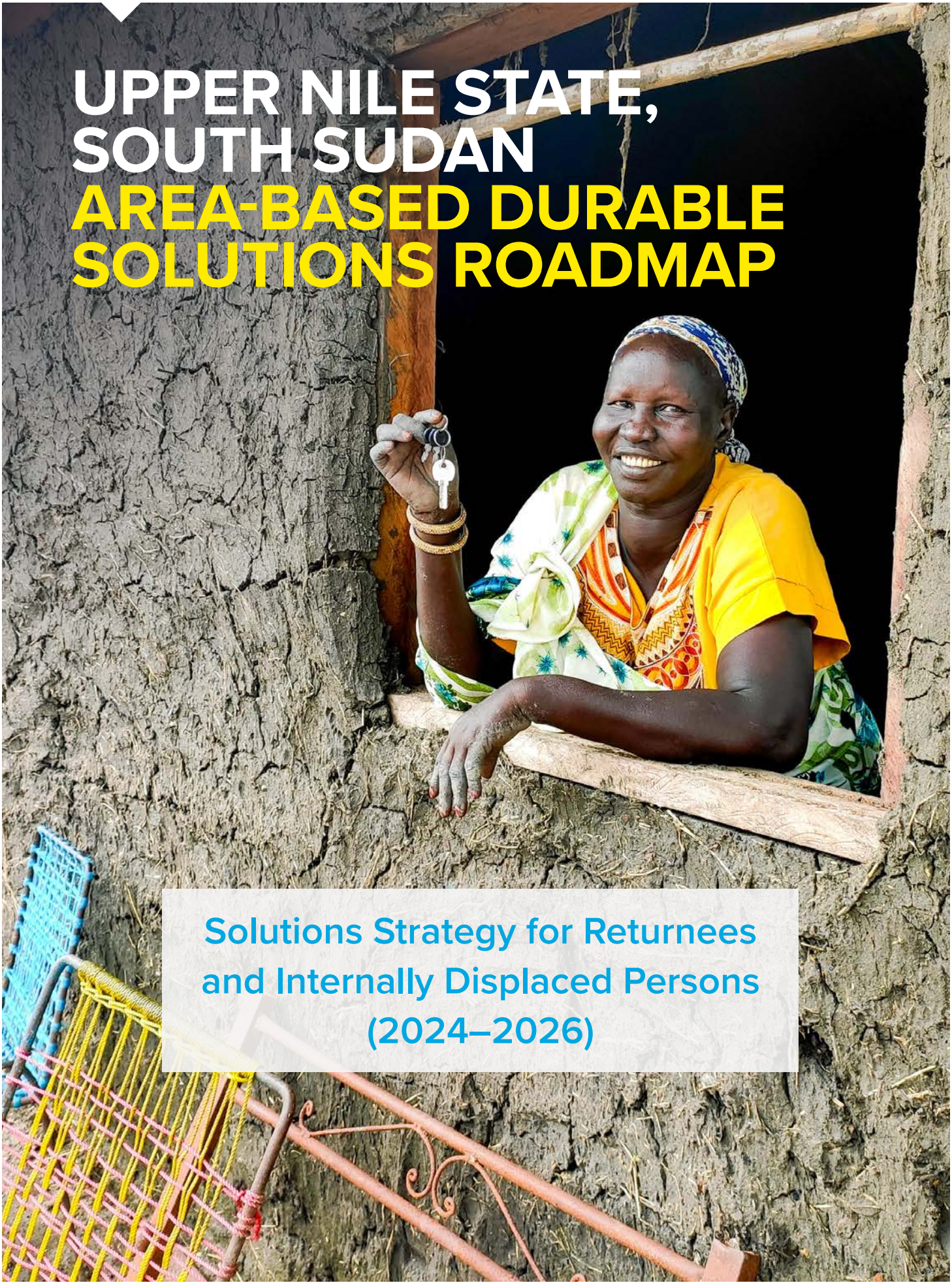
UPPER NILE STATE, SOUTH SUDAN AREA-BASED DURABLE SOLUTIONS ROADMAP



Solutions Strategy for Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (2024–2026)

Acknowledgements

This Roadmap was developed with the support of the relevant authorities in South Sudan, in particular the State Government in Upper Nile, and in coordination with all interested humanitarian, development and peace actors operating in Malakal over the period July to December 2023.

This Roadmap will be subject to continual review periodically to ensure it measures progress, builds on lessons learned and remains relevant. It will also be subject to review on ad hoc bases depending on change in circumstances and in relation to available resources.

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH:
Roda, who fled the war in Sudan and returned to South Sudan in June 2023, proudly shows the keys to her new home in Malakal, Upper Nile State. ©UNHCR/Igor Iatluk

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Executive Summary

The Roadmap in one sentence: Build on existing Government led durable solutions for displaced persons and returnees in Upper Nile State (UNS), show tangible results in Malakal and selected locations, build confidence among stakeholders and expand to other areas within the State.

Accordingly the Roadmap reflects an agreement between the State Government of Upper Nile and humanitarian, development and peace actors to support the below durable solution activities for displaced and affected communities:

(1) **Establishing safe and sustainable settlements for IDPs and returnees** on Government identified and/or non-disputed lands;

(2) **Reclaiming individual plots/land for IDPs and returnees title holders** via Government processes and linking to support systems to reestablish themselves;

(3) **Strengthening area-based support services and livelihoods for vulnerable returnees from the Sudan crisis** to enable them to reestablish themselves in their return destination as well as support for the voluntary return of other IDPs;

(4) **Strengthening basic/public services infrastructure within Malakal and other key return locations** to enhance return conditions including enhancing; security, rule of law, water supply, education, healthcare and livelihoods;

(5) **Expanding peace and community cohesion activities,** strengthening community-based and Government-led projects that aim to minimize conflict between communities and seeking to prevent risk of any further displacement.

Time-Frame: Three-year time-frame proposed. Phased approach – (1st year) Malakal and four counties in Upper Nile, namely: Renk, Fashoda, Baliet and Nasir; (2nd year) Add additional counties; (3rd year) State-wide. Emphasis on enhancing use and coordination of existing resources and expanding where funding permits

What durable solution pathways are possible over 3 years with additional support?	Support **durable housing on secure land title** for over **70,000** returnees and IDPs.	Ensure **livelihood and integration support** for over **20,000** vulnerable families, benefiting **100,000** individuals.	Enable **access to basic needs** (clean water, education and health) for **200,000** people.	Promote **peaceful cohesion** activities reaching over **180,000** people.

