



UNHCR/WFP Joint Post Distribution Monitoring

Profiling analysis to inform targeting and prioritization of assistance to refugees in South Sudan

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

September 2023

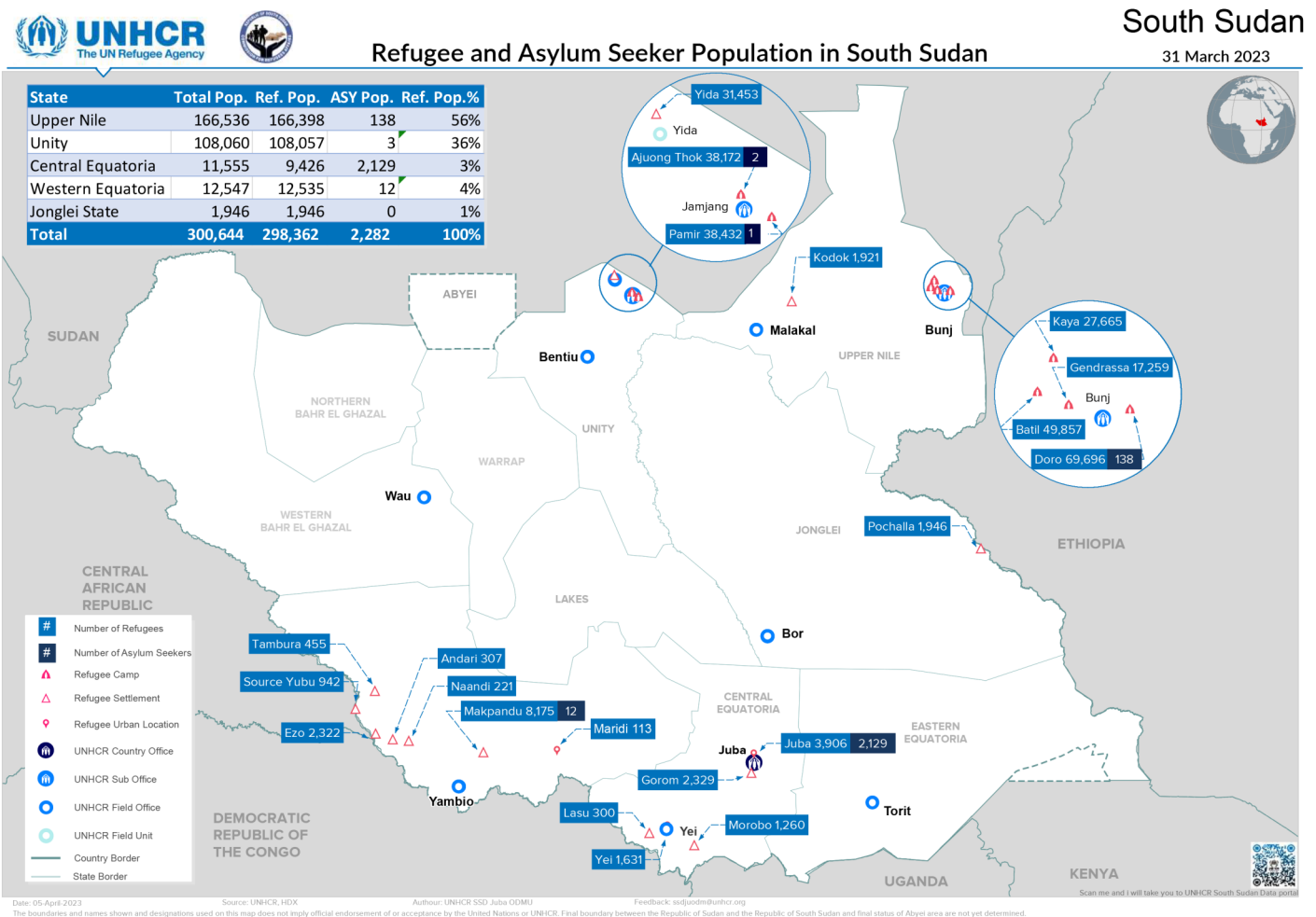


JOINT PROGRAMME EXCELLENCE AND TARGETING HUB

INTRODUCTION

Prior to the outbreak of violence in Sudan in April 2023, South Sudan was hosting a total of 300,644 refugees and asylum seekers, representing the focus of this assessment (Map 1). This group of refugees finds itself in a highly complex and volatile situation, as the country has been marred by a long history of conflict, compounded by weak Government systems, reduced assistance transfers, food insecurity, greatly limited livelihood opportunities, climate hazards, and disease outbreaks. The currently ongoing conflict in neighbouring Sudan that recently broke out in April 2023 is likely to exacerbate the situation further.

