



UNITED NATIONS
SOUTH SUDAN

UNCT NEWSLETTER

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



South Sudan Commemorates World Refugee Day

By Gift Friday, UNHCR



HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ South Sudan commemorates World Refugee Day
- ◆ United Nations County Team marks 60 day countdown to the SDG by tree planting
- ◆ United nations economic commission for Africa conducts South Sudan national risk assessment workshop.
- ◆ Government and UN conducts a technical review of the preliminary Sustainable Development Goals Assessment Report as the SDG summit draws closer.
- ◆ Hungry, weary and Lost: children and women comprise almost 75% of the thousands of people fleeing Sudan.
- ◆ South Sudan prepares for the first elections: consultations on the national election act 2012

In Juba, The UN refugee agency UNHCR marked the day at the Gorom refugee settlement on the outskirts of Juba city, where more than 3,000 refugees from Sudanese, Ethiopia, Burundi, DR Congo and Eritrea are being resettled. This year's World Refugee Day focuses on solutions for refugees and the power of inclusion, commemorated under the theme "Hope away from home." UNHCR's Country Representative Marie -Helene Verney said, this year's, Word Refugee Day 2023 comes amidst a large-scale emergency (Sudan's crisis) that has seen more than 120,000 South Sudanese and 8,000 refugees arrive since mid-April. Many of them have arrived in Gorom and joined some 300,000 other refugees who were already in South Sudan.

"Behind these numbers are women, children, men, youth who have endured loss, separation from family members, and violence during flight" she said. In addition, more than 2.2 million South Sudanese are still refugees in other countries in the region: it is the largest refugee emergency in Africa.

In her message to the refugees currently in South Sudan – especially for those who have just arrived, the Representative echoed that it can be hard to imagine a future full of hope. "For all refugee women and men, and perhaps especially for young refugees: please do not give hope. Your example is an inspiration for many of us who work in UNHCR, and humanitarian NGOs and we are here to listen to you and help you rebuild hope".





UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA CONDUCTS SOUTH SUDAN NATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in partnership with the UN Office of the Resident Coordinator conducted a workshop for the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) National taskforce members and other selected agencies on the Anti-money laundering /combating the financing of terrorism.

The objective of the workshop was to provide technical assistance to South Sudan in conducting the Republic of South Sudan National Risk Assessment (RSSNRA). The RSSNRA is meant to assist the FIU to identify, assess, and understand the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (ML/TF) risks in different sectors of the economy, and will serve as a basis and reference for FIU to take actions to implement other FATF recommendations in a risk-based approach to combat ML/TF activities.

Furthermore, the RSSNRA will provide valuable guidance to articulate policies and strategies to address the risks identified, strengthen coordination amongst relevant authorities and government agencies, and allocate resources to areas that have the greatest impact in the fight against financial crime in South Sudan.



GOVERNMENT AND UN CONDUCTS TECHNICAL REVIEW OF THE PRELIMINARY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ASSESSEMENT REPORT AS THE SDG SUMMIT DRAWS CLOSER

Ministry of Finance and planning and the United Nations Office of the Resident Coordinator convened a meeting to review the draft Sustainable Development Goals report and Insights for South Sudan. The technical review meeting brought together the Government Chairs from the Sector Working Groups with mandate over the sectors of Agriculture, Education, Health, Gender, Water and Sanitation, Environment and Climate, and Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions to review the draft assessment on Sustainable



Development Goals (SDGs) in South Sudan. The draft corresponds to SDGs 2,3,4,5,6, 13 and 16 and are aligned with the Revised National Development Strategy (R-NDS) priorities.

Findings from this review and other consultations will be used to inform South Sudan's report to the SDG summit happening on 18th –19 September in New York.

The SDG Summit provides an opportunity to Member States including the Government of South Sudan to present status, achievements, challenges, and priority actions to advance and accelerate progress on the SDGs to 2030.





UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY TEAM MARKS 60 DAYS COUNT DOWN TO THE UN SDG SUMMIT BY TREE PLANTING AND YOUTH DIALOGUE

By Poni Allen, UNRCO

SOUTH SUDAN COMEMORATES WORLD REFUGEE DAY

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The United Nations Country Team in South Sudan teamed with STEM power and Animu Athiei foundation to create awareness on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on the 18th of July 2023, a date marking exactly 60 days to the UN SDG summit 2023.

