

December 2020



UN AND HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS COME TOGETHER TO RESPOND TO THE DEVASTATING FLOODS OF 2020

Over a million people were affected by flooding in 2020 and entire communities, mostly in areas along the Nile, fled to higher ground to escape the flood waters. Close to half a million people were displaced, with women and children most affected. In August, the Government declared a state of emergency in flood-affected areas. People in Jonglei State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area, were hardest hit by the flooding and were already vulnerable, having earlier been displaced by sub-national violence.

Villages and people's homes were submerged by the flood waters, destroying people's crops and killing their livestock. Infrastructure and public facilities did not escape the waters. Hundreds of schools and health and nutrition centers were damaged, compromising essential services to communities. Key immediate needs of flood-affected people included food, water purification tablets, plastic sheeting for temporary shelter, mosquito nets, fishing kits, basic health items and the replenishment of medicine, nutritional supplies and dignity kits.





Coordinated by OCHA, humanitarian response operations were scaled up from July onward to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people, with funding from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund and the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund, among other sources. Using limited resources, people were provided with emergency flood response kits. Hundreds of thousands of people were reached with food assistance and livelihood support. Displaced people received plastic sheeting

for temporary shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene support, and protection services.

Humanitarian organizations on the ground – most of them South Sudanese – worked tirelessly as the needs rose along with the flood waters but faced many challenges. Flood response activities were constrained by insecurity that forced some local partners to put the flood response on hold. Persistent heavy rains made roads impassable and flooded airstrips, putting an extra burden on transporting aid to where it was needed the most.

The waters are now slowly receding, but people's needs remain. The United Nations, non-governmental organizations and the local authorities continue to work together to help flood-affected people return to their homes and livelihoods as soon as possible. Further investments will be required in 2021 to strengthen people's capacity to cope with recurring shocks, including flooding.

HIGHLIGHTS

-  UN agencies alarm at worsening hunger in South Sudan
-  Urgent treatment needed for 313,000 children suffering from malnutrition
-  UNHCR responds to flood affected communities in greater Jonglei
-  Removal of explosive ordnance by UNMAS ...



NEWS FROM UN AGENCIES FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

UN AGENCIES' ALARM AT WORSENING HUNGER IN SOUTH SUDAN: CONFLICT, FLOODS AND COVID-19 PUSH MORE PEOPLE INTO EXTREME HUNGER

Three United Nations organizations are calling for immediate humanitarian access to parts of South Sudan's Pibor County in Jonglei State, where people have run out of food and are facing catastrophic levels of hunger according to a new Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report released today.

The high levels of hunger are being driven by insecurity, the effects of COVID-19, the economic crisis, and the impact of flooding on livelihoods, the report said. Humanitarian assistance is needed to save lives and avert a total collapse of livelihoods in hard-to-reach areas.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) are scaling up their response, along with other humanitarian aid organizations.

"We call on all parties to stop the violence and to ensure safe humanitarian access in order to prevent an already dire situation from turning into a full-blown catastrophe," FAO Representative in South Sudan Meshack Malo said.

"We are extremely concerned about the increased numbers of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. These children need urgent treatment to prevent them from dying. The data leave us with no doubt about the sense of urgency for all of us - Government, donor community and humanitarian actors - to join hands and ensure all these children get the treatment they need. At the same time, we need to invest more in actions to prevent children from becoming malnourished in the first place," UNICEF Representative in South Sudan Mohamed Ayoya said.

"WFP is extremely worried about the rising numbers of people suffering because of the lack of sufficient food and nutrition, intensified conflict, unprecedented flooding and high food prices. The coming year will be extremely tough, but we are determined to do all we can to reach more people for longer periods of time," said Makena Walker, Deputy Country Director of the World Food Programme in South Sudan.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

WFP has already begun scaling up its lifesaving food and nutritional assistance to critically food insecure areas in Pibor County as well as other areas of concern, extending its humanitarian response beyond the usual lean season and increasing the number of vulnerable people who need support.

In the past two months, WFP has extended its food assistance to nearly 80,000 people in Pibor County. Meanwhile, in Akobo East more than 40,000 people are currently receiving food assistance. WFP will continue to scale up its emergency food response working with partners to build community resilience and development. In total, WFP has provided food assistance to five million people in need in South Sudan in 2020. WFP will continue to scale up its emergency food response working with partners to build community resilience and development. In total, WFP has provided food assistance to five million people in need in South Sudan in 2020.