Photo by Area-Based Coordinator for Upper Nile State

Purpose of the Roadmap

This Durable Solutions Roadmap for Upper Nile State is one of several area-based strategies in South Sudan, adapted to the specific context for each State, recognizing the Government's responsibility to seek durable solutions to displacement, and seeking to enhance support across the combined and coordinated efforts of humanitarian, development and peace actors.

Specific Objectives of the Roadmap: Build agreement among all relevant actors on the following:

- Agreement on key principles concerning durable solutions and how they can be adapted to the context of Upper Nile State;
- Agreement on how to overcome challenges and promote durable solutions for displacement affected internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and returnee populations in Upper Nile State;
- Assist in determining the processes and the resources required to facilitate durable solutions, including returns, local integration, and resettlement.

Government ownership: The process of developing the Roadmap was inclusive and collaborative, reflecting existing Government priorities and objectives concerning solutions for IDPs and returnees, and building on these efforts with inputs from humanitarian, development and peace actors, and affected communities themselves. This includes involving the host community, national and international NGOs, UN agencies, private sector, and most importantly, the displaced population.

Photo by Area-Based Coordinator for Upper Nile State

Conflict Sensitivity: The context in Upper Nile requires a measured and conflict sensitive risk-taking approach, whereby solutions for displaced persons are not without the risks and must be grounded in principles of 'do no harm'. The Government and supporting stakeholders recognize that all actions will have some degree of risk, including taking no action. The above 5 actions proposed by the Roadmap, and any expansion, would need to be considered from a conflict sensitivity perspective.

Living Document: This Roadmap will be subject to continual review periodically (every 6 months) to ensure it measures progress, builds on lessons learned and remains relevant. It will also be subject to review on ad hoc bases depending on change in circumstances (e.g. security/emergency) and in relation to available resources.

Context in Upper Nile

Summary of Situation in Upper Nile State: Upper Nile has 13 counties with varying dynamics ranging from relatively peaceful and stable, to areas where conflict and/or natural disasters have impacted communities. Concerns include: Intercommunal violence and displacement in prior years; Land contestation in certain areas, including Malakal particularly along ethnicity; Impacts of civil war, political transition period and destruction of infrastructure; Flooding over past 4 years with impact on humanitarian access and already limited public services, as well as impact on food security; Relative poverty of community; Several armed groups operate around State and neighboring areas; Prevalence of light weapons; Annually a number of reported incidents of cattle raiding, revenge attacks, and intercommunal violence.

Malakal Protection of Civilian (POC) Site and Transition Process: Malakal has last Protection of Civilian (POC) site in South Sudan under UNMISS protection. The Roadmap recognizes the importance of the UNMISS-led, humanitarian supported and Government facilitated transition process, conditional on objective benchmarks being met as advised by Security Council Resolutions. Stakeholders also recognize the need to link the transition process to solutions for IDPs, including the Roadmap.

Current and Potential Risk Factors: Continuation of historical land competition issues and impact of the 2013 civil war. Risk of spillover of the Sudan crisis, and since April 2023 the impact of hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese returnees in already conflict sensitive environment and fragile infrastructure. Impact of the planned 2024 elections with potential risk of exacerbating existing tensions. Likely deteriorating food insecurity and humanitarian aid scenario in coming years with limited capacity of Government to replace the predominantly humanitarian services offered currently.

Displaced, Refugee and Returnee Population Groups

Upper Nile State Population: According to the National Bureau of Statistics Projections, Upper Nile State has an estimated population of 1,459,701.

Malakal town host community: Unofficial estimates have the current town population as around 52,000 (ISNA), which may include some groups of IDPs as well.

IDPs in Malakal town: After June 2023 incident, the IDP residents of the POC are estimated at 40,000 POC. Accordingly to DTM data there are around 30,000 IDPs Malakal, including biometrically registered in communal IDP sites are around 10,000 (e.g. Way Station, Fire Brigade, Hospital Site, Camboni, State Assembly).

IDPs in Upper Nile State: According to DTM data there are around 230,000 IDPs in all counties within Upper Nile State.

Refugees in Upper Nile: According to UNHCR data there are around 170,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, mostly within the Maban camps but also new groups arriving since the Sudan crisis in various other locations in Upper Nile State. Since October 2023 an increasing

number of Sudanese nationals started entering the country seeking asylum and this is expected to rise.

Returnees in Upper Nile State: Prior to the Sudan crisis, there were spontaneous South Sudanese refugee returnees to Upper Nile over several years. However since April 2023 this has dramatically increased with several hundred thousand South Sudanese returnees arriving into the country, 80% via Joda/Renk border, and many of those arriving intend to remain in Upper Nile State. Government and UN agencies recorded around 400,000 South Sudanese who arrived by the end of 2023.

Durable Solutions Framework in Upper Nile

South Sudan Durable Solutions Strategy and Plan of Action for Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons, Returnees and Host Communities: The Government's Solutions Strategy in South Sudan (2021 and updated in 2023) outlines the following strategic objectives:

- Create **secure and safe environment** for achieving durable solutions;
- Provide **basic services** to support and sustain durable solutions;
- Support **integration** of refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities including livelihoods;
- Strengthen **government institutional capacities** and relations; and
- Bolster **Government ownership** and capacity, partnership arrangements and coordination mechanisms.

Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS): The importance of durable solutions for displaced persons and returnees mentioned in the R-ARCSS at paragraph 2.1.1.

Upper Nile State Development Plan (2021-24): The National Development Strategy (NDS) for South Sudan, which is aligned with the provisions of the R-ARCSS and other frameworks, requires all States within South Sudan to develop and implement State Development Plans. Specifically linked to displacement, the State Development Plan has the **Strategic Objective 1.3: To establish a conducive environment for the repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of displaced persons,** calling for; Allocation of land to resettle displaced persons; Create dialogues to enable acceptance of returnees; Provision of basic services at

Photo by Area-Based Coordinator for Upper Nile State

the return areas and POCs; Provision of livelihood skills, and; Reception centres to register refugees, returnees and IDPs.

