

GAMBELLA - METAR - BURBE - PUGNIDO - GOG - MIZAN - RAAD - BOMA - JIMMA ROAD ASSESSMENT MISSION

Date(s):	06 June – 13 June, 2012
Location(s):	Gambella - Metar - Burbe - Pugnido-Gog - Mizan - Raad -Boma -Akobo - Dima - Jimma
Participating Agencies	Logistics Cluster Republic of South Sudan (RoSS), WFP Ethiopia
Participant (s)	Venkat Dheeravath (Logistics Cluster), Teklemariam Moges (WFP), Daryll Ainsworth (WFP/Red R), Belay Seyoum (WFP), and Naser Jamel (WFP)
Security:	Level 1, 2, & 3

1. Mission Objectives

1. Assess, using GPS and SDI-T tools, **Gambella - Metar - Burbe - Pugnido-Gog - Mizan - Raad -Boma -Akobo - Dima - Jimma** road sections for humanitarian access.
2. Identify exact stretches of damaged roads, bridges, and culverts to repair and understand better the access for returnees, Common Transport Service (CTS) and for all humanitarian community/INGO's/NNGO's/UN.
3. Assess the possibility of using the Gambella Road corridor from Djibouti into Upper Nile, Jonglei, and Eastern Equatoria states, RoSS.
4. Explore river corridors into RoSS from Gambella.

2. Brief

During the rainy season which lasts from May to December, the key road corridors (Gambella- Pagak; Gambella – Jikou; Jimma – Raad) from Ethiopia into South Sudan are not passable for all traffic as the road becomes increasingly muddy and impassable. The river corridors are used during this period to bring food and Non-Food Items (NFIs) into South Sudan from Metar/Itang/ Gambella ports through Sobat River via Nasser to Malakal. During May and June, due to low water levels, only boats with cargo capacity less than 25 mt can operate. The access roads leading to the river, except Gambella, are muddy and passable only after two dry days for 4WD/trucks/trailers. The new Metar to Akobo Road corridor is presently under construction and the project is set to finish in 2014.

To explore the possibility of using Gambella and Jimma Road and river corridors into the Republic of RoSS, the Logistics Cluster and WFP Logistics (RoSS and Ethiopia) initiated a Cross Border Road Assessment Mission (CBRAM). Access points are located in the RoSS states of Upper Nile, Jonglei, and Eastern Equatoria, connecting from Ethiopia which further connects from Djibouti port via Addis Ababa. This mission also aimed to fill the gap of Logistical GIS features and to map out all road constraints, bridge, culvert, ports, and missing villages in the database using GPS and SDI-T tools.

On 05 June 2012 the CBRAM team met with the Ethiopian Road Authority's (ERA) Chief Planning Officer in Addis Ababa to gather information regarding road construction plans towards the RoSS border and within RoSS to connect border towns to areas such as Boma. Also the team conducted short meetings with the ERA and road construction companies at a regional level and on company construction site.

The mission team (5 people) travelled approximately 1,500 km from Gambella (Ethiopia) by road towards RoSS borders (Akobo, Burbe crossing, Pochalla, and Boma) in the Gambella region, and further travelled to the Mizan and Jimma region from 06 June to 13 June 2012.

3. Summary of Findings/Recommendations/Observations
Day 1: Gambella – Metar – Burbe Crossing

- Gambella to Majok Road: first approximately 20 km stretch is smooth, beyond this the road condition is poor as a result of heavy traffic to Mater port, the road is nevertheless passable for all traffic during all seasons (see photo A, B).
- Majok – Metar road is currently smooth as it is a new road section from Adura Bridge (Box Culvert). The road is 90m long and 20m wide and is passable for all traffic during all seasons. The Adura Bridge is in the completion stages and is expected to open for all traffic by the end of June 2012.
- The Metar to Burbe road is currently under construction by SATCON Construction Company; only 30 km have been gravelled from Adura towards Burbe and the remaining stretch is under construction with clay and black cotton soil completed in the first two layers only. The Moun to Burbe section is not passable during the rainy season for all traffic. SATCON has temporarily suspended construction on this road section due to the onset of the rainy season and road construction work will resume only during the next dry season (November/December 2102) Completion of this road section is forecasted for January/February 2013.

- Metar port is operational up to 30mt boats however at the moment as river has low water level so passage is difficult but smaller boats are currently travelling. Heavy traffic (truck/trailers) from Gambella is routing on this road and port as Pagak –Mathiang road has been closed due to heavy rains. The team has discovered that porters have been charging 400 birr/one mt for loading/off loading at Metar port (see photo B, C&D).
- Along Gambella River there are several small coffee shops which affect loading in Gambella Port.
- The access road to Gambella port is narrow which may affect manoeuvring of heavy trucks.
- Metar town roads are currently muddy and the access roads to the port are only passable after two dry days for 4WD/trucks/trailers.
- Mun/Metar Junction to Akobo road is currently under construction; on the first five km the second layers have been completed and another few km bush has been cleared for the new road construction. This whole section is aimed for completion by December 2013 (see photo E&F)
- Gambella Port is not yet operational as the river has a very low water level.
- Gambella to Metar route has bus transport service available for public use.



