



South Sudan faces multiple challenges contributing to this crisis, including cross-border influx, state armed and inter-communal

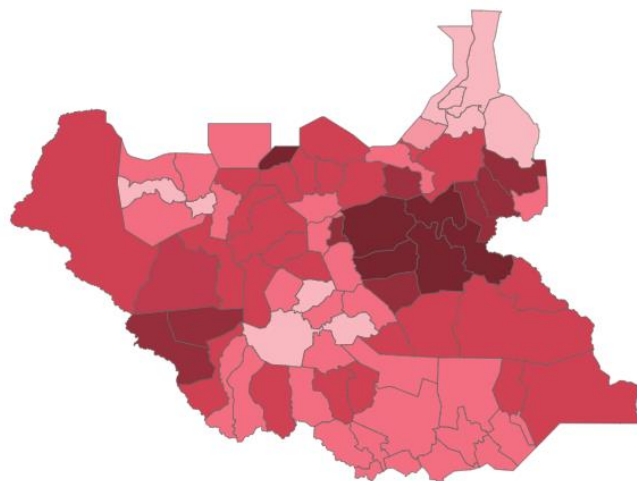
IDPs In Akobo, Jonglei State, March 2026

conflicts, as well as adverse effects from climate phenomena like floods and droughts, all exacerbated by severe economic turmoil and governance issues. To address the needs of the IDP population, it is essential to differentiate between groups. One significant category comprises **IDPs who have been residing in settlements for extended periods without experiencing or marginally affected by recent conflict-related shocks**, totaling close to a million individuals. These individuals require targeted integration assistance and durable solutions. The other category comprises **recent returnees (in IDP-like situations), people temporarily displaced by natural hazards and inter-communal conflict** and those fleeing *en-masse* from the ongoing conflict between state armed actors.

HCT PROTECTION UPDATE – March 2026

DISPLACEMENT IN SOUTH SUDAN AND PROTECTION PRIORITIES (GAP ANALYSIS)

Recognizing the fluid nature of the ongoing displacement within the country, as well as the indistinct boundaries between displaced groups as circumstances change, the Protection Cluster aims to comprehend the current emerging needs and gaps for situational response packages to reduce protection risks. To this end, the Protection Cluster conducted a rapid assessment based on PRMS, utilizing sub-national coordination reports, the current 5W, and insights into the existing funding at the field level. See below key takeaways and more detailed assessment in the annex.



The Protection Cluster estimates that some 787 thousand people are currently in a state of recent displacement out of which some 428 thousand fleeing from the Conflict between SSPDF and SPLA/IO or their affiliates, while the remaining 359 thousand are in a state of displacement due to localized floods, inter-communal conflict or congesting influx points along the northern border.

To meet the needs of the most vulnerable individuals within the two distinct groups, the Protection Cluster employs the Minimum Service Package as a benchmark for identifying gaps. It is crucial to recognize that the urgency and application of contextualized aspects of the MSP affects how advocacy is prioritized to address these gaps.

GAP ANALYSIS

STATE/AREA	IN PLACE	LACKING	RECCOMENDATION / ADVOCACY
Abyei AA	Indication of minimum support to GBV survivors by the end of 2026 and PSS for boys and girls until the end of Q1 2026.	MSP for IDPs and onward movement support for returnees	MSP packages for some 4,000 displaced people and OTA for 1,500 returnees until the end of the year.
Central Equatoria	MSP is partially available	MSP is not available for newly displaced, especially support to children at risk and women and girls at risk	MSP packages for some 5,000 vulnerable displaced people and DS support to some 5,000 retirees and IDPs from Jonglei
Eastern Equatoria	MSP is partially available	MSP is not available for newly displaced, especially support to children at risk and women and girls at risk	MSP packages for some 10,000 vulnerable displaced people.
Jonglei	MSP is partially available	Overall needs exceed available MSP with overall access still volatile.	MSP packages for some 40,000 vulnerable displaced people.
Lakes	Some GBV is available	MSP not available	MSP packages for some 4,000 vulnerable displaced people.
Northern Bahr el Ghazal	MSP is partially available	Returned PSN screening, referral and MSP is needed for 2 nd half of the year	MSP for some 2,000 PSNs.
Unity	Some MSP is available	MSP during rainy season	MSP for some 2,000 PSNs.
Upper Nile	MSP is partially available	Overall needs exceed available MSP	MSP for some 12,000 PSNs among IDPs and 8,000 among returnees.
Warrap	No protection services are available	While numbers are low, urgent deployment of some MSP is needed	MSP for 2,000 IDPs
Western Bahr el Ghazal	No protection services are available	While numbers are low, urgent deployment of some MSP is needed	MSP for 2,000 IDPs
Western Equatoria	Some MSP are available and more will be there under SSHF support	There are further support needs outside SSHF areas, especially for returnees.	MSP for 2,000 IDPs