

HIGHLIGHTS

- UN Humanitarian Chief urges parties to cease hostilities, protect civilians and aid workers.
- Partners scale-up cholera prevention campaigns to mitigate the risk of outbreaks during the current rainy season.
- Detained aid workers released, NGO suspends operation due to insecurity.
- Armed groups release more than 200 children in Pibor.
- Over 20,000 South Sudanese have fled insecurity and hunger to Ethiopia as refugees since January 2018.

FIGURES

No. of Internally Displaced People	1.74 million
No. of refugees in neighbouring countries	2.47 million
No. of people assisted in 2018 (as of 30 Apr)	3.0 million

FUNDING

\$370.5 million
funding received in 2018

21.6%
of appeal funding received in 2018

\$1.7 billion
requirements for South Sudan 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan



USG, Mark Lowcock, on a tour of Maal Primary School at UN House Protection of Civilians site in Juba. Photo: UNMISS/Eric Kanalstein

In this issue

- USG urges end to hostilities P.1
- Cholera Response Scaled Up P.2
- Aid workers released P.3
- 200 more children released P.3
- Thousands flee to Ethiopia P.4

UN Humanitarian Chief urges parties to cease hostilities, protect civilians and aid workers

UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, concluded a two-day (15 to 16 May) mission to South Sudan, calling for all parties to cease hostilities, amidst fresh fighting that has displaced tens of thousands of people in multiple locations across the country. This was his first visit to South Sudan as the Emergency Relief Coordinator.

During his visit, Mr. Lowcock held meetings with senior Government officials, members of SPLA-in Opposition, humanitarian and diplomatic partners and visited people affected by the crisis in Juba, Yei Town and Mundu. The latter is an SPLA-IO controlled area. Mr. Lowcock lamented that ordinary people are suffering amidst fresh fighting that has displaced tens of thousands of people in multiple locations across the country. “The conflict in South Sudan is now in its fifth year. Ordinary people are suffering on an unimaginable scale. The peace process has so far produced nothing. The cessation of hostilities is a fiction. The economy has collapsed”, he said.

“Belligerents use scorched-earth tactics, murder and rape as weapons of war. All these are gross violations of international law. Seven million people need humanitarian assistance in 2018. And things are simply getting worse.” Reflecting on his meetings with affected people, Mr. Lowcock said, “When I asked them what they needed most, the word I heard most frequently from them was: ‘peace’.

Ending the violence is the first and single most important thing needed to alleviating human suffering in South Sudan.” The humanitarian crisis in South Sudan continues to intensify.

As a result of the compounding effects of widespread violence and insecurity and a deteriorating economy, 7 million people – more than one in two across the country – will need humanitarian assistance in 2018.

Nearly 4.3 million people – one in three people in South Sudan – have been displaced, including more than 1.74 million who are internally displaced and about 2.5 million in neighbouring countries. Displaced people are more vulnerable to threats to their safety,



USG listens to IDPs in Gezira in the outskirts of Yei town in Central Equatoria. Photo: UNMISS/Eric Kanalstein

“Ordinary people are suffering on an unimaginable scale. The peace process has so far produced nothing. The cessation of hostilities is a fiction. The economy has collapsed” – UN Humanitarian Chief Mark Lowcock.

Since January 2018, a total of 234,094 people were vaccinated in the first and second rounds of OCV campaigns in Aburoc, Malakal PoC site, Malakal town in Upper Nile, Wau IDP sites in Western Bahr el Ghazal and Budi in Eastern Equatoria.

health and livelihoods. “Despite a multitude of challenges, humanitarians are saving lives and protecting people,” said Mr. Lowcock. Humanitarian workers need rapid, safe, unhindered access to all people in need.

Mr. Lowcock also met with humanitarian organizations whose staff and operations were affected by insecurity and paid tribute to the bravery of aid workers across the country. He described South Sudan as “one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a humanitarian worker. Crimes are being committed against aid workers, with apparent impunity. There needs to be accountability, and the Government - because it is the Government, and this is a responsibility of Governments everywhere - has the prime responsibility for that.”

