

HIGHLIGHTS

- South Sudan joined countries around the world to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.
- An inter-agency mission accessed Kajo-Keji from Juba by road, for the first time since 2016.
- The Ministry of Health has declared a Yellow Fever outbreak in Sakure, Nzara County.
- Nearly 250 people were voluntarily returned to Akobo by the Bor Solutions Working Group using UNMISS helicopters.
- A delegation of the South Sudan People's Defense Forces and the SPLA-iO met near Juba and agreed to provide unhindered access to humanitarians.

FIGURES

No. of Internally Displaced People	1.98 million
No. of refugees in neighboring countries	2.18 million
No. of people assisted in 2018 (As of 30 October 2018)	4.8 million

FUNDING

\$1.02 billion
funding received in 2018*

59%
of appeal funding received in 2018

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

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



A midwife conducts family planning session with mothers in Wau.
Photo: Bruno Feder/UNFPA

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The 16 Days of Activism calls to end child marriage

On 25 November, South Sudan joined countries around the world to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, as it kicked-off a series of events to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence.

In June, leaders from across the country including Ministers, State Governors, traditional and religious leaders, civil society organizations and the United Nations agencies, made a collective commitment to eliminate child marriage.

Despite the national frameworks and international agreements, child marriage remains a prevalent practice in many developing countries, including South Sudan, where four out of 10 girls are married before the age of 18. The conflict has generated additional risks of sexual and gender-based violence, even though it was widespread before the start of the conflict in December 2013.

Speaking during the launch of the 16 Days of Activism, the Minister of Gender, Child and Social Welfare said: "Treating young girls as commodities that will bring fortunes to families must stop and all parties who perpetuate this practice must be held accountable for their actions – the parents who marry off their minor children, the men who marry the children, and even authorities and law enforcers who knowingly allow this practice to take place and choose not to take action."

"Child marriage is outright wrong, yet it is deeply entrenched in the culture of the country," said UNFPA Country Representative Dr. Mary Otieno. "I say 'outright wrong' because it puts at stake the very lives and future of South Sudan's adolescent girls."

In South Sudan, 40 per cent of girls are married before 18. Only 6.2 per cent of girls complete primary school, with one out of five dropping out of secondary school due to pregnancies. The situation is exacerbated by the crisis, which has left many people in extreme poverty. Marrying off a girl child, usually to a much older man, is often seen as a source of income.

In the first half of 2018, some 2,300 cases of gender-based violence were reported with the majority against women and girls. More than 20 per cent of survivors who have come forward are children. Partners reported that the actual number of cases is far higher, as gender-based violence continues to be severely under-reported. Humanitarian and development organizations are providing psycho-social support to survivors and working to prevent gender-based violence through the dissemination of information.



Adolescent girls discuss about child marriage in Juba. Photo: UNFPA

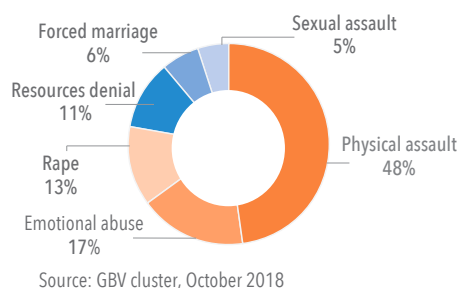
Dramatic increase in rapes along the Bentiu-Nhialdiu road

On 30 November, an international organization reported that they have provided emergency medical and psycho-social assistance to 125 women and girls who were allegedly raped and beaten in Bentiu, Unity between 19 and 29 November.

Survivors of the violence in Bentiu said they were also whipped and beaten with sticks and rifle butts. Even their ration cards to receive food distributions have been taken and destroyed by their attackers.

Survivors of the violence in Bentiu said they were whipped and beaten with sticks and rifle butts. They were robbed of money, clothes and shoes, the aid organization reported. Even their ration cards to receive food distributions were taken and destroyed by their attackers. "Some are girls under 10 years old and others are women older than 65. Pregnant women have also not been spared from these brutal attacks," said Ruth Okello, a midwife from the organization. Protection and health partners are offering immediate medical and psycho-social support to the survivors.