International Framework for Durable Solutions for IDPs: According to IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons (2010), "A durable solution is achieved when IDPs no longer have specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and such persons can enjoy their human rights without discrimination resulting from their displacement." A durable solution can be achieved through:

(1) Sustainable reintegration at the place of origin (hereinafter referred to as "return");
(2) Sustainable local integration in areas where internally displaced persons take refuge ("local integration");
(3) Sustainable integration in another part of the country ("settlement elsewhere in the country").

SG's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement: The Roadmap also recognizes the three overarching goals of the UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement (2022), that all actors must work together to:

(1) Help IDPs find a durable solution to their displacement;
(2) Better prevent new displacement crises from emerging;
(3) Ensure those facing displacement receive effective protection and assistance.

The Action Agenda recognize the following guiding considerations when promoting durable solutions:

- IDPs are citizens and residents of their country, and States have the primary responsibility to protect their rights and respond to their needs.

Photo by Area-Based Coordinator for Upper Nile State

- Action to address internal displacement must recognize the rights and agency of IDPs and host communities and ensure their active and informed participation in decision-making.
- Actions must be embraced as cross-cutting and part of humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, human rights and disaster risk reduction efforts, and utilize "whole-of-society approach, including civil society etc.

SG's Special Advisor on Internal Displacement: The UN Secretary General Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement mission report after visiting South Sudan in April 2023, recommended the following amongst others:

- Develop jointly with Government a short narrative [Roadmap for Solutions] and accompanying simple action plan;
- Begin the development of a costed Roadmap for Solutions establishing links with State-level Development Plans;
- Expand solutions-related data, map education and health services in areas of return to support solutions initiatives.

ERC Flagship Initiative: The Roadmap links directly to the ERC's Flagship initiative, calling for a "reset in coordination" through:

- **Area-Based Leadership** and strengthen coordination within and between development and humanitarian action;
- **Ensure affected people's priority needs, participation and contribution,** including Government, will be kept at the very core of how this plan will be designed."

Coordination and Partnerships

State Level Taskforce on Solutions for Upper Nile ("SLTFS"): The SLTFS established in 2020 is the main mechanism to formally coordinate work on durable solutions for displacement in Upper Nile between humanitarian, development, peace and Government actors. The forum is chaired by RRC and UNHCR. This forum links to the National Solutions Taskforce.

Upper Nile Coordination Forum: The taskforce brings together heads of UN agencies, chaired by UNMISS on ad hoc basis.

Malakal POC Transition Taskforce: Restarted in July 2023 to jointly work with Government and humanitarian partners to develop a coordinated and comprehensive transition of the POC to an IDP site as well as find solutions to displacement.

Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG): Chaired by OCHA, coordinating the work of the Clusters and humanitarian activities.

Area-Based Coordination Meeting: Chaired by the Area-Based Coordinator and attended by all heads of humanitarian and development agencies (UN/NGO) based in Malakal, attended by UNMISS (PTR) and serves to guide the Roadmap development and implementation, as well as other matters. The forum replicates at the State level, the National UNCT-HCT.

Specific Coordination Platforms and Bilateral: A range of specific coordination mechanisms exist that complement the above and promote specific elements of the Roadmap (e.g. the Technical Land Committee, the Taskforce on Returnees etc).

Partnership for Peace, Recovery and Resilience (PfPRR): The Roadmap was developed in coordination with the PfPRR team.

Displacement Solutions in Upper Nile State

The Roadmap in One Sentence: Build on existing Government led durable solutions for displaced persons and returnees in Upper Nile State (UNS), show tangible results in Malakal and selected locations, build confidence among stakeholders and n expand to other areas within the State.

Common Goals: The Roadmap reflects an agreement between the State Government of Upper Nile and humanitarian, development and peace actors to support durable solutions, building on each other's activities towards common goals.

Linked to State Development Plan: The specific programmes that will be expanded tie directly to the Governments priorities as listed in the Upper Nile State Development Plan, namely under the goal to establish a conducive environment for the repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of displaced persons.

Intention Survey: All decisions to proceed with a form of displacement solution must be informed and voluntary. An intention survey will be conducted to assess the voluntariness, interests, motivations, livelihoods/plans and intentions of the IDP/returnee population. The survey should detail access to available basic services and should include other IDP groups (e.g. in Malakal town), as well as information on protection and security. This will also link to the POC Transition process.

Context-Based Risks: The security situation in Upper Nile is in the process of stabilizing and a number of risks are listed above. Solutions activities are currently reliant on existing predominantly humanitarian stream funding. Unless additional resources are made available, any additional displacement will reduce resources available for solutions (and vice versa).

Resources and Scenario Planning: Each activity details the impact with existing resources and additional resources, namely;

- Making better/efficient use of **existing resources** across HDP and Government actors, incorporating inherent risks;
- Utilizing **additional financial support** to respective actors, promoting durable solutions, reducing/mitigating risks;

(i) Establishing Safe and Sustainable Settlements for IDPs/Returnees

Description: Establishing safe and sustainable settlements for IDPs and returnees on Government identified and/or non-disputed lands.

Rationale for Expansion: The State Government has committed to identifying Government-owned land to provide solutions for IDPs and returnees and seeks to expand this initiative. These settlements are designed to be integrated into town plans.

Agreed Guidelines:

- **Land Identification:** Authorities have advised the priority will be given for identification of State owned land to made available, and any identified land would be reviewed by a conflict sensitivity analysis. Where non-State land is utilized (community owned or private), a land verification team will identify with enough certainty, but without expecting absolute confirmation, as to who owns the area where the settlement will take place and obtain permission from the owner(s) if relevant. Government to ensure the selected land for the settlement is authorized in writing.
- **Site Suitability Assessment:** A thorough and holistic assessment of the selected site(s) must be jointly conducted by Government authorities, technical experts and HDP agencies, and other service providers, to ascertain the suitability, safety, access, flood risk, mine clearance, sustainability of site, and any conflict sensitivity issues that may exist.
- **Site Planning:** Government-led planning of site plan, infrastructure, including individual plots, public services and roads. Minimum allotted plot to individual household is 8x10m, maximum upto 20x20m as per national standard.
- **Beneficiary Selection for Settlement:** Government is in the lead concerning the selection of IDPs/returnees to occupy settlements, although this would be done in consultative process with community leaders and HDP actors based on humanitarian needs and other considerations, including conflict sensitivity. Where biometric or other data exists concerning IDP caseloads, HDP actors may request to confirm selected beneficiaries according to the available data-sources. According to the Government, the initial target for settlements in Malakal are the IDPs who left the POC in June 2023, as well those within the POC who don't have land title, and other IDP groups. Additionally, many thousands of returnees from the Sudan crisis may settle in Malakal, and not all will have former land title.

