SUDAN EMERGENCY

REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE

South Sudan

Progress Report: May - August 2024

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CREDITS

UNHCR wishes to acknowledge the contributions of all relevant partners in the preparation of this document.

MAP & STATISTICS

The maps in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of UNHCR concerning the legal status of any country or territory or area, of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries. All statistics are provisional and subject to change. Regularly updated population figures can be found on the Sudan Situation Portal..

COVER PHOTO

Forcibly displaced families continue to arrive in South Sudan via the Joda border point in Upper Nile State. More than 800,000 refugees and South Sudanese returnees have crossed the border, fleeing the ongoing conflict in Sudan.
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AT A GLANCE

Sudan Situation Overview

South Sudan

Total figures as of 30 August 2024

New arrivals from Sudan since April 2023

175,439
Refugees and Asylum Seekers

606,003
South Sudanese Returnees*

1,712
Third Country Nationals

Cumulative figures

494,487
Refugees and Asylum Seekers in South Sudan

823,818
South Sudanese Returnees**

1,712
Third Country Nationals

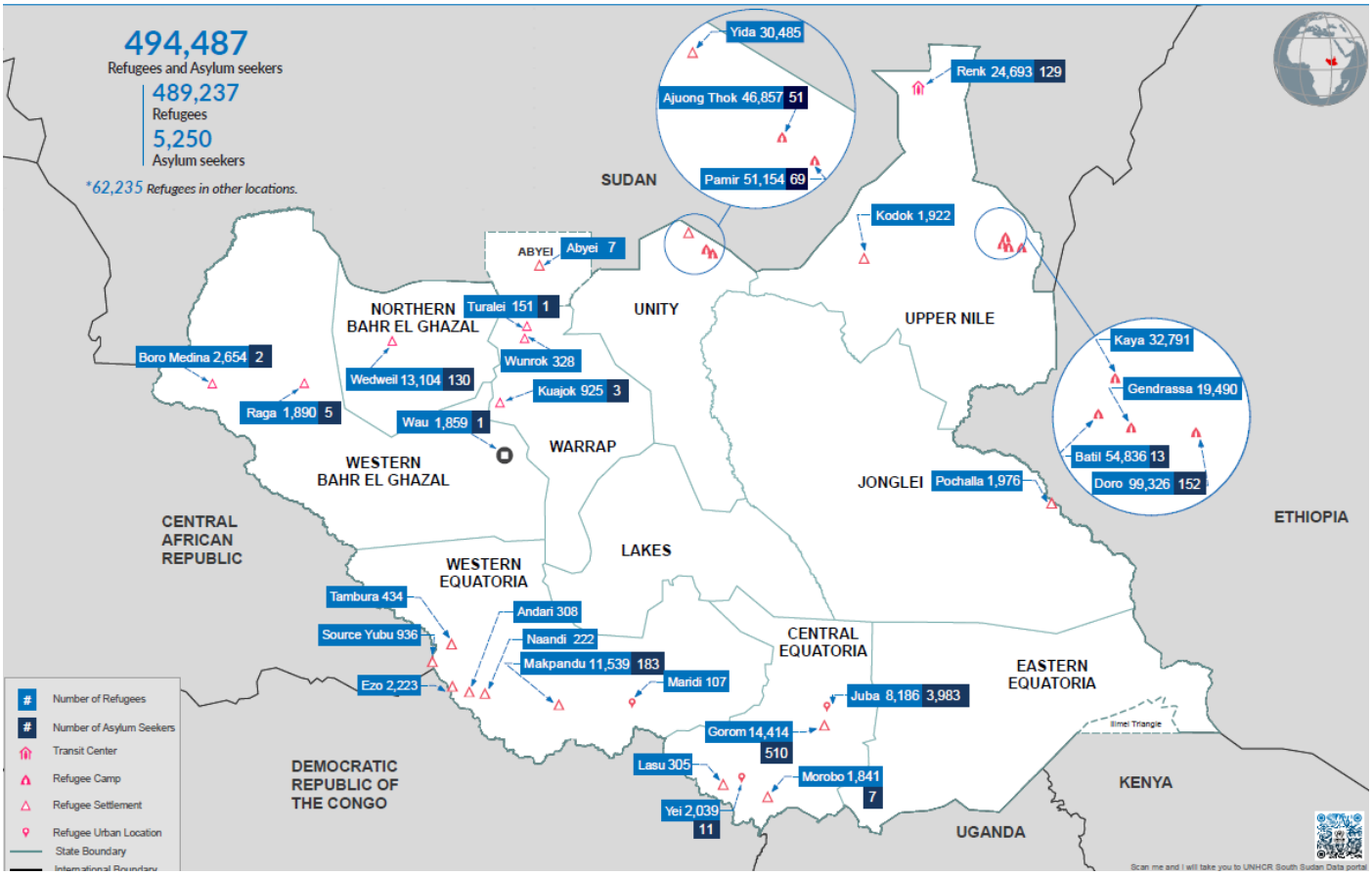
373 M
Requirements, USD***

24%
Funded

42
Partners

** Returnees (refugees and migrants) are included in the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) for South Sudan and are not included in the Sudan Regional RRP.*
*** This includes returnees from Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic during 2023 and 2024. Needs of returnees are included in the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) for South Sudan.*
**** Data retrieved from Refugee Funding Tracker as of 7 October 2024.*

Refugees and asylum seekers in South Sudan



Situation Overview

Between May and August 2024, 126,012 individuals arrived from Sudan, of whom 38,497 (31%) were Sudanese refugees, the rest South Sudanese. The daily arrival rate decreased by approximately 32.3%, dropping from 1,512 arrivals per day earlier to 1,024 from May to August. The trend in border crossings remained steady, with most new arrivals from Sudan entering through the Joda-Wunthou border crossing (75%). Additionally, there was an increased use of unofficial border crossing points in Renk County during the reporting period, where at least 8,836 individuals—comprising 4,912 returnees and 3,924 refugees — used this route.

