



# RAPID APPRAISAL GUER

Nyirrol county (Bieh state), Jonglei

April 05, 2018

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Overall situation of food security, nutrition, WASH, and health was reported very poor and deteriorated due to floods and conflict.
- The main livelihoods have been disrupted first by floods and then cattle raiding which significantly reduced livestock herds and affected agricultural activities.
- Wild food gathering is currently significant source of household food consumption in addition to some cereals and vegetables.
- The most pressing humanitarian needs reported and observed are: water, support for agriculture activities, food assistance, health, Protection and NFI.

Following are the [Key Recommendations](#) from this assessment:

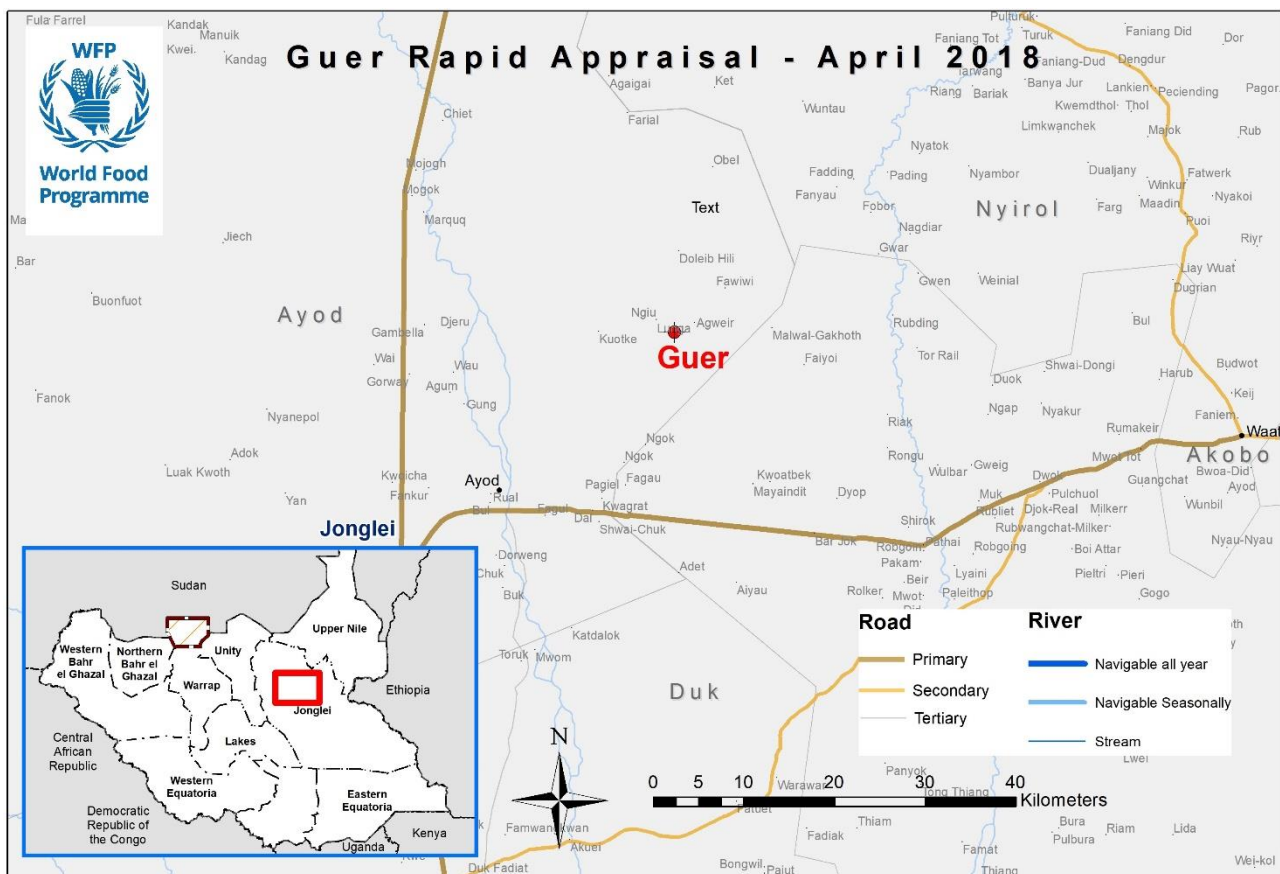
- Depending on the resource availability, a one-off food distribution may be considered to supplement the current insufficient food consumption. This should be preceded by a population verification exercise.
- The food assistance should be complemented by distribution of tools and seeds (cowpea, okra, tomatoes, pumpkins) for kitchen gardening.
- It is important to have provision of livestock support due to the decline in livestock herds after the looting of livestock.
- Provision of mobile health clinic, establishment of temporary learning spaces for children and improved access to clean drinking water is also important.

