



UNITED NATIONS  
SOUTH SUDAN

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# UNCT NEWSLETTER



## South Sudan Celebrates World Press Freedom Day By Doreen Loboka, UNESCO



Journalists in South Sudan joined the rest of the world in commemorating the World Press Freedom Day 2023 under the theme: "Freedom of Expression as a Driver for bolstering Fundamental Human Rights."

At the national level, the event was celebrated in Yambio, capital of Western Equatoria State. The event was hosted by the State Government and the Union of Journalists of South Sudan (UJOSS) and the State's UJOSS branch office with support from UNESCO's Multi Donor Program on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists.

The event brought together over fifty stakeholders drawn from the media fraternity, government, CSOs, representatives from the South Sudan People's Defense Forces (SSPDF) and the National Police Service.

In his remarks, the Secretary-General of UJOSS, Mr Majak Daniel Kuany, thanked the Government of Western Equatoria State and the State Union branch for hosting the event. He called for continued cooperation between the state authorities and the UJOSS branch office.

Addressing journalists during the occasion, UNESCO Country Representative, Julius Banda, who first spoke in the Azande language, said freedom of expression is the driver of all human rights. In the spirit of Leaving No One Behind,

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ♦ South Sudan celebrates World Press Freedom Day
- ♦ UNMISS raises awareness on the status of the peace process, calls for civil space for political debate
- ♦ Young voices calling for more investment in the welfare of teachers
- ♦ The journey from evidence to reality begins with a strong foundation in education
- ♦ UN and Ministry of Finance and Planning briefed stakeholders on the recommendations from the Doha program of Action for the Least Developed Countries
- ♦ Providing Health care services to returnees and Refugees fleeing fighting in Sudan
- ♦ As historic floods engulf South Sudan, some communities are staying dry





## UNMISS RAISES AWARENESS ON THE STATUS OF THE PEACE PROCESS, CALLS FOR CIVIL SPACE FOR POLITICAL DEBATE

By Filip Andersson, UNMISS

## SOUTH SUDAN CELEBRATES WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

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The UN Peacekeeping mission's in-house band—the Flamingoes—fired up an energetic crowd in Maridi, Western Equatoria, asking them to ponder the musical event's theme – 'Peace Begins With Me.' The event was organized in partnership with the state's Ministry of Peace Building.  
Photo: UNMISS/Denis Louro

UNMISS is playing its part in improving South Sudanese citizens' access to information, not least about the status of the constitution making process, crucial security sector reforms, other provisions of the revitalized peace agreement not yet implemented, and the views of different political actors.

In May, the mission's Community Outreach Unit continued to organize "Peace Begins with Me" festivals across the country to raise awareness on these issues.

During a recent press conference, SRSB Nicholas Haysom also stressed the need to create "the environment to support robust political competition", emphasizing that 2023 is a "make or break year" to enable free, fair, and credible elections by December 2024.

language diversity in the media was paramount - the people of South Sudan should hear their sixty-four languages over the airwaves. He said "all the freedoms reinforce each other: the freedom of expression, the freedom of movement, the freedom of association. All these freedoms are extremely important for the development of this country. As the whole globe celebrates the World Press Freedom Day, it is a universal aspiration of all the people to be free," Mr. Banda added.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Peacebuilding, Hon. Pia Philip Michael, encouraged the journalists to be conflict sensitive in carrying out their reporting. He urged them to stick to their journalistic ethics and avoid incitement to violence and the propagation of hate speech.

The Governor of Western Equatoria State, Hon. Futuyo Alfred Karaba, urged the journalists to be courageous enough and investigate corruption allegations. He called on journalists to refrain from disinformation and misinformation and remain neutral in their work.