A. Metar Road (in Bad condition)



B. Trucks are at Metar Town



C. Trailer stuck at Metar port



D. Metar River – Low water level



E. Metar Junction to Akobo Road under construction



F. Metar Junction to Akobo Road end UC (5km)

Day 2: Gambella – Pugnido – Pochalla – Gog

- Gambella to Pugnido road is smooth, made of gravel and is passable for all traffic and during all seasons.
- Alwero Bridge to Saudi Star Agro compound (approximately 20 km) road section has been upgraded and is passable for all vehicles during all seasons (see photo G).
- Pugnido to Pochalla (RoSS) road track is passable by motorcycle only up to Gilo River Foot Bridge with difficulties in the dry season and from Pochalla to Gilo River Foot Bridge the road track is passable only for 4WD/light trucks during the dry season only (information provided by local residents) (see photo H, I, J).
- The Gilo River Foot Bridge is 1.2 km long from Pugnido town and is passable for all traffic in all seasons. An approximately 100m box culvert approach road and one km road leading to the bridge would need to be constructed in order to make it passable all the way to Pochalla (RoSS) and connect to Kebeles (payam) in Gog wereda (district) across the river.
- The Gilo Foot Bridge is 120 meters long and one meter wide and is passable for pedestrians and motorcycles with a maximum capacity up to 50 kilos. A crack has been developed between the approach slab/steps and the abutment needs to be repaired immediately. If the crack is not repaired, the approach slab could be separated from abutment due to settlement, making access to the bridge difficult (see photo K,L)
- Significant trade has been reported during the dry season using the Pugnido to Pochalla (RoSS) route, although with difficulties.
- Pugnido to Gog road is smooth, made of gravel and passable for all traffic during all seasons, however the road ends at Gog Ginger Kebele.
- The Gambella Rural Road Authority has reported that there is a plan to construct in 2013 a 4 km feeder road from Gog to Gilo River.



G. Saudi Star road near Alwero Dam



H. Pugnido gravel Road



I. Pugnido to Gilo River Foot Bridge Road Track



J. Swamp/stream on way to Gilo River Foot Bridge



K. Gilo River Foot bridge



L. Foot Bridge Crack

Day 3: Gambella – Gore – Tepi – Mizan

- Gambella to Gore are connected by a tarmac road which is passable for all traffic during all seasons (see photo M).
- Gore to Tepi road is gravel and rough, however passable for all traffic during all seasons.
- Tepi to Mizan road is hilly and narrow with some sections rough and are under maintenance; however it is passable for all traffic during all seasons (see photo N).
- Mizan Town roads are rough and currently under maintenance.



M. Gambella – Gore Tarmac Road



N. Tepi – Mizan gravel Road

Day 4 and 5: Mizan – Dima – Raad-Boma-Akula-Gog/Pugnido

- Mizan – Dima road is made of rough gravel on a hilly path, however the road is passable for all traffic during all seasons.
- Dima – Raad road is rough, composed of gravel, however passable for all traffic during all seasons (see Photo O).
- A public bus service is available up to Bandira from Mizan. Raad is a border village located in RoSS at the Ethiopian border (see map on page 9), 15 km from Bandira village.
- Raad Bridge has been built by the Ethiopian Road Authority (ERA) in 2010. The bridge is a temporary Bialy Bridge, 100m long and 4m wide to connect RoSS with Ethiopia with a maximum capacity up to 40mt (see photo P).
- The Raad to Boma road is a black cotton soil track around 65km from the Ethiopian Border. The road track is in poor condition, passable for 4WD/light trucks only with difficulties and only during the dry season from January to April (see photo Q, R).
- The ERA has developed a proposal to upgrade it to a tarmac road from Mizan to Raad (at the RoSS Border) in 2013-2015.
- Raad Junction to Gog/Pugnido road is in very poor condition for the first approximate 10 km, and then smoothes up to Akula which is passable for light vehicles during all seasons, the road then extends another 10 km after the bridge; this road and the Akula Bridge construction was suspended in 2006 (see photo S, T).