Between May and August 2024, the Commission for Refugee Affairs (CRA) and UNHCR registered 29,321 new refugee arrivals, primarily from Sudan, raising the total registered population to 494,487 refugees and asylum-seekers as of August. Of these newly registered refugees, 44% are in camps and settlements (5,482 in Jamjang, 3,731 in Wedweil, and 2,351 in Maban). In Renk, 10,230 refugees and asylum-seekers were registered and remained in transit. A notable 6,180 refugees were identified and registered in remote, out-of-camp locations in Western Bahr El Ghazal (Boromedina, Raja, Wau), Warrap (Kuajok, Turalei, and Wunrok), and Upper Nile State (Pochala).

RRP partners sustained their presence in key locations such as Renk, Malakal, Abyei, Wedweil, Gorom, Jamjang, and Maban. They provided essential services and protection interventions, shelter, non-food items (NFIs), and food assistance. Despite opening a new extension at the Renk Transit Centre in early January, challenges such as overcrowding at transit centres that increase protection risks, particularly for women and girls, remained.

From May to August, 28,648 refugees and asylum-seekers were transported from the border to transit sites. Additionally, UNHCR relocated 3,197 refugees from transit locations such as Renk and Abyei to refugee-hosting areas across South Sudan. In close consultation with the Government and refugees, UNHCR expanded its relocation programme to additional camps beyond Maban, the sole destination in 2023. Refugees are now able to relocate to Jamjang and Wedweil. 4,424 refugees were relocated from Renk to Maban and Jamjang between January and April

2024. During the reporting period, UNHCR relocated 2,697 refugees, including 282 to Maban, 1,359 to Jamjang, and 1,056 to Yambio. Many new arrivals from Sudan do not go to camps but rather elect to live among communities, mostly in urban settings.

WFP and UNHCR, in coordination with authorities and RRP partners, rolled out targeted food assistance during the reporting period. Following the joint UNHCR-WFP monitoring exercise in 2023 and an analysis of vulnerability levels, it was decided to reduce blanket food assistance across camps (from 12 months for all camp residents to eight months in Maban camps, six months in Jamjang (Yida) and Gorom (Juba), and four months in Yambio). In all camps, the most vulnerable families (estimated to be 15-30% of the population) will continue receiving 12 months of food assistance. Refugee families arriving in South Sudan due to the Sudan war will not be affected by these measures in 2024 and will continue receiving food assistance throughout the year. From May to August 2024, partners worked with community structures in refugee camps and settlements to ensure that refugees were informed and prepared for the roll-out of targeted assistance, verifying vulnerability data to minimise exclusion errors and establishing complaint and feedback mechanisms specifically for this purpose. Challenges remain with the rollout, in particular in the Maban camps, where refugees have not accepted the targeting.