**"Freedom of the press is the foundation of democracy and justice. It gives all of us the facts we need to shape opinions and speak truth to power. And as this year's theme reminds us, press freedom represents the very lifeblood of human rights.**

**But in every corner of the world, freedom of the press is under attack.**

**Truth is threatened by disinformation and hate speech seeking to blur the lines between fact and fiction, between science and conspiracy".**

UN SECRETARY GENERAL  
ANTONIO GUTERRES



The UNMISS in-house band —the Flamingoes— held a peace concert in Raja County, Western Bahr El Ghazal, bringing excitement, joy, and hope to the area.  
Photo: UNMISS/ Alahayi Nemaya



## YOUNG VOICES CALLING FOR MORE INVESTMENT IN THE WELFARE OF TEACHERS.

*Teachers lack basic livelihood needs in South Sudan*

*By Richard Ruati, UNICEF*



### *Why do we need teachers?*

"A country without teachers would be chaotic and unstructured because no one would inspire students and pupils to their full potential. Teachers are also responsible for educating the next generation and helping shape their future. Furthermore, teachers often face challenging circumstances and are forced to work with limited resources; hence, the government should increase professional development and training funding".

**Hans Richard**

Photo: UNICEF South Sudan/ Nathanaelle Ngabe Nguegan

### *Teachers' feeding*

#### *programs*

Most teachers' welfare in government schools is not up to date because they don't feed on a balanced diet and clean and healthy water. This gap may lead to regular sickness in teachers since they exert a lot of energy, and when the teacher is sick, the learners may miss a lesson which reduces the performance of learners

**Margret Edward**

### *Learning aids*

These learning aids, such as laboratories, are essential for easier learning, which most secondary schools in South Sudan do not have. This burdens teachers because it becomes tough for the learners to understand. The government should put more effort into building enough laboratories because doctors still need to be in the labs.

**Winnie Ruth**

As part of our "Invest in Teachers, Invest in the Future" Campaign and series of public advocacy for the welfare of South Sudanese teachers, UNICEF South Sudan Young Reporters share their opinions on the best teachers can be supported to deliver quality education to learners in South Sudan. Their reflections highlight the importance of teachers' role in achieving the educational aspirations of children in the country.

The campaign aims to address the challenges teachers face by improving their livelihoods and the overall quality of education - for the future of children in South Sudan. By ensuring that teachers receive regular, on-time payments and proper training, the campaign will enable the retention of highly skilled educators in the sector, who will, in turn, provide better teaching to their students and contribute



#### *Teacher's payment*

Teachers are catalysts of change but have been given low wages. It's time for the teachers to be recognized and appreciated for their fantastic work. And I urge the government to understand the support they need because teachers are not just teachers but also counsellors, pastors, winners of souls, mentors, and actors of change.

**Sittannah Ahmed**







## THE JOURNEY FROM EVIDENCE TO REALITY BEGINS WITH A STRONG FOUNDATION IN EDUCATION

By Juma Delu/UNFPA

MAY 2023



Aber Evaline helps a mother to carry her baby.  
Photo: UNFPA/Juma Delu

"The world is going digital, our nurses and midwives need to be empowered with digital skills to be able to generate evidence, the roles of nurses and midwives are undeniable" These were the words of the undersecretary of the national ministry of Health, Dr. **Victoria Anib Majur** during the national event to mark the International Day of Nurses and Midwives 2023 in Al Sabah children's hospital.

Nurses and midwives in South Sudan under their umbrella body, South Sudan Nurses and Midwives Association (SSNAMA) through their president used the occasion to call for better pay and working conditions throughout the country.

They decried that they are overworked and underpaid, a sentiment the undersecretary lauded them for, saying that she is aware of the tough conditions the nursing and midwifery cadre is going through, "I know you are volunteering because you are paid little but still you have not given up, but I must emphasize, Nurses and midwives are an important asset of health professionals, without well-trained nurses and midwives, we won't reduce maternal morbidity, therefore you are the malaikatul Rahmah! Angels of blessings" she said amidst cheers and ululations from the crowd.

UNFPA humanitarian coordinator Mr. Hussein Hassen who represented the UNFPA Deputy Representative at the event said that "the journey from evidence to reality begins with a strong foundation in education". He stressed that Investing in the education of nurses and midwives empowers these healthcare professionals and ensures that they are equipped with the most current, evidence-based knowledge and skills.

