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16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



South Sudan tops list of most dangerous countries for aid workers in the world, and the humanitarian crisis deepens amid mounting needs, access constraints and lack of funding

HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ South Sudan tops list of most dangerous countries for aid workers in the world, and the humanitarian crisis deepens amid lack of funding
- ◆ Young people and stakeholders pledge to support South Sudan’s sustainable Development trajectory
- ◆ International Youth Day: Youth challenged to be innovative and responsible
- ◆ WHO health workers fearlessly deliver medical aid to those in need in hard to reach areas of South Sudan
- ◆ Protecting nearly 800,000 people from bilharzia in four countries of South Sudan
- ◆ Future forward, UNIPOD launched at the University of Juba
- ◆ South Sudan launches the Maputo protocol for the protection of women Rights.



(Juba, 17 August 2023) With 40 attacks on aid workers so far this year, South Sudan has recorded the highest number of attacks against aid workers, according to the 2023 Aid Worker Security Report. The attacks left 22 aid workers dead and 36 injured.

“Too many humanitarians, most of them South Sudanese nationals, have lost their lives while trying to alleviate the suffering around them,” said Mr. Peter Van der Auweraert, Acting Humanitarian Coordinator for South Sudan. “As we mark World Humanitarian Day, we honor their memory and pay tribute to their dedication and selflessness,” he added.

Across South Sudan, humanitarian workers, mostly national staff, face severe constraints while trying to reach people in need: armed violence, bureaucratic impediments, operational interference, targeted violence, and threats, and looting of assets.





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Most security incidents were recorded in Jonglei State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, Upper Nile State, Unity State, Central Equatoria State, Western Bahr el Ghazal State, and the Abyei Administrative Area. Between February and June 2023, criminal activities, particularly ambushes, looting of commercial and humanitarian trucks and insecurity between Jonglei State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area hindered the pre-positioning of supplies ahead of the rainy season, and forced a temporary halt in some humanitarian operations.

Incidents against aid workers continue even as humanitarian needs increase and funding lags. Some 9.4 million people in the country – more than two-thirds of the population – need humanitarian and protection assistance. Humanitarians require US\$1.7 billion to target 6.8 million of the most vulnerable people. As of 16 August, the [humanitarian response plan](#) is funded only at 43.8 per cent.

In addition, the conflict in neighboring Sudan has triggered an influx of over 220,000 refugees, returnees, and third-country nationals into South Sudan since April. The overcrowding at border points, transit centers and the Protection of Civilians site in Upper Nile State is likely to increase tensions and conflict over access to basic services and resources. The vulnerable returnees, particularly women, children, and the elderly, will be further exposed to protection and serious health risks.



Day after day, in extremely difficult circumstances, humanitarians support the most vulnerable
#NoMatterWhat



#NoMatterWhat

“The lack of a conducive environment for humanitarian workers significantly affects vital life-saving support to the most vulnerable, especially now as new crises put additional strain on the already fragile humanitarian situation,” said Mr. Van der Auweraert. “The people of South Sudan and those trying to help them deserve better,” he concluded.

About World Humanitarian Day

In 2008, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution designating 19 August as World Humanitarian Day. Each year on 19 August, World Humanitarian Day advocates for the survival, well-being and dignity of people affected by crises, and for the safety and security of aid workers. www.worldhumanitarianaday.org





Development highlights

Young people and stakeholders pledge to support South Sudan's Sustainable Development trajectory



"Young people are strong, resilient, and innovative, when equipped with the right skills, they can play critical roles that can enhance the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). When girls are allowed to go to school, a bright future is guaranteed for all and the nation will develop" said Yom Benjamin, while speaking on behalf of the youth delegates at the opening of the youth dialogue on SDGs in Juba.

The youth dialogue provided an opportunity for young people to contribute strategies to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs in South Sudan. It also provided youth with an avenue to reflect on the SDG progress, identify and showcase catalytic innovations that can help fast track the implementation and achievement of the SDGs.

"Young people make up the majority of South Sudanese population, they should be on the decision-making table to drive the SDG agenda forward," said Hon. Gai Mayen, the chairperson of the specialized committee for youth and sports. He encouraged young people to work hard, study and acquire skills that will enable them to participate in leadership and development initiatives in the country.

In his opening remarks, the UN RC ai Mr. Peter Van der Auweraert stressed the need for all stakeholders to work together. "We cannot talk about development without the youth, the implementation of the SDGs requires collective efforts from all stakeholders, said Peter.



