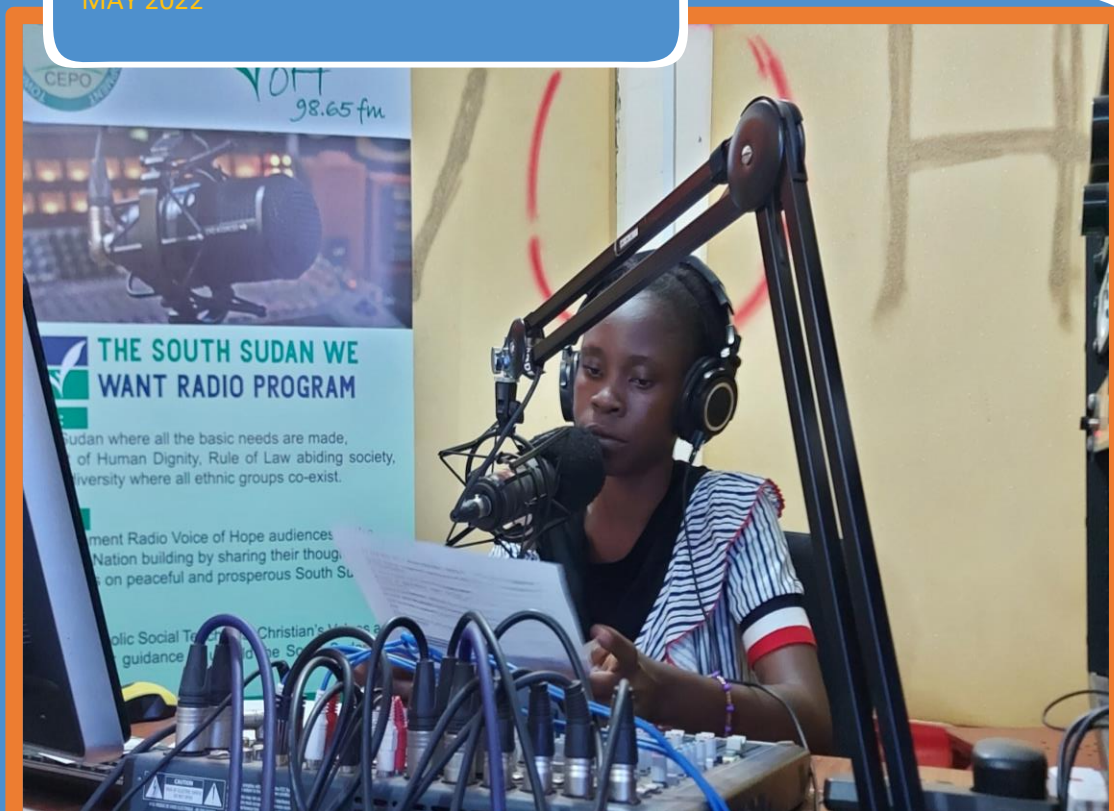




MAY 2022



JOURNALISM UNDER DIGITAL SIEGE

SOUTH SUDAN COMMEMORATES 2022 WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY IN WAU

South Sudan joined the rest of the world to commemorate the World Press Freedom Day (WPDF) on 3rd May 2022 under the theme “Journalism Under Digital Siege”. This year’s national celebrations brought together stakeholders from the government, media associations, journalists, CSOs, law fraternity and academicians in Wau, Western Bahr El Ghazal State.

Mr. Ochaya James, Executive Director National Press Club South Sudan stated that “We in the advocacy group call on the government and all stakeholders to re-affirm their commitment and responsibility for ensuring the safety and protection of journalists, promotion of freedom of expression and access to information to journalists and citizens at all levels. I also call upon the government to investigate the death of the 5 journalists that lost their lives in the line of duty in Raja in 2015”

On his part, Mr. Julius Banda, UNESCO Country Representative to South Sudan, expressed his delight that the idea for the establishment of a World Press Freedom Day originated from Africa. As stressed by the Windhoek Declaration 1991, “the establishment, maintenance and fostering of an independent, pluralistic and free press is essential to the development and maintenance of democracy in a nation, and for economic development”. Mr. Julius Banda also reminded the stakeholders present at the event that Freedom of Expression is a driver for all sustainable development goals.

