



THE RIPPLE EFFECT

What is it that South Sudan has plenty of, but less than half of the population has access to? The answer is water.

It is a bit more complicated than the riddle suggests but the paradox is still there. If you look at South Sudan on a map, a big section is covered by river Nile and its tributaries. With so much water available, why are people still left with the impossible choice of being thirsty or drink dirty water?

Decades of conflict has hampered investments in water infrastructure in South Sudan. The optimism after the peace agreement was signed in 2005 saw several water projects, but waves of violence from 2013 smashed new water infrastructure and put projects on hold. Currently, only 40 per cent of the population has access to clean drinking water, while the rest is at risk when quenching their thirst under the merciless sun.

What looks like over boiled spaghetti is gently pulled out of someone's foot and wrapped around a toothpick. Guinea worm is just one of many parasites and diseases feasting in the bodies of people forced to drink dirty water. More commonly is acute watery diarrhea which is affecting children the most and can take down a healthy boy or girl in just a few days. Diarrhea remains one of the top three child killers in South Sudan.

Clean water is not only affecting people's health from the inside of the body but also the outside. With the threat of COVID-19, people are asked to wash their hands as a protective measure. If you don't use clean water, it means you

are rubbing away the virus but dressing your hands with bacteria that will later find its way into the body, potentially making you sick.

The ripple effect of easy access to clean water for everyone in South Sudan will be like a positive tsunami. Children will stop filling up health and nutrition centers as they no longer have frequent acute watery diarrhea which often leads to acute malnutrition. Mothers don't have to look after sick children. Money spent on medicine can be used for school fees and the extra time can be spent on income generation. Less children will die from drowning while fetching water. Girls and women will be less at risk of sexual violence, as they don't have to walk long distances often in the dark to fetch water. The work force needs fewer sick days and becomes more productive which contributes positively to economic growth. In a nutshell, everybody wins.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Breaking stereotypes,
- 85 children released from prison
- UNMISS supports local businesses in the fight against COVID-19
- On the frontline of COVID 19 fight
- UN women joins the fight against COVID-19
- Increasing access to life saving treatment for COVID-19 patients.

The UN in South Sudan is committed to working towards the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 6, which aims at securing sustainable access to water and sanitation for all. To get there, innovative and scalable interventions are needed. UNICEF, as the lead on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) have some exciting solutions literally in the pipeline. The Juba Pipeline project will pump dirty water from the river Nile to a water treatment plant making it potable. From there, water is pumped to an elevated water tower where gravity is pushing the water to water kiosks in communities across the capital. In urban areas, we need to see more grand solutions aiming at serving many people going forward. For rural areas we need tailored approaches, utilizing existing water sources turning dangerous water into water conducive for life. Investing in clean water is investing in child health, general health, the South Sudan economy and creates a foundation for a prosperous South Sudan.

CHALLENGES OF ACCESS TO WATER: TALES OF JUBA RESIDENTS

Viviana Marcelin spends most of her day fetching water, as the nearest borehole in the Jebel area in Juba is one hour by foot away. “We need four of these per day at least,” she says pointing at the 20-liter jerrycan. “but I can only carry one at the time as it is so heavy and the distance is far, so I spend most of the days fetching water.” To make every drop last longer, she makes sacrifices every day. “We don’t wash our clothes as often as we should, don’t wash ourselves as often as we should, not even the kids.”

Mary Ding: Children in the Rejaf community in Juba see children getting sick from dirty water on a weekly basis. Acute watery diarrhea is most common. She knows that is treatable, but what is not is the many deaths from drowning. “At least 15-20 children just from this community has died because of that.” She explains how children get home from school being thirsty. If there is not water in the house, they venture to the river to quench their thirst and as they do that, the mighty river Nile is swallowing the child-as they can’t swim.

Angelina Njaore Tural: “Before we had to spend time going to the river for water, but the biggest change is in our children. They are no longer sick,” says Angelina. She is the chair lady of the community water committee in Hai Sluk in Rubkona. Together with four other women, she has taken on one of the most important jobs; keeping children healthy through managing the new water kiosk in their community. “When the men realized this was unpaid work, they didn’t want it. So, we said; we are women, we take care of our children, we will do it.”

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A community member drawing water from a tap.

Photo Credit: UNICEF



A pupil drinking water from a tap. Photo Credit: UNICEF

NEWS FROM UN AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

THE BOREHOLE HANDPUMP MECHANIC BREAKING STEREOTYPES IN HER COMMUNITY

In July 2018, IOM constructed a water yard to serve the community of Joppa on the outskirts of Juba with safe drinking water.