Photo by Area-Based Coordinator for Upper Nile State

- **Intentions and go-and-see visits:** Visits to be arranged for any new allocated site to gage voluntariness, complementing intention surveys. Go-and-see visits are organized for representatives of the displaced community.
- **Documentation:** Beneficiaries of allotted plots receive Government issued token and/or other legal documentation.
- **Settlement Approach:** Approach requiring "one off" humanitarian support, whereby communities feel sense of ownership of land/property and be responsible for its maintenance. Public service provision based on strengthening services available to the host community and strengthening where necessary. Integration into town planning required, and community structures related to neighborhood governance to have local participation.
- **Shelter/WASH Support:** A durable semi-transitional shelter and latrine design is being used in Malakal settlements (wooden-frame/plastic sheet walls/iron roof). The design can be improved by the owner for durability. For other locations the design to be adapted to context. To promote ownership, construction of shelter/latrines to be completed by beneficiaries. Rates for construction to be negotiated, including % contribution from beneficiaries.

Coordination Mechanism and Responsibilities of Actors: While activities are coordinated among the actors through the Government chaired, **Technical Land Committee**, the general breakdown of activities is as follows:

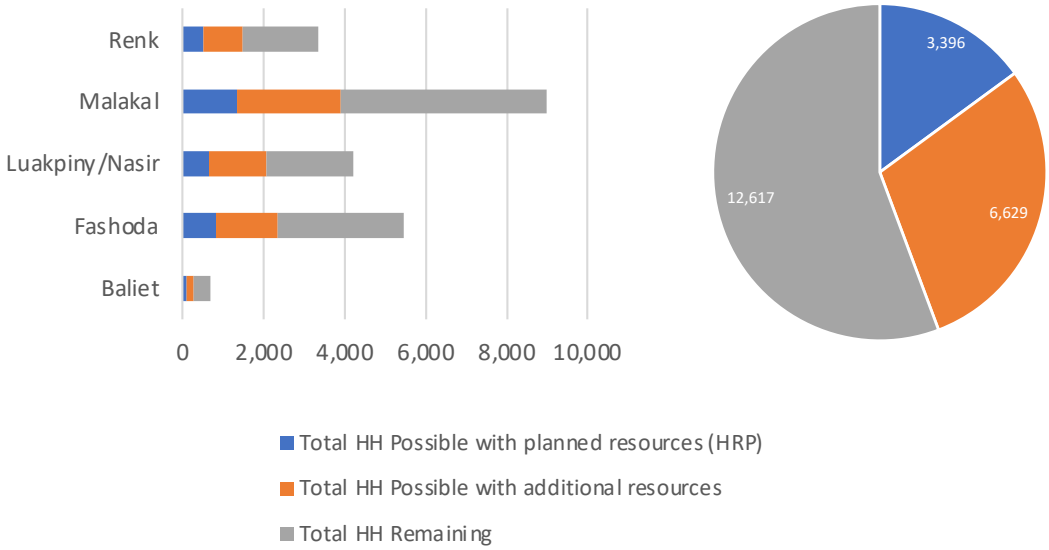
- **Government:** Leads the identification of land, site planning and demarcation, allotment of plots to individual households, provision of security of the area and ensuring equal access to available public services.
- **Humanitarian:** Support via predominantly the initial SNFI, WASH and CCCM support,

in coordination with OCHA, namely in providing one-off individual shelter, latrine/ shower and water supply. Technical support to site plan etc. If household was registered for general food rations, this support would continue until otherwise notified.

- **Development:** Support to public services, namely education, health and water, as well as livelihood support.
- **Peace:** UNMISS supports where necessary and coordinated with Government priorities. Coordination may include on issues of access roads, drainage, support for rule of law, justice and national police capacity in Settlement area.
- **Communities:** Engaged throughout process, provide inputs on designs and plans, participate in construction etc.

Impact with Existing / Additional Resources:

Figure 1 *– Indicator: # households supported with durable housing structures on allocated settlements or other land arrangements during 2024–2026*



(ii) Reclaiming Individual Plots of Land for IDPs and Returnee Title Holders

Description: Reclaiming individual plots/land for IDPs and returnees via Government processes and linking to support systems to reestablish themselves.

Rationale for Expansion: While the HLP programme has been running for several years supporting mostly IDPs, there is a rapid expansion with many returnees from the Sudan crisis returning with title documents and the State is committed to expanding the programme. Registered HLP cases likely increasing from dozens in 2022, to thousands in the coming years.

Agreed Guidelines:

- **Government Managed HLP Procedures:** Housing Land and Property (HLP) processes remain Government processes, led by the Ministry of Land and Public Utilities, verifying existing title deeds and processes to replace lost title deeds. Authorities to establish a **'one stop window'** with all relevant authorities to escalate and simplify lost-documentation procedures. After a title deed is verified, the authorities physically demarcate the individual plot.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Awareness campaigns concerning HLP are made by the actors (authorities/UN/NGOs) in high density returnee and IDPs areas. Individuals with HLP claims self-identify and register accordingly.
- **Beneficiary Selection Considerations:**
  (1) Title deed and identify of HLP claimant verified by MoLand and relevant authorities;
  (2) Priority given to (i) displaced/returnee persons living in POC or communal sites, and (ii) among this group priority to Persons with Specific Needs;
  (3) Household committed to leaving site/living on plot once shelter built;
  (4) Security of plot area is perceived as safe by household and authorities;
  (5) Limit of one HLP support pack per household.
- **HLP Legal Counselling:** Working alongside authorities, agencies support with awareness on due process to reclaim title deeds, or lost documentation, as well as any dispute or alleged occupation via relevant justice procedures.
- **Community Land Committees:** Committees formed in various locations (Malakal / POC etc) raising awareness on reclaiming land, processes and mediating any community tensions, including when land is occupied by another party.
- **Security and Police:** Unauthorized occupation of land and plot demarcation requires

Photo ©UNHCR/Igor Iatluk

coordination with police, additionally security presence in certain areas/suburbs (e.g. Malakal) enhances return potential for HLP beneficiaries.