Hon. Anthony Charles, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, and the Acting Minister for Information in Wau State, at the WPDF

occasion, reminded journalists that the media is not for lies and misinformation but for disseminating facts and the truth. While Mr. Adam Wassawa, Justice Advisor, UNMISS Rule of Law, Wau Field Office noted that the digital age should enhance access to information and not become a hinderance, because access to information saves lives. The Governor of Western Bahr El Ghazal Hon. Sarah Cleto Rial, underscored the importance of the work done by journalists. “The Information they share shapes our society especially during this transition period. I am a supporter of the press and the media and there should be a free flow of information and better use of the media to serve communities and pass information to the grassroots”, Governor Sarah Cleto Rial stated.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Journalism Under digital siege (PG. 1)
- A Green and Clean future Beckons for South Sudan (PG. 3)
- Update on 2023-25 UNSDCF Results framework and WFP, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA Documents. (PG. 4)
- News from UN Agencies, Funds and Programs. (PG. 5)



She encouraged journalists to conduct proper research before releasing stories. Noting the importance of fostering democracy, she urged members of the press to be impartial in their reporting.

This year's national event was jointly organized by the South Sudan National Press Club and all media Associations/networks and media houses in Wau with support from UNESCO's multi-Donor programme on freedom of expression and safety of journalists.

STAKEHOLDERS TRAINED ON MEDIA LAWS

As part of the 2022 World Press Freedom Day initiatives, UNESCO and the National Press Club in South Sudan conducted a 2-day multi-stakeholder capacity building workshop on media laws. Participants were drawn from the police, military, Journalists and media managers from Western Bahr El Ghazal, Northern Bahr El Ghazal, and Warrap States.

The workshop aimed to equip stakeholders with knowledge and skills on media laws as well as enhance the spirit of working together in addressing issues of promotion of freedom of expression and safety of Journalists.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Julius Banda, UNESCO Country Representative to South Sudan, urged stakeholders to adopt and practice a multi-stakeholder approach in tackling issues on freedom of expression, press freedom and safety of journalists. "This requires the active efforts of all actors (for instance, Judiciary, police, lawyers, CSOs, line ministries, UN Agencies), in addressing these challenges that will in the long-term enable us to reduce the cycle of violence against media workers but also realize a free and safe media environment that will allow for accountability, democratic processes, participation, transparency and development", he stated.



Capt. Guot Guot Akol, Police Spokesperson, Northern Bahr El Ghazal State, speaking at the opening of the 2-day stakeholders' workshop in Wau. Photo Credit: UNESCO



Hon. Sarah Cleto Rial, Mr. Julius Banda and Hon. Anthony Charles (center) with other Stakeholders at the 2022 World Press Freedom Day celebration in Wau. Photo Credit: UNESCO

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE EMPOWERED TO SPEAK OUT ON ISSUES THAT MATTER TO THEM MOST

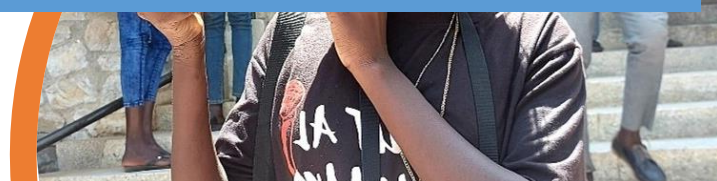
In South Sudan, children are braving all odds to demand their right to speak

Growing up in South Sudan I have witnessed a culture where the opinions, views and stories of children and young people are often brushed aside. 'You're too young to talk', 'you don't know, you talk too much for your age' are some of the things adults may say. But the children and young people of my country have a lot of meaningful things to say. They just need the guidance, opportunities, and platforms to be empowered advocates in our country.

UNICEF South Sudan is on a mission to change this scenario and is working with over 100 children and young people from across the country. Since its launch in early 2020, the Young Reporters Programme has empowered children and young people to promote children's rights and participation and speak out about many issues - embedded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 12 and 13 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child gives every child 'the right to freedom of expression' and 'the right for their views to be respected. This programme is an attempt by UNICEF South Sudan to empower children to voice their opinions and views on themes or topics they want to talk about. An opportunity for them to tell their stories in a way that they would like to say it.

"I wish that my society would be a complete society and that there would not be any difference of opinions.





Child Reporter Christopher Loyika addresses UNICEF staff in Juba about the importance of child participation in UNICEF programmes. Photo Credit: UNICEF

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"I wish that my society would be a complete society and that there would not be any difference of opinions.

In my view of an ideal society, I wish that all children will be empowered to speak up," said 13-year-old Christopher Loyika, who joined the programme in 2020 in Juba.