Fitted with a full autonomous hybrid solar system, the water yard has the capacity to provide more than 4,100 residents of Joppa with water.

Agnes is a female borehole handpump mechanic breaking stereotypes in her community. She is one of four community members trained by engineers from the International Organization for Migration's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (IOM WASH) as handpump mechanics to do maintenance and repairs of the pumps.

Read her story here <https://bit.ly/2W98rNM>



Agnes, the pump mechanic breaking stereotypes in her community.

Photo Credit: IOM

UNMISS SUPPORTS LOCAL BUSINESSES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

To help prevent COVID-19, UNMISS peacekeepers and humanitarian partners made financial and in-kind donations to purchase cloth face masks for displaced families living in the Malakal Protection of Civilians site.

This effort is also supporting local enterprise with tailors from the protection camp commissioned to make the first 2000 masks in just one week.

UNMISS' Relief Reintegration and Protection team has also been working with a non-governmental organization since the beginning of the year to train displaced returnees and youth from Kodok in various vocational skills, including dress-making. With the outbreak of COVID-19, these tailors are now focusing their efforts on producing cloth masks with more than 750 already distributed to

frontline health workers and community members in the Kodok market.



A tailor making cloth face masks to help curb the spread of COVID 19.

Photo Credit: UNMISS

85 CHILDREN RELEASED FROM PRISON IN SOUTH SUDAN



An empty prison cell, UNICEF and UNMISS will continue to advocate for the release of children from detention. Photo Credit: UNICEF

On 7 May, UNICEF announced 85 juveniles had been released from detention in South Sudan to decongest prisons as a COVID-19 prevention measure.

The children were handed over to their parents or other legal guardians. 11 juveniles remain in prison due to the severity of the offences they are accused of.

As detention of new children is still ongoing, UNICEF and the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) will continue to advocate for their immediate release as new cases become known.

The release is a collaboration between the South Sudan Judiciary, the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, UNMISS and UNICEF. These are also important partners for UNICEF working to improve justice for children in South Sudan.

ON THE FRONTLINE OF COVID-19 FIGHT: ‘WE SHALL OVERCOME THIS’

Midwife Justine Mangwi is concerned about protecting mothers and their newborns from being infected with COVID-19. More expectant mothers are expressing preference to deliver at home instead of the hospital for fear of catching the virus in a health facility.

South Sudan has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in the world and one of the contributing factors is the low skilled birth attendance. Only 15 per cent of women deliver assisted by a trained birth attendant such as a midwife. Now, COVID-19 adds up to the many factors that could cause pregnancy and childbirth complications.

UNFPA is working with the Ministry of Health to ensure that maternal health and other reproductive health services are safeguarded to prevent deaths and illnesses especially among pregnant and breastfeeding women and their newborns, as well as protection for frontline health workers like midwives. Read more <https://bit.ly/3dHitf7>



Midwife Justine Mangwi giving some tips to a new mother at Juba Teaching Hospital on caring for her newborn. Photo Credit: UNFPA

UN WOMEN JOINS THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19



Ms. Regina Ossa, Director General in the Ministry of Gender receiving sanitation materials donated by UN Women

Photo Credit: UN WOMEN

On 23rd April 2020, UN women South Sudan Country office joined efforts to help curb the spread of Corona Virus in South Sudan by donating 400 washing buckets and stands; and dozens of cartons of Dettol hand washing soap to the National Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare.

This donation aims to target women who are at a higher risk of Corona Virus infection given that women bear the greater burden of caregiving and domestic work.

Ms. Regina Ossa, the Director General at the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare appreciated the support that UN Women has been providing to the ministry over the years. She asserted that, “Women are very vulnerable to COVID-19 and the donations will help prevent the spread of Corona Virus in South Sudan”

UN Women will continue working with its partners to prioritize all marginalized groups including women living with disabilities, women living in refugee camps and internally displaced people’s camps, those in prisons and the elderly to ensure that they have access to sanitation facilities and the right information on how to keep themselves and their loved ones safe.

INCREASING ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING TREATMENT FOR COVID-19 PATIENTS IN SOUTH SUDAN

COVID-19 cases have been reported in 52 African countries; many having wide-spread community transmission.

Given the high risk of spread of COVID-19 in South Sudan, expanding the Dr John Garang Infectious Diseases Unit (IDU) is one of the key activities which will help protect South Sudanese citizens and residents.

