

Koch County: Rapid Needs Assessment: May 31, 2014

World Relief / Concern Worldwide

Mission Objective

The mission into Koch was initiated by World Relief to restart their operations, bringing in national staff and medicine to support their role in implementing the Health Pooled Fund (HPF) in conjunction with the County Health Department. Concern Worldwide joined World Relief mission, as part of CCCM cluster, to collect updated data on displaced populations, sector specific needs and to assess the coping mechanisms of the community for food and health concerns and provide information for sector responses in meeting the needs of Koch County.

Site Visited

We visited Reir a boma in Koch County and Jaak (payam of Reir). Reir is a 30-40 minute walk from Tharjath where the airstrip is located and the closest boma to the oil fields. It was once a thriving community with an active market. It is now barren of food; the market was destroyed and the oil companies have since left long ago. The community is just returning but many families will not stay for long since there is no food available to provide for their families.

Reir existing borehole does not produce clean water (high levels of salt) and therefore are sourcing water from a stagnate lake (pool) for drinking, bathing and washing. The oil company's use to truck in clean water from Bentiu to service the community, but since the outbreak of war, the community has been without potable water.

We met with Deputy RRC, local chiefs and community members (from Norbor, Reir, Jaak 1 and Jaak 2) who provided us with an overview of Koch County, since we were unable to reach Koch center due to time constraints. Therefore, the information provided in this report is secondary information that the authorities and chiefs collected from their contacts throughout Koch County.

Situation Overview

Total Number of Households: 13,079 Households (IDPs/Host)

IDP Population: 2560HH (15,666). IDPs are largely from Bentiu **Host population:** 10,519HH (total number of individuals (per HH) provided by RRC are unreliable and too low for the number of HH reported). The host household number (10,519HH) is believed to be correct and will be used for programming purposes.

Communities largely affected (highest number of homes destroyed): Koch Town; Mirmir, Pakur, Boaw, Ngony and Bieth

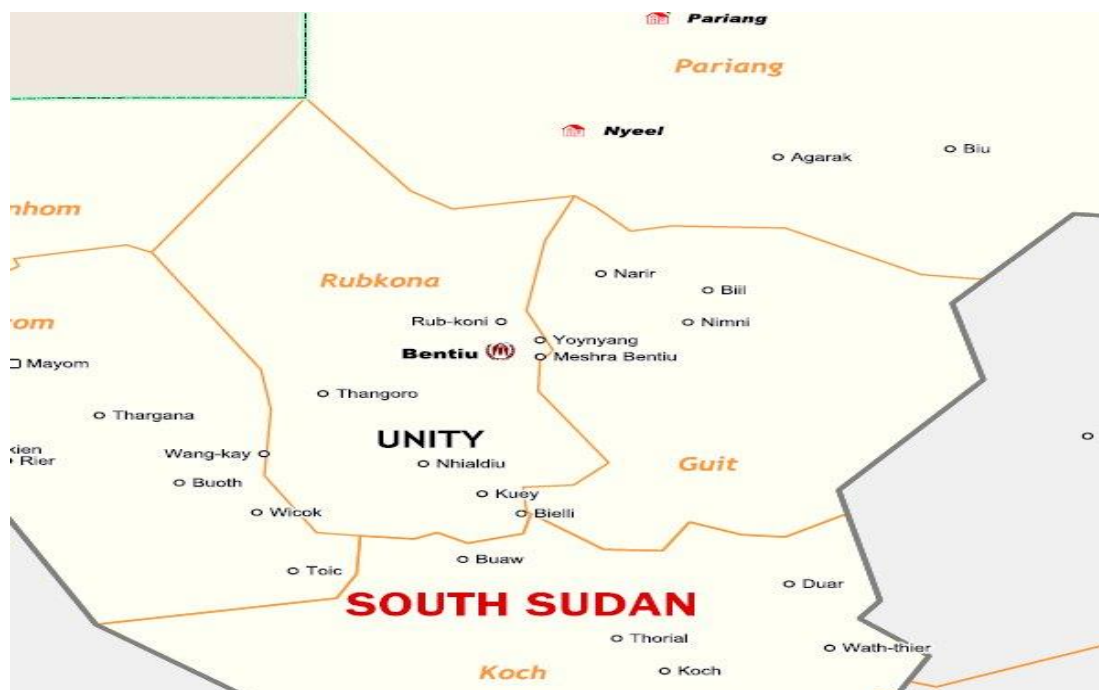
Airports: Tharjath (all weather airstrip) and Koch Center (Helicopters only)