- **Shelter, NFI or Cash Support:** A durable semi-transitional shelter is recommended for use in Malakal for reclaimed individual household land/plots (wooden-frame/ plastic sheet walls/iron roof). The design can be improved by the owner for durability. For other locations the design to be adapted to context. Where possible, to promote ownership, construction of shelter to be partially completed by beneficiaries. Limited NFI and/or cash assistance (e.g. for official fees re: issuing documentation etc) also available depending on needs / prioritization of household and resources.

Coordination Mechanism and Responsibilities of Actors: While activities are coordinated by the Ministry of Land, with technical support from the **Protection Cluster**, the general breakdown of activities is as follows:

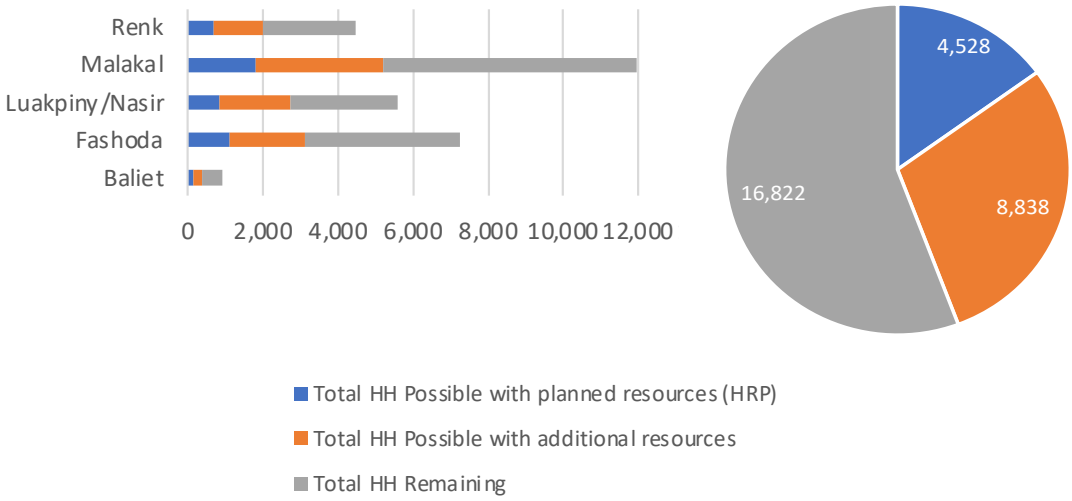
- **Government:** Leads the verification of title deeds and facilitates lost documentation; awareness raising; resurveying and demarcation of individual plots; resolves/ mediates disputed claims/occupation; provision of security of the area.
- **Humanitarian:** Support the Ministry of Land with awareness campaigns, registering

HLP claims, legal counselling and referrals for disputed claims, supporting identified vulnerable IDPs and returnees with Shelter/latrine, multi-purpose cash and/or NFI, advocacy for latrine/shower support with WASH cluster. If household already registered for general food rations, support continues until otherwise notified, if not no additional food support is foreseen.

- **Development:** Support to public services, namely education, health and water, as well as livelihood support.
- **Peace:** UNMISS supports where necessary and coordinates with authorities. Support can include capacity building support to the Ministry of Land on HLP, support for rule of law, justice and national police capacity/training, others.
- **Communities:** Engaged throughout process via HLP Committees, community leaders, and awareness campaigns etc.

Impact with Existing / Additional Resources:

Figure 2 *– Indicator: # households able to prove ownership of HLP and supported with legal advocacy, housing or other HLP support during 2024–2026*



(iii) Strengthen Area-Based Support and Livelihoods for Vulnerable Returnees from the Sudan Crisis

Description: Strengthen area-based support services and livelihoods activities for vulnerable returnees from the Sudan crisis to enable them to reestablish themselves in their return destination as well as support for the voluntary return of other IDPs.

Rationale for Expansion: The Government of South Sudan has shown a strong commitment to welcoming its returning citizens and ensuring coordinated support. With hundreds of thousands returning since the Sudan crisis, it is a unique opportunity to enable people to find durable solutions at their chosen place of final destination in key locations within Upper Nile State.

Agreed Guidelines:

- **Area-Based Approach and Household Vulnerability:** Given the high number of returnees to a large number of locations around Upper Nile, prioritization will start in higher density return locations and utilize standard vulnerability analyses depending on the Cluster/Actor involved (e.g. persons with specific needs etc) and available resources, as well as incorporating community and the authorities' recommendations. All support however would operate on an 'area-based' approach and review conflict sensitivity issues, including not only returnees from the Sudan crisis, but also prior returnees, IDPs and include segments of the most vulnerable within the host community.
- **Place of Final Destination:** South Sudanese returnees from the Sudan crisis make their own way or are assisted with transportation to their chosen place of final destinations by river, air or road transport. This location may, or may not be, the place of origin but where the person has intended to re-establish themselves permanently.
- **Area-Based Support and Reintegration Package at Household level:** Support delivered by Clusters (coordinated by OCHA) at final destination areas, given resources limitations this will prioritize identified vulnerable households utilizing an area-based approach. Support adapted to needs, may include; Food (in-kind food package or cash), Nutrition, Livelihoods (e.g. agricultural / fishing / micro-grants or cash etc), shelters/NFI (and/or cash), and Protection activities (e.g. specific needs support / referrals, CP, GBV, HLP and peaceful cohesion).
- **Advocacy for Integration into Town Planning and Land Allocation:** Advocacy for access to nearby life-saving/public-infrastructure services, including; WASH, Health,

Photo ©FAO

Education, Justice and Livelihoods (linked to Objective 4 below). Promote discussions between local authorities (e.g. Boma, Payam) and communities concerning land allocation to support returnees, promote self-reliance and minimize and conflict sensitivity issues.

- **Prioritization and HRP:** Challenge of limited resources within the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to meet all identified in need (host, displaced, returnees) and continual prioritization required by clusters, coordinated by OCHA.