Aber Evaline, a former UN Volunteer with UNFPA, who currently volunteers at the Juba Teaching Hospital, said, celebrating the International Day of Nurses and Midwives brings fond memories of her days while working with UNFPA, but again was quick to say that the nursing profession is a noble one for her and more reason she is still volunteering, "From day one, I have been working at Juba Teaching Hospital, babies have been named after me, this is a profession I love and I will continue to serve" said Aber

This year's theme for international nurses' day, according to the International Council of Nurses (ICN), is, **'Our nurses, our future'**. It is a global campaign that aims to address global health challenges and achieve better global health for all. The theme for international day of the midwife, according to the International Confederation of Midwives was **"Together again: from evidence to reality."**

The Director General for Nursing and Midwifery at the national Ministry of Health, Rev. Janet Michael also urged the government to look at the welfare of nurses and midwives in the country, *"the leadership needs to increase the health budget, the government needs to give a decent budget allocation and provide a good working environment for nurses and midwives, a healthy nation is dependent on healthy citizens, well-skilled nurses leads to fewer complications"* she noted

Reverend Janet observed that ambulances whirling with sirens in the streets of Juba are carrying dead bodies instead of carrying pregnant women to health facilities, our ambulances are carrying dead people, there is no emergency in carrying a dead body, but there is an emergency in carrying a pregnant woman to a health facility, we need to reverse this trend, ambulances need to be used for emergencies such that we can reduce maternal morbidity" she added. South Sudan at independence had only eight qualified midwives. With support from donors including Canada, Sweden, Norway, Japan, USAID, and ECHO, the country now boasts of over 2000 nurses and midwives. UNFPA continues to provide technical assistance and support for midwifery and nursing programs and services across the country.





## Development Highlights

### UN AND MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND PLANING BRIEFED STAKEHOLDERS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DOHA PROGRAM OF ACTION FOR LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND LAUNCHED PREPARATIONS FOR THE UN SDG SUMMIT

Representatives of line ministries, civil society and private sector converged in Juba on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 for a debriefing session on the Doha Program of Action for Least Developed countries and launch of the preparations for the UN SDG summit.

The half day meeting provided stakeholders with information on the Doha Program of Action, and stimulated discussions on immediate actions and modalities to domesticate the recommendations from the fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in Doha, Qatar.

Participants highlighted that, available resources for example land, human capital should be utilized to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals." Farmers need capacity development on how to make the best use of land and its resources. Without using chemicals, farmers can be supported to use sustainable modern farming methods to grow food which can feed the nation and also for export to other countries" noted the civil society group. Also Parliament should be oriented on the the SDGs and Doha Program of Action for oversight support.

The Resident Coordinator ai, Peter Van Der Auweraet emphasized the urgency of accelerating development in South Sudan for the wellbeing of the Country and its people noting that the revised National Development Strategy can serve as an entry point. " South Sudan has a huge youth population that can be leveraged for the development of the country.

In his opening Speech, the Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning Hon. Agok Makur Kur Agok stated that the Doha Program of Action (2022-2031) serves as a guiding framework in the Country's pursuit of sustainable development as it provides a roadmap to address the multifaceted challenges to sustainable development in South Sudan.

The Doha Program of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2022-2031 (DPoA) manifests a new generation of renewed and strengthened commitments between the least developed countries and their development partners, including the private sector, civil society, and governments at all levels to accelerate progress towards sustainable development.



Some of the participants at the Doha program of Action for the Least Developed Countries debrief.  
Photo: RCO/Allen Poni







By *Alessandro Abbonizio, WFP*



Yar shows where the floodwaters reached in her house . Photo: WFP/Alessandro Abbonizio

Every day for three years, mother of seven Yar Mayom Arok dreamed of returning to her home in Jalle in Jonglei state.

She and her family fled their home in 2020, when floodwaters from the nearby Nile River broke through a dyke and flooded their town.

Today, Yar's wish has come true, thanks to an ambitious World Food Programme (WFP) project to repair a crucial dyke that holds back the floodwaters and protects almost 190,000 people living along the dyke in Bor South and Twic East.

"When I heard about the dyke repairs, I saw a chance for us to return home," says Yar, who returned to her now-dry home in January.

Yar's family is among the millions that WFP supports with food and cash assistance. They also benefit from resilience and infrastructure projects.

