

October 2021



WORLD FOOD DAY HIGHLIGHTS URGENT NEED TO TRANSFORM FOOD SYSTEMS AMIDST INCREASING NUMBERS OF HUNGRY PEOPLE IN SOUTH SUDAN

This year's World Food Day finds the world at a critical moment. The COVID-19 pandemic remains a global challenge, causing untold losses and hardship. Widespread flooding has washed away homes, and the impacts of climate change is endangering lives and livelihoods.

Today food insecurity in South Sudan is at its highest level since the country gained independence ten years ago. Sixty percent of the population faces severe and acute food insecurity, with families unable to feed themselves because of the combined effects of conflict, displacement, massive flooding and economic hardships, made worse by the pandemic.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and partners are committed to confront these problems. The UN Food Systems Summit mapped out the broad outline of how the world needs to move forward to transform agri-food systems. We at FAO have already rolled up our sleeves and got down to the practical tasks of leading the implementation and driving the transformation.

In the past few months, South Sudan has undertaken a major assessment of its food system within the framework of the National Food Systems dialogue; the findings will feed into future food systems policies, legislation and investments in the country.

World Food Day 2021 was commemorated in Malakal this year under the theme 'Better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life'. From one of the areas of South Sudan most affected by conflict and the impact of the climate crises, the international community has called for collective action to ensure sufficient, nutritious, and safe food is available at an affordable price to every South Sudanese, and nobody is hungry or suffers from any form of malnutrition.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✚ UNCT initiates the evaluation of the UNCF 2019-2021 process
- ✚ The world bank and UNICEF join hands for Basic health care for the most vulnerable in Jonglei and Upper Nile state
- ✚ Women friendly space: An anchor for women affected by flooding in South Sudan
- ✚ South Sudan celebrates UN day in style
- ✚ IFAD scales-up re-engagement efforts in South Sudan



FAO continues to prioritize assisting communities to increase agricultural production and preserve their livelihoods in a way that fosters peaceful co-existence. FAO is supporting around 4 million people with emergency livelihood support, including vaccination and treatment of nearly 11 million head of livestock belonging to over 500 000 households. Additionally, FAO supported 99 000 people with capacity building activities, including training and the establishment of demonstration plots. However, due to insufficient funding this year, FAO was unable to support a further 460 000 food insecure households (2.7 million people).

The “agri-food system” covers the journey of food from farm to table – from when it is planted, grown, harvested, processed, packaged, transported, distributed, traded, bought, prepared, eaten and disposed of.

Everyone has a role to play in this process. Our approach can only be effective if it’s rooted in working together with the government and key partners, as they forge their own national pathways towards transformation in line with their specific conditions and needs.

Scientists, bureaucrats, food producers and distributors will never be able to bring about all these desperately needed changes on their own. The transformation can and must start with pragmatic and concrete action by ordinary consumers and the choices we make.

The decisions we make every day on the food we choose to consume and the way we produce, prepare, cook and store it make us all an integral part to how an agri-food system works and have an impact on future of this planet. Consumers should choose locally produced food whenever possible, and plan meals well in order to avoid food waste. All of us have the potential to be food heroes. Our actions are our future.

World Food Day, celebrated this year on 15 October, marks the anniversary of the founding of FAO on 16 October 1945. The main objective of the day is to heighten public awareness of long-term global food challenges, and to develop further national and international solidarity in the struggle against hunger, malnutrition, and poverty.



A woman watering her vegetable garden during the dry season.

Photo Credit: FAO



Goat rearing is one of the lucrative business in South Sudan.

Photo Credit: FAO

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NEWS FROM UN AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

UNCT INITIATES THE EVALUATION OF THE UNCF 2019-2021 PROCESS

The current United Nations Cooperation Framework (UNCF) for South Sudan comes to an end in December 2022 and in consistency with the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) UNCF guidelines, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) is undertaking an independent evaluation of the UNCF.

The evaluation exercise focuses on assessing the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the UN's programmes on recovery, and long-term development in South Sudan by reviewing the contributions made under the UNCF towards addressing national priorities and achieving results in line with agenda 2030, and humanitarian commitments.