O. Dima – Raad Road



P. Raad Bridge @ RoSS/Ethiopian border



Q. Raad – Boma road track



R. Raad – Boma road track car stuck



S. Raad Junction – Akula road



T. Akula Bridge under construction suspended – 2006

Day 6: Mizan – Jimma

- Mizan - Bonga road is approximately 118 km long and is currently being upgraded with tarmac, however the road is open and is passable for all traffic during all seasons (see photo U, V).
- The Keangnam Korean Construction Company has aimed to complete the tarmac road by December 2013 from Jimma to Mizan. The first section (Jimma – Bonga) is 90 percent complete and the second section is 50 percent complete.
- The tarmac road width is 14 meters in town and 7 meters outside Jimma town (see photo W, X).
- The team met with the Jimma region ERA Engineers and they reported that they are the responsible party for rural/secondary roads maintenance/management.



U. Mizan – Bonga Road under construction



V. Mizan –Bonga Tarmac road under construction



W. Bonga – Jimma Tarmac Road



X. Bonga – Jimma: Bridge under construction

Security:

Some routes assessed during the mission, such as Gambella to Mizan, and Mizan to Jima, have minimal security requirements, precautions should be taken as with any other road; passengers travelling along these road stretches should inform in advance government officials about their travels within the corridor and onward to RoSS.

A. Gambella to Matar and Burbe: passengers should get in contact with the government officials in the region, zone, and wereda and inform them about any humanitarian activities which will take place.

B. Mizan to Dima, Raad and Boma: on these road stretches, there have been reports of Surma bandit groups which disturb the movement between Koy and Dima town, robbing commercial trucks and foot travelers. The Surma Bandit Groups have also targeted humanitarian food aid which is being transported to RoSS. The following are highly recommended:

- Presence of the WFP staff in Mizan and Dima who can liaise closely with the government in the event of any inconveniences occurring;
- Trucks should move in large convoy when they cross the border into RoSS; more than 5 trucks in convoy is recommended;
- Local governments on both sides (Ethiopia/RoSS) need to be informed prior to the trucks arrival into and through their respective territories, specifically those with officials present at the border areas;
- Truck drivers should not load any personal items on top of WFP food in the trucks or any additional load which does not belong to WFP.

Regular follow up at the checkpoints is needed. WFP staff needs to be following up closely regarding truck movements.

Recommendations/Conclusions:

1. The Raad to Boma road track needs to be rehabilitated as soon as possible during the dry season to access food and non food items from Ethiopia for humanitarian community/NGO's/RoSS.
2. Akobo Town (RoSS) can be accessible by the end of 2013 as the road is currently under construction from Metar/Gambella into RoSS.
3. Potential access corridors: Gambella – Pagak Road; Jimma – Raad Road; Metar, Burbe, Itang and Gambella by river in the rainy season (once water levels have increased to support large boats into RoSS).
4. An access road is required one km on both sides from the bridge at Pugnido to Gilo River Foot Bridge and from Gilo towards Pochalla to allow traffic to travel smoothly during the dry season. Additionally, a box culvert is required at the stream before Gilo River from Pugnido; and another 65 km of road needs to be constructed to reach Pochalla (RoSS) across the river.
5. Construction of all season access roads, about 600 m from the main road to Matar river port and port area, need to be upgrade to gravel/marrum.
6. Construction of warehouses at port facilities, loading/discharging yard, and other logistics facilities are needed throughout the corridor.

Other Findings:

- Weather: Heavy rains were reported during the field mission from 6th June to 13th June 2012.
- New Boma/settlements and Airstrip GPS coordinates collected which were did not exist in the WFP database.
- Gambella - Dimma region up to Raad has significant agricultural activity which are being managed by foreign commercial farms (Saudi Star, Saratori, and Sannati etc.)
- Military check points are located at Raad Bridge on both sides in RoSS and Ethiopia; proper documents are required for goods/personnel movements across the border.
- There is an Ethiopian government warehouse located in Pugnido which currently stores some WFP food.
- UNHCR way station is located just before Pugnido and Gambella. There is no GSM telephone coverage around Raad area; locals travel to Dima town to access GSM network coverage.
- Limited Internet service is available in Gambella and Mizan.



Gambella port: High water level expected in August month.



Gambella region: Private agriculture industrial zone.