To alleviate the hospital bed shortage designated for COVID-19 in the country, WHO is expanding the Dr John Garang Multi-purpose Infectious Diseases Unit in Juba from 24 to 80 bed capacity treatment center, a temperature controlled dispensing pharmacy and a fully equipped laundry facility to enhance infection prevention and control. Staffed by the International Medical Corps (IMC) and

the Ministry of Health clinicians, the facility will provide care for more patients as opposed to the previous size of the facility.

“Thanks to WHO, the expansion of the Infectious Diseases Unit is an incredible team effort, bringing together partners to separate patients with respiratory symptoms so they are not waiting among other patients seeking care”, said Dr Angok Gordon, Incident Manager for the COVID-19 response at the Ministry of Health.

“Expanding and equipping healthcare facilities is fundamental to protect both patients and staff”, said Dr Olushayo Olu, WHO Representative for South Sudan. “The expansion of the IDU establishes a tertiary health facility capable of delivering quality healthcare services and ensures adequate protection of staff, patients and prevention of environmental contamination”.

The Infectious Disease Unit was designed and equipped to enhance supportive care which is currently the hallmark of treatment for COVID-19 patients, as there is no specific treatment for the virus to date.

The Dr John Garang Infectious Diseases Unit was opened on 20 December 2018 as part of the national emergency preparedness and response efforts to intensify preparedness in response to an Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The facility was constructed by WHO in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. The Unit also serves as a training and simulation facility to build national capacity in management of infectious diseases.

The COVID-19 response is funded by the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, the People's Republic of China, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and EU Humanitarian Aid.



Dr. John Garang Infectious Diseases Unit has been equipped with 80 ICU beds to admin COVID-19 patients. Photo Credit WHO

“Expanding and equipping healthcare facilities is fundamental to the protection of both patients and staff”

**DR. Olushayo Olu
WHO Country Representative**

FAO SEEDS DISTRIBUTION IN SOUTH SUDAN DURING COVID-19: A YOUNG FEMALE FARMER RECEIVES QUALITY SEEDS FOR THE PLANTING SEASON



A farmer in South Sudan’s Northern Bari Payam in Central Equatoria State holding seeds received at an FAO distribution.

Photo Credit: FAO

Jacqueline is 21 years old and already the mother of three children. The family lives in northern Bari Payam, in Central Equatoria State, where in April FAO distributed seeds and essential farming tools to 500 households as part of the Organization’s Emergency Livelihood Response Programme (ELRP) in [South Sudan](#).

With restrictions imposed on the movement of personnel and equipment due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, FAO is supporting and working with the Government of South Sudan to find new ways to distribute seeds to farmers during the ongoing planting season. Without these seeds, the most vulnerable people could be brought to the brink of famine in the coming months.

Read the [full article](#)

UNHCR SUPPORT TO WATER RESOURCES SYSTEM IN UNITY STATE



UNHCR and its partners Staff supervising the area of the hafir excavation's project. **Photo Credit: UNHCR**

Access to water, sanitation and hygiene services is critical as it greatly impacts many aspects of life – mainly health and nutrition. This is also conducive to maintain protection space, which is even more important during a pandemic.

In 2019, UNHCR and partners SP and AAHI excavated four hafirs (water dams), two in Yida and two in Jamjang, and drilled four boreholes in Jamjang, alleviating the water shortage in the area, for refugees, South Sudanese and livestock consumption.

The excavation of one large hafir dam (25,000m³ capacity) is currently ongoing in Jamjang to harvest water running in natural streams during the rainy season.

The project will benefit both the forcibly displaced and their host community – enhancing also peaceful co-existence between communities.

A TRULY MULTI-PURPOSE POND PROVIDES WATER THROUGH THE SEASONS

Ponds built by communities in South Sudan with support from the World Food Programme give much more than just water

Looking at the dust clouds that form behind us and parched clay soil all around, you would never be able to tell that this land was once flooded. In this part of South Sudan water flows the Lol River to the Sudd – the world's largest swamp. The area is prone to flooding. During the rainy season from May to August water spills over riverbanks and collects in low lying areas.

Despite unusually heavy flooding last year, many homes in Riing village were spare thanks to the multi- purpose ponds.



WFP helps communities rehabilitate or create assets such as ponds which can store runoff water for extended periods. **Photo Credit: WFP**

For households who have to rebuild their homes, the pond provides an easy to access source of water for molding bricks and mudding the walls of the thatched houses, known as tukuls. Read [more](#)

Misinformation during a crisis like #COVID19 can result in people being left uninformed, unprotected & vulnerable.

Get the FACTS here: <https://www.un.org/coronavirus>

- Maintain physical distance
- Wash your hands frequently
- Don't touch your face
- Share facts, not rumors
- Show kindness and solidarity