It is informed by data and analysis from the 2019 & 2020 UNCF annual reviews and agency reviews, assessments, and evaluations; complemented by field visits to particularly capture human interest stories. Thus, the evaluation will be evidence-based, and recommendations might be used for resource leveraging and partnerships.

A consultancy firm comprising of four technical experts have been identified to lead the process. The consultants have already interacted and held discussions with stakeholders and beneficiaries in selected states of Jonglei, Western Equatoria, Western Bar El Ghazel and Lakes.

Once completed, findings will be used to inform the next United Nations Sustainable Development Framework 2023 to 2025



The UNCF evaluation team conducting a focus group discussion to understand some of the lessons learnt during the implementation of the cooperation framework 2019-2021. Photo Credit: RCO

THE WORLD BANK AND UNICEF JOIN HANDS FOR BASIC HEALTH CARE FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE IN JONGLEI AND UPPER-NILE STATE



A medical person chats with a new mother. Photo Credit: UNICEF

The World Bank and UNICEF are collaborating with the Ministry of Health to implement a \$53.5 million project in South Sudan that focuses on COVID-19 vaccine deployment in the country and the provision of essential health services for the most vulnerable populations in two of the most hard-to-reach areas – the States of Jonglei and Upper Nile.

This project is the continuation of a partnership between the World Bank and UNICEF that was initiated in 2018 and immunized nearly 127,000 children with the penta3 vaccine and nearly 128,000 children against measles vaccines and provided more than 55,000 pregnant women with antenatal care services.

This renewed partnership between the World Bank and UNICEF in South Sudan comes at a crucial time as the country continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic including the scaling up of its vaccination roll out efforts.

Through this partnership the World Bank and UNICEF will also support the Ministry of Health in enhancing its stewardship of the South Sudanese health system and its capacity to plan and implement health programs.

NEWS FROM UN AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

THE CLEARANCE OF A BATTLE AREA IN LOWOI, CENTRAL EQUATORIA BY UNMAS, INCREASES SAFE CULTIVATION

In Lowoi, Central Equatoria, legacy contamination by cluster munitions and abandoned ordnance have hindered the local community from capitalizing on their land for agricultural pursuits, including for farming and livestock. Large swathes within and around the village were known to be hazardous and people avoided using or crossing the ground.

Since April 2021, UNMAS has been clearing Lowoi village and its vicinity. To date, they have removed and destroyed 47 cluster munitions and five unexploded ordnances, including mortars and a rocket. Some of the items were reported to UNMAS during the delivery of explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) to the local community.

Simultaneously, UNMAS responded to a report of a threat along the road between Lowoi and Torit where the team located and destroyed two anti-vehicle mines.

UNMAS has so far released over 493,496 sqm of land and as noted by the village's Chief, "[W]e know that the clearance work is going to help many people's lives as well as build a better economic and social future for the community of Lowoi."



Unexploded ordnance (mortars) located after being reported during an explosive risk ordnance education session in Lowoi village, Central Equatoria.

Photo credit: UNMAS

WOMEN-FRIENDLY SPACE: AN ANCHOR FOR WOMEN AFFECTED BY FLOODING IN SOUTH SUDAN



Health service providers use boats to reach the affected populations during flooding in Bor. Photo Credit: IMA World Health South Sudan

As if extreme poverty and the ongoing humanitarian crisis brought about by armed conflict in the country were not enough, severe flooding has affected hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese people since the onset of the rainy season this May.

Bor resident, Kedia, 49, found a way to deal with the sense of desperation and hopelessness created by the disaster. Barely recovering from the floods of 2020, her family's home was once again inundated when the rainy season began.

"We have nowhere to go to escape the flood, so we stayed in the flooded house. We don't know where to get food. The situation is very difficult for me," said Kedia. Her husband is a retired soldier and has no regular source of income to feed their six children.

Kedia found a glimmer of hope when she met one of the female chiefs in her village, who told her about the Women and Girl-Friendly Space (WGFS).

She learned about the skills training activities at the WGFS, which sparked her interest as she wanted to acquire skills that would allow her to make an income. The awareness-raising sessions about women's health and rights and what to do when they experience gender-based violence are an added attraction for women to attend the center regularly.