Youth discussed, and shared strategies on how stakeholders can work together to expedite the implementation of the SDGs in South Sudan.

Representing the undersecretary of Ministry of Finance and Planning, Mr. Maxwell Loboka said, "SDGs, represent the world's shared commitment to building a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable world. They provide a roadmap for South Sudan's future, one that is inclusive and driven by the aspirations of our youth, the backbone of our nation."





By Poni Allen, UNRCO



The United Nations in South Sudan, in collaboration with the National Ministry of Youth and Sports and youth led organizations, commemorated the International Youth Day at STEM center, Juba University. The celebration anchored on the youth day theme, “Green Skills for Youth: Towards A Sustainable World” highlights the significant role young people play in driving sustainable development through green skills.

Speaking at the event, the Country Representative of the Food and Agriculture organization (FAO) called on the youth to be exemplary, and responsible. “Youth comes with responsibility, let’s bring out all efforts together to synchronize. Young people must demonstrate and take on the responsibilities that will enhance the development of the country.

Youth planted over 100 trees, marking the launch of an initiative to green Juba and South Sudan.

The acting UN Resident Coordinator reminded the gathering that South Sudan is one of the most youthful countries in Africa. He called for sustained mobilization of partnership to realize Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“Young people are the biggest asset in South Sudan, it is important that youth organize themselves and take responsibility for their community and country” he said.

Commenting on the theme: green skills for youth towards a sustainable world. He noted that it connects young people and the environment. He urged young people to work together to protect the environment.

“We can use our environment to make money, today we will plant a hundred trees, we aim to plant one million. When matured, trees can be sold and bring income said the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Hon. Africano Bartel. He advised youth to plant trees as a way of conserving the environment.

South Sudan, like many other countries, faces significant climate and environmental challenges, including floods, heat waves, deforestation, land degradation, water scarcity, and biodiversity loss. These challenges have adverse effects on both present and future generations, particularly impacting young people’s health, wellbeing and livelihood opportunities. A green economy offers the potential for new sustainable opportunities for young people.

International Youth Day, designated by the UN on the 12 August annually, recognizes and commemorates the significant contributions and innovative ideas of young people worldwide.



WHO health workers fearlessly deliver medical aid to those in need in hard to reach areas of South Sudan

By Atem John, WHO



Healthcare workers in South Sudan face immense challenges in providing healthcare services to people living in hard-to-reach areas.

Gabriel Chuang, a WHO staff, and his colleagues embarked on a grueling 20-hour walk through challenging terrain to investigate a disease outbreak in the remote village of Dajo, located in Longochuk County of Upper Nile State near the Ethiopia border.

Despite having no access to clean water or shelter, Chuong and his team endured an arduous journey through unforgiving terrain, driven by their unwavering commitment to healthcare.

"We set off on this strenuous journey, walking day and night, equipped with little more than what we could carry on our heads," Chuong recalled, reflecting on what he described as the most challenging experience of his life.

The village of Dajo, inaccessible by road due to flooding and with the nearest airstrip a strenuous seven-hour walk away, posed daunting logistical challenges. Yet, Chuong and his colleagues, bearing the minimal provisions they could carry, chose to brave the journey on foot.

"People like Chuang are our heroes. His story highlights the dire situation in which many healthcare workers operate in remote areas as they ensure to provide health services to the people in need, said Dr Fabian Ndenzako, WHO Representative in South Sudan." "We thank and celebrate Mr Chuang, WHO teams across the country, and all the health workers for their unflinching dedication to providing health services to those most in need."

Delivery of medicines and medical supplies to support the population

WHO supported the National Ministry of Health by deploying a multidisciplinary team comprising clinicians, nurses, and public health officers are deployed investigate a suspected viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) outbreak in Longochuk County and provide much-needed medical services to the affected population.

The team collected samples from patients and delivered 42 essential health emergency kits, including malaria rapid diagnostic test kits, Inter-Agency Emergency Health kits, sample collection and transportation kits, cholera investigation and treatment kits, and pneumonia kits.

Thanks to the generous contribution of the African Public Health Emergency Fund (APHEF), these kits will be able to serve 10 000 people for the next three months.



Protecting nearly 800,000 people from bilharzia in four counties of South Sudan

By Atem John, WHO



In an effort to protect people at risk of bilharzia in South Sudan, the Ministry of Health, with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), conducted mass drug administration in four counties.