The next objective of the programme is to provide platforms for children and young people to talk about the issues that are important to them. As Young Reporters, they are encouraged and guided to express their views through different platforms, including radio, social media, by writing blog stories and poems about various issues. These include on education, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, peace, governance, climate change and environment and child protection.

"I wish that our small aspirations and big dreams will be fulfilled. I wish they would all stand on their own feet without depending on anyone's help. This is all I wish for — that all our dreams would get wings to fly," said Grace Gamboripai, a 16-year-old Child Reporter in Yambio.

Between 2020 and 2022, UNICEF expanded the programme across South Sudan to Yambio, Bor, Malakal, and Wau. Over this time, UNICEF has partnered with local radio stations to give the young reporters a platform to speak on radio and learn how media outlets such as radio stations operate. Radio Stations such as Eye Radio, Radio Miraya, Capital FM, Youth Advance Radio, Yambio FM, Voice of Hope, Jonglei FM and Nile FM have all embraced the young reporters and welcomed their voices into their programmes and news.

Read more: [Children and young people empowered to speak out about the issues that matter to them most](#) | UNICEF South Sudan

A GREEN AND CLEAN FUTURE BECKONS FOR SOUTHSUDAN

Over the past period, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has significantly increased its use of solar power across South Sudan. One example is the IOM managed solar plant that supplies electricity to the Humanitarian Hub in Malakal. The Hub, which has been listed as one of the twelve environmentally friendly practices in the global Compendium of Good Practices for a Greener Humanitarian Response published by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), provides living and office space to over three hundred humanitarian workers. The generation of solar power reduces the carbon footprint of the Hub, but, beyond that, also points to the potential that solar power holds for the future of South Sudan.

When an organization generates electricity through renewable energy – solar power being one of them – it generates “carbon credits”. These carbon credits can be traded on the international market for hard cash.

In the case of the Humanitarian Hub in Malakal, IOM generated sufficient carbon credits to fund equipping the Malakal Teaching Hospital with a solar plant and compatible power bank. This, in turn, will enable the Hospital’s critical care units to function full-time, with a reliable and cost-effective green power system.

The impact on the local population is clear: Malakal Teaching Hospital is the only hospital in the area, serving over 80,000 people in Malakal town and the surrounding counties.

READMORE: [A Green and Clean Future Beckons for South Sudan](#) | [IOM South Sudan](#)



Solar panels generating solar power in the IOM supported Humanitarian Hub in Malakal. Photo Credit: IOM

UPDATE ON 2023-25 UNSDCF RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND WFP, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAM DOCUMENTS

In 2021, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) extended the 2019-2021 United Nations Cooperation Framework (UNCF) by one year to 31 December 2022, with the endorsement of Government and Regional Development Coordination Office (DCO).

The extension was timed to coincide with the completion of the National Development Strategy review, thereby allowing for the national priorities therein to inform the formulation of the forthcoming United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) (2023-2025).

The UNCT used the one-year extension to build on the successes and lessons learnt from the previous years' implementation, expand, and adjust the scope of programming in the country.

At the same time, the UNCT launched the elaboration process of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2023-2025 to contribute to national priorities emerging from the NDS review.

The elaboration process was inclusive, consultative, and participatory involving development stakeholders including government at both national and state level, civil society organizations, academia, and media, among others.

The elaboration process included evaluation of the 2019-2022 UNCF and Common Country Assessment (CCA) whose findings were jointly validated by stakeholders on 30 November 2021.

This was followed by a Strategic Prioritization exercise with stakeholders from 7-9 December 2021 informed by the CCA analysis, fragility assessment, lessons learned from the implementation of the 2019-2022 UNCF implementation and emerging priorities from the Revised National Development Strategy (R-NDS).

Stakeholders agreed on four strategic priority areas aligned to the R-NDS that the UN could focus on to contribute to national development priorities in 2023-2025.

1. Transparent, Accountable & Inclusive Governance
2. Sustainable Economic Growth & Diversification
3. Social Development with Protection of the most vulnerable
4. Women & Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development

The government subsequently concurred with the identified priority areas and the Minister of Finance and Planning endorsed the new UNSDCF Results Framework on 11th May 2022.



The Sustainable Development Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all"

UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP have since prepared their Country Programme Documents/ Strategic Plans based on the agreed UNSDCF outcomes. On 23 May 2022, the Minister of Finance and Planning cleared the programme documents/plan of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP for 2023-2025 for submission to the agency Executive Boards.

The CPDs/CSP are the agency programming instruments to contribute to UNCT's collective efforts national priorities through the UNSDCF. On the next steps, the Government, the DSRSG/RC/HC and the UN Agencies will sign the next UNSDCF in September 2022.