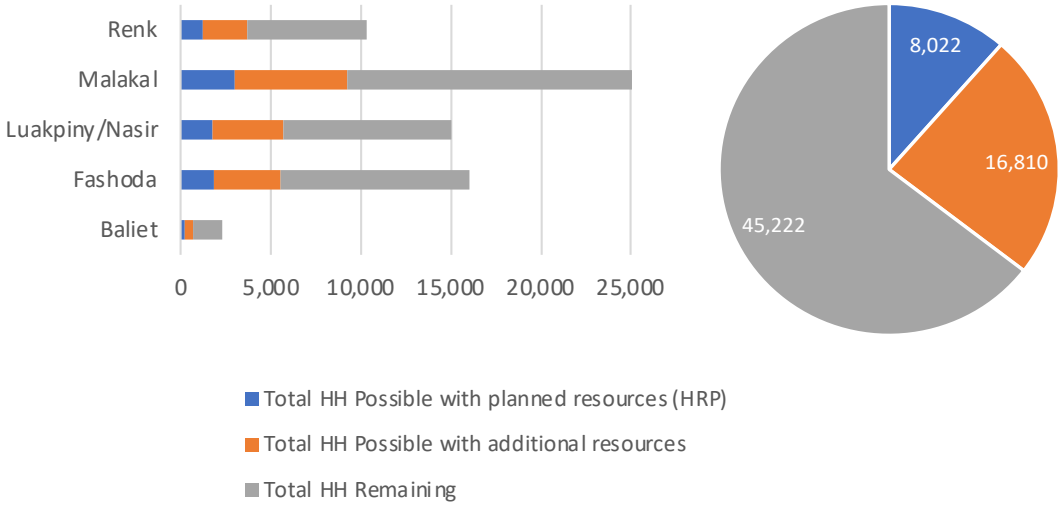
Coordination Mechanism and Responsibilities of Actors: Activities concerning returnees are coordinated by the **Taskforce for Returnees** (an intra-Government committee at State level), with UNHCR and IOM leading the cross-border emergency stage and OCHA/Clusters leading support at returnee destination areas, followed by relevant State authorities and development actors in terms of longer-term planning and support to public infrastructure. The breakdown is as follows:

- **Government:** Ensures open border system for returnees, supervises coordination of activities at reception/transit sites. Provides barges/coordinates with boat union. Access / authorization for air movement. Provision of security at transit/reception sites, including riverine movement. Ensure access to public services, integration and land allocation.

- **Emergency:** Initiated at border crossing point. Includes border flow monitoring, onward transit assistance/OTA (vehicle/boat/air), CCCM of transit/reception centre, food or cash support in transit, nutrition, and provision of protection (PSN identification, CP, GBV etc) and basic/life-saving services including WASH and health.
- **Humanitarian:** Integrated into the general HRP and initiated when the returnee reaches chosen place of final destination. Includes reintegration support from all Clusters coordinated in the ICCG as detailed above.
- **Development:** Support by Development actors jointly with authorities for strengthening public services and security at areas of final destination. This links to the Roadmap Objective 4 below.
- **Peace:** UNMISS supports throughout given Protection of Civilian mandate and security in coordination with authorities, as well as quick impact projects.
- **Community:** Community leaders play a critical community role in advising on support, identification of most vulnerable and promoting peace and reintegration in return areas.

Impact with Existing / Additional Resources:

Figure 3 *– Indicator: # of vulnerable households supported with livelihood activities or reintegration support (NFIs, CBI, protection) during 2024–2026*



(iv) Strengthening Basic/Public Services Infrastructure within Malakal and Other Key Return Locations

Description: Strengthening basic/public services infrastructure within Malakal and other key returnee locations to enhance return conditions, including enhancing; security, rule of law, water supply, education, healthcare and livelihoods.

Rationale for Expansion: With the Government of South Sudan showing a strong commitment to finding solutions to IDPs in Upper Nile, as well as welcoming thousands of returnees to settle in Malakal and other key locations in the State, it presents an opportunity to support the rebuilding of the towns war damaged infrastructure, promote return and peaceful cohesion.

Agreed Guidelines:

- **Government-led Process:** Government to lead infrastructure planning processes and prioritization for investment, based on consultation with communities and inline State development plans. Ensure legal and security arrangements in place for infrastructure development.
- **Government Resource Allocation:** Government to incrementally increase finance for expansion of basic services infrastructure via State budgets, and/or prioritize services to rehabilitate and maintain. Government to allocate sufficient financing for salaries of public sector workers (healthcare, education, water supply, justice / other services).
- **Peace and Security:** Development only possible with continued peace. Ensure continuous advocacy for peaceful resolution or disputes / conflicts, engaging all stakeholders in inclusive manner (see Roadmap Objective 5 below). Government to ensure security for all communities, protect infrastructure and promote safe investment climate.
- **Good Governance and Business Conducive Environment:** Promote transparency and accountability in managing public resources and donor funding, capacity building of State Revenue Authority, strengthening public financial management at the State and local government levels to improve disbursement, accountability, and effective tracking of public resources. Authorities to ensure minimal river checkpoints which stifle trade and increase costs. Coordinated efforts on road maintenance and enhancing transport services. Advocacy to attract private investors.
- **Mapping of Infrastructure:** Assessments in relevant areas of existing services, needs gaps and agreed priorities.
- **Infrastructure Support:** Following key areas for infrastructure support in Malakal

Photo ©WVI

and other key returnee locations. Given likely reduced funding situation, implemented in staggered manner with goal to make better use of existing Government, humanitarian, development and peace funds and enhance advocacy with relevant stakeholders:

(1) Water Supply: Rehabilitation of the damaged system or expansion of current water treatment facilities in Malakal in progressive stages with goal to reconstruct a cost effective and sustainable public water service. In all locations, access to water is critical for attainment of other basic services and protection.

(2) Healthcare Services: Expansion of prioritized existing Government assisted health services and clinics; satellite or mobile health care services in rural locations; training of additional healthcare workers.

(3) Educational Services: Expansion or rehabilitation of prioritized school facilities (e.g. primary and where possible secondary) to enable access to education; distribute educational materials; training of teachers.

(4) Livelihoods: Support to prioritized livelihoods activities/trainings, access to finance, savings, and start up grants. Prioritize support for enhancing agricultural production / food security (e.g. tools and distribution of seeds that are suitable to the local environment). Assessments to enhance trade; Mapping of value addition sectors with growth potential; Map economic recovery infrastructure, e.g. ports, access roads, markets etc.

(5) Rule of Law: Support on prioritized basis for enhancing capacity of Government to administer and manage justice (e.g. ensure deployment of

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high court judges), resolve land issues, enforce private contracts etc.

