

June 2021



TOGETHER WE HEAL, LEARN AND SHINE WORLD REFUGEE DAY JUNE 21ST, 2021

Ten years ago, a nation was born, shining but asunder. South Sudan was on the map, but millions were on the wrong sides of the borderline. Over the past decade, the nation has lurched from hope to strife, and back again. But if the pain of exile and displacement has been a constant, so too has the generosity of hosts towards refugees.

We commemorate World Refugee Day each year on 20 June, a date chosen in tribute to the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention, and a fitting honor to the African framework and practice of opening their arms to refugees. South Sudan, with limited resources and nascent institutions, has nonetheless been an exemplar of this enlightened approach; and South Sudanese outside their country have benefited from their neighbors' kindness. Sprawling and protracted displacement is a hallmark of this sub-region, but the South Sudan model shows that with pain and misfortune also comes the chance to heal, to learn and to shine.

On this World Refugee Day 2021, UNHCR South Sudan pays tribute to the strength of the millions forced to flee their homes; to the openness and compassion of those who host them; to the labor of those who work to protect and aid them; and to the donors who fund our programs. Sometimes it seems that there is an abundance of bad news coming out of this country. But the story of displacement in and around South Sudan is one of consistent compassion in the face of tragedy, which the international community can acknowledge with humility and appreciation.

Globally, the number of displaced people reached 82.4 million in 2020, reflecting a trend of unending displacement driven by violence and persecution. Here in South Sudan, UNHCR and South Sudan's Commission for Refugee Affairs have registered close to 320,000 refugees, 93 per cent of whom are Sudanese. A further 1.3 million people are displaced internally in the country. And South Sudan's refugee population remains the largest in Africa with over 2.2 million South Sudan refugees hosted by Uganda, Sudan, Kenya, Ethiopia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

South Sudan is generous to refugees in both law and practice. It has signed on to all the relevant refugee protection instruments, and it operates some of the most progressive refugee policies in the region.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✚ The process to elaborate the new UNSDCF in South Sudan has started (PG. 1)
- ✚ Reenforcing frontline warriors to protect women's health. (PG. 2)
- ✚ UNICEF issues report on impact of Humanitarian crisis on children (PG. 3)



Despite its own enormous socio-economic, security and political challenges, South Sudan has always kept its borders open, allowed freedom of movement and furthermore allocated large tracts of fertile land to refugees for farming.



Dr. Evan Atar, winner of the 2018 Nansen Award. Photo Credit: UNHCR

Just this week, I travelled with the Foreign Minister, the Commissioner for Refugee Affairs and the donor community to Maban, the site of camps hosting over 100,000 Sudanese refugees. We witnessed the incredible achievement of Dr Evan Atar, who has used prize money from the prestigious Nansen award to construct a maternity wing. What a story — a South Sudanese from Eastern Equatoria, exiled for many years, now giving back to his people in Upper Nile State. Each brick represented an investment in the Bunj community's health, and its completion marks a further step in the process of healing following this difficult period.

South Sudan cannot manage this alone and moving forward we need to reimagine and recommit. Reimagine refugee camps as places to heal and to learn and reimagining a country where returning South Sudanese refugees (over 400,000 have already come home, spontaneously) are voting with their feet for peace. We at UNHCR South Sudan believe that refugee camps and counties to which refugees are returning can represent pockets of hope, places where people are making peace, and where money spent is money invested in the peaceful, green future of South Sudan. Together with our government and international partners, we are modelling a pocket of hope approach that takes as a starting point refugee and returnee agency, and as its end-point areas where all people regardless of status have a chance at integration and economic progress.

Enabling refugees and internally displaced people to sustain themselves, will not only allow them to give back to host communities, but support their eventual return and cement the path to peace.

Investing in South Sudan's future will pay long-term dividends not only for refugees, South Sudanese but also the wider region. We hope that this can help activate the third element of our World Refugee Day theme and enable displaced people to shine.