The SDG summit will mark the beginning of a new phase of accelerated progress towards the SDGs with high-level political guidance on transformative and accelerated actions leading up to 2030. Convened by the President of the General Assembly, the Summit will mark the half-way point to the deadline set for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

In a speech read by the Head of the Resident Coordinator’s Office/Strategic planner Mr. George Otoo on behalf of the RC ai, he stressed the important of all stakeholders coming together to rescue the SDGs in South Sudan. “All the SDGs are interconnected and equally important, we all need to work together towards a sustained desired future, transformative progress will not be possible for South Sudan without a surge in global solidarity and international cooperation” he said.

Participants who included youth from various walks of life planted trees as a way of preserving and greening the environment.

“We depend on the environment for everything that we do, in our day to day activities, tree planting is one of the ways we can conserve the environment, I encourage all people to plant trees and use them in a sustainable manner” said 10 year old queen Ritah Samantha, a ten year old environment in a recorded message.

The deputy commissioner for the Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA) Hon John Dabi, encouraged the refugees to take all the opportunities available in the country. He said the South Sudan Refugee Law is a progressive law, that allows refugees to seek for employment, or carry out businesses. He said the law also allows refugees to be allocated land to farm and produce their own food and be self-reliant to avoid the dependency on aid.

“Make use of the conducive environment in South Sudan to build yourself and progress with the expertise and professions you have”

Hon Dabi also called upon the Sudanese refugee students who are in candidate classes both primary and secondary to register so that their lists are submitted to the Ministry of general education for consideration to seat for the exams.

The World Refugee Day 2023 was commemorated across the Country in the different UNHCR’s Field and Sub – Offices with various activities ranging from dances and drama, poems, essay writing, speeches, football matches between the host community and refugees/ returnees.



School children going the World Refugee Day celebration activities at Gorom Refugee Settlement. Photo Credit: Gift Friday/UNHCR



HUNGRY, WEARY AND LOST

Children and women comprise almost 75% of the thousands of people fleeing Sudan

By James Maiden , UNICEF



In the once-small border village of Roriak in the north of Unity State, South Sudan, tens of thousands people are arriving each week across fleeing conflict in Sudan. Photo Credit James Maiden/UNICEF

It's over 40 degrees under the scorching sun in the once small border village of Roriak in the north of Unity State in South Sudan. Since 2021, tens of thousands of people have been displaced in and around Bentiu after flooding engulfed much of the area. Now, tens of thousands more are arriving each week across the border from Sudan.

At a dusty transit site , large buses overflowing with people and belongings roll in from the border. Children, women and families join 83,000 (as of May 28) who have fled Sudan and arrived in South Sudan since mid-April.

Crowds gather around the bus and friends and relatives embrace after a long and dangerous journey from Khartoum and other parts of Sudan.

As the crowds gather, UNICEF staff and partners spring into action to meet children, young people and families who have just arrived. At the transit site, UNICEF alongside partners are supporting the response in border regions by expanding and scaling up existing programs.

UNICEF is supporting health, nutrition and child protection screening (including tracing and reunification); as well as providing health services such as vaccinations, medical services and malnutrition treatment. And provide the most vulnerable with basic frontline services after entry into the country.

Samuel Luny, from Women's Vision, a UNICEF Child Protection partner, meets two young boys, Juma (12) and John (16), who've wearily stepped off one of the buses. Juma and John were separated from family amidst the fighting in the capital of Sudan, Khartoum and had travelled several days to reach Roriak. They were travelling alone, and were hoping to reconnect with family members who had arrived earlier.

Juma said he ran away from the shelling and gunfire and hitched a ride on one of the buses when the driver allowed him to jump on board before it set off. He spent four days travelling from Khartoum to the border standing up in the bus as there was no seats left. Along the way from Khartoum, a group of armed men diverted the bus into the bush and stole all the passengers' possessions including Juma's little money and documents. His voice softening, he mentioned that five women from their bus were also sexually abused during the ordeal.

As soon as they arrived in Roriak, children and women who needed care were immediately taken to the UNICEF integrated medical and nutrition center in Roriak for further screening and treatment. The other new arrivals joined the thousands of others sheltering at the transit site.

"We've seen more than 130 children arrive requiring child protection and psychosocial support over the last few weeks here in Roriak," said Samuel.