- **Maintenance of Services:** While initial infrastructure support may be made available from the various HPD actors depending on resources, these would be contingent on assurances of maintenance and ongoing upkeep costs progressively being allocated from State/public budgets, enabling a phase-down in international support overtime.
- **Conflict sensitivity:** Ensure all above actions considered from conflict sensitivity perspective, engaging communities and stakeholders throughout the mapping and prioritization and promote equal access to service for all residents.

Coordination Mechanism and Responsibilities of Actors: Activities are coordinated by relevant line Ministries with technical support from the **relevant clusters/ICCG, UNDP, UNMISS and ABC Forum**. The general breakdown of activities is as follows:

- **Government:** Lead on infrastructure planning, engagement with community on prioritized infrastructure needs. Ensure salaries for Government staff in public services. Relevant Ministries to advise/lead as per their mandate.
- **Humanitarian:** Provision of startup livelihoods kits and/or small start-up grants; support early recovery activities between humanitarian and development response; Consultations with communities to identify priority needs.

- **Development:** Support Government in design, selection and identification of financing models for infrastructure projects. Assist Government and communities to develop agreements for new infrastructure. Market systems and value chain analysis to identify potential growth sectors; training and linking with private sector on agricultural and livestock good practices. Assistance for training of public healthcare, education and other service providers.
- **Peace:** Capacity development assistance to police and other Government led security forces. Jointly with Government, strengthening and mapping of community led peacebuilding and civil society networks in Malakal.
- **Community:** Contribute to identification of prioritized infrastructure and public service needs, engaged in maintenance of community/public infrastructure, consultation for livelihoods projects/needs and promoting peace.

Impact with Existing / Additional Resources:

Figure 4 *– # of rehabilitated or expanded water systems (750 people per distribution system) during 2024–2026*

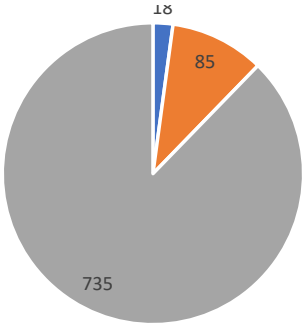


Figure 5 *– # of supported existing government health services and clinics, satellite or mobile health care in rural areas in 2024–2026*

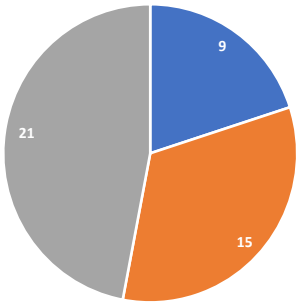
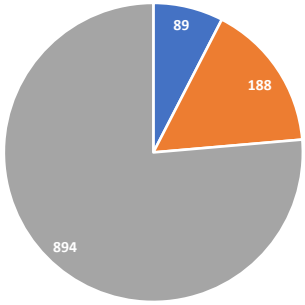
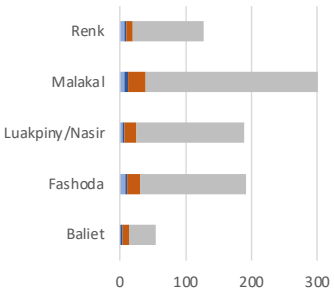
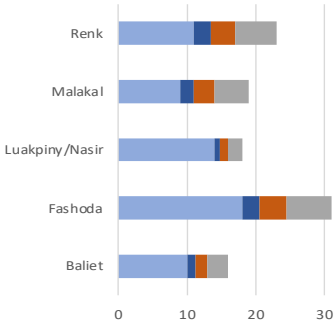


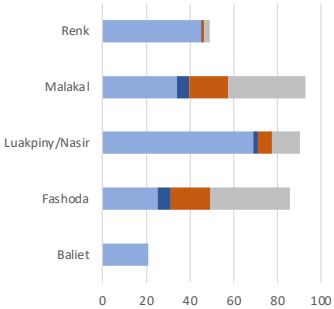
Figure 6 *– # of expanded, rehabilitated or equipped school facilities (one for 400 school age children) during 2024–2026*



Total construction with planned resources *Total construction with additional resources* *Total remaining needs of sector*







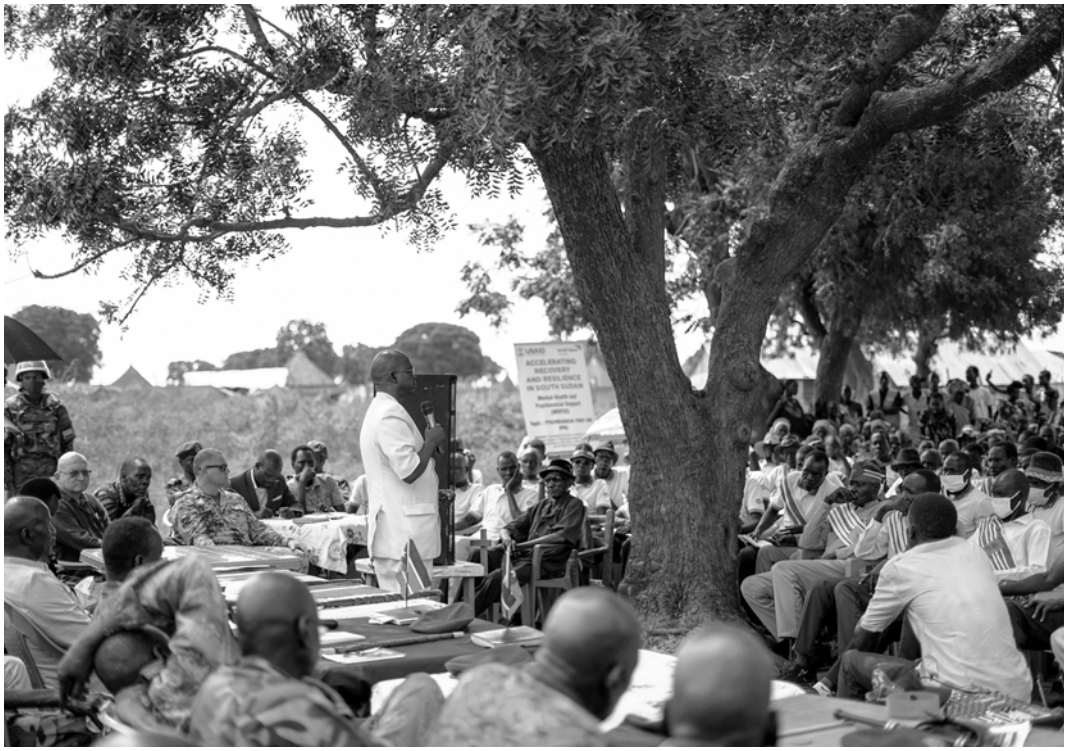
(v) Expand Peace and Community Cohesion Activities

Description: Expand peace and community cohesion activities, strengthening community-based and Government-led projects that aim to minimize conflict between/within communities and seeking to prevent risk of any further displacement.