NOTE: KOCH 2008 Census: 75,000 population; KOCH 2010 Census (by NGOs): 17,000 population and current KOCH 2014 Census by RRC: Host: 10,519 HH / IDP: 2560 HH (13,079HHH). If the standard 5 persons per household are used to calculate total population then Koch current population is approx. 65,000 (IDP/host).

Population breakdown by payams:

Koch Payams	Number of Households (HH)	Est. Number of Households Destroyed
Kuachlual (Koch Centre)	1924	1136
Jaak	453	64
Mirmir	1476	1236
Boaw	3478	369
Ngong	153	37
Gany	912	18
Norbor	1284	41
Pakur	839	126
IDP households	2560	2560 ?
Totals	13,079 HH	5587 shelters destroyed

The above figures were provided by RRC Deputy Coordinator for Koch County (John Puot). IDP: 2560HH (15,666 individuals) and Host: 10,519HH (total population not known)



The fighting in Koch County seized just four week ago, beginning of May. It was just last week when the community learned of our arrival that they cleared the runway of shelling's and ammunition so

planes can land safely on the airstrip. They have been accessing the roads and well defined pathways without incident.

The community is just beginning to return to Koch as peace prevails but have found that there is no food to feed their families. Therefore, the host community as well as the IDPs is not visible to the extent of those who returned and/or fled to Koch, as they are in the bush foraging for food. It is apparent that the community is moving where ever they can find food. The community is surviving on grass, leaves from trees and only a few families, meat. However, **the cattle are diseased and are dying**, which is threatening the only remaining source of food that can sustain life. **The lack of food in Koch County is critical** with the markets barren of food. The need for **immediate food assistance to sustain life is the number one priority requested by the community.**

Diseases are rampant in Koch due to the lack of **medicine to treat and clean water to drink, reported by community leaders, deputy RRC and CHD team.** There is a **measles outbreak; whooping cough; malaria; diarrhea and reported starvation among the population.** The young and the old are largely affected and are unable to cope. The chief from Norbor (1284HH) reported that the rate of mortality within his community was as follows: 10 deaths related to starvation; 20 deaths related to measles and 20 deaths due to diarrhea, malaria and other complications. Chief from Jaak reported (453HH) for the month of May there were 10 deaths from measles; 10 deaths from starvation and 5 deaths from malaria. There were also 10 children reported missing from Jaak since January. The deaths related to starvation were 4 young children and 6 older persons (Jaak). Other payams have apparently reported similar mortality rates.

It is estimated by the community that 90% of the boreholes in Koch County are contaminated with high levels of salt or oil. The remaining boreholes that provide potable water to drink is far and few between. Many of the boreholes are broken though the numbers are not certain. A WASH response is needed to verify and test the water quality in the existing boreholes and to fix boreholes damaged during the conflict.

The water situation in Koch County is very complex and requires a long term solution, but right now an immediate intervention is needed to curb the rise in diseases. Reir has a history of having water trucked in from Bentiu and other payams in Koch either purchase water from markets (bottled water) or collect it from the few boreholes with potable water, but those boreholes are located far away and are not feasible to reach for a few communities. Therefore **many communities have been sourcing ground water for drinking and are bathing and washing clothes from the very same source of water.**

It is estimated that over **5500 households in total were destroyed across Koch County**, leaving many families without shelter. We were not able to make it into Koch town due to time constraints but understand that the local government has not allowed IDPS or community members to stay in the schools, so displaced populations are either living with family or in the bush where they can find shelter. We were also unable to verify the number of households destroyed so this will need further review for shelter assistance.

The highest priority of needs is **food, medicine and NFIs.** The population is largely surviving on grass and leaves from trees. The river water level is low so fish is not available nearby. This situation will remain as such until July when the water levels rise bringing fish in closer to the community where

they can access it. The community is in need of **fishing wire and hooks** which they use to purchase in Bentiu, but are now unable to do so. The community has also requested **seeds and tools** for small scale farming to sustain them in the future months.