Almost 18 months into the crisis, humanitarian actors are also reaching out to stabilisation and development partners to address some of the longer-term issues triggered by the arrivals of close to 800,000 people in fragile communities before the influx. In many localities, including Renk, the response is now evolving to include a longer-term response aimed at expanding infrastructures, increasing the availability of basic services, and reducing tensions between host communities and new arrivals, either refugees or returnees.

These development needs are hampered by a severe economic crisis triggered by the breakdown of the oil pipeline transporting oil from South Sudan to Sudan for refining and exporting, which led to a sharp loss of national revenues. The South Sudanese pound depreciated sharply against major currencies, crippling the importation of essential goods and services difficult. Inflation is a significant concern in South Sudan, driven by currency depreciation, supply shortages, and soaring prices. The cost of the multi-sectoral survival minimum expenditure basket increased by 146% between July 2023 and July 2024. By August, inflation had surged further to 54.8%. Additionally, the disruption of supply routes from Sudan has decreased availability and increased the cost of consumer goods in the north, which hosts most refugees.

Furthermore, rising water levels in the Nile River, combined with unprecedented rainfall, are expected to result in some of the most severe flooding in South Sudan's history, significantly impacting vulnerable refugee populations, particularly in Maban, Aweil and Renk. In Maban, where the refugee population exceeds 200,000, flood preparedness and response have been a priority, including pre-positioning emergency supplies, reinforcing dykes, and engaging communities in flood risk mitigation. In Renk, the combined impact of floods and the continued refugee influx from Sudan has overstretched humanitarian capacities, exacerbating food insecurity, protection risks, and health vulnerabilities. The humanitarian community has released an inter-agency flood preparedness and response plan.

Highlights and Achievements

January – August 2024

146K
individuals received protection services

310K
individuals provided with food assistance

79K
individuals supported with shelter or housing assistance

71K
individuals relocated or supported with transportation

120K
individuals received non-food items

100K
individuals provided with primary healthcare consultations

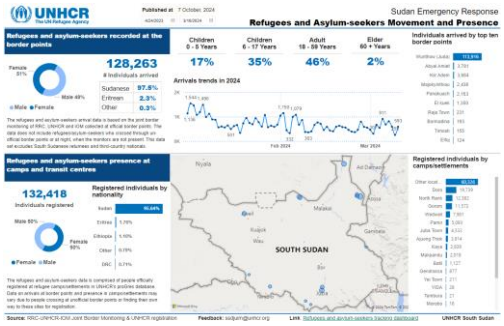
Sectoral Responses

Protection

Between May and August 2024, CRA and UNHCR registered 29,321 new refugee arrivals, primarily from Sudan, which increased the total registered population to 494,487 refugees and asylum-seekers as of August. With more refugees settling in various remote locations across the country, especially in the North, the response increasingly necessitates a mobile approach. CRA and UNHCR jointly with other RRP partners registered 4,553 refugees in Boromedina and Raga Town (Western Bahr El Ghazal State), in addition to some 12,000 refugees and asylum seekers registered in Wau (Western Bahr El Ghazal State) and Warrap States. Refugees in these locations consistently expressed reluctance to relocate to designated refugee-hosting areas.

Another developing trend is that refugees elect not to live in camps and receive assistance. Instead, they choose to live mostly in cities, seeking to find jobs, exercise their profession, or pursue their studies. This aligns with South Sudan's refugee law, which permits refugees to live and work in any part of the country. This new trend requires a fundamental shift in how humanitarian partners can support refugees in urban settings.

Significant protection risks persist, including ongoing reports of extortion and smuggling at border points. Once inside South Sudan, refugees and asylum seekers are exposed to heightened risks of exploitation and insecurity. Gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection issues remain acute and widespread. RRP partners have increased their efforts to improve access to legal services and tackle these issues through advocacy, coordination, and capacity building. Nevertheless, challenges



Sudan Emergency Response: Refugee and Asylum Seekers Movement and Presence Dashboard (source: UNHCR)

Joint Border Monitoring Dashboard (source: RRC, IOM and UNHCR)

remain, including delays in case processing, underreporting of GBV, and limited law enforcement capacity, which hinder justice for affected populations. To mitigate these risks, border monitoring in critical locations is crucial in identifying and addressing these threats. During the reporting period, 19,772 refugees and asylum seekers received protection services, including psychosocial support, legal representation, and documentation renewal. The Norwegian Refugee Council launched a pilot project, Family Connect, to enhance connectivity and family reunification through airtime for calls and internet access in Renk. This innovative initiative aims to alleviate the emotional distress of separation, foster connections, and support family reunification.