More than 50 unaccompanied or separated children have arrived for which we have managed to reunite most with families. For the remaining children, we've increased our efforts to trace family members and are ensuring they get the support and services they need.

Juma and John became friends on the journey and while Juma only left South Sudan a year ago and knew where his family was in the Bentiu Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camp, John moved to Khartoum 10 years ago when his family fled conflict in South Sudan. He had no idea where his brother, sister and Aunt were in the immense IDP camp

Read more: <https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/stories/hungry-weary-and-lost>



SOUTH SUDAN PREPARES FOR ITS FIRST ELECTIONS: CONSULTATIONS ON THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS ACT 2012

By Sarah Abraham /UNDP



Prof. Abednego Akok, Chair of NEC, Dr. James Mabor Gatkuoth Nyak, Chair of Standing Specialized Committee, Mr. Darren Nance, Principal Electoral Affairs Officer at UNMISS and Dr. Joseph Geng Akech. Photo: UNDP/ Sarah Sibrino

During the opening, Dr. James Mabor Gatkuoth Nyak, chairperson of the Standing Specialized Committee on Legislation and Justice said “the Elections Bill is very, very important to the committee because even a normal South Sudanese on the street is yearning for elections.” He also urged the stakeholders present to engage as much as possible because, “The leadership of the Standing Specialized Committee on Legislation and Justice wants to embrace an inclusive elections process.’

Getting South Sudan ready for elections
Representing the United Nations at the opening, Mr. Darren Nance, Principal Electoral Affairs Officer at UNMISS, congratulated the Committee for making this process inclusive by listening to the view of all stakeholders.

In August 2022, the parties to the Revitalized Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) extended the transitional period provided for in the 2018 agreement by two years and thus postponing elections to December 2024.

Although there are multiple challenges in holding the elections, the parties to the Revitalized agreement have expressed their commitment to hold elections and UNDP is here to provide support.

A critical piece of legislation, the National Elections Act, 2012 (Amendment) Bill, 2023 is currently before parliament and is being reviewed by the Standing Specialized Committee on Legislation and Justice of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly.

With support from UNDP and UNMISS, a consultations workshop was organized by the Standing Specialized Committee on Legislation and Justice on Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd June 2023.

The consultations workshop was attended by over 100 participants including the National Elections Commission, academics, electoral experts, members of the Law Society and representatives of civil society including youth, women, and persons with disabilities.

And urged national authorities to address challenges specific to South Sudan including infrastructure issues, logistics, climate, security, accessibility of voting centers, and the status of the national elections commission which impact the administration of elections.

What is South Sudan’s Goal for the upcoming Elections? Inclusivity, Transparency, Credibility and Sustainability.

Review of the National Elections Act, 2012 (Amendment) Bill, 2023

During the consultation, the National Elections Commission (NEC) presented implementation considerations associated with the bill, with an objective to:

1. Achieve an inclusive representation including, youth, women, and persons with disabilities.
2. Simplify the process to make it easier for voters, political parties, candidates to participate in the process and for the NEC to implement the elections within the overall timeline provided by the roadmap. The NEC also presented an option for consideration to simplify the proportional representation component in the law. Read more:[South Sudan Prepares for its First Elections | United Nations Development Programme](#)

undp.org





WOMEN LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION PROJECT LAUNCHED

By Sarah Chaat, UN Women



Women parliamentarians pose for a group photo at the launch of the Women's Leadership and Political participation project in Juba, South Sudan. Photo: UN Women/ Sarah Nyibak Chaat

UN Women South Sudan and UNDP South Sudan have launched a three-year Women Political Participation and Leadership during South Sudan Transition project is a one, funded by the Peace Building Fund. The project, to be implemented in Juba, Malakal and Pibor will have technical leadership and strategic oversight provided by the South Sudan Ministry of Peace Building.

Hon Mary Nawai, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs speaking as she launched the project called on all stakeholders to leverage the gains from similar projects to support capacity-building and advocacy efforts for women's political participation.

UN Women Country Representative Peterson Magoola stated that South Sudan is at a critical juncture where opportunities for equal and full participation of women in peacebuilding, security, and political processes must be harnessed.

Also speaking was Amer Manyok, a woman civil society representative, who highlighted the need for a gender-responsive political space in South Sudan, in line with the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65) as women political participation is key to closing the gender gap in politics.

The Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), 2018, requires the participation of women by at least 35%, however to date, none of the government institutions have attained this representation. Out of 100 members of the Council of States, 26 are women.

Out of the 550 members of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA), only 171 are women.

Out of the 64 parties, only three political parties are women-led, and two are legally registered.

UN WOMEN PROGRAMING IN SOUTH SUDAN

- Women's leadership and participation in gender responsive governance enhanced
- Women in South Sudan, especially the poorest and most excluded are economically empowered and benefit from development
- Improved protection and security for women and girls
- Peace and security and humanitarian actions in South Sudan are shaped by women's leadership and participation





By *Jemila M. Ebrahim WHO*



Participants at the health workers training pose for a photo after the opening of the training. Photo Credit WHO/ATEM

The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Water and Irrigation and partners, trained healthcare workers to build the country's capacity to plan, implement and conduct simulation exercises, including full-scale simulation exercise to improve preparedness and response to public health events.

The training aimed to enable the country to have a core team of experts that will regularly conduct simulation exercises to ensure the health system has all the required procedures, standard operating procedures (SOPs) and strategic plans that can be used to prepare for, timely detect, and respond to disease outbreaks and other health emergencies at each level of the health system

"South Sudan's Ebola preparedness and readiness structure were repurposed to fight COVID-19. The training on simulation exercises is important to enhance the country's core capacities to be adequately prepared and operationally ready for future health emergencies," said Dr Atem Nathan, Director General for Primary Health Care at the Ministry of Health.

Full-scale simulation exercises focus on meeting the recommendations of the previous exercises to improve coordination and communication with State Task Forces and between Technical Working Groups, review SOPs, ensure adherence to the SOPs and conduct regular drills to improve the performance of their teams.

"Simulation exercises are meant to validate and enhance preparedness and response plans, procedures and systems for all hazards and capabilities", said Dr Fabian Ndenzako, WHO Representative a.i. for South Sudan.

A total of 44 participants drawn from 8 teams comprising epidemiologists, clinicians, risk communication experts, laboratory technicians and infection prevention and control experts were engaged in the training.

We acknowledge our donor, US Agency for International Development (USAID), for supporting the ongoing efforts to strengthen the country's preparedness capacities and respond to health events and other emergencies.





A NUMBER OF FAMILIES FLEEING SUDAN'S CONFLICT SEARCHING FOR SEPERATED CHILDREN IN AWEIL WEST COUNTY

By Mure Moses Waigo ,UNICEF

The on-going conflict in Sudan has forced almost 90,000 people to flee their homes

Since mid-April the on-going conflict in Sudan has forced almost 90,000 people to flee their homes and take the dangerous journey into South Sudan and other neighboring Countries.

Throughout this ordeal, many children are being lost or separated from their parents and caregivers. In South Sudan's Northern Bahr El Ghazal State, which borders the Darfur region, humanitarian partners are seeing an increasing influx of returnees and refugees through the 5 points of entry.

Many of the unaccompanied, separated, and missing children reported at Kiir-Adem and Wedwil transit center were separated from their parents or caregivers while fleeing for their lives as fighting intensified in Sudan. Joseph, a 36-year-old father of five children was separated from his family in Sudan while they were fleeing. After registration and family tracing he was reunited with his family at the entry point in South Sudan. The family is currently seeking to be transported back to their home county in neighboring Aweil North.



Despite being happy to be return to his home county, Joseph said he has fears on how to start life again there with the little they came with from Sudan. He urges humanitarian partners to stand with the returnees and continue to provide services at their places of return. The transit center is designated by government for returnees to be registered and transported to their home towns and villages. But many are facing challenges to find means to return to their home locations.

"That day the conflict erupted I was away from home doing casual work, and when the shooting rang out, I was afraid, I ran home only to find that the family had fled, leaving every item we had in the house "Joseph, a father of five children

"This life, moving back and forth, is a great pain to me those impacted by the conflict because we lost everything. My family and I run away from South Sudan during the 2016 conflict, and we come back with nothing, we don't have anything to eat, sleep or wear. I don't know how to start rebuilding our lives" Joseph said.