The aim was to interrupt transmission and protect school-aged children and adults at risk of infection in moderate to high-risk areas of South Sudan. Bilharzia is a significant public health problem in many countries, and preventive chemotherapy has been demonstrated to benefit affected communities. However, it is still not readily accessible by all.

Bilharzia is highly endemic in 48 Payams, moderate in 96 Payams, and low in 93 Payams of South Sudan, putting over 4 million people at risk, including 1.5 million school-aged children aged 5 - 15.

South Sudan is endemic for bilharzia. People who come in contact with contaminated water when paddling, swimming or washing can become infected.

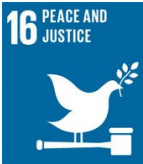
To control and eliminate human bilharzia, it is crucial to use large-scale preventive treatment with safe, single-dose, quality-assured medicines to prevent illness and interrupt transmission.

With the aim to exceed the World Health Organization's minimum treatment goal of at least 75% of at-risk school-age children and adults in high-risk areas, the Ministry of Health, with support from WHO and partners, conducted mass drug administration in schools and community centers in Juba and Terekeka, Central Equatoria State; Bor, Jonglei State and Awerial, Lakes State of moderate and high endemic, treating nearly 800 000 children and adults.

Dr Fabian Ndenzako, WHO Representative a.i. for South Sudan, said, "Administering medicine to prevent bilharzia will protect children and adults from getting sick."

Thanks to the generous contribution of Merck Pharmaceuticals, WHO is committed to supporting the Ministry of Health to reduce infection levels and prevent illness, especially the development of irreversible pathology in adulthood, using preventive therapy through mass treatment of targeted groups, said Dr Ndenzako.





Future forward; UNIPOD Launched at the University of Juba

By Sarah Abraham, UNDP



VP Hussein Abdelbaggi and delegates towards the UNIPOD Photo: UNDP/ Sarah Sibrino

The UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Mr. Titus Osundina emphasized that the UNIPOD will serve as a space where University faculty and Students will become innovators and entrepreneurs while fostering connections with industries, UN agencies and the local community.

The UNIPOD is a UNDP African Regional Bureau initiative aimed at promoting innovation, inter-disciplinary research and nurture the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs in the University. Located in six countries: Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Gabon, Rwanda, Guinea, Togo and now South Sudan.

The first high tech innovation hub for technology was launched in Juba University on 16 August 2023. Officiated by H.E. Hussein Abdelbaggi, Vice President for Services Cluster the University of Juba Innovation POD (UNIPOD) is the first of its kind in the country. Worth \$1.2million, the UNIPOD facility is furnished with equipment for; woodwork lab, Agri/Food Tech Lab, Textiles/Fabrics, Electrical & Electronics Lab, Audio Visual & Augmented Reality/Visual Reality (AR/VR) Lab, and other spaces.

After a tour of the University and UNIPOD premises, the Vice President pledged his support to all South Sudan Universities, stating that he has seen the need of the students. The UNIPOD is a great solution because it brings students what they really need, he said.

Hon. Gabriel Changson Chang the National Minister for Higher Education, in attendance, reiterated the Ministries commitment in transforming a National Universities to Centres of excellence. Although resources are limited, he said, discussions are ongoing with the cabinet on the national budget and the enactment of the Education Bill, which will facilitate improvement of higher learning institutions.

The University of Juba and UNDP South Sudan signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2022 and since then, the two entities have partnered to ensure the UNIPOD's success through the National Transformational Leadership Institute (NTLI) of the University, Go Girls Initiative and the Peace and Community Cohesion (PaCC) project at UNDP.

Ensuring ownership and continuity of the UNIPOD, UNDP hired a consultant to set up a team of youth in the science and arts fields who will manage the POD.

Speaking at the launch, Prof. John Akech the Vice Chancellor of the University of Juba said that the UNIPOD will accelerate learning for students and talented youth while reinventing the future and transforming lives.



South Sudan Launches the Maputo Protocol for the Protection of Women Rights

By Sarah Chaat, UN Women



Speaker of Parliament, minister of gender UN Women Deputy Representative, Ambassadors pose for a photo during the launch. Photo: UN Women/Sarah Nyibak

of South Sudan to uphold relevant laws that impact on the lives of the people of South Sudan.”

Hon Aya Benjamin Minister of Gender, Child and Social Welfare stated that the launch of the Maputo protocol is a significant milestone, a groundbreaking achievement in South Sudan, and it shows the Government’s commitment to uphold human rights gender equality and the empowerment of women in South Sudan.