## Situation Overview

The inhabitants of Guer and the surrounding villages are agro-pastoralists, who rely on rain-fed agriculture. Last year from August to September, the area witnessed flood which partly destroyed what they planted. the main crops grown include maize, red sorghum, okra and other vegetables.

The community of Guer experienced looting twice, resulting in the loss of 5,000 cattle between December 2017 and January 2018 by suspected raiders from the neighboring Murle tribe. These two lootings negatively impact the current coping strategy because the community members harvested limited amount of their crops due to the floods.

The majority of the community members are of the Nuer tribe (Lou Nuer). Some Shilluk have been integrated into the community when they settled in Guer in 2013.



## Background and Methodology

The findings are based on focus group discussion (FGD) with men and women from the affected community and the local authority (Commissioner) in the area and transect walk conducted to get glimpse of situation.

The mission members paid courtesy call to the county commissioner's office and held a general introductory meeting with the community members and local authorities including the Commissioners, local chief and area military commander for informing them on the mission and its objectives and to gain a general overview of the situation, including security. After the initial discussion, the mission members split into two groups to discuss more sector specific issues with community members.

Two focus group discussions were conducted one for food security and nutrition where participants included both women and men while another group exclusively women was for protection related concerns.

The rapid assessment mission collected information on issues ranging from food consumption, livelihoods and main coping strategies adopted, to service delivery and security concerns. In addition, specific protection concerns related to women were discussed with the FGD composed by women only.

Due to limited time the assessment team had on the ground, it is not possible to have in-depth and statistically representative results on the situation in term of food security, livelihood and nutrition.

However, the time spent on the ground was sufficient to provide some indicative results for an overall understanding of the situation in this community.

## Objectives of the mission

The main objective of the mission was to assess the current security and humanitarian situation in Guer and provide recommendations on a possible humanitarian response.

Following are the [specific objectives](#) of the rapid assessment:



1. To assess the situation in terms of livelihood, food security, markets, current level of assistance, and safety and protection concerns;
2. To have an estimate of the populations;
3. To explore WFP's response options and modalities, including locations of possible operations.

## MAIN FINDINGS

Findings presented are based on primary data collected from two FGDs and key informants in Guer, Nyirol County (Bieh State) of Jonglei State on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

### Demographics

- According to Guer county RoSS commissioner, there are currently 8,000 Household in 5 payams (Tiep, Pakun, Guer, Gumut and Leek).
- The household size was relatively large with 10-15 members per household.
- The community consisted of men, women and children with few pregnant women observed in the community.
- The number of children per HH as according to FGD ranged from 5-7.
- Most of the population are reported as resident in the community.
- The county is hosting 250 IDPs from Mogok in new state of Fangak, and also there are reportedly about 400 returnees from Sufia.
- Some 400 returnees are reported to have come from Ethiopia and settled at Tiep payam of Nyirol County.

### Food Security and Livelihoods

#### Food Consumption

- The general food consumption situation in the community is moderately poor as a result of various drivers that includes cattle raiding (inter-communal violence), displacement, localized floods from August to September 2017 which affected crops and disrupted the livelihood.



- Most FGD participants reported eating currently once a day, at lunchtime. This is a decrease compared to the period before their cattle was looted and localized flood destroyed their crops, when most of them consumed two meals a day. The current meal comprises of sorghum, okra and some wild leaves.
- The participants reported cultivating okra, sorghum, and maize.
- The respondents mentioned that they have not received any food assistance since the existence of their settlement.
- The main consumption-based coping strategies that the local population is employing include reduced number of meal per day, increased consumption of wild foods, decreased diversity of diet (reduced consumption of cereals, no consumption of meat and milk) limiting portion size.