Before the flooding, Yar and her husband owned many cows and goats. She also ran a shop selling sugar, vegetable oil, biscuits. They grew sorghum in the wet season and hunted in the dry season.

Then came the devastation unleashed by the overflowing Nile River.

"When the waters came, there was no time to save any of our belongings. We put the children in a boat and escaped to dry land," recalls Yar.

Three years on, the town is now dry, following WFP repairs to a 93 km section of the dyke, which holds the Nile's overflow. As news spreads about the dyke repairs, former Jalle residents are starting to return.

Since coming home, Yar has started a new business – this time selling tea – and no longer relies on WFP for food assistance. She hopes to earn enough money to reopen her shop and to buy new livestock.

"I am so much happier in Jalle, there is plenty of fish to eat and if you look at my body, my skin is smooth and I am gaining weight again," she says.

Local authorities in Jonglei say 13,000 people have been able to return to their homes following a World Food Programme (WFP) dyke rehabilitation project along the Primary Nile Dyke running from Bor to Ayod.

Read full story here: <https://shorturl.at/adDK2>





## PROVIDING HEALTHCARE SERVICES TO RETURNEES AND REFUGEES FLEEING FIGHTING IN SUDAN

BY *Jemila Mohammed, WHO*

Mary Ukuach Deng, 34 years old and her three little children on a Tuesday morning awoke to a rattling sound of gunshots at her residence of Hai Mayo in the Sudanese capital Khartoum. It began a long rough journey to safety for Deng with her family. Deng, among others, was forced to flee to her country of origin, South Sudan, by the intense fighting in Khartoum.

Ms Deng had been residing in Khartoum for over 20 years. She had fled the war in South Sudan 20 years ago. Again, due to the fighting in Sudan, Deng fled to the border town of Renk in South Sudan in search of safety, a journey that took her two days. "It was such a tragic experience for my children and me. I was so scared because of the loud sound of guns that engulfed our neighborhood; we could see soldiers running all over". Deng narrated her ordeal.

Deng found safety at the border town of Renk in South Sudan, located about 453 Km south of the capital Khartoum. Deng is among thousands of people fleeing the fighting and spent days and weeks in limbo, without access to water, shelter, food and health care. "It is a nightmare to me; my children have never had a meal today, we left everything in our house, and one of them is sick with no medicine", Deng added. "The huge population of the returnees and refugees have resulted in overcrowding at the transit sites in Renk, posing a huge risk of disease outbreaks, and this is a big concern," she said.

Despite this challenging condition, the Government of South Sudan, through the Ministry of Health, is working with partners to ensure that the basic health needs of the people arriving from Sudan and that of the host community are taken care of. Multi-disciplinary teams of health experts are dispatched to various locations and work with partners to support the communities.

### *Saving the lives of refugees and returnees*



The World Health Organization (WHO) has deployed mobile medical teams comprised of clinicians, nurses and public health officers to locations experiencing an influx of people from Sudan to support the Ministry of Health and health cluster partners to strengthen humanitarian health coordination, disease surveillance and provision of the much-needed health care services.

WHO prepositioned 269 Health Emergency Kits (185 Inter Agency Emergency Health Kits, 25 Cholera Investigation and treatment kits, 17 Pneumonia Kits, six Sever Acute Malnutrition with medical complication kits and 36 sample collection and transportation kits) to ensure continuity of healthcare services in Renk, Malakal, Panikang, Raja, Aweil

and Rubkona. The kits are enough to serve 101 555 people affected by the conflict for the next three months.

Dr Fabian Ndenzako, the WHO Representative a.i for South Sudan, said, "The unfolding humanitarian crises in Sudan is placing a huge burden on the already fragile health system due to the huge influx of people, thereby increasing the risk of disease outbreaks putting the life of tens of thousands of people at risk".

"WHO has scaled up its presence on the ground, delivering much-needed medical supplies for timely response and will continue to support the Ministry of Health and partners on the ground to ensure that refugees and returnees receive the most needed basic healthcare services.", Dr Ndenzako added.

Thanks to United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the African Public Health Emergency Fund (APHEF) for supporting the Sudan crisis response. In addition, USAID contributed USD 5 million to WHO to support an integrated health response for communities affected by crises and acute food insecurity across South Sudan.