About the Maputo Protocol

- ◆ The Maputo Protocol of 2003: The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) on the Rights of Women in Africa was adopted in Maputo in July 2003.
- ◆ The adoption of the Protocol by the African Union is a positive step towards combating discrimination and violence against women
- ◆ It is significant in efforts to promote and ensure respect for the rights of African women. T
- ◆ he Protocol requires the African States to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women in Africa and to promote equality between men and women
- ◆ The Maputo Protocol has given rise to the adoption and promulgation of equally innovative and progressive legislation, policies and other institutional mechanisms to advance women’s human rights .

According to a UN women report released in September 2022, at the current rate of progress it will take up to 286 years to close gender gaps in legal protection and remove discriminatory laws, 140 years for women to be represented equally in positions of power and leadership in the workplace, and at least 40 years to achieve equal representation in national parliaments. South Sudan is progressing and rallying towards closing the gender gap, being committed, and making huge strides towards achieving gender equality.

On the 24th February 2023, following the international conference on women’s transformational leadership that was held in Juba that brought about four hundred women from all the ten States and three Administrative Areas of South Sudan, and African women from 15 countries, President Salva Kiir Mayar acceded the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa - known as the Maputo Protocol. South Sudan is the 44th country in Africa to ratify the protocol on women’s rights.

Speaking at the Launch of the Maputo Protocol in Juba on the 18th of July UN women Deputy Country representative Rukaya Mohammed said that “The Maputo protocol is one of the world’s most progressive and comprehensive women’s rights instruments, with a purpose to protect, promote and affirm women’s human rights to exercise civil and political rights; economic, social, and cultural rights as well as collective and solidarity rights, further reaffirming the universality, indivisibility, and interdependency of human rights for African women.”

The Speaker of the Government of National Unity, Rt Hon Nunu Kumba, commended the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare for the role it has played and for depositing this instrument of women’s rights on the 19th of June to the African Union Commission, saying “This is the manifestation of our commitment as the government





By Garang Abraham Malak, UNICEF

UNICEF and partner ForAfriKa work to tackle high rates of common illnesses and malnutrition in children and mothers in Boma



A nutrition center supposed by UNICEF.
Photo Credit UNICEF/Garang Abraham Malak

In a small blue shed, amongst lush bush in remote eastern South Sudan – a primary care center is providing crucial healthcare and nutrition services to over 3,000 people from the Jie tribe population.

Boma County is one of the most remote places in South Sudan and the area is susceptible to high rates of common illnesses such as malaria, diarrhea, pneumonia, and malnutrition – illnesses that particularly affect children.

UNICEF's health partner ForAfrika established the center years ago to tackle such health issues, but recently, progress has been made to integrate nutrition services together with other health services to treat and prevent malnutrition in children and mothers.

The facility which receives an average of 15 patients per day is run by six healthcare workers and four nutrition professionals who work tirelessly to improve the health outcomes of the local population.

For Angelina Nakachiipio - a 26-year-old mother, the facility has been instrumental for her and her child Lonyia Lonyango since he was born two years ago.

When I was pregnant, I received nutrition supplements and I believed those services helped me reach where I am today. After delivering my baby, I didn't have enough blood, but the services offered at the center here, plus proper feeding advised by doctors helped me gain my blood back and I am now healthy.

Angelina Nakachiipio, 26-year-old mother

She added that the center also later helped her baby access medication after an intense illness.

"My baby was so sick. I didn't know what he was going through. This sickness lasted for one week, and it became bad in the second week. I rushed him to the facility where the doctor told me he had malaria and was malnourished too."

hasn't gotten sick again," said Angelina.

"I became so worried but got the medication instantly. Without these services, my baby's health would have been very bad, and I am not sure whether he could have survived. I am glad since his discharge; he hasn't gotten sick again," said Angelina.

Meanwhile Mary Niet, a young mother of an 8-month-old Lokaraba Abraham also revealed that without the existence of the center, she wasn't sure of her baby's survival.

"My baby had diarrhea and a cough. His situation before I brought him to the center was worrying. The child was so dehydrated. I felt so helpless that I couldn't support him."

After consultation from my community healthcare worker, I was asked to rush the baby to the Naoyapuro site. When I reached there, the worker screened the baby and got immediate medication for some days for which he became well, and I was so happy.

Mary Niet, a mother

Abraham Manso is a nurse who oversees Naoyapuro Nutrition Site as the team leader. Born in Naoyapuro and later raised in Kenya, Abraham revealed that he returned home after completing his studies to come and serve the community.