Joseph expressed gratitude for UNICEF, the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, and other child protection partners for being at the forefront in the border areas and transit centers providing family tracing and individuals psychosocial support for separated and unaccompanied children. As of 26 May 2023, UNICEF and partners have reunited 5 children, identified 19 cases of unaccompanied and separated children, and provided psychosocial support to 25 children including their parents/caregivers.

UNICEF is working closely with the State Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare to ensure safety of vulnerable children and families are provided with immediate child protection services.

The current emergency also necessitates UNICEF and partners to rapidly expand the capacity of emergency family tracing and reunification services, temporary foster care arrangements with screened parents/caregivers as well as other critical services to ensure the protection of children.

UNICEF remains concerned with the mental and psychosocial wellbeing of unaccompanied and separated children. Many of the separated children face enormous challenges in meeting their basic needs, without the people in their lives who would usually help them find food, water, clothing, shelter and basic care is deeply. UNICEF thanks, USAID and the European Union (ECHO) for the generous support in funding the Child Protection services provided for children and families arriving from Sudan.



“REISHAPING POLICIES FOR CTEATIVITY AND ARTISTIC FREEDOM “ IN SOUTH SUDAN PROJECT LAUNCHED

By Paul Night, UNESCO



Group photo with the Swedish Ambassador Mr. Tomas. Photo Credit UNESCO / Paul night

UNESCO Office in Juba in collaboration with Hope Society and the Ministry of Culture, Museums and National Heritage organized a multi-stakeholder one day event to launch UNESCO/SIDA project on reshaping policies for creativity and artistic freedom in South Sudan. The aim of the launch and training workshop is to Strengthen **participatory processes for monitoring policies for creativity and artistic freedom** through the preparation of the quadrennial periodic

report on the implementation of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

The event brought together over 30 participants from government ministries, civil society actors, cultural practitioners on participatory policy monitoring to better understand the project to able to monitor, design and implement policies and measures that foster the emergence of dynamic cultural and creative sectors for sustainable development and the promotion of fundamental freedoms. Address gender equality as a key emerging topic for the elaboration of transformative measures/action plans for the cultural and creative sectors. Generate spaces of policy dialogue and support sustainable, inclusive, participatory, and transparent systems of governance of culture. Engage in peer-to-peer learning for knowledge transfer. And to raise awareness about the 2005 Convention’s objectives and guiding principles among policymakers, civil society organizations and the public. And learn how to collaboratively collect data for South Sudan’s second periodic report in 2024.

“Policies and measures should ensure the freedom of cultural and creative professionals to create, produce, disseminate and distribute artistic works to foster their viability and contribute to economic development”, said Mr. Becu Thomas, program Officer for culture at UNESCO office in Juba. He further added that the media are key in promoting diversity of the creatives.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Tomas Brundin, Head of Cooperation at the embassy of Sweden in Juba said that “protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions underlines the importance of preserving, safeguarding and enhancing the many various expressions and forms as an integral part of people’s wellbeing and development”. He further added that, “the symbolic meaning as well as artistic and cultural values that stem from the creativity of individuals, groups and societies form an important basis for learning and dialogue which in turns promotes interaction and social cohesion between human beings.”

Meanwhile Mr. Deng Nhial, Acting Director General for Culture at the Ministry of culture, Museums and National Heritage and the focal point for 2005 Convention in South Sudan said, “the ministry is taking seriously the issues of policies to guide culture program nationwide through the draft culture policy which is being discussed at the cabinet and the Copyright bill to address challenges of the cultural and creative industries in South Sudan”.



Participants during a group session exercise. Photo Credit UNESCO / Paul night



By Kennedy Okoth, IOM



Sudanese on board a boat from Renk to Malakal as part of the onward movement to their communities. Photo: IOM South Sudan /Kennedy Okoth

Teaching has always been Long Deng's passion. His dream took him to the town of Al-Kalakla in Khartoum, where he went to study Education at the Sudan Open University seven years ago. The flexibility of his studies meant he could work part-time.

"With a degree, I was one step closer to my teaching dream. So, when I finally achieved it and got the opportunity to teach children at a local school in Abu Adam, I was happy."

When the fighting erupted on 15 April, he had no choice but to leave the country.

The father of three left Abu Adam before the violence could get to them. But the life they had built over the past seven years could not be packed up as luggage. He had to prioritize only the essentials for the road. Transportation was the next hurdle; modes of transportation were hard to come by and the few available had tripled their prices.