## UNMAS- UNMISS PROVIDES RETURNEES AND REFUGEES WITH INFORMATION ABOUT EXPLOSIVE HAZARDS

By Genevieve Imbali, UNMAS



Returnees and refugees receive explosive ordnance risk education . Photo: UNMAS /Sikuliwe Gwara

The crisis in #Sudan has resulted in the displacement of over 1 million people, with more than eighty thousand fleeing to South Sudan to-date. Displaced persons are at higher risk of being impacted by explosive hazards as they move into unfamiliar territory and do not know the localized threats.

To address this issue, the UNMAS risk education teams have recently initiated specialized training on explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) at various border points where refugees and returnees intersect in their quest for safety.

At the temporary reception site in Bulukat, Upper Nile, UNMAS teams provide EORE training to those fleeing the conflict in Sudan. Among the beneficiaries of EORE training is Nyadok, who embarked on a perilous journey from Sudan to Renk in South Sudan with her five children, hoping to reunite with her husband, presently residing in South Sudan.

"I had no knowledge about UXOs and landmines, but the UNMAS presentation has been immensely beneficial to me," Nyadok expressed. "Both my children and I are now aware of the dangers and now know what steps to take and where to report if we come across them."

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***I had no knowledge about UXOs and landmines, but the UNMAS presentation has been immensely beneficial to me. My children and I are now aware of the dangers and now know what steps to take and where to report if we come across them.***

”

Ms Nyadok  
Returnee fleeing the Sudan conflict



**#NOT A TARGET  
#PROTECT CIVILIANS**





## SOUTH SUDAN LAUNCHES NEW WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

*By Sarat Chaat, UN WOMEN*



**Dignitaries pose a photo at the Project Launch event.**

**Photo Credit: UN WOMEN/Sarah Chaat**

Women in 10 states and 2 administrative areas in South Sudan will have their livelihoods enhanced following the launch of the World Bank funded South Sudan Women Social Economic Empowerment Project (SSWSEEP) that will be implemented by UN Women. The Project aims to empower 261,000 women including adolescent girls and youth.

Negative social norms and practices have historically hindered the progress of women and young girls in South Sudan, and they are currently undergoing challenges due to climate change and inadequate opportunities for empowerment.

The 4years SSWSEEP project will give women and girls access to livelihood through the construction of five Women Economic Empowerment Centers that will be a space for livelihood and life skills training, including literacy, support to value chain development and second chance education. Speaking at the launch event in Juba, the UN Women Regional Director for

"In South Sudan, women own 63% of the SMEs and only 5% have access to credit and loans which remains a key barrier to the growth and development of women-led enterprises".

The project builds on and aims at scaling up the gains already made by South Sudan women with the support of UN Women and its partners.

The flagship nature of this project and its design will complement UN Women's efforts to support South Sudan in tackling vulnerabilities experienced by women and girls across the country.

The SSWSEEP project will offer small grants to 200 women, and extensive training to 1,000 women entrepreneurs to help boost their contribution to economic growth and livelihood. The project also aims at supporting survivors of Gender Based Violence through the construction of a safe house that will shelter up to 2,100 GBV survivors,

offer livelihood training and link the survivors to various economic empowerment activities within the 10 states.

Abuk Makuach, the chair of Chamber of women entrepreneurs expressed her excitement on the sidelines of the launch event saying, "Now there is hope for the women of South Sudan, it's the first time ever to have centers dedicated to women where women will gain skills for livelihood".

About 400 to 450 Social Workers will be trained under the project to strengthen their capacity to provide services within the community and to deliver on the mandate of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

Her excellency Mama Rebecca de Mabior, Vice President Gender and Youth cluster speaking during the launch said,

"We will work together, and continue to work together. Even if am not in this position I will continue to monitor the work of women and girls and the youth in general, thank you very much World Bank for making this day wonderful for the women of south Sudan, I want to see tangible things from this project, since the formation of the government of South Sudan the ministry of gender has not had any office and yet women are 58% of the population, Thanks to this project women will have their own office".





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