"What inspired me to come back to my Jie community is the desire to serve the people. Since I got this job, I am happy simply because I am helping the community, especially children and women, and also helping myself and my family meet their basic living needs."

Read more: [Nutrition and health services integration is helping children in remote parts of South Sudan | UNICEF South Sudan](#)





The Youth centers serving as a catalyst for Transformation in South Sudan

A place which renews the lost hopes of young people

By Isaac Hurskin, UNICEF

Just outside of Juba, South Sudan, a youth center hums with activity. The sounds of drumbeats and guitar strums blend with the laughter of children, dancing, and singing, while in a quieter room, young artists express their stories through drawings.

South Sudan is still marked by intercommunal and subnational conflict, which, combined with deeply rooted and new grievances, has led to continued violence and instability in the young country. Despite efforts and progress towards peace, the situation remains unsettled with children and youth often mobilized by armed groups in the conflicts. Combined with natural disasters such as flooding and droughts, and extreme poverty heightens vulnerability, with adolescent boys and girls among the most at risk.

Adolescent boys face deeply entrenched social norms and challenges such as normalized violence, limited opportunities, and societal expectations to view and treat girls and women as assets. Conversely, adolescent girls often have only one prospect - marriage. Their opportunities for education are restricted, and they're frequently subjected to physical and sexual violence and ill-health from early pregnancies. This has led to widespread gender-based violence and disempowerment, with more than half of all girls married off before the age of 18.

Creating protective spaces for victims of abuse and violence and opening opportunities for adolescents is a key component of UNICEF's Child Protection program. "This initiative aims to protect children in the most difficult situations, children that are often extremely hard to reach" says Marité Decker, UNICEF Child Protection Officer. "The core of our intervention methodology is creating physical and emotional safe spaces where these adolescents and youth can flourish." These spaces extend beyond mere physical environments to cultivate emotional safety among peers, mentors, and other engaged at the center.



"The centers are designed to cultivate an atmosphere that promotes self-regulation and the development of social and emotional skills. By involving a wider community of stakeholders and guardians, we aim to meet the immediate and long-term needs of these children".

Marité Decker, UNICEF Child Protection Officer

The initiative focuses on fostering positive relationships as an integral part of healing and growing beyond traumatic incidents and aggressive behavior. It helps young people build healthy connections, vital for their journey towards recovery, growth, and reintegration, while developing essential life skills like self-regulation, anger management, and mindfulness through engaging activities such as sports, breathwork, arts, music, as well as vocational training and gardening work. At the heart of these centers is the principle of co-creation.

Harriet Opani, Inspirator, South Sudan.

Photo credit: UNICEF/Hurskin

The youth have a leading role in decision-making, shaping the center's atmosphere, activities, and conflict resolution guidance. One of the main pillars of the project is the recruitment of 'inspirators', young individuals who have themselves, overcome adverse childhood experiences, to guide and motivate others.

One of these inspirators is Harriet Opani, now 26. She credits her life's trajectory to her passion for football. She began playing at 14 and it quickly became a vital part of her life. "Football made me who I am," she says. "My mentors in the sport were the ones who motivated me and helped me pursue my dream."

Harriet was fortunate to receive a football scholarship that allowed her to study medicine. This was a significant achievement. Furthermore, football presented her with opportunities to explore beyond her hometown. Read more: [The Youth Centers Serving as a Catalyst for Transformation in South Sudan | UNICEF South Sudan](#)





SIDA TVET Project launched in Western Equatoria state

By Doreen Gunne Loboka, UNESCO



The youth and state authorities in Western Equatoria State, highly welcomed the launching of the UNESCO – SIDA funded project “Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training in South Sudan” in the state.

UNESCO and Finn Church Aid (FCA), in collaboration with the national and State Ministries of General Education and Instructions formally launched the TVET project in Yambio town,

Female TVET learner, practicing welding and metal fabrication. UNESCO OIC, Dr Tap Raj Pant and Hon. Grace Apollo. Photo credit: Doreen Gunne /UNESCO

Western Equatoria State. The event brought together over fifty-five (55) stakeholders drawn from the relevant line ministries, including the youth, women associations, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

The event was presided over by the representative of the State Governor of Western Equatoria State (Hon. Christopher Benjamin, who doubles as the Minister of Peace Building), State Minister of Education (Hon. Grace Apollo), minister of Youth and Sports (Hon. David Paulino Simbi), Minister of Agriculture and Food Security (Hon. Alison Barnaba), minister of Housing (Hon. Simon Sayawa); the representative of National Ministry of General Education and Instructions (Gibson Waru, DG of TVET and chairperson of the national TVET Ad-hoc Coordination Committee), National Ministry of Labor and Public Service (Rev. Waigo Ben Tauga, also deputy chairperson of the National TVET Ad-hoc coordination committee). Director General national Ministry of Youth and Sports (Mario Velvur), and Director General national Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare (Miriam Betty) and national Chamber of Commerce (Angelo Lado).