Read the full story here: <https://bit.ly/3vZGVCU>

STRENGTHENING YELLOW FEVER LABORATORY TESTING CAPACITIES IN SOUTH SUDAN

A team of technical officers in the National Public Health Laboratory have been trained over the last week, aiming at building their capacity to contribute to controlling yellow fever outbreaks.

South Sudan lies in the yellow fever belt and has reported 187 cases including 27 deaths reported in three separate outbreaks in 2003, 2018, and 2020. Moreover, in the absence of preventive massive vaccination campaigns, the risk of outbreaks remains high in the country. Strengthening national capacities for case detection, investigation, and testing is critical for effective yellow fever control.

With support from Eliminate Yellow Fever Epidemics (EYE) partnership including WHO, GAVI, UNICEF, CDC, and other health implementing partners, the Ministry of Health has trained Technical Officers in the National Public Health Laboratory on yellow fever laboratory testing and confirmation.

“South Sudan will continue strengthening surveillance and response capacities for yellow fever and other diseases within the context of the integrated disease surveillance and response (IDSR) strategy. The strengthening of national yellow fever laboratory testing capacities will facilitate rapid confirmation and response to new outbreaks as required under the international health regulations (IHR (2005)”, said Dr John Rumunu, the Ministry of Health Director General Preventive Health Services.

A WHO-supported Ministry of Health joint external evaluation in 2017 showed that out of the 10 core laboratory tests countries are expected to perform, South Sudan was only able to perform five tests for HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, measles, and cholera. The South Sudan National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) therefore includes laboratory capacity expansion as a core intervention. Read More: [Strengthening yellow fever laboratory testing capacities in South Sudan | WHO | Regional Office for Africa](#)



Technical Officers in the National Public Health Laboratory trained on yellow fever laboratory testing and confirmation.
Photo Credit: WHO

SOUTH SUDAN'S CLIMATE PROMISE IS COMMITTED BY SUBMITTING ITS SECOND NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTION

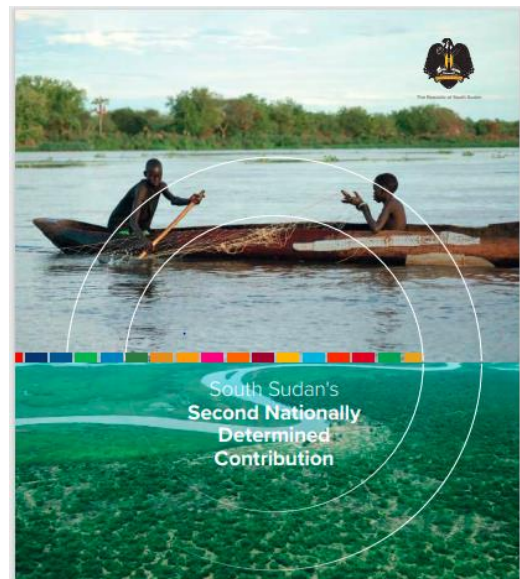
This document presents South Sudan's second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC); it updates the first NDC to include the country's changing climate and its development considerations.

South Sudan has come a long way since it published its first NDC with the development of its detailed greenhouse gas inventory (published in its National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), the establishment of its National Adaptation Programme of Action, and the development of other climate-related sectoral plans and policies.

In addition to these elements, South Sudan, as part of this NDC revision process, has also carried out a detailed science-based metabolic and circularity assessment to inform its revised climate-related strategies. All of this progress is presented in detail in this document.

South Sudan, through this second NDC, reiterates its commitment to the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, while making efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

It details how South Sudan has significantly increased its climate ambition of reducing emissions across its sectors by 109.87 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent while sequestering an additional 45.06 million tons by 2030. Read more: [South Sudan's Second Nationally Determined Contribution | UNDP in South Sudan](#)



South Sudan's second Nationally determined Contribution. Photo Credit: UNDP

IFAD SCALES-UP RE-ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS IN SOUTH SUDAN