NEWS FROM UN AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

100 YEARS OF PROGRESS; STATE OF MIDWIFERY IN SOUTH SUDAN



Every May 5 globally marks the International Day of Midwives, and South Sudan, like other countries around the world, celebrated this event under the theme “100 years of progress” signaling 100 years of progress in midwifery globally that have led to healthier, happier families and communities in every corner of the world.

National celebrations were held across the country under the leadership of the South Sudan Nurses and Midwives Association with support from development partners including UNFPA. The event in Juba was held at the Juba Teaching Hospital. Undersecretary in the Ministry of Health, Dr. Victoria Anib used the occasion to call for more investment in midwifery and to support the work of midwives for better maternal health outcomes, *“Investment in Nurses and Midwives is value for money; the Ministry of Health will continue to engage all stakeholders to enhance nursing and midwifery services”* she stressed

It can be recalled that at independence, South Sudan had only 10 qualified midwives, but UNFPA, in partnership with the government and partners like Canada and Sweden, supported the training of nurses and midwives at the various Health Science institutes across the country including Juba, Rumbek, Maridi, Torit, and Wau training institutes. Today, there are more than 1500 midwives who have graduated and are deployed at health facilities across the country.

“We commit to our continued support to strengthen midwifery services in the Republic of South Sudan,” pledged Jessie Ann Brouillette from the Embassy of Canada. These sentiments were also echoed by Mr. Ulf Kallstig from Sweden Headquarters, Stockholm.

On his part, UNFPA Representative, Dr. Demola Olajide, said, *“Nurses and Midwives represent the largest professional cadre in the health system and can be the difference between a reactive health system or one which is responsive to the needs of the community, especially women and girls”*. He expressed optimism that with *“the progress being made in midwifery; South Sudan will be a better place for women and girls”*.

South Sudan has some of the worst health outcome indicators globally, with the maternal mortality ratio standing at **1,150 per 100,000 live births**, whereas neonatal and under-five mortality rates are 39.3 and 99.2, per 1000 live births respectively (2014). Evidence globally shows that with increased investments in midwives and midwifery, we will save an estimated 4.3 million lives a year by 2035 and that universal coverage of midwife-delivered interventions would avert 67 percent of maternal deaths by 2035.

Therefore, training and deploying more midwives and those with midwifery skills in the Bomas and Payams across South Sudan will be critical for ensuring that there is a midwife at every birth and that no woman dies while giving birth in South Sudan.

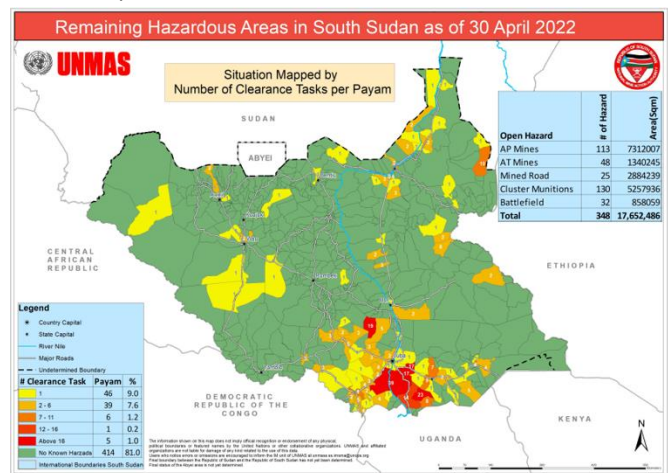
THE ROLE OF INFORMATION IN MINE ACTION

Information is key to preventing explosive ordnance (EO) accidents and saving lives.

To enhance the accessibility to information, UNMAS conducts outreach activities in the communities and to humanitarian/development partners and peacekeepers to alert them on the risks of landmine and EO and to promote safe behaviors.

Across the country, 45 mine action teams are delivering Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) tailored to respective age, gender, and other demographic groups by adjusting the delivery modality based on their behavioral practices.

Every month, UNMAS populates and circulates maps that indicate the presence of landmine and EO at state and country levels, as well as on roads.