Speaking at the project launch, Mr. Simple John, chairperson of the youth union in Western Equatoria applauded the partners for the TVET project being launched targeting the youth for skills development. He cited that majority of the youth in WES were idle and are often prone to manipulation by political influencers to engage in negative activities. However, through the opportunity of this project, he is confident that many youths will now acquire appropriate skills for employability, self-employment, and self-reliance.

On his part, the representative of the State Governor of WES State, Hon. Christopher Benjamin, congratulated the people of WES upon the launching of the TVET project and thanked the partners for the initiative. He underscored that TVET is a critical subsector if prioritized, it has the potential to positively impact the economy of the country. He pointed out that emphasis should be put on improving agricultural and veterinary skills to enhance food production as Western Equatoria has the potential to be the breadbasket of the country and region.

For his part, Dr Tap Raj Pant, UNESCO representative and Officer in Charge (OIC), appreciated the state officials’ warm reception of the project being launched, which he said was so far the first milestone for TVET in South Sudan. He was grateful to the Swedish SIDA for the trust and support given to UNESCO to lead TVET in the country. He further underscored that UNESCO in partnership with likeminded partners will continue to provide technical support to the government of South Sudan aimed to set a foundation for a robust and integrated approach to the TVET program aligned to UNESCO global TVET strategy and the agenda 2030. Dr Tap also emphasized the importance of integrating TVET skills with literacy as the foundation for development. He asserted that the project being launched will focus on empowering the youth with skills, as well as strengthen capacities of TVET institutions.





IOM commemorates World Day Against Trafficking persons in Juba

By Loyce Nabie, IOM



Migrant communities march to raise awareness of trafficking in persons. Photo: IOM/Nabie Loyce .

The International Organization for Migration together with the Human Anti-Trafficking Network brought together students, migrant communities from countries neighboring South Sudan, representatives from South Sudan organized forces to commemorate the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.

Every year, member states of the United Nations marks 30 July as World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, a decision that came out of the 2013 UN General Assembly which adopted a resolution A/RES/68/192 that designate 30 July as the Anti-Trafficking Day to raise awareness of the situation of victims of human trafficking and for the promotion and protection of their rights.

The campaign for [World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2023](#) aims to raise awareness while reaching every victim of trafficking and leaving no one behind.

"This day gives us the opportunity to raise awareness and sensitize everyone on the issue of human trafficking and enables us to amplify the impact of the great work we are doing to combat human trafficking" said Philip Boterere, IOM South Sudan's Cluster Coordinator.

During the commemoration event in Juba, migrant communities in South Sudan called on governments, law enforcement, public services, and civil society to enhance their efforts to strengthen prevention, identify and support victims of trafficking.

"Migrants face a lot of problems at entry points because most of them are lured to travel without the required documents with promises of getting better jobs in South Sudan. When some of these irregular migrants their destinations, life becomes contrary to what they were promised and they become victims of trafficking." said Niyibizi Aladin, the chairperson of the Burundian Diaspora in South Sudan.

Aladin urged authorities to strengthen their efforts in identifying victims of trafficking at the points of entry.

On 30 July 2010, UN General Assembly adopted Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons urging Governments worldwide to take coordinated and consistent measures against this scourge. The Plan calls for integrating the fight against human trafficking into the UN's broader programmes in order to boost development and strengthen security worldwide.

"To End Human Trafficking, we cannot allow this crime to be met with increasing indifference and impunity. We must strengthen resilience against exploitation and the underlying socio-economic and cultural issues that are conducive to trafficking." Urged Mr. Boterere

"We must sensitize everyone to the topic of human trafficking and thus push attention towards those who can make a difference in terms of changing policy and national resource management to strengthen prevention measures, improve identification of victims, increase support of survivors and end impunity." Boterere concluded.

South Sudan is a country of origin and destination market for human trafficking with the most prevalent forms of trafficking including forced recruitment into armed forces and armed groups, forced marriage, domestic servitude, and sexual exploitation particularly among women and children, as well as labor exploitation.