Based on JPDM analyses protection concerns are high as the refugee population in South Sudan is young with 60 percent below the age of 18 years, almost two-thirds of households are headed by women who are frequently exposed to GBV risks, and 15 percent of the population are persons with specific needs (PSN). All endeavours that aim to support the local, hosting South Sudanese and refugee population in meeting their needs independently, continue being challenging enterprises.



WFP and UNHCR – under the overall guidance of South Sudan’s Commission of Refugee Affairs (CRA) – has been assisting refugees with in-kind food and/or cash transfers, non-food items, shelters, as well as limited livelihood support, based on their refugee status and residency in camps. Due to funding constraints, food assistance transfers to refugees have been reduced by 50 percent since 2021.

Against the background of greatly limited financial resources and vulnerability levels differing between locations and households, UNHCR and WFP are developing a more refined, needs-based, location-specific targeting and prioritization strategy for food and non-food assistance and livelihood support programmes for refugees in South Sudan.

Primary quantitative and qualitative data was jointly collected from 1,295 refugee households in January 2023, forming the basis for subsequent analyses that led to the following results and recommendations.

Legislative Environment:

South Sudan maintains an open-door policy for refugees, offering a favourable legal environment. Thanks to the country's Refugee Act (2012) and the Refugee Status Eligibility Regulations (2017), refugees in South Sudan have freedom of movement, the right to work, own animals and can access land, while the national asylum procedures are aligned to international standards and good practices of refugee protection. South Sudan's National Development Strategy (NDS) 2021–2024 considers refugees a vulnerable population and envisages support for their human capital development, provision of protection and assistance, as well as facilitation of their resettlement.

KEY FINDINGS OF VULNERABILITY ANALYSES

While almost all refugee households are being assisted with in-kind and/or cash assistance, transfers are insufficient and require refugees to engage in livelihood activities to earn an income to fill the gap. However, income earning opportunities are greatly limited and difficult to come by, let alone to build or improve livelihoods and achieve self-reliance. During the three months preceding the survey, most refugee households across all locations – except in Gorom – drew their income from small-scale, rainfed agriculture and/or the sale of firewood. Refugee households almost exclusively engage in livelihoods characterized by high levels of temporary, informal and unprotected work, low wages and lack of social protection. Additional challenges that undermine refugees' livelihoods include - from their point of view – frequent climate shocks, limited agricultural inputs, limited access to land, lack of employment opportunities, lack of start-up capital, poor market conditions and high and rising food and non-food prices. About one in three refugee households do not engage in productive income earning activities but entirely rely on the consumption or sale of the greatly reduced food assistance transfers or by gathering wild foods.

FIGURE 1: REFUGEE HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY (CARI)

