

Thousands of people suffering the impact of flooding

(Juba, 06 August 2021) As early season flooding unfolds in parts of South Sudan, the humanitarian community is working with the Government of South Sudan to support people affected by the rising waters. An estimated 90,000 people have been affected thus far, after heavy rains inundated homes and agricultural fields, and forcing families and their livestock to higher ground.

On 4 August, a mission comprising of humanitarian representatives and government officials from Juba and Bor visited Ayod and Canal counties to understand the impacts of the ongoing flooding and support required to assist the people. During the mission, local authorities reported that upwards of 70,000 people have been affected by flooding in Ayod and Canal counties. For many, this is the second time they have faced flooding since May.

“Intense and unrelenting for two years, the flooding is seriously degrading the ability of the people to cope and survive. Tens of thousands of people have been impacted,” Arafat Jamal, the Humanitarian Coordinator ad interim in South Sudan, said.

“What is occurring in Ayod is a distressing example of how a changing climate disrupts the normal patterns and intensifies the effects of flooding, leaving people disoriented and dispossessed. The people we met in Ayod and Canal faced acute humanitarian needs, yet their thoughts were directed to their brethren across the river, marooned on islands surrounded by water, sheltering under trees and unable to cross to safety,” the Humanitarian Coordinator added.

“I met with community leaders and women representatives, who told me that people have been arriving in search of safety daily as waters rise. This has placed increased pressure on their already meagre resources with communities surviving on fish and indigestible grasses. Urgent food assistance, shelter, kitchen items, medicines and access to clean water are especially needed,” Mr. Jamal stated.

Mr. Jamal pledged the support of the humanitarian community in favour of the flood affected people. A joint humanitarian team is in the process of providing for the basic needs of flood survivors in Ayod and beyond. ‘The imperative right now is to alleviate suffering, which we shall do with the resources at our disposal. But we must also help communities to adapt to change, and we are also investing in longer term interventions, such as dyke building, that will help communities to better withstand recurring climate shocks.’

The Humanitarian Coordinator noted that the situation witnessed in Ayod is just one example of the multiple reports received from across the country of people impacted by flooding thus far in 2021. Mr. Jamal pledged humanitarian support and called for increased investment in flood mitigation measures.

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