

HIGHLIGHTS

- Thousands of civilians have been displaced in Longochuk and Maiwut counties, following fighting.
- One hundred humanitarian access incidents were reported in South Sudan in June, the highest number recorded in any month so far in 2017.
- Deaths caused by malaria represent 76.9 per cent of all disease-related deaths recorded so far in 2017.
- Humanitarians are striving to improve the situation of nearly 60,000 internally displaced persons who are living in the protected area and other collective sites in Wau, in extremely congested conditions.



New collective shelters the protected area adjacent to the UNMISS base in Wau. Photo: IOM

FIGURES

No. of Internally Displaced People	1.94 million
No. of refugees in neighboring countries	1.93 million
No. of people severely food insecure (June-July 2017)	6 million

FUNDING

\$845.8 million
funding received in 2017*

51.6%
of appeal funding received in 2017

\$1.6 billion
requirements for South Sudan 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan

*According to the Financial Tracking Service (<https://fts.unocha.org>). Additional pledges have been announced but not yet recorded.

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Upper Nile: Insecurity forces relocation of aid workers, cuts services

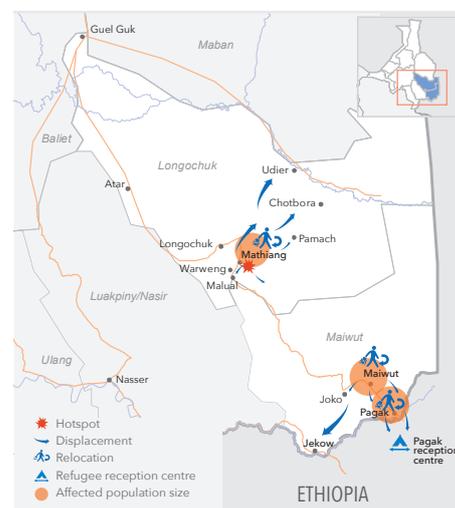
Thousands of civilians have been displaced in Longochuk and Maiwut counties, following an offensive by government forces which began around 2 July in Mathiang. Most of the displaced people have fled to Malual, Udier, Chotbora and Pamach in Longochuk County, and Pagak, Jekow and Joko in Maiwut County. An estimated 5,000 people have crossed the border to Ethiopia in the past week in search of safety.

Due to escalating tensions, at least 25 aid workers from different humanitarian organizations were relocated from Pagak and surrounding areas on 6 and 7 July. UNICEF has reported that three South Sudanese who were working for a firm it contracted to conduct education surveys fled Mathiang along with aid workers and were held in Pagak upon arrival. UNICEF is working to establish the exact location of the contractors, their state of health and to secure their release. There are also separate reports of looting of humanitarian compounds and assets in Mathiang and Maiwut towns.

Aid workers say thousands of civilians have been cut off from assistance in key locations, including Mathiang, Maiwut and Pagak, as a result of the escalating insecurity and relocation of humanitarians.

Partners are deeply concerned regarding the plight of civilians in areas affected by the clashes and call on all parties to uphold their responsibilities under international humanitarian and human rights law to protect civilians, and to provide free, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian organizations to return to these areas as soon as possible.

Displacement in Upper Nile



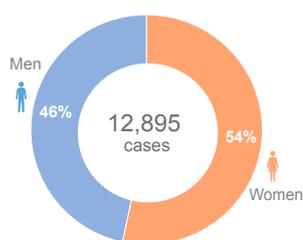
South Sudan's humanitarian crisis deepens

One year after renewed violence broke out in the South Sudanese capital Juba, and six years since the country became independent, humanitarian needs across the country continue to grow.

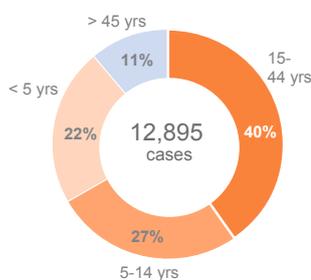
The South Sudan crisis is, first and foremost, a protection crisis. Refugees arriving into neighbouring countries continue to report violations against civilians, including killing, abduction, rape and destruction of homes. Sexual and gender-based violence has been a persistent and pervasive feature of the conflict. In the first half of 2017, government offensives and security operations displaced tens of thousands of people along the West Bank

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Cholera cases by sex in 2017



Cholera cases by age in 2017



(WHO, 2 July 2017)

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of the River Nile in Upper Nile, in and around Wau town in Western Bahr el Ghazal, and in central and northern Jonglei. Over 17,000 children are estimated to have been recruited by armed actors in South Sudan, and there are continued reports of forced recruitment by all parties to the conflict, including most recently in Unity.