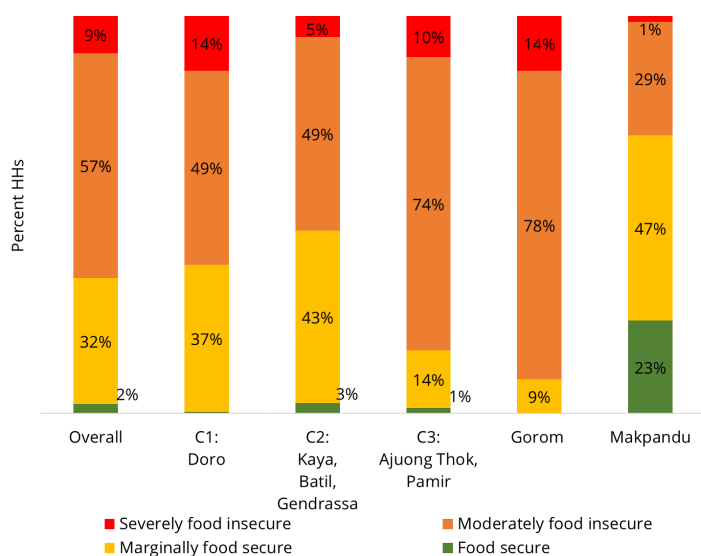
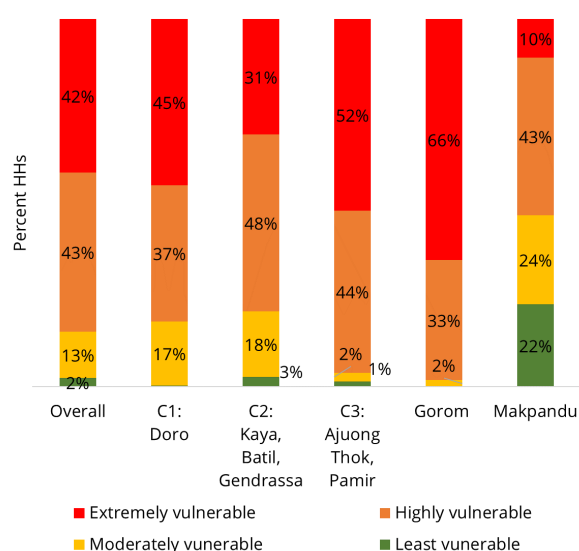


FIGURE 2: OVERALL HOUSEHOLD VULNERABILITY



The large majority of refugee households are food insecure and vulnerable, albeit at varying levels depending on the location. Food insecurity is particularly prominent among refugees in Gorom, and Jamjang (Ajuong Thok, Pamir), where up to 90 percent of households are either moderately or severely food insecure. Similarly, more than three quarters of refugee households in all camps, are either extremely or highly vulnerable. These households lack the economic resources to cover their basic food and non-food needs, have poor food consumption and engage in coping strategies to make ends meet, some of which further undermine households' resilience levels. Gorom is hosting the largest share of extremely vulnerable refugees, followed by Jamjang (Ajuong Thok, Pamir), and Maban (Kaya, Batil, Gendrassa).

A number of highly intertwined contextual factors illustrate the complexity and volatility of the situation in South Sudan and may have contributed to current food insecurity and vulnerability levels among refugees. They include the ongoing, non-abating civil conflict, reduced transfers of assistance, the effects of climate change in the form of heavy rains, prolonged flooding, as well as long and unexpected dry spells, limited livelihood opportunities, continuously high market prices and a dilapidated road infrastructure, cutting off certain locations from economic activities and assistance, to mention a few. The recent outbreak of violence in Sudan in April 2023 – South Sudan's main source for imports - has already resulted in cut supply routes of food and non-food items and sharply rising market prices of food and fuel.

PROFILE OF VULNERABLE REFUGEE HOUSEHOLDS

Refugee households of similar vulnerability levels were found to share a number of characteristics which – provided they are discussed with and agreed by the refugee community – could serve as future targeting criteria. Extremely and highly vulnerable households tend to be larger in size, have more young household members and are likely to be female headed. Comparatively speaking, they are less likely to have an income source, nor do they commonly engage in farming activities. Their productive asset base is minimal and they tend to reside in substandard shelters. Most vulnerable households are least likely to be traders, business people, shop-owners and salaried workers and are most likely to own fewer than 10 pieces of livestock (i.e. sheep/goats/chicken).

Extremely and Highly
vulnerable households tend to be



Larger than average



Female-headed



Include more young members

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TARGETING AND PRIORITIZING ASSISTANCE

PROGRAMMATIC

- **Prioritized food assistance is highly recommended for those most in need**, taking into consideration available resources, location-specific seasonal factors, livelihood opportunities and protection-related concerns.
- **Food assistance is to be targeted or prioritized at four layers:** 1) geographically, 2) seasonally, 3) individually/household level and/or through 4) self-/community targeting.
- **Livelihood interventions – especially within the agricultural sector – should be promoted** with the objective to increase refugees' access to food and/or economic resources to help build self-reliance.
- **The targeting and prioritizing approach for humanitarian and development assistance is recommended to be aligned**, and ongoing successful interventions and best practices should be replicated or expanded in order to create synergies, avoid duplication, optimize limited resources and maximize their impact.