On this World Refugee Day 2021 we acknowledge the experiences of the millions of people forced to flee violence and persecution. But we also celebrate the fact that, with help from welcoming communities, kind neighbors and international support, people can find the strength to heal, learn and even shine.



THE PROCESS TO ELABORATE THE NEW UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (UNSDCF) IN SOUTH SUDAN HAS STARTED

In November last year, the 2019-2021 UN Cooperation Framework (UNCF) for South Sudan was extended by one year, to expire on 31st December 2022.

The extension of the UNCF responded to the transitional period of the Revitalized Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), and to be aligned with the Review of the National Development Strategy (NDS). The NDS was launched in 2018 for the period FY 2018/2019 to FY 2020/2021. The UNCF 2019-2021 is also going to be evaluated, to draw lessons that can enrich the process of preparing a new United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDCF). The latest annual report of the UNCF is available at <https://rb.gy/lhfx6n>

The new UNSDCF is expected to start in January 2023, and the process to elaborate it has recently started. A Roadmap detailing all the steps for the preparation of the new UNSDCF has been prepared and is available at <https://rb.gy/lhfx6n>

The first step is to draft a Common Country Analysis (CCA) which describes the challenges faced by the country and analyzes their root causes.

The CCA will serve to identify areas of intervention for the United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programs (AFP) supporting South Sudan.

The CCA, and more widely the UNSDCF process, involve widely inclusive consultations amongst all relevant stakeholders.

Other vital aspects of the UNSDCF are to ensure that no one is left behind, and a description of the sources of development finance necessary to implement it, among others.

It is expected that the new UNSDCF will be ready for signature in the third quarter of 2022.



Figure United Nations Cooperation Framework for the Republic of South Sudan 2019-2021. Photo Credit: RCO



NEWS FROM UN AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

REINFORCING FRONTLINE WARRIORS TO PROTECT WOMEN'S HEALTH

“There is still so much to be done to achieve zero maternal deaths. Antenatal care and hospital deliveries should remain accessible for pregnant women during the pandemic,” says Kenyi Friday Lodu, a midwife at the Juba Teaching Hospital, as he expressed concern that COVID-19 could compromise the already poor maternal health in South Sudan.

Mr. Lodu is one of the nine new midwives recruited and deployed by UNFPA in 2020 to augment the number of frontline health workers to ensure continuity of sexual and reproductive health services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Without skilled birth attendants like midwives, maternal deaths and morbidity could increase. South Sudan currently has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in the world at 789 deaths per 100,000 live births, according to 2017 estimates by the UN and World Bank.

On an average week, about 90 mothers give birth at the Juba Teaching Hospital. “Mothers need antenatal care throughout the pregnancy, and all deliveries should be at the health facility with the assistance of skilled birth attendants,” Mr. Lodu says. Read the full story at: <https://bit.ly/2TuK9yZ>



Midwife Kenyi Friday Lodu checks on a mother who just gave birth at the Juba Teaching Hospital. Photo Credit: UNFPA

UNMAS DELIVERS EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE RISK EDUCATION IN MABAN, UPPER NILE, TO FACILITATE THE SAFE AND VOLUNTARY RETURN OF SUDANESE REFUGEES

Since 2012, Sudanese civilians have fled their homes and country due to armed conflict and temporarily settled in refugee camps in Unity and Upper Nile in South Sudan. With the ongoing peace efforts in Sudan, these refugees are now planning to return home.



An UNMAS team delivered explosive ordnance risk education to a group of children in Doro camp, Maban, Upper Nile.

Photo Credit: UNMAS

In anticipation of their return, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), reached out to UNMAS South Sudan requesting support.

Specifically, they asked UNMAS to deliver explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) to the Sudanese refugees, which was initiated in the Doro displacement camp in Maban, Upper Nile, as of March 2020.

To date, over 3,000 mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers have been taught to recognize, avoid, and report explosive hazards, so that they are prepared if they encounter such items during their return journey and eventual resettlement.