Rationale for Expansion: The State Government of Upper Nile is leading community cohesion dialogues under the Ministry of Peacebuilding along with other humanitarian, development and peace stakeholders, promoting community/civil society-led initiatives. The need to expand these peace and community cohesion activities is critical given; hundreds of thousands of returnees since the Sudan crisis; the Malakal POC transition; and scheduled elections in 2024 among others.

Agreed Guidelines:

- **Social Cohesion:** Social cohesion is the extent of trust in government and within society and the willingness to participate collectively toward a shared vision of sustainable peace and common development goals. Where a sense of a shared vision of the future exists, social cohesion creates resilience to escalating conflict at individual or community levels. Goal to promote peace by **building a bridge of trust** between all stakeholders led by the Government in partnership with communities, and supported by humanitarian, development and peace actors.
- **Locally Owned Processes:** Activities designed to promote social cohesion must be wholly owned or adapted to context in Malakal / Upper Nile, where communities and/or authorities engage to promote peaceful mediation of conflict, dialogue on peacebuilding and resilience along their own identified objectives and towards a common goal.
- **Build-on Existing:** Government, civil society, community based organizations, humanitarian, development and peace actors have all engaged in social cohesion and peace dialogues. Coordination between these actors to be enhanced.
- **Inclusivity and Community Mapping:** Ensuring all segments of the community to the extent practical are identified and engaged, including; women, youth, different ethnic and religious groups, political parties, segments of civil society/worker unions, host/displaced communities, traditional leaders, persons with specific needs etc.
- **Independence and Neutrality:** While recognizing Government and segments of the community will take the lead in social cohesion activities, these activities must remain delinked from political objectives or electoral campaigns and avoid perceptions of discrimination against any other group.



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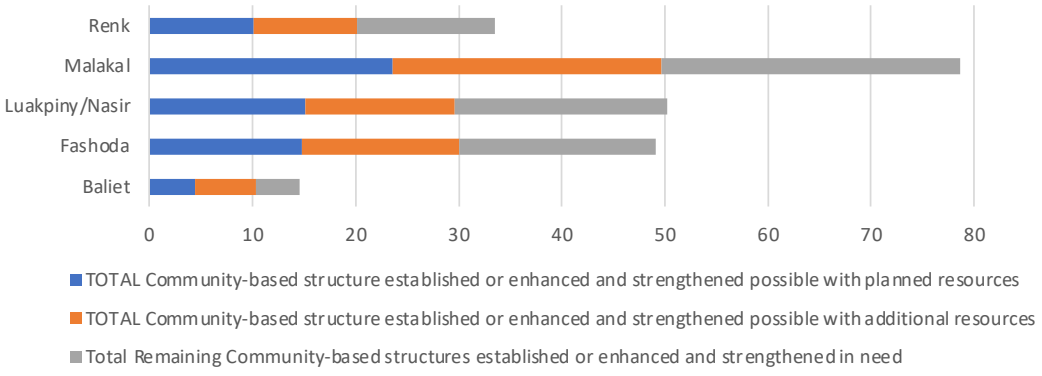
- **Peace Dialogues:** Dialogue is key to promoting inclusivity and peace, engaging all segments of society in discussions. The aim of dialogue is to engage diverse community segments in a constructive conversation in order to break down stereotypes, mediate conflicts, and rebuild trust. Dialogues should be promoted in Malakal and around the State.
- **Peace Committees:** This can include strengthening existing committees, enhancing the capacity/TOT of community leaders and relevant officials/Government peace actors, in leadership, conflict mediation and other activities.
- **Trauma and Psychosocial Support:** Activities aimed to enhance the skills of the community to deal with trauma, heal and reconcile. Also recognizing persons with specific needs and protection issues may need support to engage.
- **Youth Engagement:** Youth groups are key stakeholder in peace and social cohesion, vulnerable to risks of exploitation, economic and political marginalization, activities to engage them are critical to strengthening peace and security. Activities may include social sports events, clubs, specific dialogues, as well as linking to livelihood and skills training.
- **Conflict Sensitivity:** Prior to engagement, activities reviewed for conflict sensitivity issues and mitigation measures. Promote updated assessments of overall context: returnees, economic, election, conflict, land competition issues.

Coordination Mechanism and Responsibilities of Actors: While activities are coordinated primarily by the **Ministry of Peacebuilding**, in coordination with the Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation Commission, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport and Ministry of Gender and Social Affairs, as well as UNDP, UNMISS, and support from various humanitarian agencies.

- **Government:** Lead on peace and social cohesion coordination and planning, engage inclusively with all segments of the community, identify prioritized support and areas/counties. Relevant Ministries to advise as per their mandate.
- **Humanitarian, Development and Peace Actors:** Support existing peace and social cohesion activities and dialogues in various areas, enhance coordination mechanisms, participate in mapping community/civil-society groups and ensure displaced communities represented. Capacity building of community leaders and trainings of trainers.
- **Community:** Engaged throughout in all peace and social cohesion activities, identification of support needs for dialogues and early community conflict warning/ mitigation, lead trainings and discussions, acts as agents of change.

Impact with Existing / Additional Resources:

= 7 *– Indicator: # of peace, social cohesion and protection structures/mechanisms strengthened or established in 2024–2026.*



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Annexes

Please contact the Area-Based Coordinator for the following annexes:

- ANNEX 1: Action Plans per Objective
- ANNEX 2: Durable Solutions – Linkages between HDP Programmes/Activities
- ANNEX 3: Linkages to Upper Nile State Development Plan 2022/2024
- ANNEX 4: Roadmap Monitoring and Costing Framework

UPPER NILE STATE AREA-BASED DURABLE SOLUTIONS ROADMAP

February 2024