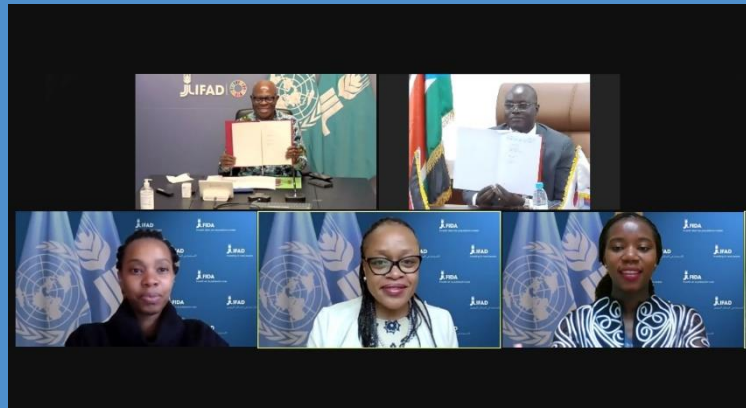
The International Fund for Agriculture Development's (IFAD) re-engagement efforts in South Sudan are now in full swing following the approval of the South Sudan livelihoods and Resilience Project (SSLRP) by IFAD's Executive Board in May 2021, and the subsequent signing of the financing agreement by IFAD's President, Gilbert Houngbo and the Minister of Finance and Planning, Honorable Athian Diing Athian in June 2021.

IFAD and the Government of South Sudan have now turned focus towards implementation of the project, with the recent Start-Up workshop held in the capitol Juba in October this year. The Start-Up workshop was structured to provide stakeholders and partners with an opportunity to strategize and elaborate on the implementation modalities as the SSLRP moves to the operationalisation phase. The workshop facilitated discussions on the implementation arrangements including the composition and role of the Project Coordination Unit (PCU), VSF Germany, AAHI and decentralized structures.

Speaking at the Start-Up Workshop, IFAD's Country Director for South Sudan, Bernadette Mukonyora-Dias, reiterated the critical importance of an expedited start-up to SSLRP to ensure that the benefits start to trickle-down to the rural communities in the target States.

Mukonyora-Dias also shed more light on IFAD's business model while challenging the Government to play its part in ensuring that SSLRP meets key expected milestones for 2021.

"IFAD's business model is premised on leverage – working with Governments to design framework projects that can mobilize additional funds from other partners. SSLRP is demonstrating this very notion. However, the success of our joint resource mobilization efforts lies in our ability to start-up SSLRP and demonstrate that the Government of South Sudan is ready to take its rightful role in having oversight over development interventions in the country." She reiterated.



Signing of the financing agreement by IFAD's President, Gilbert Houngbo (top left) and the South Sudan Minister of Finance and Planning, Honourable Athian Diing Athian (top right) in June 2021.

CONFLICT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUNGER; A TRIANGLE OF DESPAIR: WFP RESPONSE ADDRESSES IMMEDIATE NEEDS WHILE ALSO LOOKING TO LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT

Nyanchiew Chung is trapped in a cycle of despair. Chronic violence has forced her to leave her home several times and now the mother of five has fled again after flooding destroyed her home, crops, and livestock.

Chung's plight is typical of many South Sudanese families who are stuck in a cycle of conflict, climate shocks and rising levels of hunger.

Flooding has affected 380,000 people in South Sudan since May of this year. Almost 75 percent of those affected are from Unity and Jonglei States, where early seasonal rains have caused rivers to overflow dykes and banks, submerging entire settlements including farmlands and precious harvests.

Thousands have escaped to higher ground and now face severe food shortages, a lack of clean drinking water and the threat of mosquito-borne diseases. Some have even resorted to eating tree leaves to quell the pangs of hunger. "We tried to build dykes but they broke, we tried to plant crops, but floods washed them away and we lost many cattle too," says Chung, who fled her home in Ghorwai, a village in Ayod County in Jonglei State. Read More: [Conflict, climate change and hunger: A triangle of despair in South Sudan | World Food Programme \(wfp.org\)](#)



The effects of climate change such as flooding are common in South Sudan. Photo Credit: WFP

FINDING THE PATH TO WELL-BEING IN SOUTH SUDAN

Life for Nyakume Thipek Mani was as normal as it comes. The 45-year-old lived with her husband in Tharkan, a village in South Sudan's Rubkona County, raising their children and tilling the fields.

Then tragedy struck – as it did for thousands of people living in South Sudan – when conflict broke out in December 2013, only two and half years after the young East African nation gained independence.