PROTECTION

- **Protection considerations are to be firmly integrated into all stages of the design, implementation and monitoring of the strategy**, with a special focus on the needs and capacities of women, persons with specific needs and other marginalized groups.

COMMUNICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- **A joint UNHCR and WFP communications strategy is to be developed** to stipulate objectives, key messages, communication channels and location-specific action plans
- **The refugee community is highly recommended to be actively involved in all stages of the process** – including the identification of eligibility criteria – in order to ensure the relevance of planned interventions as well as community members' buy-in, and potential risks are to be mitigated.
- **Appeal mechanisms are to be established** to receive, follow up on and respond to refugees who disagree with their assigned vulnerability level.

PARTNERSHIPS, ADVOCACY AND FUNDING

- **Increased collaboration with development actors** – most importantly FAO to leverage agricultural initiatives, with **private sector partners** to seek opportunities for alignment of assistance provision, and **financial service providers** to improve refugees' access to affordable financial services.
- **An adequate, predictable, and long-term multi-year financial strategy for future development initiatives is needed** to ensure successful and sustainable development interventions that are to help refugees reach greater self-reliance.

SOCIAL COHESION

- **The social cohesion between refugees and the local host community is to be promoted in future livelihood interventions** through, for example, building collective assets from which both groups can profit.

MONITORING

- **Regular joint monitoring of key outcome indicators for food and livelihood assistance will be required** to measure interventions' impact, the validity of the targeting and prioritization approach and provide timely recommendations for adjustments.



WFP and UNHCR are supporting new arrivals in Renk County, South Sudan, who are fleeing ongoing conflict in Sudan. © WFP/Peter Louis

PROPOSED LOCATION-SPECIFIC TARGETING AND PRIORITIZATION APPROACH

MABAN Doro: 69,834 refugees Kaya: 27,665 refugees Yusuf Batil: 49,857 refugees Gendrassa: 17,259 refugees	JAMGANG Ajounj Thok: 38,172 refugees Pamir: 38,434 refugees	JUBA Gorom: 2,354 refugees	YAMBIO Makpandu: 8,187 refugees
FOOD ASSISTANCE			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be continued for the time being. If assistance is further reduced, transfers should be equal across all four camps to minimize potential tension The provision of additional food assistance to address protection concerns could prove challenging as the community may be unable to help identify the eligible (lack of leadership, security risks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on available resources, food assistance is to be provided based on seasonal patterns and/or in response to shocks Households with protection vulnerabilities are to receive higher rations compared with less vulnerable households. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on available resources, food assistance is to be provided based on seasonal patterns and/or in response to shocks Households with protection vulnerabilities are to receive higher rations compared with less vulnerable households. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be reduced gradually or removed altogether, if circumstances allow Households with protection vulnerabilities are to receive higher rations compared with less vulnerable households.
NFI/CRI ASSISTANCE			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be aligned as much as possible to food assistance programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be aligned as much as possible to food assistance programmes and provided seasonally or after specific shocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be aligned as much as possible to food assistance programmes and provided seasonally or after specific shocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision to be aligned as much as possible to food assistance programmes
LIVELIHOOD INTERVENTIONS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing interventions to be scaled up New/expanded interventions to focus on flood risk reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing interventions to be scaled up, ensuring benefits to the host community New/expanded interventions to focus on agricultural tools and farming inputs, land, human capital development (technical skills), larger-scale/commercial farming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing interventions to be scaled up and new/expanded interventions to be driven by opportunities inherent in the proximity to the urban centre of Juba (e.g. private sector) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing interventions to be scaled up New/expanded interventions to focus on fish farming, farmer cooperatives, market linkages/food value chain, capital for business

Cover page photo: A refugee woman collects damaged bags from WFP airdrops of food in Maban County, South Sudan. Air drops were used as a last resort by WFP to reach people in Maban, who were cut off by flooding. © WFP/Eulalia Berlanga

For more information about this report, please contact:

Joint UNHCR-WFP Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub: wfp.unhcr.hub@wfp.org

UNHCR in South Sudan: ssdjupi@unhcr.org

WFP in South Sudan: wfp.southsudan@wfp.org.