UNMAS plans to rollout EORE for the Sudanese refugees in other camps in Unity and Upper Nile in the coming months.

UNICEF ISSUES REPORT ON IMPACT OF HUMANITARIAN CRISIS ON CHILDREN

Ahead of the 10th anniversary of South Sudan, UNICEF issued a report about the impact of the humanitarian crisis on children.

In this report UNICEF highlights that the humanitarian crisis South Sudan is going through has a major impact on children and is a child rights crisis.

All rights of children are impacted by the dire humanitarian situation in South Sudan. 4.5 million children are directly affected by the crisis and need humanitarian assistance.

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UNICEF calls the donor community not to cut on their humanitarian budgets for South Sudan and its children. To read the report and know more about the humanitarian crisis impacting on children, go to www.unicef.org/southsudan



Pibor Stabilisation Center. Photo Credit : UNICEF

UNMISS RE-ESTABLISH TEMPORARY BASE IN KOCH AMID INFLUX OF REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Koch County in Unity State is a strategic location for the Beyond Bentiu response programme established in 2016 to assist refugees and internally displaced persons who decide to return home.

Many have chosen to do so, from other parts of South Sudan but also from Sudan, Uganda and Kenya, and The Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience Task Force based in the town is doing its best to meet their needs for rule of law and essential services.

“What’s vital to make all of this work is security, and that is why we [UNMISS] have for a second time decided to establish a temporary operating base here,” Lieutenant General Shailesh Tinaikar, the visiting UNMISS Force Commander told humanitarian workers and local leaders on the ground.



Force commander visiting Koch. Photo Credit: UNMISS

SOUTH SUDAN COPYRIGHT DESIGN PEER EXCHANGE WITH KENYA AND UGANDA

UNESCO and the European Union are supporting the Ministry of Culture, Museums and Natural Heritage in South Sudan with the development of the cultural and creative industries sector through peer-to-peer learning.

Experts from Kenya and Uganda Copyright Offices shared their experiences in a two-day meeting with South Sudanese national stakeholders from 26 to 28 May 2021 organized by the UNESCO Office in Juba.

The meeting brought together key actors in the cultural and creative industries (CCIs), government Ministries in South Sudan as a national team to participate in the national consultation and share in Kenya and Uganda experience to support the CCIs develop a national copyright bill to support the CCIs.



Participants in the UNESCO meeting in Juba, 26 May 2021. Photo Credit: UNESCO

OVER 56 000 INDIVIDUALS VACCINATED AGAINST YELLOW FEVER IN MOROBO, LAINYA AND YEI RIVER COUNTIES OF CENTRAL EQUATORIA STATE

The Ministry of Health with support from Eliminate Yellow Fever Epidemics (EYE) partners including WHO, GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, UNICEF and other health implementing partners have completed a pre-emptive yellow fever vaccination campaign.

The campaign targeting 57 443 individuals, aged 9 months to 60 years, was conducted in Morobo, Lainya and Yei River Counties in Central Equatoria State

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neighboring Kajo-Keji where Yellow Fever was confirmed in 2020. At the end of the campaign, 56,640 (98.6%) of individuals aged 9 months to 60 years received the yellow fever vaccine in Morobo, Lainya, and Yei River counties.

In March 2020, two laboratory-confirmed yellow fever cases were reported in Kajo-keji County following a comprehensive cross-border outbreak investigation after a yellow fever outbreak was declared in the bordering Moyo district of Uganda.

“When we learnt that Yellow fever has been confirmed in the neighboring Kajo-keji county it was a source of worry to the communities given the high risk posed by our proximity with Kajo-Keji and Uganda where similar cases have also been confirmed coupled with the fragile health system in the county” Hon. Aggrey Cyrus, Commissioner for Yei River County said

“We thank the Ministry of Health, WHO, UNICEF and other health implementing for heading to our call and ensure that yellow fever vaccine is administered to the people of Morobo, Lainya and Yei River counties, a relief to the communities.”