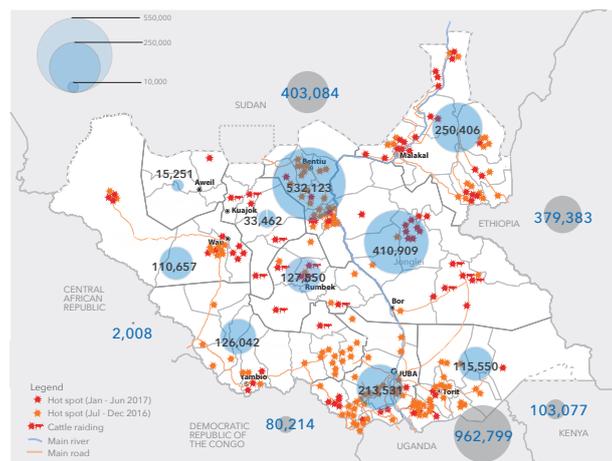
Displacement has reached unprecedented levels, with nearly 4 million people uprooted, including more than 1.9 million people internally displaced (IDPs) and more than 1.9 million who have fled as refugees to neighbouring countries. Over the past year, the escalation of conflict in key towns in the Greater Equatoria region—including Yei, Morobo, Lainya, Kajo-Keji, Magwi and Pajok—has caused a major outflow of refugees to Uganda, with about 733,800 having arrived from July 2016 to date, compared to about 206,520 from December 2013 to June 2016.

Food insecurity and malnutrition also continue to escalate. An estimated 6 million people (50 per cent of the population) are projected to be severely food insecure at the height of this lean season in July, and some 1.7 million people—the highest ever number—are now on the brink of famine. Although the localized famine declared in Leer and Mayendit in Unity in February 2017 was arrested through a massive multi-sectoral humanitarian response, some 45,000 people are facing catastrophic food insecurity, including 25,000 people in Leer, Koch and Mayendit counties in Unity and 20,000 in Ayod County in Jonglei. Malnutrition remains a major public health emergency in parts of South Sudan, with 10 out of 12 surveys carried out from March to May showing Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates above the emergency threshold of 15 per cent.

The conflict has also deepened South Sudan's health crisis. The country is now facing the longest, most widespread and most deadly cholera outbreak since it became independent. Cumulatively, 17,242 cholera cases, including at least 320 deaths (Case Fatality Rate (CFR) 1.8 per cent), were reported in 24 counties in South Sudan from 18 June 2016 to 2 July 2017.

As insecurity persists, education continues to be adversely affected. Boys remain at risk of recruitment into armed groups and girls continue to face sexual violence, forced marriage and exploitation. Countrywide, 51 per cent of children are out of school, and only 40 per cent of those accessing education are girls.

Hotspots and displacement (July 2016 - July 2017)



Violence against aid workers increases in June

One hundred humanitarian access incidents were reported in South Sudan in June, the highest number recorded in any month so far in 2017.

Although there was a reduction in the number of conflict and insecurity incidents impacting humanitarian access in June, with no relocations of aid workers carried out during the month, partners reported a substantial rise in incidents involving violence against personnel and assets, from 29 cases in May to 46 in June.

Violence against aid workers and assets included compound break-ins, looting of humanitarian supplies, and physical assault. At least 24 humanitarian compounds, including offices, residences, and warehouses, were broken into countrywide in June, resulting in the looting of humanitarian supplies and theft of staff member's personal belongings. On 24 June, government soldiers reportedly forcibly entered an NGO compound in Budi County, Eastern Equatoria, assaulted guards and commandeered the organization's vehicle. On 28 June, a group of youth forcefully entered an NGO compound, barricaded the entry and

There were at least 20 robberies or ambushes of vehicles involved in humanitarian activities in June.

physically assaulted staff members in Ajoung-Thok, Pariang County, Unity. Humanitarians reported that nine out of the 14 community volunteers and health workers, who had been detained by armed forces in Guit County, Unity, on 6 June remained in detention as of 13 July. Negotiation with the authorities for the release of the workers are ongoing.

Violence against humanitarians also increased along main road routes. In June, there were at least 20 incidents of robbery or ambush of vehicles that were travelling to undertake humanitarian assessment and response missions, and to pre-position and deliver vital humanitarian supplies. Such incidents were particularly prevalent in Lakes, Western Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria and Central Equatoria. In Yei, armed men reportedly ambushed an NGO vehicle at Limbe on Lainya-Yei road about 15 kilometres from Yei town on 7 June. One staff member was shot and seriously injured during the attack.

Operational interference and bureaucratic impediments remained key challenges. On 5 June, partners were forced to suspend a planned food distribution to more than 7,500 vulnerable people in Pibor and Vertet in Jonglei due to interference from government soldiers. In IO-held areas, humanitarian organizations reported that authorities attempted to institute exactions. In Juba, several organizations faced challenges transporting cash out of Juba for their humanitarian operations, with the authorities requesting new and additional paperwork.

[Read more: Humanitarian Access Snapshot \(June 2017\) -- http://bit.ly/2uiftCp](http://bit.ly/2uiftCp)

Threat letters against aid workers

Recent weeks have seen an alarming trend of threat letters issued against aid workers in at least three locations in South Sudan.

