



January 2021



AMIDST COVID-19 PANDERMIC: THE MINISTRY

OF HEALTH LAUNCHES A CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT OVER 93000 INDIVIDUALS AGAINST CHOLERA IN GREATER PIBOR ADMINISTRATIVE AREA

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the first round of oral cholera vaccination campaign is being implemented across the Greater Pibor Administrative Area of South Sudan to protect flood-displaced populations in high-risk areas.

The five-day campaign running from 16 to 21 January 2021 was organized and led by the Ministry of Health with support from WHO, UNICEF, IOM, MEDAIR and other partners to reach 93 250 individuals aged one year and above in Pibor town, Verteth, Gumuruk and Lekuangule.

“The severe flooding in 2020 and 2019 and its impact, the transient nature of the population and the porous borders with neighboring Ethiopia which has an active cholera outbreak places the population in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area at high risk of cholera outbreak. Hence, we require effective and efficient systems for preventing an outbreak”. said Hon. Elizabeth Acuei Yol, Minister of Health.

South Sudan has faced several outbreaks of cholera affecting the vulnerable populations living in urban slums, rural populations, cattle camp and island dwellers, and communities along the River Nile. However, the country has not registered any new confirmed case of cholera since 18 December 2017.

During the longest and largest (18 June 2016 to 18 December 2017) cholera outbreak, South Sudan reported over 20,000 cases of cholera leading to 436 deaths.

“When used along with improved access to safe water sanitation and hygiene, two-dose of oral cholera vaccine are very effective for cholera prevention, giving protection to those at risk,” said Dr Olushayo Olu, WHO Representative for South Sudan. “We appreciate the financial support from GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, these efforts are critical now to prevent the flood-affected communities”.

HIGHLIGHTS

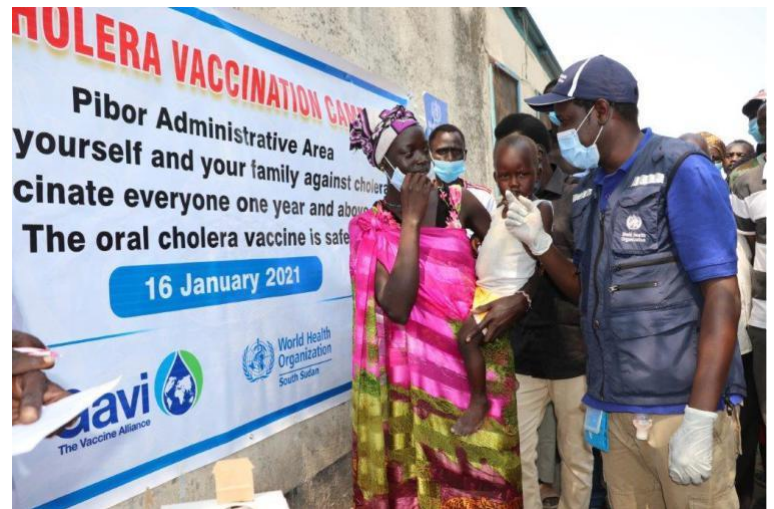
- ✚ Children on the reopening of schools
- ✚ Explosive ordnance risk education enables community members to identify and report explosive hazards
- ✚ 21 years with Fistula: Survivor wants young girls to learn from her experience.
- ✚ Dual threats addressed as UN Mine Action Service visits sites in Eastern and Central Equatoria



As part of the ongoing preventive measures, two rounds of pre-emptive Oral Cholera Vaccination campaigns were implemented in Bor, from 16 to 20 December 2020 and from 10 to 15 January 2021, where 63,280 people were vaccinated during the first round while 64,137 individuals aged one year and above were vaccinated during the second round of the campaign.

Delivering vaccines in South Sudan has never been harder; impassable roads due to flooding, insecurity and mobile populations made the logistical arrangement and delivery of vaccines extremely difficult. Thanks to the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund, currently the WHO mobile medical teams in Pibor are supporting the campaign including training and supervising the process to ensure compliance to oral cholera vaccine protocols.

Cholera is a killer but can be prevented if people have access to adequate safe clean drinking water and decent toilet facilities.



Residents of Pibor administrative area assemble to receive the vaccine.
Photo Credit:WHO

A MOTHER'S SECOND CHANCE: AFTER STRUGGLING WITH HER DAUGHTER'S HEALTH, ABUK FINDS TREATMENT AND HOPE THROUGH WFP NUTRITIONAL PROGRAM



Abuk Kiir and her two-year-old daughter also named Abuk wait at the WFP supported clinic in Aweil. Photo Credit: WFP

Abuk Kiir, a South Sudanese mother from Aweil, remembers when she and her children had to survive off a simple diet of sorghum and flour with broth. That was all the widow could afford from the meagre salary she made by selling groundnut paste at the market.

"I did not have money to buy her better food," said Abuk Kiir as she points to her daughter, an emaciated-two-year-old with a bloated stomach and very dry, scaly skin.

One day, Abuk took her sickly daughter to the nearest health care centre in Aweil town.

Once screened, the mother was referred to a WFP supported nutrition centre where she received Plumpy Sup, a Ready-to-Use Supplementary Food (RUSF). It consists of a high energy peanut/chickpea-based paste enriched with micro-nutrients.

She was also counselled on complementary feeding practices, proper hygiene and the correct use and storage of Plumpy sup.

It is all part of the package of assistance that The World Food Programme in South Sudan provides to thousands of children.

WFP implements a preventive blanket Supplementary feeding programme across South Sudan to save the lives of children such as Abuk's daughter.