Gender-based violence cases by type



The scope of the reported cases is now thought to be over 150 and spans over a course of weeks. A range of high-level statements have been issued condemning the incidents and calling for justice, including a joint statement by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and global heads of UNICEF and UNFPA.

Inter-agency assessment mission to Kajo-Keji

On 28 November, an inter-agency team comprising of UN agencies and NGOs went by road to Kajo-Keji from Juba for the first time since 2016.

Both Koriyo camp and Merwa camp, both close to the Ugandan border were visited. Civilians were also reported in other locations including Kansuk, Mondikolo, Ramogi, Mere, Bori, Leikor and Sokare. Key needs identified by the assessment team were health, water, sanitation and hygiene, non-food items and food.

The team reported that nine out of 166 primary schools were functional, with an enrolment of 620 pupils. Seven of these schools were in the IDP camps. None of the 13 secondary schools were functional. Many of the schools were deserted.

Livelihoods were severely disrupted, assets looted and restrictions on movement during the peak of the conflict severely impacted civilians. Health service provision was reported to be limited to the camps. A health organization runs only two mobile outreach services in the area and many of the Primary Health Care Units have not been replenished with supplies.

Most homes along the main roads were destroyed in Kajo-Keji and the town is heavily vandalized. Reports of children associated with the armed forces were also heard and the prevalence of gender-based violence on women and girls in the settlement areas was also listened to.

People in Kajo-Keji have faced the perpetual effects of violence and displacement since fighting broke out in 2016. Their homes, public facilities and health centres were destroyed.



Aid workers assess damages and looting at Kajo-Keji health Science Institute. Photo: IMC

In 2017, several logistics cluster convoys were denied access to Kajo-Keji by armed groups.

Markets were looted. Many have fled to neighbouring Uganda or to border communities in South Sudan that were safer from the fighting.

People have not been able to cultivate or return to and repair their homes.

Since 2016, humanitarian access to Kajo-Keji was cut off. Several humanitarian convoys attempted to access Kajo-Keji through the Juba-Kajo-Keji road and were turned back.

In 2017, several logistics cluster convoys were denied access to Kajo-Keji by Government forces. Additionally, on 27 November, a team was denied access to Kajo-Keji by the National Security Service (NSS) about 20 km from Juba.

This was despite the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism clearance from the Ministry of Defense and Veteran Affairs, and the notifications to the various Government departments through the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission office in Juba.

Western Equatoria: Yellow Fever outbreak in Sakure, Nzara County

On 29 November, the Ministry of Health declared a Yellow Fever outbreak in Sakure, Nzara County. One case has so far been confirmed, with no deaths. The affected area is very rural and located close to the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the patient had travelled before falling ill.

The case was first reported on 23 November 2018, after the State Ministry of Health received a report of a suspected case of Ebola at the point of entry to South Sudan in Sakure. As a result the Ministry of Health, with support from partners, deployed a response team for investigations as well as sample collection. Testing at Uganda Virus Research Institute confirmed that the sample was positive for Yellow Fever Virus, not Ebola.

A multi-disciplinary team including epidemiologists, a public health officer, entomologists, laboratory specialists as well as risk communication experts, carried out an analysis of the situation to determine the magnitude of the outbreak, the size of the population at risk, identify factors for disease transmission and propagation, and initiate control measures to prevent further spread of the disease.

Yellow Fever is a viral disease that is transmitted by mosquitoes and can lead to serious illness and even death.

South Sudan experienced a Yellow Fever outbreak in May 2003, in Imatong region of Torit County, Eastern Equatoria with a total of 178 cases with 27 deaths in Imatong and Ikotos districts.

The country has not yet introduced the Yellow Fever vaccine into the national immunization programme and South Sudan is among the 40 high-risk countries targeted to eliminate Yellow Fever epidemics by 2026.

