiemnom town, and the remaining new cases are scattered around Mankien Payam in Mayom County.

- Health

The withdrawal of MSF-France from Bentiu, World Relief from Mayom and COSV from Panyijar, left a gap in health assistance. Even though COSV recently resumed its activities in Nyal, Panyijar County, the situation is critical. MSF-Holland is currently running the only fully operational and functioning hospital in the entire state, in Leer, and most critical cases are referred to it or, occasionally, to other health facilities in South Kordofan and Warrap. Bentiu hospital is suffering from lack of equipment, drugs and specialized staff.

In recent months, WHO and MSF reported an increase in cases of tuberculosis throughout the state. All 80 patients who tested positive were referred to Leer as there are no TB treatment facilities in Bentiu. The State Ministry of Health, in collaboration with UNICEF, MSF, Malaria Consortium and CARE, recently conducted an assessment in Bentiu and Rubkona towns on malnutrition among children under five years old. The findings revealed that out of 8,349 children, 166 children were classified as severely malnourished with other medical complications, and 724 as moderately malnourished; with 40% of children in Bentiu falling below and 47% for Rubkona respectively. Stakeholders are also concerned about a rise in AWD and malaria cases during the rainy season.

- Food security & livelihood

Unity State used to be considered one of the less food insecure states in Southern Sudan. Yet, the lack of adequate rainfall distribution and widespread insecurity during 2009 led to adverse conditions affecting overall food security. Findings of the 2009 Annual Needs and Livelihoods Assessment reveal that 20% of households in the state are severely food insecure (second only to Eastern Equatoria and Jonglei), and 31.2% are moderately food insecure. Projections for 2010 indicate that the situation will remain stable, with the majority of food insecure households concentrated in the state's southern counties. WFP continues its assistance program targeting moderately and severely food insecure people, IDPs and school pupils, but resources are overstretched.

Although some international NGOs are implementing livelihoods programmes in the state (for instance, Winrock in Mayom, CARE in Abiemnom, VSF in Leer, SC-UK in Koch & Rubkona, and World Vision in Pariang), assessments and findings on the ground reveal a dire need for income generating activities programmes in the state. Furthermore, livelihoods programmes could be used as a tool to stabilize insecure areas.

- Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Water scarcity seems to have been the major problem for both human and livestock consumptions in Unity State. In particular, lack of water resources in Mayom and neighbouring counties is likely to increase competition between host populations and the large annual Messeryia movement through the area, thereby acting as a major trigger for potential conflict. It is believed that water projects may also serve a conflict mitigation purpose in this area. Recently, the international NGO Solidarités has filled a major gap in water and sanitation, by taking over the construction/rehabilitation of boreholes in five payams in Mayom County. Pact Sudan, and OXFAM GB, recently carried out an emergency intervention in Abiemnom County and are also engaged in WASH activities. Yet, more programmes are needed all across Unity State.

- State support and infrastructure

UNDP is actively engaged in state support activities, and is currently implementing projects in the areas of rule of law/access to justice, state support and local government recovery. Assessments and research on the ground indicate that in order to extend and empower the presence of state authorities throughout Unity State, particularly focusing on remote/insecure areas, basic infrastructure (such as schools and police stations) and road networks must be built. Part of a wider “roads for stabilization” programme, the inter-state roads connecting Mayom to Gogrial East, Pariang to South Kordofan, and Mayendit to Rumber North would be vital for boosting trade, allowing for a rapid and efficient response and deployment of security forces, thereby eventually increasing security.

- Education

Save the Children and Windle Trust are implementing projects in alternative learning programmes, training primary and secondary school teachers, and capacity-building to State Ministry of Education officials – yet these projects are somehow limited to major towns. State officials also point out the need to build teacher capacity, and to follow up for an extended period of time after training and capacity-building programmes have ended.

**5. Integrated Team in Unity State**

Anastasié Nyirigira	RRR Officer	Team Leader/State Support
Kennei Momoh	HERR/RCSO Officer	OIC/Humanitarian Action
Alberto Giera	HERR/RCSO Officer	Stabilization
Edmund Tucker	RRR Officer	Protection/Returnees
Susan Phanuel	NPO officer	Cross-cutting all portfolios
Tarib Gatkuoth Kam	Driver	