“Yellow Fever remains a major public health concern in South Sudan and its re-emergence especially at the time the country is responding to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic places more burden on the health system and is something to be worried about.” Said Dr John Rumunu, Director General for Preventive Health Service. “We thank WHO and our health partners for ensuring that our people are vaccinated against Yellow Fever”

The 8-day campaign was implemented within the national and WHO guidelines for implementing mass vaccination campaigns in the context of COVID-19. Read more at <https://rb.gy/rkbkcg>



A person being vaccinated for yellow fever. Photo Credit: WHO

HUMANITARIAN HUB TO BOOST EFFICIENCY IN DELIVERING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN PIBOR, SOUTH SUDAN



The newly constructed humanitarian hub in Pibor. Photo Credit: IOM

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) handed over the newly constructed Pibor Humanitarian Hub in South Sudan’s Greater Pibor Administrative Area to Plan International, which will be responsible for the management of the hub.

The establishment of the humanitarian hub in Pibor will enable the expansion of operations across hard-to-reach areas of the GPAA through an increase in static humanitarian presence.

“The Humanitarian Hub goes beyond just a physical structure. It is a way to ensure that when a humanitarian crisis occurs which calls for urgent response, humanitarian teams are ready on the ground to respond swiftly and effectively to save the lives of affected populations,” said Peter Van der Auweraert, IOM’s Chief of Mission in South Sudan.

“We need humanitarian teams to be as close as possible to the people they serve, and this is exactly what the humanitarian hub offers,” said Peter Van der Auweraert.

“This hub will accommodate humanitarian workers from all humanitarian responders, both national and international alike. Read more at <https://rb.gy/rxcmti>

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“A COUNTRY CANNOT DEVELOP WITHOUT EMPOWERING WOMEN,” SAYS WORLD BANK REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

The World Bank Regional Vice President (RVP) for Eastern and Southern Africa, **Hafez Ghanem**, visited Buluk Quarter Council in Juba Municipality on his first official mission to South Sudan, where he heard first-hand testimonies from beneficiaries and community committees on the impact of the World Bank-funded South Sudan Safety Net Project (SSSNP) on people’s lives.

Implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), in partnership with the Government of the Republic of South Sudan, the SSSNP provides low-income and vulnerable households across 10 counties in South Sudan with cash assistance to meet their urgent needs and invest in their household welfare.

Ousmane Dione, World Bank Country Director for Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan; **Hon. Josephine Joseph Lagu**, the National Minister of Agriculture and Food Security; **Hon. Lily Kapuki Jurkin**, the Central Equatoria State Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Forestry, **John Ogoto Kanisio**, Undersecretary of Ministry of Agriculture and Food Insecurity and **Husam Abudagga**, World Bank Country Manager for South Sudan accompanied the RVP during the site visit, which provided an eye-opening experience on how the SSSNP is helping to rebuild lives and livelihoods of the communities.

Speaking at the event, the World Bank Regional Vice President Hafez Ghanem, expressed his appreciation for the partnership between the World Bank, UNOPS and the South Sudan Government towards addressing economic vulnerabilities in the country. Read more at <https://rb.gy/cpreas>



Community members during a meeting with World Bank's Regional Vice President for Eastern and Southern Africa. Photo Credit: UNOPS

JUBA CENTRAL PRISON INMATES ACQUIRE SKILLS TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES



Trainees in the auto mechanics section in Juba central prison vocational training center. The center accepts all types of inmates, including juveniles and adults and those with sentences up to 20 years. Photo Credit: UNDP

Since 2016, the Vocational Training Centre, supported by UNDP and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, has trained 986 inmates and prison personnel.

Graduates and current trainees of the Vocational Training Centre (VTC) at Juba Central Prison say the skills they acquire from in-prison training are helping support themselves and their families, while incarcerated and upon release. On 14 June 2021, the National Prisons Service of South Sudan (NPSSS) celebrated the graduation of its fifth cohort of trainees from the Centre, established in 2016.