Nearly 250 IDPs voluntarily return to Akobo

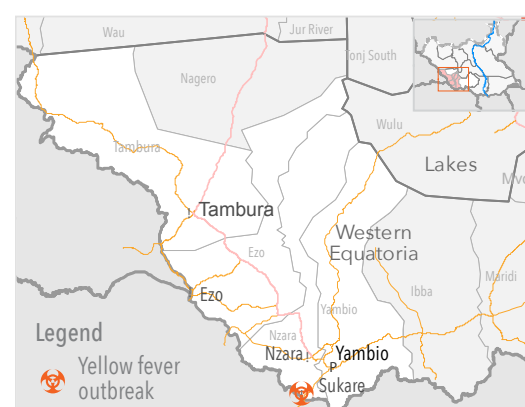
Nearly 250 people were voluntarily returned to Akobo by the Bor Solutions Working Group using UNMISS helicopters to transport them. The movement started on 30 October and ended safely on 8 November. The final number of the displaced people who returned was 244, consisting of 118 females and 126 males.

Since the conflict started they had been taking refuge at the UNMISS Protection of Civilians (PoC) site in Bor, seeking safety.

Following the declaration of the Yellow Fever outbreak, partners deployed a multi-disciplinary team to coordinate response including risk communication, surveillance and disease control to prevent further spread of the disease.

Preparations before the repatriation process included reconnaissance visits to their places of origin, which were facilitated by humanitarian organizations, including the UN refugee agency.

Yellow Fever outbreak area in Nzara county



Map: OCHA.

The returnees were provided with life-saving assistance including food, non-food items and emergency shelter by partners in Akobo.

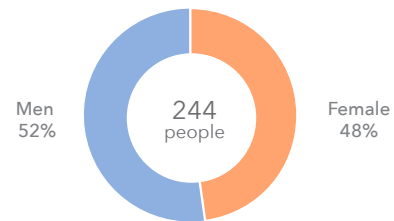
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The exploratory visits were meant to enable the people to make an informed decision to voluntarily return home after hearing the reports from people in Akobo.

The recently signed revitalized peace agreement had brought new impetus and optimism, also influencing their decision.

The returnees were provided with life-saving assistance including food, non-food items and emergency shelter by partners in Akobo. The number of IDPs in the Bor PoC site stands at 2,261 IDPs (1,070 households), according to the biometric registration exercise conducted in November 2018.

IDPs repatriated to Akobo from Bor PoC by sex



(UNOCHA, December 2018)

Central Equatoria: Armed groups agreed on unhindered humanitarian access

On 4 November, officials from the South Sudanese Government Army, South Sudan People's Defense Forces (SSPDF) and the main opposition army, SPLA-iO, met near Juba to discuss security measures aimed at implementing the security arrangements under the revitalized peace agreement to end the conflict in South Sudan.

The armed groups have agreed to provide humanitarian organizations unhindered access to the most vulnerable people so that basic services can be provided. They also agreed to allow free movement of civilians and commodities around Juba.

Similar confidence building talks between the SSPDF and SPLA-iO group continued across the country including in Mboro, Wau County and Raja in Western Bahr el Ghazal, Kendiri in Kajo-Keji, Central Equatoria, in Magwi in Eastern Equatoria and Waat in Nyirol County in Jonglei.

During the meetings the parties agreed to allow humanitarian access to people in need of assistance and ensure protection of civilians, with more focus on women and children, and guarantee their free movement. The parties have also agreed to allow citizens to harvest their crops now that the dry season is approaching.

Despite the confidence building talks, armed fighting continued to be reported between the armed opposition groups in the outskirts of Yei town in several locations including Mugwo, Otogo and Lasu. The fighting has affected humanitarian response including Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) preparedness activities in the area.



Nutrition screening in Remenze in Yambio Photo: UNICEF

The armed groups have agreed to allow free movement of civilians, commodities and people providing humanitarian services around Juba.

For further information, please contact:

Christina Corbett, Public Information Officer, christina.corbett@un.org

Iramaku Vundru Wilfred, Reports Officer, vundru@un.org

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