### **Livelihoods (Food and Income Sources)**

The area falls under the Eastern Plain Sorghum and Cattle livelihood zone. The area is characterized by a unimodal rainfall pattern with precipitation of about 800-900mm per annum. There are two distinct seasons a rainy season, from May to October, and a dry season, from November to April.

The inhabitants of Guer and the surrounding villages are agro-pastoralists, who rely on rain-fed agriculture. However, their livelihoods have been affected – crops were affected by the floods in August-September 2017, while most livestock were lost due to cattle raiding which occurred three times during December 2017 to January 2018. Households are clearing their lands to prepare for cultivation and they do not have sufficient tools for this. Sorghum, Okra and maize are the main crops cultivated.

### **Markets**

No functional market was observed in the area, most individuals of the local community are relying on limited sorghum and collection of wild foods.

The nearest market is the one in Fangak which is currently not functioning due to recent fighting there.



## Service Mapping

No basic infrastructure existed in the area even before the conflict. Services such as health, education and water were not there. No organization was working for any assistance programme in the area according to the community leaders.

## Nutrition

- The nutrition situation seemed poor by observing the community members during the assessment mission.
- Mothers of children below two years of age reported breastfeeding their child(ren) exclusively.
- Mothers of children below 59 months reported that their children eat one-meal per day and consume cow milk in between meals.
- The nutrition situation seems to be poor not only because of the lack of food but also the presence of illnesses, i.e. diarrhea and malaria, and the lack of health services.

## Health

- There is no medical facility in the area. The community reported that the population has been surviving on traditional medicine.
- Common diseases reported include malaria, diarrhea and anemia.
- 7 death cases were reported due to hunger (4 children, 1 elderly and 2 women).

- No health partner has been present in area neither for outreach nor any assessment.
- The WASH condition observed was very poor. The adolescent girls and women have to walk up to 4 hours (one-way) to collect muddy water from river Tiep for drinking. With the exception of the Commissioner's house, all households practice open defecation.

### **Safety and security concerns**

From the discussion held with the Commissioner, women and later with men the main security/protection threat they face is related to insecurity caused by raiders from suspected Murle tribe of Boma State.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The most pressing humanitarian needs reported and observed are: food assistance and livelihood support, WASH, health, and protection. The people mostly in need are women, children and elderly.

Following are the recommendations based on the findings of this rapid appraisal.

- As the community has missed last year's harvest due to floods, depending on the availability of resources, a one-off food distribution may be considered to supplement the current consumption of limited cereals and green leaves gathered from the wild. This should be complemented by support for agriculture such as distribution of seeds and tools. A population verification exercise should be done prior to a food distribution.
- A mass MUAC screening should be conducted to determine a proxy GAM rate to assess the malnutrition situation within the area. All children between 6 – 59 months and PLWs should be screened for malnutrition.
- A comprehensive multi-sectoral need assessment to determine the needs of the population, and to evaluate and recommend appropriate response options should be conducted.
- Provision of clean drinking water and mobile health clinics is recommended.

## Annex: SEASONAL CALENDAR<sup>1</sup>:

The rainy season in this zone starts in May and ends in October. The lean season is normally from mid-May to mid-August, when green crops are still not ready for consumption. All main food crops are cultivated during the same months. Unlike other zones, maize is the staple cereal. Agricultural work starts in February to April with land preparation, followed by sowing or planting in the month of May to mid-June. The agricultural workload intensifies with weeding towards the end of June to August. Harvesting of all crops, including green consumption, starts in September and lasts until end of December. However vegetable production is mainly done during the dry season.

Seasonal calendar

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Seasons</b>												
Rainy season												
Dry season												
Lean season												
<b>Cropping</b>												
sorghum												
vegetables												
<b>Livestock</b>												
lambing/kidding/calving												
milking												
<b>Other</b>												
employment by oil companies												
<b>Hazards</b>												
livestock diseases												
conflict/cattle raiding												
<b>Legend</b>												

Consumption calendar for poor households

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Staple foods</b>												
sorghum												
market purchase												
wild food collection												
<b>Income</b>												
sale of firewood												
sale of elephant grass												
domestic work												
<b>Expenditures</b>												
health care												
education												
<b>Legend</b>												

<sup>1</sup> South Sudan Livelihood Zones and Descriptions, FEWS NET, August 2013.