UNICEF will further scale up its interventions supporting therapeutic treatment and stabilization centers in the most affected counties to protect and save children's lives. This year, UNICEF has already treated 170,000 children affected by severe acute malnutrition, with a 94 per cent recovery rate. Further expansion of services is now urgently needed - including to insecure areas - for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition. UNICEF will continue to address the underlying causes of malnutrition such as malaria and diarrheal diseases caused by a lack of clean water, sanitation and hygiene, and investing in prevention of malnutrition through promotion of breastfeeding and good feeding practices for the young child.

FAO's priority is to assist farming and agro-pastoral communities to increase their production and preserve their livelihoods. So far in 2020, over 100 000 farming families have received support to grow their own food from seeds, and more than 5 million animals have been vaccinated and treated to assist 164 000 households. FAO has also distributed 800 tonnes of emergency animal feed for critical animal stocks, especially in flood-affected locations. Read [more](#)



Community members receive food at the WFP food distribution Center.
Photo Credit: WFP

UNHCR RESPONDS TO FLOOD AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN GREATER JONGLEI



Emergency assistance reaches flood affected population in Bor. Photo Credit: UNHCR

Heavy rainfalls and rising water levels along the River Nile had a devastating impact on communities across Greater Jonglei this year, affecting close to half a million men, women and children.

In order to protect and assist those most vulnerable, including elderly and persons with disabilities, UNHCR provided humanitarian supplies to some 10,500 affected families.

Working around the clock and battling rising flood waters, urgently needed items delivered included plastic sheeting, blankets, mosquito nets, soap, sanitary items as well as solar lanterns to provide safety at night.

At the same time, UNHCR constructed shelters for especially in need families, including refugee returnees and displaced persons.

In light of the flooding, UNHCR partner Humanitarian Development Consortium (HDC), rolled out several peaceful coexistence projects in Duk counties, including repair of the dyke in Duk Padiet to prevent water from submerging the marketplace.

In total, 150 youths, both male and female, came together for the repair works, which has protected the market, essential for purchasing goods as well as a source of livelihoods for all communities.

REMOVAL OF EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE BY UNMAS PROTECTS IDPS IN TINGILI, CENTRAL EQUATORIA

Seeking shelter and safety from localized conflicts and insecurity, over 2,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), including 750 women and 1,013 children, temporarily settled along the Magwi-Sirsiri road near Tingili, Central Equatoria in July 2020.

Unfamiliar with the area, they set up camp on land that is potentially contaminated with anti-tank (AT) mines, anti-personnel (AP) mines, mortars, and rocket-propelled grenades.

UNMAS has commenced operations and plans to survey and clear an approximately 150,000 m² of land.

In the first week of December, three AT mines were found less than 300 meters from three IDP households; once located, the items were removed and destroyed.

To protect civilians and to raise their awareness of the danger of unexploded ordnance, UNMAS delivered explosive ordnance risk education to the community, after which, two mortars were further reported within the settlement area. UNMAS safely removed and destroyed the threats immediately.



Three households that are next to the UNMAS operations control point and are 300 meters from the location where the AT mines were found and destroyed in the first week of December. Photo Credit: UNMAS in South Sudan

URGENT TREATMENT NEEDED FOR 313,000 CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM SEVERE ACUTE MALNUTRITION

The new Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report on South Sudan was released on 18 December. Around 1.4 million children aged between 6 months and 5 years are expected to be acutely malnourished in 2021. This includes 313,000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition.

UNICEF is extremely concerned about the increased numbers of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. “These children need urgent treatment to prevent them from dying. The data leave us with no doubt about the sense of urgency for all of us - Government, donor community and humanitarian actors - to join hands and ensure all these children get the treatment they need,” said Dr Mohamed Ayoya, UNICEF Representative in South Sudan.

In 2020, UNICEF treated 170,000 children affected by severe acute malnutrition, with a 94 per cent recovery rate. Further expansion of services is now urgently needed - including to insecure areas - for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition.

At the same time, UNICEF will continue to address the underlying causes of malnutrition such as malaria and diarrheal diseases caused by a lack of clean water, sanitation and hygiene, and investing in prevention of malnutrition through promotion of breastfeeding and good feeding practices for the young child.



A baby being tested for malnutrition at a UNICEF supported center.

Photo Credit: UNICEF

SOUTH SUDAN LAUNCHES A COMPREHENSIVE FIVE-YEAR NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR HEALTH SECURITY TO STRENGTHEN ITS CAPACITY TO PREVENT, DETECT, AND RESPOND TO PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

South Sudan launched its National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) 2020-2024. The plan was launched by Hon. Dr Martin Elia Lomoro, Minister of Cabinet Affairs.

The NAPHS was developed based on the Joint External Evaluation conducted in 2017 to strengthen core capacities in the country as required under the International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005.

