During the third quarter of 2021, 174 humanitarian access incidents were reported, 56 per cent of which were violence and threats against humanitarian personnel and assets. Over a quarter of the incidents reported occurred in Central Equatoria. Twenty-nine NGO staff were detained for various reasons, including new visa requirements and outstanding court procedures against former staff. Insecurity forced the relocation of 80 aid workers from Ayod and New Fangak counties in Jonglei State, Nagero and Tambura in Western Equatoria State, and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area. Looting of supplies significantly impacted humanitarians’ ability to respond efficiently to people in need. On 8 July, 230 metric tons of assorted critical food items for people in highly food-insecure areas were looted from a UN warehouse in Torit North, Warrap State. On 15 July, 70 metric tons of food commodities were looted in a roadside attack in Abiemhomb, Unity. On 21 August, 12.5 metric tons of food supplies were looted in Baggari, Western Bahr el Ghazal. Youth disrupted humanitarian action in Torit, Rek, Koch, Ulang, Kajo-Keji and Bentiu in 30 reported incidents. This increasing trend of youth demands, aggression, and at times violence has significant impact on humanitarian space and the ability to operate in an unimpeded manner.

A notable decrease in roadside attacks against humanitarian convoys during the third quarter could be attributed to the limited movement by humanitarians due to heavy rains and floods. Ten ambushes took place in Lafon and Bidi in Eastern Equatoria and Yei County. Bureaucratic impediments by the local authorities, ranging from operational interference and illegal taxation, in Panyijiar, Leer and Walgak, have increased. Humanitarian activities were significantly impacted in Tonga, Aweil, Sund and Canal, Tambura, Koch and Mayendit due to insecurity resulting from sub-national violence. Riverine movement along Malakal and Adok port has been challenging, while movements from Malakal to other field locations were suspended, affecting prepositioning and response.

Ongoing sub-national violence in Tambura, Western Equatoria, which displaced more than 80,000 people since June, continues to impact humanitarian operations. In addition to the violence, there were access violations including looting and destruction of humanitarian assets and supplies. Poor road conditions compounded by heavy rain and floods led to access challenges and slowed the response to the flooded-affected communities in Ayod, Fangak and Canal in Jonglei State.
The 49 per cent increase in the number of overall incidents reported compared to the same period last year is attributed to a surge in attacks against humanitarian staff and assets and continued active hostilities and sub-national violence, particularly in Central Equatoria and Jonglei.

South Sudan remains on alert for a resurgence of COVID-19 numbers. There has been a decrease in confirmed cases reported in October. The recently rolled out antigen rapid test has not yet revealed any confirmed COVID-19 case. The declaration of an Ebola outbreak in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo is cause for renewed concern. Health partners are reviewing the May 2021 Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) preparedness checklist to ensure adequate preparedness measures.

The snapshot only reflects incidents reported, and thus, may not reflect the trend in actual events. It is expected that other incidents which occurred were not reported. Humanitarian access concerns humanitarian actors’ ability to reach people affected by the crisis, as well as affected people’s ability to access humanitarian assistance and services.