It took Deng all his savings to secure transportation for his wife, two children, niece, and himself. Even then, he did not have enough money. Like many others, he had to come to an agreement with the car's owner to pay upon arrival where he would access money from the South Sudan side of the border.

The first car had to be shared with other families, so Deng chose to have his wife and children take it.

"My wife and the children had to go first, I was okay remaining behind and hopefully follow them after and if not, at least I would know they are safe," he says.

Deng managed to secure transportation and followed shortly. With the vehicle filled to the brim with household goods and passengers, the journey was slow, and they had to spend the night in Rabek town, 158 kilometres from the Sudan border with South Sudan. The eventual journey across the border brought back memories from when and why he left.

Seven years down the line, it was not the homecoming Deng had hoped for, but it offered a moment of clarity: joy from knowing that he had done his bit in Sudan, he had been able to build a life following his passion, as well as a calling to begin doing the same in his hometown of Bentiu.

Back home in South Sudan, he hasn't stopped thinking about his students.

"I always think of my students, hoping that they made it out as well and, if not, are safe and sound."

Like Deng, most of the South Sudanese returning home want to go back to their communities.

"I left my rented house locked and if the fighting ends and things get back to normal, I would wish to go back and collect my things," he adds.

Over 90 per cent of the nearly 50,000 people who have arrived in South Sudan since the start of the fighting are South Sudanese. Wounthou/Juda continues to be the main point of entry for arrivals.

Like Deng, they want to go to their communities and cannot wait. At the Juda point of entry in Renk, approximately 2,000 to 3,000 arrivals are recorded daily; the majority are South Sudanese. Most of them have already spent all their money to reach the crossing. Some are reaching out to their relatives to facilitate their journeys, but the majority are unable to. If they don't receive help, they might become stranded under the scorching heat for days or even weeks.

Having been successfully registered, Deng has his family beside him, and his luggage packed, as they gather next to a bus awaiting the boarding process. "So, when do we leave?" he asks with optimism.

The bus is part of a seven-vehicle fleet operated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), that has been facilitating the transport of people from the Juda point of entry to the Renk transit center. There, IOM, and other humanitarian organizations are offering emergency services before onward movement to people's final destination, their homes and communities.

"I have my extended family in Bentiu (in northern South Sudan), and I am looking forward to seeing them. This time, not to visit but to stay."

So far, the Organization has facilitated the onward transportation of nearly 1,000 South Sudanese returnees from Renk to Malakal through river transportation, with the first one departing on 14 May. More are set to depart in the coming days. Deng hopes to be on one of them soon.





WFP SUPPORTS DROUGHT –AFFECTED COMMUNITIES WITH HUMANITARIAN FOOD ASSISTANCE

By Eulalia Berlanga, WFP

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is finalising its lean season response in drought-affected Kapoeta this month, providing families with humanitarian food assistance to cope with the extreme dry conditions that have decimated crops and livelihoods.

In Kapoeta, the lean season runs January-July when extreme dry conditions lead to significant food shortages for communities.

Kapoeta has been experiencing the effects of the Horn of Africa drought with two consecutive years of exceptionally dry conditions.

The dire situation is further exacerbated by increasing prices of food and fuel, combined with the rapid depreciation of the South Sudanese Pound. As a result, the number of food insecure people in the region has risen by 20% since December 2022.

Nari Lotede and her children are among those in need of WFP assistance for the first time. Nari used to grow okra, maize, and sorghum, but after her crops died she was forced to rely on humanitarian food assistance to support her seven children.

“Before receiving this food I collected wild fruits to eat and charcoal to sell in the market, but sometimes I wouldn’t sell it and I would go to sleep hungry,” she says.

Nari is from Riwoto, a village from Kapoeta North County in the Greater Kapoeta region. A traditionally pastoralist area, the lack of water has also affected cattle as water bodies dry up and livestock perish.

“I hope I can start planting food again to support my children. I want them to go to school and have a better future,” says Nari.





United Nations Resident Coordinator' Office
 UNDP Compound, Ministries Road
 Plot 21,P.O.BOX 410
 Juba, South Sudan

Email: unctcommunications-southsudan@un.org
 Facebook: UN in South Sudan
 Twitter: @UN_SouthSudan
 Website: <https://southsudan.un.org/>