In early 2014, when fighting spilled over to her village, Nyakume's family was uprooted from their home, escaping death.

They took refuge in the former United Nations Protection of Civilians (PoC) site in Bentiu, now the internally displaced persons (IDPs) camp.

Thankfully, for Nyakume and her family, they escaped unscathed, physically at least.

Over the months, after arriving in Bentiu, something started to change in Nyakume. She had witnessed what most of us will only see in a movie.

"My neighbors in the village were not as lucky as we were. They were killed," says Nyakume, whose small frame makes her look younger than she is. "I saw corpses of people I knew."

Nyakume's youngest son, Bol Wiyoah Bath, says his mother started behaving in a strange way. "She looked like my mother, but she behaved like someone I had never met."

Nyakume's strange episodes occurred sporadically.

Her family took her to a traditional healer but to no avail. In 2020, her condition deteriorated.

She experienced hallucinations, went through periods of speech disorder and had nightmares and difficulty sleeping because she was constantly haunted by images of her neighbours.

"I was scared about what I was going through," says Nyakume. "I could feel my mind escaping me."

A community mobilizer working with the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) team learnt about Nyakume and referred her to the MHPSS counsellor who immediately referred her for specialized services and treatment at a nearby hospital.

The counsellor provided Nyakume with stress management and psychoeducation about how to cope with the situation. The counsellor also supervised and ensured that Nyakume took the medication as instructed at the hospital.

IOM provides MHPSS services and peer support in host communities and in displaced persons camps throughout South Sudan to help protect and promote mental health and psychosocial well-being for communities.



Nyakume and her youngest son Bol Wiyoah Bath.
Photo Credit: IOM

The MHPSS team also provides recreational and non-formal learning activities, including skills groups focusing on small-scale, income-generating activities.

"Nyakume made positive progress with the specialized treatment and the psychosocial support IOM provided her," says Peter Luoy Ruei, IOM MHPSS Counsellor. Read more: <https://storyteller.iom.int/stories/finding-path-well-being-south-sudan>



Nyakume and IOM MHPSS counsellor Peter Luoy Ruei share a joke. Photo Credit: IOM

SOUTH SUDAN MARKS UN DAY IN STYLE

The United Nations Country Team in South Sudan, on Friday joined the rest of the world to mark the UN Day, a day when the world commemorates the historic occasion when the organization was founded in the wake of World War II with the aim of securing global peace and security.

Thousands of people gathered at Nyakuron Cultural center to witness the work that the United Nations in South Sudan is doing to support the country achieve a peaceful, just, equitable, prosperous, and sustainable society.

Addressing the event, Vice President Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior, Gender and Youth Cluster, spoke articulately of the ongoing support given by the UN as South Sudan starts drafting a permanent constitution, aiming to usher in a new era of democracy, development, and durable peace.

“Ten years ago, when our flag was raised in the UN it was a joyous time. To become a member of the global community is very important and a beautiful thing,” she said.

The Vice President thanked the UN for its consistent support to all communities across the country, by protecting civilians and saving lives through humanitarian assistance. “In 2013, everything went wrong in our country and for those scars to be fully healed, we need patience. Most importantly, we need to engage young people in developing their country,” she stated.

For his part, Guang Cong, the UNMISS Deputy Special Representative-Political (DSRSG), commended South Sudan for taking concrete steps towards building a sustained peace, including the reconstitution of the Parliament, the historic appointment of the first female Speaker of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, the drafting of a bill on the constitution-making process, and efforts to progress economic reforms.

He assured national counterparts that the UN family here remains committed to the ideals of peace, unity, and development.

“On this special day – United Nations Day - let’s seize this opportunity to redouble our efforts to support South Sudanese in rebuilding the peaceful and prosperous future they deserve,” averred the DSRSG.



The Vice President H.E madam Rebecca Nyandeng arrives at the UN day celebration event. **Photo Credit: RCO**



Vice President Rebecca Nyandeng delivering her keynote speech. **Photo Credit: RCO**



The UNMISS Chinese Battalion entertain guests at the UN Day celebration at Nyakuron Cultural Center. **Photo Credit: RCO**



Figure DSRSG Guang Cong delivering a speech at the UN Day Event. **Photo Credit: RCO**