Operational Context

South Sudan continues to face a political crisis which manifests in part in violent conflict and insecurity associated with an economic crisis and a serious and protracted humanitarian crisis. The signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan in September 2018 gave rise to hopes for an end to the violence. Although the civil conflict has largely abated in most parts of the country, the relative stability experienced in 2019 remains fragile and is often not reflected at local levels where conflict persists ignited by access to natural and social resources. The multifaceted nature of the crisis continues to disrupt local economy, increase displacements and reduce access to basic services and education. This continues to increase the vulnerability of the population with 7.5 million people – more than two thirds of the population – in need of humanitarian assistance in 2020. Nearly 4 million people remain displaced: 1.5 million internally and 2.2 million as refugees in neighbouring countries. The country remains in a critical period of unprecedented severe food insecurity with 6.4 million people considered food insecure at the height of the 2020 lean season.

A Transitional Government of National Unity was formed on 22 February 2020. The formation of the government offers hope to the South Sudanese people that peace may return, and livelihoods can be rebuilt. However, the situation remains dire on the ground.

COVID-19 Updates

- South Sudan had no reported cases of COVID-19 by the end of March. The Government of South Sudan, with support from the international community, is taking measures to prevent the potential spread of the virus.
- Across all of its emergency assistance interventions, WFP is conducting double distributions of food and cash as an advanced preparedness measure to mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19 in South Sudan. Double distributions are planned for around 3.2 million beneficiaries throughout April and most have started. WFP is prioritizing food distributions for IPC Phase 4 and 5 locations, refugee camps and Protection of Civilian sites.
- WFP is expediting the delivery and prepositioning of food, advancing food distributions, increasing the number of food distribution points, and deploying rapid response teams to hard-to-reach areas to ensure that emergency food assistance is provided safely to the most vulnerable people.
- WFP has experienced occasional disruptions and delays to cargo movement owing to increased time required for border checks. WFP continues to advocate for ensuring the movement of humanitarian cargo.
- WFP continues to liaise closely with National Authorities on COVID-19.
- Economic shocks related to the COVID-19 pandemic could have devastating impacts on the local economy. WFP continues to monitor food prices and markets and advocate for measures to mitigate against an exacerbation of the already fragile food security situation.

Food and Nutrition Assistance

- WFP and cooperating partners reached 1.57 million people with a total of approximately 15,395 mt of mixed food commodities and US$ 3.19 million in cash in February.

In Numbers

| 15,395 mt of food and nutrition assistance distributed* |
| US$ 3.19 m in cash-based transfers made* |
| US$ 207 m six months (April – September ‘20) net funding requirements |
| 1.57 m people assisted* |

*in February 2020

56% 44%
**Supply Chain**

- At the end of March, WFP South Sudan had a total availability of 203,240 mt.
- At the end of March, 111,535 mt of food items, equivalent to 59 percent of the planned 190,530 mt have been prepositioned in the areas that will not be reachable throughout the rainy season.

**Challenges**

- Concerns around the spread of COVID-19 and associated increases in movement restrictions and border closures pose a challenge to WFP operations. WFP is working closely with all partners to ensure safe and continuous delivery of assistance to the most vulnerable.
- Access across the country remains improved since the signing of the peace agreement. However, the concessions required for the formation of the TGNU has resulted in increased frequency and intensity of major local level violence which continues to disrupt access in some areas. The potential for a continued upsurge in major local violence remains a concern.
- The damage done by flooding in 2019 to road and air infrastructure, presents serious challenges as access is available only by helicopter in the worst affected areas. Additional air assets were sourced to facilitate the delivery of food, non-food items and the deployment of assessment and response personnel.
- Swarms of locusts ravaging crops and grazing land across East Africa have reached South Sudan. In February 2020, the locusts crossed into Southern Magwi County, and Laboni County, both on the border with Uganda. WFP is monitoring the situation closely, the potential impact of locusts on a country that is still grappling with complex conflict, displacement, and severe food insecurity could be devastating.
- Currently, there are no cases of Ebola in South Sudan. WFP continues as part of the humanitarian community to improve national preparedness and to monitor the situation closely.

**Donors (listed alphabetically)** *

Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia South Korea, South Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America

*Excluding multilateral and private donors