In late June and early July, three letters threatening violence against aid workers from the Equatoria region working in Bor, Jonglei, were received by aid organizations. Humanitarians have extensively engaged with authorities regarding the letters, which were authored by a group proclaiming to be the Bor Community Youth Association. The acting Governor issued a public statement condemning the threats and assured humanitarians that authorities would take all necessary steps to ensure their safety. Several arrests have already been made of alleged perpetrators.

“It is not acceptable for any community [...] to address people by ethnicity or tribes. It is not a responsible attitude. You might have grievances or complaints [...] but you shouldn't be using language of intimidation, threat or incitement,” said the Acting Governor, Agot Alier Leek, in an interview with Radio Miraya.

In Torit, Eastern Equatoria, a threatening letter was recently found posted in an NGO compound demanding that staff from the greater Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal regions vacate their jobs. The Governor has reportedly instructed national security and police to investigate the incident and arrest the culprits.

In Mankien, Unity, a threat letter was issued by the County Commissioner demanding that staff from other areas leave. This was followed by a further threatening letter from a group proclaiming to be Youth of Greater Bul counties.

These letters are particularly concerning as they are the first threat letters to be issued against aid workers from specific communities since October 2016 when multiple threat letters were issued on multiple locations.

Malaria increases as rainy season sets in

With the arrival of the rainy season, malaria has returned as a main cause of illness in South Sudan. Already in 2017, more than 928,141 malaria cases, including 1,956 deaths, have been recorded in health facilities, with deaths caused by malaria representing 76.9 per cent of all disease-related deaths recorded. The counties most-affected to date are Aweil North, Gogrial West, Juba, Maban, Torit and Wau.

Health organizations are scaling up their malaria prevention and response, with distribution of mosquito nets, and replenishment of antimalarial drugs in health facilities ongoing. How-

Letters threatening violence against aid workers based on their ethnicity have been received in Bor, Torit and Mankien recently.

Deaths caused by malaria represent 76.9 per cent of all disease-related deaths recorded so far in 2017.

ever, closure of health facilities due to conflict—including in Jonglei where recent fighting has severely impact the availability of healthcare—and supply chain issues in the delivery of malaria drugs remain key challenges in the response.

Malaria is endemic in South Sudan, especially during the country's rainy season, and there is an annual upswing in cases around July. In recent years, conflict, displacement and poor access to health services have contributed to the severity of malaria outbreaks, with 2016 having the highest number of recorded cases since South Sudan became independent.

Wau: humanitarians strive to improve IDP living conditions

Humanitarian organizations are working to improve the situation of nearly 60,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are living in the protected area and other collective sites in Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal, in extremely congested conditions.

In the protected area adjacent to the UNMISS base, over 39,000 registered IDPs have, on average 5.08m² of space per person; the lowest average space per person in any IDP camp in South Sudan. As there is no land available to expand the camp, humanitarians are working to improve the conditions inside within the existing constraints. The restructuring of one of the zones is ongoing, and more than 4,000 people are being relocated to 60 newly constructed shelters. Although this does not increase the space available per person, the living conditions in the new shelters are much improved and the restructuring will enable better drainage systems in the camp. Once complete, the rehabilitation project will create improved space for an estimated 17,000 IDPs.

Humanitarian organizations are also responding to reports of gender-based violence and violence against children in the Wau displacement sites, and plan to distribute solar lights to displaced people in the protected area and collective sites in the coming days.

Partners report that many IDPs in the protected area have begun returning to their homes in Wau town during the day, but continue to shelter at the protected area during the night. Many IDPS report that they cannot return to their homes permanently due to continued insecurity. Numerous interviews by protection partners reveal fear of the possibility of being killed or physically attacked when trying to go back home.

Unity: Clashes and tensions disrupt aid operations

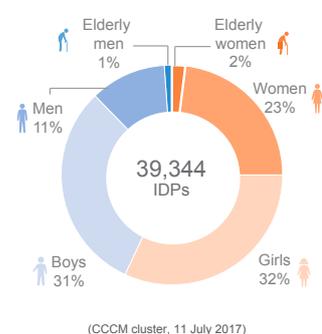
Rising tensions and clashes in Unity have disrupted humanitarian activities, including due to growing insecurity in Mayendit town, renewed fighting near Leer town and inter-communal violence in the Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) site.

In Mayendit, heavy gunfire was reported on 8 July between armed groups and several bullets reportedly hit humanitarian compounds. The fighting forced humanitarian organizations to relocate 14 aid workers who were engaged in life-saving response in the county, which remains severely affected by food insecurity, displacement and disease.

Armed clashes were subsequently reported in the vicinity of Leer town, where an estimated 14,000 people continue to require humanitarian assistance, on 11 July. The growing insecurity forced some 13 aid workers to temporarily seek shelter in the UNMISS base in Leer town. However, they have since returned to their compounds.

In Bentiu PoC, clashes erupted between youth groups from different counties on 6 July, leaving scores injured. Given the inter-communal tensions, many local aid workers remain fearful to return to their shelters in the PoC site, and are staying overnight in the humanitarian logistics base.

IDPs in Wau protected area by sex and age



Insecurity has affected Leer, Mayendit and Bentiu Protection of Civilians site.

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