To boost the country's efforts to combat trafficking, IOM supported the Government establish the Technical Task Force on Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants to enable the government respond, raise awareness and train front line actors on victim identification and participate in regional policy dialogues and evidence collection on data.

Trafficking in Persons is defined in the UN protocol also known as Palermo Protocol as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

IOM's migration management programme is supported by European Union, Better Migration Management, and the German Cooperation.

Read the story on IOM website: <https://bit.ly/47KTDYG>





From eating to providing school meals: Julia's personal story with WFP

By Eulalia Berlanga, WFP

Growing up in Juba in the early 2000s, Julia dreamt of working for the World Food Programme (WFP), the organization behind the warm meals and the “girls’ package” she received at school. Now, years later, her dreams have become a reality after landing a job with WFP. Julia is based in Maban, Upper Nile State, where she’s a field monitor, ensuring WFP’s programmes are running smoothly.

“As a kid I always had a passion to support, to help people, because I grew up in a conflict and I saw people suffering around me,” Julia remembers. “WFP was not only providing meals at my school, but they were also giving food assistance to almost everybody in Juba.”

In a country where two-thirds of the country faces critical food insecurity and half of all children are out of school, school meals are a daily lifeline for many students whose parents keep them enrolled and attending the classroom to ease the pressure on the household food budget.

“My father was a teacher and wanted me to study despite the pressure from the community. It was normal for girls to marry as young as 13, but it was not the case for everyone,” says Julia.

Girls are at particularly high risk of being pulled from the classroom early for marriage, especially when a family is struggling financially. To incentivize families to send their daughters to school, WFP provided, and still provides, what’s known as the girl package, a take-home ration with cereals and oil for them and their families.

“Many families see their daughter’s marriage as an easy solution for their economic struggle which also ends their studies. With these packages, WFP highlights the importance of their education and incentivizes families to keep girls at school,” says Aachal Chand, Head of Nutrition and School Meals at WFP South Sudan.

After finishing secondary school in Juba, Julia moved to Malakal in the north of the country to get her diploma in ICT at Upper Nile University. Throughout her studies she worked for a security company but she never forgot her childhood dream of working for WFP. As soon as she finished her studies she began applying for jobs and, a few months later, she got an offer to work for WFP’s Field Office in Maban. She hasn’t looked back since.

“If I could say something to young Julia’s out there, I would tell them to study and follow their dreams. Despite all the challenges, a dream is not just a dream; I am living my dreams now and their dreams can also become their reality,” says Julia.

Across the country there are an estimated 2.7 million potential Julia’s. Some are in school and on their way to achieving their dreams, but others are in need of a strong social safety net and support to help get them into school so they can reach their full potential.

Lilian is 13 years old and one of those on their way to achieving her dreams. She attends primary school in Kapoeta North, in the south-east of the country and has her sights set on becoming a nurse to help people in her community, especially the orphans and widows. She’s passionate about education and the places it can take her and her peers.

“With education you can change yourself and your community, learn what is right and what is wrong,” says Lilian.

Girls in South Sudan often have a delayed start to or interrupted education, this is due to a low prioritization of their education or marrying at a young age. School meals are an important incentive for families, particularly in highly food insecure areas, to send their children to school by ensuring students have at least one nutritious meal a day and taking economic pressure off families.

Lilian’s school saw a sharp increase in the number of students after they started serving meals provided by WFP. From 700 children in 2019, the school has now 1252 students eager to learn every day. But as resources become increasingly constrained, fewer students and communities are able to benefit from WFP’s School Meals programme; from 600,000 in 2022 to only 440,000 in 2023.

“The School Meals programme is critical for the future of millions of girls and the future of South Sudan,” said WFP Representative to South Sudan, Mary-Ellen McGroarty. “Among our staff in WFP South Sudan we have people who have been refugees, people who have received school meals, and people who used to rely on WFP for food each day. This shows just how a little support can go a long way in creating a generation of people who can help build a country.”

School meals are possible thanks to support from Canada, the European Union, Japan, and Germany.



Julia Poni working for WFP in Maban. Photo Credit : WFP/Eulalia Berlanga





EU AND UNDP PARTNERSHIP TOWARDS SUPPORTING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR SOUTH SUDAN ELECTIONS

By Sarah Sibrino, UNDP



SG, of NEC Yoanes Amum, EU - Amb. Timo Olkkonen and UNDP - DRRP Titus Asundina signing the agreement . Photo Credit : UNDP/Sarah Sibrino

On Thursday 17th August 2023, The European Union (EU) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) signed an agreement of 3million Euros to support the creation of an enabling environment for South Sudan's Elections set to take place in December 2024.