The number of aid workers killed in South Sudan since conflict broke out in December 2013 reached 101 this month.

Mr. Lowcock emphasized that the United Nations and its partners were fully committed to stay and deliver in South Sudan to alleviate the suffering of people in need. “However, we will also consider how we can improve the way in which we deliver our support in South Sudan, given the increasingly difficult environment in which we operate.” Mr. Lowcock also addressed the issue of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in the aid sector in South Sudan.

“The Secretary-General has been clear that we have a zero-tolerance approach to SEA in the United Nations. We are taking steps to ensure transgressors cannot move freely from job to job in our sector; to ensure that we have sufficient capacity to investigate allegations of SEA in the aid sector; and that we always take a victim-centered approach, standing in support and solidarity of people subject to these abuses.”

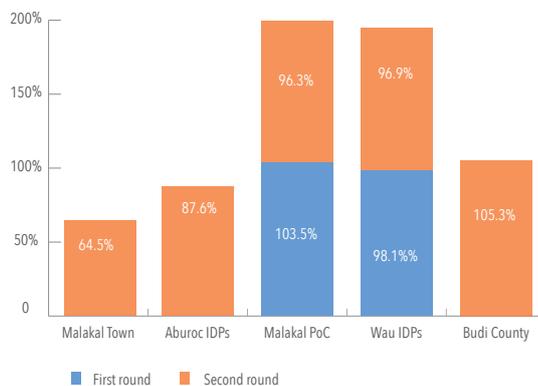
Partners scale-up cholera prevention campaigns in South Sudan

Health partners, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, have initiated oral cholera vaccine (OCV) campaigns, to mitigate the risk of cholera outbreaks during the current rainy season across the country.

The campaigns are targeting over 854,000 people in South Sudan’s cholera endemic ‘hot spots’ in the first half of 2018 and will incorporate water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions that are critical to achieve the global target of attaining a 90 per cent reduction of cholera deaths by 2030.

“These OCV campaigns are critical for preventing recurrent cholera outbreaks in endemic areas,” said Dr Wamala Joseph, Epidemiologist at WHO South Sudan. “They provide protection in the immediate term and serve as a bridge to rolling out long-term and sustainable WASH interventions in cholera hotspots.”

Since January 2018, a total of 60,614 people were vaccinated in the first round of OCV campaigns in Malakal PoC and Wau IDP sites, and another 173,480 people vaccinated in the second round of OCV campaigns in Aburoc and Wau IDP sites, Budi County, Malakal town and Malakal PoC site, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Save for Malakal town, which had a 64.5 per cent coverage, other targeted locations recorded over 85 per cent coverage, with Budi County recording 105.3 per cent. The variations in coverage, according to WHO are attributable in part to unpredictable population movements either due to conflict-related displacements or seasonal movement in search of water, pasture and food.



In addition, the coverage is also affected by challenges related to inadequate social mobilisation and a high dropout rate for the second dose of oral cholera vaccine, especially when the campaign is conducted in the absence of an ongoing outbreak.

The second round OCV campaign for Juba begun on 25 April and is currently underway, targeting to immunize some 206,292 people. First round vaccinations in 2018 have also been scheduled for Akobo, Karam, Lankien, Pieri, Torit, Yirol East and Yirol West.



A child receives a dose of cholera vaccination. Photo: WHO

Since 2013, the country has faced several outbreaks of cholera affecting vulnerable populations in IDP camps, urban informal settlements, cattle camps as well as rural population, island dwellers and communities along River Nile. According to WHO, more than 20,000 cases of cholera, including 436 deaths were reported during the longest and largest cholera outbreak that lasted nearly 20 months, from 18 June 2016 to 7 February 2018.

Detained aid workers released as NGO suspends operation due to insecurity

The 14 aid workers, who went missing in Yangiri, Ezo County on 14 May, were on a humanitarian mission from Tambura to Yambio when they were held.

On 18 May, 14 INGO/NGO staff were released about 150 kms north-west of Yambio. The aid workers, who went missing in Yangiri, Ezo County on 14 May, were on a humanitarian mission from Tambura to Yambio when they were held. The aid workers were safely returned to Juba.