More than anything, Aduk wishes for health services in her community. So much so, she hopes her daughter will one day be a doctor.

"I want my little girl to go to school and become a medical doctor. Our children are suffering in the villages without good doctors and I want my daughter to save the lives of our people," she explained. For now, she is relieved that her daughter is in good health. "I made the right decision by coming to the nutrition centre. Thank you, WFP, for your support." Read full story [here](#)

NEWS FROM UN AGENCIES FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

CHILDREN ON THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS



A student in Torit, Eastern Equatoria state carrying her Lunch
Photo Credit: UNICEF

"Thank God I'm back, most of my girlfriends didn't make it. They have dropped out," Mary Biale Daniel (16) is saying, "With the resumption of school, I can start chasing my dreams again." After having been closed for months because of COVID-19, schools partially re-opened last October in South Sudan.

Josephine Bakhita (16) has waited for Dumak primary school to resume since all schools across South Sudan were closed in March 2020 as a COVID-19 preventive measure. She is in her final year in primary school, and in need of every minute of education possible to do well on her final exams.

Instead, books were replaced with chores at home. As the oldest of a total of six siblings, Josephine had to contribute with the many things that has to be done every day in the household. Weeding in the family's vegetable garden was also part of her responsibility at home. As food is scarce, it is paramount to make sure the plants on the patch of land the family owns is yielding maximum results.

UNICEF met with children in Torit and Juba and asked them how they felt about going back to school. Their testimonies can be read on <https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/stories>

UNICEF is working closely with the Government of South Sudan for a safe re-opening of all schools in April.

EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE RISK EDUCATION (EORE) ENABLES COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO IDENTIFY AND REPORT EXPLOSIVE HAZARDS

Since the beginning of December 2020, UNMAS has been delivering door-to-door EORE to the local community in Rubkona, Unity, while concurrently removing and destroying various items of explosive ordnance in the area.

After one EORE session, the children from one family reported a suspected explosive item by the riverbank, which they had attempted to play with previously. The item was later confirmed to be a rocket-propelled grenade.

A charcoal producer also reported a mortar that was located at the base of a tree, which he was about to cut down for charcoal production.

UNMAS safely removed and disposed of both items.

EORE enables community members to identify and report explosive hazards, which not only protects civilians and saves lives, but assists UNMAS operations.



UNMAS delivered door-to-door EORE to a family, after which, the family's children reported a suspected explosive item, which was verified to be a rocket-propelled grenade. Photo Credit: UNMAS

21 YEARS WITH FISTULA: SURVIVOR WANTS YOUNG GIRLS TO LEARN FROM HER EXPERIENCE

Married and pregnant as a teenager, losing three babies during childbirth and suffering from obstetric fistula for 21 years, Rose Konga may have learned her lesson the hard way but she wants to share her story with young girls who are at risk of suffering the same fate she had.

At age 18, in 1996, Ms. Konga got married and soon became pregnant while in a refugee camp for South Sudanese in Uganda. Rose was excited and looked forward to her first-born, but she had a miscarriage. Back in South Sudan three years later, she got pregnant again but at delivery, she experienced obstructed labor. The baby did not survive, and Ms. Konga developed obstetric fistula.

Obstetric fistula is a hole in the birth canal caused by the pressure of the prolonged and obstructed labor. Since then, she leaked urine uncontrollably.

In South Sudan, there is an estimated 60,000 fistula cases, which contribute to the high maternal deaths in the country. UNFPA partners with the Ministry of Health in conducting free fistula repair campaigns to help women suffering from the condition.

For 2018 and 2019 alone, the initiative has restored the dignity of 229 women. As the COVID-19 situation improves, more fistula repair campaigns will be conducted to reach out to more women with fistula. [Read more](#)



With the support of her husband, Ms. Konga is well on her way to recovery after a fistula repair surgery.

Photo Credit: UNFPA South Sudan

DUAL THREAT ADDRESSED AS UN MINE ACTION SERVICE VISITS SITES IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL EQUATORIA STATES

While the jury is still out on the endurance of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the days of explosive hazards posing a threat to the people of South Sudan are literally numbered: by July 2026 they shall all be gone.

Residents in Ameer in Eastern Equatoria State were still, however, facing both issues when the UN Mine Action Service, UNMAS, recently paid them a visit.

“It’s great news that they are removing all land mines and other explosives from our land. By doing this, they are definitely saving lives,” said Avuva Susan while breastfeeding her baby.

“But we are still afraid of going into these surrounding forests, because the whole area has not been cleared yet,” she added.

At the time of the field visit, in December, Ms. Susan was right: about half of the site, which used to be an important base for armed forces, had not been cleared. Some 10,600 square meters, roughly one and a half football pitch, remained potentially contaminated by explosive remnants of war.

The good news is that the entire Ameer risk area has since then been declared safe for its 150 residents to use as they please.

Yet, offering sessions of explosive ordnance risk education is never a bad idea. Since July 2011, more than 660,000 residents of Eastern Equatoria State, one of the most affected regions in South Sudan, have been given such potentially life-saving trainings. In total, 5.3 million South Sudanese people have been taught how to recognize and report explosive hazards.

And for good reasons, because the risks are real: in 2018, South Sudan passed the sad mark of 5,000 individuals having been killed or injured (the overwhelming majority) by explosive items since records began in 2004. [Read more](#)



Cluster munition being demolished by the UN mine Action service during a field visit to Ameer Eastern Equatoria State. Photo Credit: UNMISS