The Project implemented in collaboration with UNMISS, UNESCO and UN Women will strengthen national institutions, platforms, and processes for a credible, peaceful, and inclusive electoral process. The upcoming elections are a vital part of fulfilling the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-

ARCSS) and the roadmap.

During the press conference, the European Union Ambassador to South Sudan, Timo Olkkonen said that having the elections is not enough without fostering trust, acceptance of the elections results and the meaningful participation of citizens in all levels of the process. The Ambassador further stated that, "This requires a holistic approach that includes respect for human rights, equality and inclusiveness of participation, access to information, appropriate legislative frameworks and independent security which are paramount to create a conducive context in which the electoral process can take place."

Mr. Titus Osundina the Deputy Resident Representative for UNDP in his remarks said that UNDP's partnership with the European Union is incredibly important as it allows the us to provide support for an enabling environment that sets the foundation for credible and inclusive peaceful elections.

Witnessing the signing on behalf of the government was the Secretary General for the National Elections Commission (NEC), Yoanes Amum Nyiker who said that the country is yet to resolve certain issues pertinent to the elections such as the development of the legal framework, mobilization of resources need for the electoral process, and displaced citizens.

The Project will therefore work hand in hand with national institutions to strengthen the electoral process i.e. National Elections Commission (NEC), Political Parties Council (PPC), the judiciary, media, police, civil society including women, youth and persons living with disabilities as well as under represented groups. Furthermore, the project will also encompass the development of the electoral legal framework, election dispute resolution, broad and inclusive civic and voter education, human rights monitoring during the elections, election security and conflict mitigation.





“INCREDIBLE PAIN” CAUSED BY THE DEATH OF A COUSIN WAS “THE TURNING POINT” WHICH LED JOYCE AISHA LAKU FROM SOUTH SUDAN INTO HUMANITARIAN WORK



Joyce Asha Laku, joined OCHA in 2013 as a National Field Officer in South Sudan Photo Credit OCHA/Wilfred Iramaku

She is currently deployed with the UN humanitarian affairs office, [OCHA](#), to the north of her country, supporting refugees who are fleeing conflict in Sudan.

She has been speaking to *UN News* ahead of [World Humanitarian Day](#) which is commemorated annually on 19 August.

“Saving lives became a passion of mine when I was 15. One of my cousins was staying with us for the holidays. We were so close that she would come directly to my place after boarding school, instead of her parents. We did everything together.

One morning, it was time for her to go back to school and I accompanied her to her bus stop. Little did I know that this would be the last time I would see her. At about 4am, news got to us that the bus had been in a terrible accident. It fell off a bridge, killing 21 passengers, including my cousin.

I immediately went to the police station to enquire about her – at that time I didn’t know she was one of the victims. Information was reaching families very late as many had to reach the police station by bike, and it was a long ride.

They clearly needed help with the rescue, and I volunteered. There weren’t enough ambulances, so we were fishing bodies out of the water and piling them on the shore. I don’t know how I kept my composure, but I did.

At the hospital, so many families anxiously waited for answers. So many mothers and fathers cried around me, and yet, I couldn’t shed a tear.

It was only when I stepped away from all this chaos and went back home that I felt the weight of my own emotions. This is the moment I realized that I wanted to become a humanitarian worker and dedicate my life to helping others and saving lives; a moment of incredible pain became a turning point in my life.

South Sudan violence

In 2016, I was working in South Sudan when violence broke out following the collapse of the peace agreement that put an end to the civil war. All humanitarians involved in the response were suddenly told to evacuate, however, the military wouldn’t let us go through and were blocking the roads. They were shooting at those trying to flee, including us.

I don’t know where I got the courage to stay calm. I did my best not to panic, I stood strong and demanded answers from the authorities. All I could think of is that we had a responsibility towards the community, and we simply couldn’t let them down.

Sudan crisis

The current crisis in Sudan, our northern neighbor, is now worse than ever. I was deployed to Renk, a town in South Sudan, to monitor and report on the humanitarian situation. People fleeing Sudan face numerous challenges while on the move. Thousands of tired, dehydrated, and sick people continue to register at the point of entry each day. Many of them have experienced brutality, exploitation, extortion, and looting. Women and children are often victims of sexual violence, and children are more vulnerable than ever with many out of school, scared, and hungry. Read more: [First Person: Family death ‘turning point’ in South Sudanese hu-](#)

[manitarian’s life | UN News](#)





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