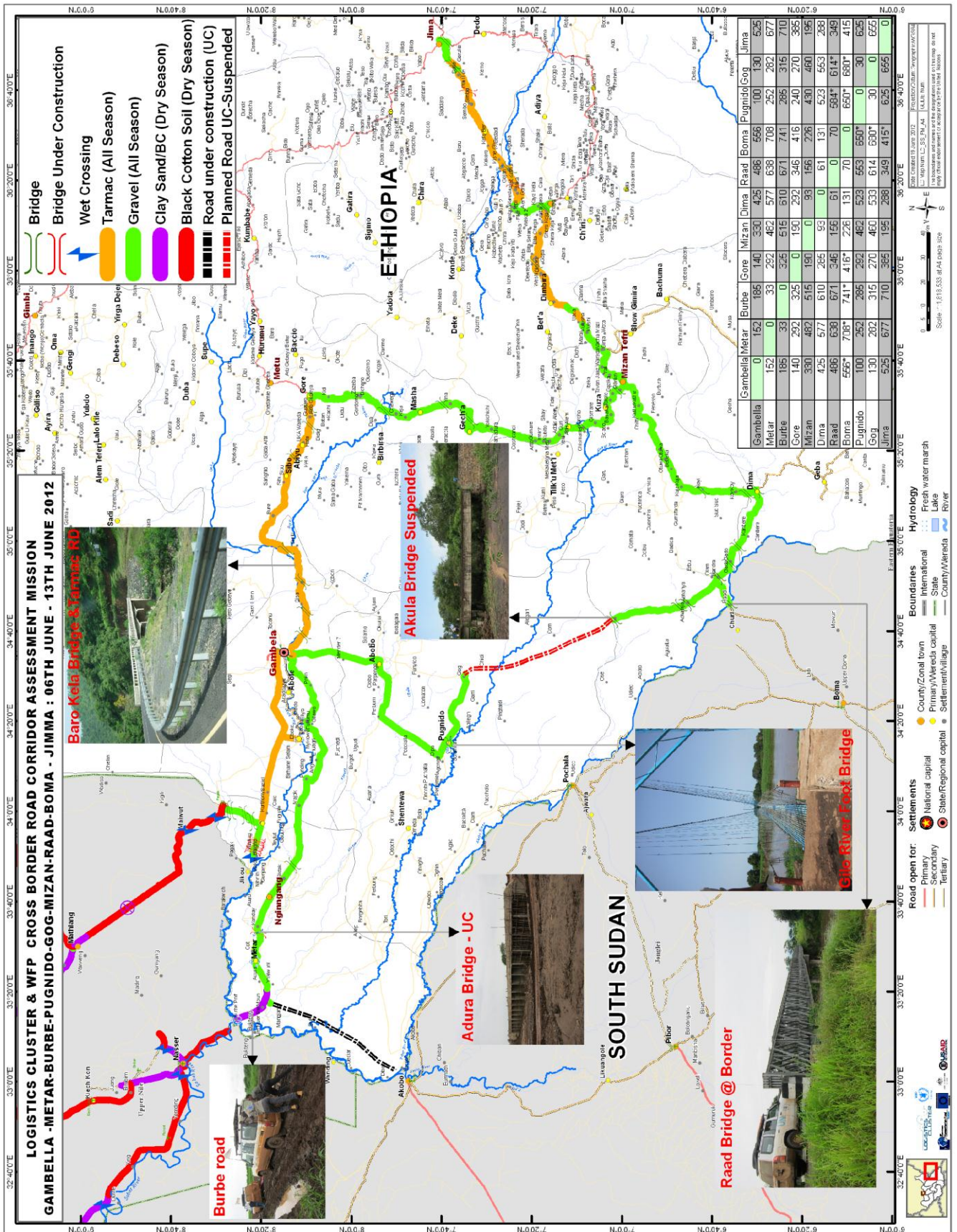
Annex - A: River Ports, Usability and Distance from Gambella

River Port	Usability	Distance from Gambella
Gambela	July to October	0
Itang	July to November	50
Metar	June to December	152
Burbe	All Year	185

Annex – B: Road Distance matrix in km

	Gambela	Metar	Burbe	Gore	Mizan	Dima	Raad	Boma	Pugnido	Gog	Jima
Gambela	0	152	185	140	330	425	486	556	100	130	525
Metar	152	0	33	292	482	577	638	708	252	282	677
Burbe	185	33	0	325	515	610	671	741	285	315	710
Gore	140	292	325	0	190	292	346	416	240	270	385
Mizan	330	482	515	190	0	93	156	226	430	460	195
Dima	425	577	610	285	93	0	61	131	523	553	288
Raad	486	638	671	346	156	61	0	70	584*	614*	349
Boma	556*	708*	741*	416*	226	131	70	0	650*	680*	415
Pugnido	100	252	285	292	482	523	553	650*	0	30	625
Gog	130	282	315	270	460	533	614	680*	30	0	655
Jima	525	677	710	385	195	288	349	415*	625	655	0

* Distance is calculated via Dima and Mizan



The Logistics Cluster in South Sudan maintains a number of e-mail lists for the dissemination of information and discussion on logistics clusters. For more information about Logistics Cluster in South Sudan, please visit our website at www.logcluster.org/ops/ssd1 or send an email to southsudan.logs@logcluster.org

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