An UNMAS map indicating the number of known areas contaminated by landmine/EO. Photo Credit: UNMAS

NEWS FROM UN AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

MORE 251 GRADUATE AT JUBA AND WAU PRISONS AFTER COMPLETING TRANSFORMATIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING



Atanasio Santino - a graduate of electrical engineering displays his certificate at the graduation ceremony. Looking on is UNDP Resident Representative - Dr. Sam Doe, Ibrahim Surur- Minister of Local Government - Wau State, Lt. Gen. Longar Wol Director of Training and Human Resources, NPSSS. Photo Credit: UNDP

A total of 251 inmates have graduated after completing the transformative vocational training designed to rehabilitate prisoners, increase prospects of employment, and support re-integration of ex-offenders on release and in so doing reduce recidivism, de-congest prisons and improve community safety.

The sixth batch of 126 inmates from Juba Vocational Training Centre graduated on April 14, 2022, at Juba Central Prison while the second batch of 125 inmates at Wau Vocational Training Centre graduated on April 28, 2022. The graduates completed nine months training in different fields such as food processing, plumbing, electrical and auto mechanic skills, tailoring, hair dressing, carpentry, masonry, metal work, fashion design, agriculture and are given start- up kits after release to enhance their ability to establish and sustain small-scale business ventures.

Cumulatively, 949 adult inmates 137 juveniles and 197 prison officers have graduated from this programme since 2016. Of the graduates, 438 adults and 51 juveniles were released back to the community between 2016 and 2021 with no known reoffending cases amongst them.

Funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, this initiative is a collaboration of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the National Prisons Service of South Sudan (NPSSS) under the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of General Education, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Labor. Read More: [More 251 inmates graduate at Juba and Wau prisons after completing transformative vocational training | UNDP in South Sudan](#)

POLITICAL PARTIES ACROSS THE SECTOR GATHERED TOGETHER TO DISCUSS PEACE

‘Interparty dialogue and focusing on ‘politics of issues’ rather than ‘politics of personalities’ are both pathways to sustainable, inclusive, and peaceful South Sudan’, highlighted the Minister of Peace Building Hon. Stephen Par Kuol at the opening ceremony for the Political Parties Dialogue on 24th of May 2022.

UN Women in partnership with the Ministry of Peace Building with funding from the Government of the Netherlands convened political parties’ representatives across the sector to discuss ways to achieve sustainable peace for three days. The consultative meeting, which took place from 24th-26th of May in Juba, South Sudan, did not only serve to forge a culture of peace dialogue between and amongst the political parties, but also to kickstart a process of creating an environment where all political parties contribute to lasting peace.

“Regular meetings within the scope of this forum will support the creation of a conducive environment of trust to freely exchange ideas on outstanding issues in the peace agreement, and to work together towards a sustainable peace in South Sudan”, says UN Women’s WPS specialist Dr. Salla Turunen.

Sustainable and long-lasting peace depends on women’s meaningful participation in the implementation of the peace agreement. The patriarchal nature of conflict in South Sudan has traditionally led to the exclusion of women in politics. As part of South Sudan’s ongoing security sector reform, UN Women together with UNDP, UNMISS and the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare are supporting the establishment of women’s networks for the security sector institutions.



Over 100 people participated in the political parties’ dialogue. Photo Credit: UN Women South Sudan Country Office

A HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION TO YEI EXPRESSES APPRECIATION FOR THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE SOUTH SUDAN SAFETY NET PROJECT ON PEOPLE'S LIVES

A high-level delegation comprising the National and State Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, the World Bank (WB) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) concluded a two-day visit to the South Sudan Safety Net Project (SSSNP) sites in Yei River County in Central Equatoria State. The purpose of the mission was to provide an opportunity for key stakeholders to assess the impact of the SSSNP and to interact with beneficiaries and local authorities that have been actively involved in the implementation of the project.

The mission consisted of the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security Hon. Josephine Joseph Lagu; Minister of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MGCW) Hon. Aya Benjamin Warille; State Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Forestry (SMAEF) Hon. Lily Kapuki Jurkin; Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security Hon. Dr. John Kanisio Lefuk, Undersecretary of MGCW Hon. Esther Ikere Ladu; World Bank South Sudan Country Manager Firas Raad; and UNOPS Country Director and Representative Peter Mutoredzanwa.

The team visited several project sites within the Yei River County including cash payment locations, Labor Intensive Public Works (LIPWs) and Cash Plus training sites in Jordan, Lumarate; Sobe villages in Yei Boma, and Kujemeje Village in Jansuk Boma.

During the visits, they listened to the personal testimonies of the project's beneficiaries about how the project had positively affected their lives. They also interacted with the Boma and Payam Development Committees, County Core teams and area chiefs to elicit their perspectives on the quality of project implementation efforts and the overall development outcomes of the project.