Meanwhile on 11 May, a national NGO reported the temporary suspension of health activities in Kupera and Mukaya in Yei County. This follows the detention, on 27 March 2018, of seven of their staff members by SPLA-iO forces. The staff members, who were later released, were delivering medical supplies and drugs to health facilities in the area, when the incident occurred. The organization has reported that it would only resume operations if assured of safety and unhindered access for all its staff. More than 30 aid workers were detained between 27 March 2018 and 11 May 2018 in Yei County, while on humanitarian missions. The aid workers were released following protracted negotiations.

On 8 May, partners suspended distribution of non-food items, agricultural seeds and tools to conflict-affected people in Mitika Payam (about 25 kilometers from Yei town) due to insecurity along Yei-Lasu road. No civilian casualties were reported, but some humanitarian supplies were reportedly looted during the incident. The security incidents attest to the ongoing tough and challenging environments that humanitarian actors continue to work in as they deliver the much-needed assistance to people in need.

Armed groups releases 200 children

More than 200 children were released by armed groups in Pibor County, Jonglei on 16 May 2018.

It was the third such ceremony to take place since the beginning of the year and brings the total number of children released in 2018 to 806. Previous ceremonies took place in February and April in the town of Yambio in the south of the country where 348 and 248 children were released. Additional releases are expected in the coming months that could result in more than 1,000 children being freed.

“Every time a child is released and able to return to their family, it’s a source of great hope - hope for their future and for the future of the country,” said Mahimbo Mdoe, UNICEF’s Representative in South Sudan. “We also hope there will be many more of these events

An estimated 19,000 children continue to serve in the ranks of armed forces and groups in South Sudan.

until there are no longer any children in the ranks of armed groups.”

During the ceremony, the children were formally disarmed and provided with civilian clothes. Medical screenings will now be carried out, and they will receive counselling and psychosocial support as part of the reintegration programme, which is implemented by UNICEF and partners.

“Today is the start of the long journey of reintegration for these children and they will need a lot of support along the way,” said UNICEF’s Mdoe.

The 210 children released today included three girls and largely came from the opposition group the SPLA-IO, with eight having been associated with the National Salvation Front (NSF).

An estimated 19,000 children continue to serve in the ranks of armed forces and groups in South Sudan. UNICEF urges all parties to the conflict to end the recruitment of children and to release all children in their ranks.

Thousands flee to Ethiopia as refugees

Since January 2018, over 20,000 South Sudanese have fled insecurity and hunger to Ethiopia as refugees, latest data shows.

Registration figures of South Sudanese seeking safety and shelter in Ethiopia show that the number of people who fled as refugees increased from nearly 419,000 in December 2017 to 440,000 as at the end of April 2018. Major drivers of the refugee outflow include growing insecurity and hunger.

The first quarter of 2018 has seen increased inter-communal violence and conflict affecting mostly Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile. In Jonglei, fighting was reported in Akobo, Nyirol and Uror counties where several civilians were killed and thousands displaced. At least 13,000 displaced people arrived in Guiy village, north-west of Motot following fighting in Nyirol and Uror counties.

In Pibor County (Jonglei), a cattle raiding attack forced the displacement of about 15,000 people and led to the abduction of at least 30 women and children in Likuangole.

In April, renewed fighting in Mayom, Rubkona, Guit, Koch, Leer and Mayendit counties in Unity led to displacement of thousands of civilians. Three villages were burnt down following clashes in and around Koch town, displacing over 7,000 people, while nearly 600 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) arrived in Nyal, Panyijiar County.

Ethiopia is the second largest host of South Sudanese refugees, after Uganda where over 1 million people have fled, especially after fighting broke out in July 2016 in the South Sudanese capital Juba.

Registration figures of South Sudanese seeking safety and shelter in Ethiopia show that the number of people who fled as refugees increased from nearly 419,000 in December 2017 to 440,000 at the end of April 2018.



For further information, please contact:

Frank Nyakairu, Head of Communications and Information Management, nyakairu@un.org

OCHA humanitarian bulletins are available at: www.reliefweb.int