Sector Response

FOOD

- Immediate distribution of food for Koch County

The people of Koch County are sustaining themselves on grass and leaves from trees. There have been several reports of death related to starvation, primarily affecting young children and older persons. An urgent appeal for a quick response for food is needed to sustain life.

With the rampant diseases reported and weaken immunities due to starvation, this raises the situation to critical levels as seen throughout Unity State.

Agency response:

World Relief will conduct the food distribution in coordination with WFP, and currently has staff on the ground.

RECOMMENDATION: *Provide a distribution of high energy bars until food can be distributed to Koch to minimize hunger*

HEALTH / NUTRITION

- Health services and medicine is urgently needed to address the high level of diseases rampant in Koch County: measles; malaria, diarrhea and whooping cough.
- Vaccination program for measles outbreak.
- Medical supplies and medicine needed to restock the PHCC's and PHCUs looted of their supplies.
- Nutrition assessment required to get a number on malnutrition rates

Agency response:

World Relief is providing essential medicines, health and nutrition services in Koch County.

WASH

- Distribution of jerry cans, buckets and water purification tabs to address the need for potable water and high levels of diarrhea
- Assessment of boreholes needed to be fixed
- Hygiene awareness to ensure community is using separate location/water for drinking and bathing

Agency response:

WASH partner is needed for response

NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI)/ SHELTER

Priority of non-food items identified by the community/chiefs: **(5500HH)**

- Plastic sheeting
- Blankets
- sauce pans
- WASH items such as jerry cans, buckets and water purification tablets to address high levels of diarrhea and lack of potable water sources

While sauce pans were placed high on the list, the lack of potable water requires an urgent response of WASH items to provide the community with the means to treat the water available to them.

A more comprehensive shelter assessment will need to be conducted since the team was unable to review the payams largely affected by the war.

Location of Distribution: Kuachlual (Koch Center)

Storage: Compound of RRC / government buildings

Airport: The airport in Kuachlual is only capable of landing helicopters. However, there are many drop points around Koch town for food distribution. All other aircraft should use the main airport in Tharjath. It should be noted that Tharjath is 1 ½ hour drive to Koch town and can take 5 hours to walk in each direction.

Agency Response:

World Relief will distribute mosquito nets through their health and nutrition program

World Vision will conduct the NFI distribution

FOOD, SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS (FSL)

- *Vaccine program for cattle*

The community reported that their life stock is dying (cattle). A vaccine response for life stock is needed to prevent further loss of life stock, which is currently the only source of food available for many families.

Agency response:

FSL partner needed for the response (life stock)

Communications

There is currently one Sat phone in Koch County located in Rier with the CHD focal person (provided by World Relief). World Relief will soon be adding an additional Sat phone that will be used outside the CHD office when the CHD/IP teams are in any part of the county in the respective facilities. This will enable officials to communicate across Koch County, minimizing the long distance travel (footing - 5 hours each direction) currently in place. Cell phone and internet service is not functioning at this time.

Security

The RRC and authorities are monitoring the security situation of Koch County and surrounding areas. Currently the situation in Koch County is secure. World Relief is in contact with the local authorities and has staff on the ground working in Koch proving a direct link to the situation in Koch.

Conclusion

In order to avoid a rapid deterioration of Koch County, particularly with food security, high levels of hunger and the lack of medicine to treat diseases, emergency interventions are required.

Koch Contacts	
Names	Payam
Joseph Kim Isaac, CHD M&E Officer (now acting CHD)	Koch County +8821 6790 0993 (SAT phone is on from 8:30am-10am and 5:00pm – 6:00 pm)
Peter, Deputy Director	Jaak
William Doup Keith, Chief	Norbor
John Pout, RRC Coordinator	Kuachlual (Koch Centre)
Simon, Radio Operator	-----
John, RRC Secretary	-----
Abraham Gatluak Kuoy, Payam Executive Director	Reir

Assessment Team Contacts			
Assessment Team	Organization	Email	Cell / Sat Phone
Michael Goa Kong, County Medical Officer, Koch	County Health, Koch CHD	konggoa2014@gmail.com	0917248462 / 0928605009
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