During the visit, Minister Josephine Lagu pledged Government's strong support for continuing to address the challenges of fragility and food insecurity in the country, stating: "as the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, we shall continue to work towards ensuring that this country is food secure and that citizens from all walks of life are empowered to take charge of their lives."

On the gender front, Minister Aya Warille emphasized that supporting women with cash, in the long run, would lessen the burden shouldered by families. Moved by the firsthand testimonials of beneficiaries, she stated: "Hearing families narrate how they've been able to take their children to school, treat the sick, start saving groups, open up businesses, indicates that we are on the right track to eradicate poverty in this country."

Firas Raad, on his part representing the World Bank, expressed his appreciation for the strong guidance and support shown by the South Sudanese Government towards the successful implementation of the project. He said, "the South Sudan Safety



Net Project has been a central part of the World Bank's Country Program and its efforts to protect the livelihoods and food security of the most vulnerable South Sudanese; and we hope that it has made a real contribution towards strengthening community resilience in many counties in the country."

Speaking on behalf of SSSNP beneficiaries, Perez Akujo, a beneficiary, and resident of Lumarate Village, reiterated the support extended by the project to her family and her community. She said, "With the money we receive, we no longer have to go too far off farmlands to get food for our families. We can afford to buy food and charcoal within the town, reducing the risk of being assaulted and robbed on our way back home."

Representing the key implementation agency – the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Country Director Peter Mutoredzanwa highlighted the role of the Government in ensuring the success of the SSSNP, saying: "I recognize the support provided by the Government in the management of the project through the National Advisory Committee and the National Technical Committee. These committees have provided us with sound guidance and counsel – and help us stay on course despite the many challenges that came our way".



PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY IN BENTIU TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF PROJECTED FLOODING



On 17 May, representatives of donors and UN agencies under the leadership of the Sara Beysolow Nyanti, Humanitarian Coordinator for South Sudan and her designated Emergency response Task Team visited Bentiu in South Sudan to assess preparedness activities to mitigate the impact of projected flooding. The high-level mission met with the authorities and affected people.

Nyajal Mirop Gil, a woman displaced by floods in Bentiu IDP site B, #SouthSudan since 2021, shared “I spend over 5 hours daily searching for firewood & wild food in floodwaters. The humanitarian assistance we received is not enough. We need food, shelter, health care & firewood.”

In April 2022, the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund allocated \$4 million to secure vital infrastructure works in Bentiu to keep people safe and roads accessible as preparedness efforts for expected severe flooding

EXPANDING SOUTH SUDAN’S COVID-19 VACCINATION TO REMOTE REGIONS

Near the banks of the White Nile in South Sudan, residents of a settlement are among the latest recipients of COVID-19 vaccines, as efforts continue to take them to more locations in the country.

The area of Mangalla hosts a settlement of internally displaced people, many of whom were affected by floods in June 2020.

Lilian Hilary, 26, was among the new recipients of a COVID-19 vaccine at Mangalla settlement during African Vaccination Week, in the last week of April.

The mother of two says she had hoped to have been vaccinated

“Today I am very happy that the services have been brought closer to our homes for women who cannot leave their children alone to also benefit from vaccines. We are happy that vaccines will now help protect us from getting sick from COVID-19.”

Hilary has lived in the settlement for two years with her children. Currently it is home to an estimated 90 000 internally displaced people and a host community of around 68 000 people.

To support the vaccine drive, community leaders in the area such as Bornalia Kuajo Peter are helping to reassure residents that the vaccines are safe and rally people to take them.

“I am happy my people have received the vaccine,” says Peter, the deputy community leader. “The 50 people vaccinated in less than one hour today is clearly an indication that people in my community really are waiting for the vaccines and ready to receive them.”

As he watched people get vaccinated, he stressed the need for vaccines in the area, particularly for the elderly and vulnerable people. “We want the vaccination to stay with us a little bit longer. I want all my people to receive the vaccines,” he tells a gathering of people at the vaccination site. “I have taken one in front of you as assurance as your sub-chief that these vaccines are safe, especially for old people like us. In my area, most people are aged 50 and above so I urge you all to come and take the vaccine.”

The European Commission’s Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) is supporting efforts by the World Health Organization (WHO) and its partners to boost vaccine rollout in Africa.

Thanks to ECHO’s critical support, WHO is reaching the most vulnerable people in 15 African countries, including South Sudan, who are facing humanitarian situations such as drought, natural disasters, and displacement. Read More: [Expanding South Sudan’s COVID-19 vaccination to remote regions | WHO | Regional Office for Africa.](#)