The genesis of the [prison vocational training program](#) began with the National Prisons Service of South Sudan’s (NPSSS) commitment to addressing prison overcrowding and reducing recidivism. The administration realized many inmates making their way into Juba Central Prison were driven by crimes of poverty, often due to high unemployment rates for young people. Some had committed several crimes without livelihood alternatives.

The VTC is part of UNDP’s [Access to Justice, Security and Human Rights Strengthening programme](#), and supported by funding from the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The NPSSS identified the curriculum and prison personnel to boost the VTC towards self-sustainability. Read more at <https://rb.gy/si87my>

LIVE FROM SOUTH SUDAN, FAO SHARES INSIGHTS BEHIND ITS WORK FOR ZERO HUNGER

Kicking off its Summer Series dialogue sessions on food systems, the UN Association of New York convened a digital dialogue with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) working for Zero Hunger and food security, with FAO's Representative in South Sudan sharing milestones and challenges from a country-level context.

The immediate emergency response phase includes delivering multi-sector rapid response kits to most vulnerable people, provision of food and health care. In areas where waters are receding, humanitarian organizations are repairing critical water, health, nutrition, and education infrastructure, and working to restore people's food security and livelihoods.

Ahead of the [UN Food Systems Summit](#) in September of this year, the UN Association of New York ([UNA-NYC](#)) kicked off its four-part Summer Series on topics ranging from agri-food systems transformations, food loss and waste reduction initiatives and sustainable consumption and production practices, among others.

Representatives from the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Program (WFP) initiated discussions by shedding light on the UN system's work supporting countries achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 ([SDG2](#)) – Zero Hunger.

They highlighted the role that agri-food systems play in our food security and health, but also in protecting our natural resources, in valuing different cultural culinary traditions and in fomenting inclusive economic and income-generating activities.



Yar Agot Machot happily shows off her harvested kale which sells to buy other basic household needs. **Photo Credit: FAO**

INSIGHTS FROM SOUTH SUDAN, WHERE THE UNDERLYING FACTORS OF FOOD INSECURITY ARE MULTIPLE AND INTERWOVEN

Connecting live from the Abyei Special Administrative Area, which is situated between South Sudan and the Sudan and is an area with no final boundary determined between the two countries, Meshack Malo, FAO Representative in South Sudan, provided a holistic walkthrough of FAO's history and purpose, and how its far-reaching mandate across many of the SDGs is manifested on the ground.

Malo spoke of FAO's roles and responsibilities and of the Organization's value added, in a country that finds itself at the crossroads of protracted climate and humanitarian emergencies and economic shocks, all of which have taken a toll on rural and agricultural livelihoods and food security levels.

Speaking of South Sudan and other countries facing famine-likely situations due to the compounded impact of humanitarian emergencies, conflict and climate extremes, he said that food aid and food support "constitute the better part of these countries' economies." A key challenge in these contexts, he added, is ensuring that agri-food systems are rehabilitated so they can remain inclusive to ensure that no one is left behind.

Against this backdrop, "it is important to look at the underlying factors," Malo said, pointing to how investments need to be made in production capacities, so that these chronically aid-dependent populations can be empowered and be able to pursue income-generating opportunities and enjoy sustainable livelihoods for them and their families.

His visit to the Abyei Special Administrative Area was geared at contributing to these very ideas. Together with ambassadors and dignitaries representing key resource partners and his in-country team, Malo was visiting project sites where alternative livelihood initiatives were being pursued, such as beekeeping and livestock production and processing, and essential infrastructure was being implemented, such as multi-purpose solar-powered water capture and distribution yards for animal and household consumption.

During the visit, the delegation also met with community leaders of nomadic and host communities of Abyei to strengthen the commitment in creating platforms for dialogue and to mitigate natural resource-based conflict, reduce forced displacement and irregular migration. Read more at <https://rb.gy/7dtgqx>