“The National Action Plan for Health Security in South Sudan is one of our key national priorities. This comprehensive plan is a high-level policy matter that needs timely release of resources”, said Dr Lomoro. “In collaboration with our partners, we will ensure that we take concrete steps to make sure that we take charge of our health needs in the country”, he added.

The NAPHS will be implemented over the coming five years (2020-2024) to accelerate progress towards attaining and maintaining IHR core capacities and institutionalizing the One Health and all hazards approaches to protect the country and the world from the impacts of public health emergencies.

“The launching of the NAPHS, a multi-disciplinary plan is an important milestone for our health care system to manage public health risks”, said Dr Mayen Machut Achiek, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Health. “We need to be prepared to manage risks that are real and can happen anytime. Hence mobilizing resources is paramount to translate the plan into action”, he emphasized.

The plan will facilitate multi-sector engagement and guide implementation of activities for progress towards attainment of International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005 core capacities required for enhancing Global Health Security.

South Sudan has braced several emergencies and disease outbreaks since her independence on 9 July 2011. The notable emergencies include the persistent cholera outbreaks reported from 2014 to 2017; the 2018 Rift Valley Fever outbreak in Eastern Lakes; the 2018 yellow fever outbreak in Nzara; and the 2019 & 2020 measles outbreaks in over 20 counties and 4 Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites, and COVID-19 reported in all the states in 2020.

SOUTH SUDAN LAUNCHES A COMPREHENSIVE FIVE-YEAR NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR HEALTH SECURITY TO STRENGTHEN ITS CAPACITY TO PREVENT, DETECT, AND RESPOND TO PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Besides, South Sudan is affected by other hazards like floods, population displacements, and severe food insecurity. Moreover, South Sudan has experienced outbreaks of Ebola virus disease in 1976, 1979, and 2004. "The NAPHS allows the opportunity to build multisectoral capacities to comprehensively respond to outbreaks", said Dr Olushayo Olu, WHO Representative for South Sudan. "The plan will also foster progress towards bridging the humanitarian and development divide", Dr Olu added.

Dr Olu called upon the donors, government and partners to make sure that the required resources are made available to support full implementation of the plan to improve the health outcomes in South Sudan. On behalf of WHO and the UN, he reiterated WHO's commitment to work with the Government of South Sudan to extend health care services to every corner of the country.

WHO will work with the Government of South Sudan and partners to mobilize the required resources and provide technical leadership and guidance for the implementation, monitoring, and evaluating the implementation of NAPHS.

A total of USD 69.1 million is required for the full implementation of this comprehensive multi-sector five -year plan to improve health emergency preparedness and response in South Sudan. To Read more: [comprehensive-five-year-national-action-plan-health-security-](https://www.afro.who.int/news/south-sudan-launches-comprehensive-five-year-national-action-plan-health-security)

strengthen[https://www.afro.who.int/news/south-sudan-launches-](https://www.afro.who.int/news/south-sudan-launches-comprehensive-five-year-national-action-plan-health-security)



Participants display copies of the Comprehensive five -year National Action Plan for Health Security. Photo Credit: WHO

SURVIVOR GETS A REBOOT THROUGH WOMEN-FRIENDLY SPACE



The safe spaces for women and girls affected by crises allow them to participate in skills training activities, receive information on their rights and rebuild their social networks, among many others. Photo is from the Women and Girls Friendly Space in Bentiu. Photo: UNFPA South Sudan

Kapoeta East, South Sudan – Beaten and thrown out of their house by her partner and having nothing for her own daily survival, 39-year-old Regina had given up on life until she discovered a place where women with similar experiences supported each other and learned with each other.

It was during the lowest point her life when social workers and GBV came to her community to conduct an information session about gender-based violence and to promote the Women and Girls-Friendly Space (WGFS).

The facility is one of the 10 safe spaces for women and girls supported by UNFPA in South Sudan through local partners. The WGFS offers case management for GBV survivors, group and individual psychosocial support services, livelihood skills training and referral of the GBV survivor to related services, if needed.

"They encouraged women and girls to come to the center because there are a lot of activities, including psychosocial support sessions where everyone who wants to share an experience can freely do so and expect to get the support from other women," Regina says. "That day when they came, I had swollen eyes and bruises on my body because of the beating that's why I feel like they actually came to help me. I felt really helpless and hopeless then."

The next day, she went with a friend to the WGFS where she found other women and girls participating in different activities such as knitting, crocheting, beading. Regina also received her own set of bed sheet, needle ring and threads so she can start on embroidery.

"I feel very happy each time I go to the center, it is such a relief," says Regina. "I can't express enough the happiness that this experience has brought into my life."

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3nc2E4n>