Furthermore, recent changes in food assistance targeting will likely increase vulnerabilities among already at-risk groups, leading to further deterioration in food security and increased tensions. The contentious shift to targeted food assistance has raised concerns over the exclusion of vulnerable populations from aid programs, pushing some refugees and asylum seekers to adopt negative coping mechanisms. RRP partners closely monitor developments in Jamjang and Maban, where the targeting is being rolled out in September. CRA and RRP partners prioritise communication to explain the rationale for these changes and ensure the distribution of protection top-up rations for those most at risk.

Government authorities have reinforced regular border monitoring at crucial border points in Maban, improving the security situation. The partners have rolled out several capacity-building initiatives focused on the civilian character of asylum, addressing gaps in law enforcement and involving various stakeholders, including refugees. Additionally, efforts continued to engage with communities through protection desks, communication on asylum guidelines, and regular detention monitoring across all locations. While the civilian character of asylum issues continues to pose challenges, some progress has been noted in Maban, attributed to effective interventions by local authorities. Additionally, severe floods have further hampered refugees' access to essential services and income sources in multiple areas, particularly Renk, Maban, and Jamjang, forcing many to resort to negative coping strategies.

IOM and UNHCR support relocation of refugees and returnees from the Joda border crossing to the transit centers in Renk town in Upper Nile State. © UNHCR / Sarah Velasco

Sub-Sector: Child Protection

Child protection efforts focused on delivering community-based child protection services, best interest determination (BID) processes, and prevention and response interventions for adolescents. Through established community structures, these efforts ensured that children at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children, received timely and appropriate assistance, enhancing their safety and well-being amidst ongoing conflict and displacement.

Children remain disproportionately affected by the Sudan crisis, with many becoming separated from their families. RRP partners, in collaboration with communities and government entities, have maintained a solid commitment to addressing the unique protection needs of children. Children constitute 47 per cent of the newly registered arrivals between May and August. During the reporting period, 5,532 children benefited from various child protection services.

The identification and documentation of unaccompanied and separated children remained a key priority, with 1,653 children identified during the reporting period. Of these, 81 children are currently under case management, receiving tailored support to address their protection needs. Furthermore, 1,416 children were referred to specialised services, including medical care and psychosocial support, ensuring their holistic needs were met.

Progress was also made on policy and procedural fronts. Partners developed and reviewed the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for alternative care, which provides a framework for caring for children needing alternative family arrangements. Child protection case management and the BID system are being further strengthened.

The tracing process for children separated from their families due to the conflict in Sudan has been initiated with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). However, active conflict in parts of Sudan continues to pose significant challenges, delaying the reunification process for these children. Addressing these obstacles remains crucial for ensuring the long-term protection and family unity of children affected by the crisis.

Sub-sector: Gender-based Violence (GBV)

During the reporting period, 91 per cent of those identified as at risk and reported survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) were women and girls, with 5 per cent being men and 2 per cent both children and the elderly. The most frequently reported GBV incidents were physical violence, followed by sexual and psychological violence, highlighting the continued vulnerability of these populations in displacement settings.

RRP partners provided essential support to 47,108 refugees and asylum seekers at risk of GBV. These individuals were reached through prevention and response activities, such as distributing dignity kits, life-saving services, psychosocial support, case management, and referrals to specialised services. Specialised response services for survivors were further strengthened, with 1,377 individuals receiving psychosocial support and many others benefiting from legal, health, safety, and livelihood interventions. Additionally, 2,954 women and girls received dignity kits alongside case management services, ensuring their immediate needs were addressed with dignity and care.

The involvement of women-led organisations has been pivotal in enhancing the response to GBV. One such initiative is the Girl Shine project, implemented by the women refugee-led organisation (Women for Peace, Culture, and Development) in Juba, with support from the Safe from the Start fund. The project aims to build the capacity of female facilitators and mentors within women-led organisations, empowering them to take a leading role in GBV prevention and response. The SASA! program, which promotes behaviour change and violence prevention, was piloted in Maban, Juba, and Jamjang. Across four camps, it reached 8,727 individuals (3,467 women, 1,485 girls, 2,556 men, and 1,219 boys). The program has proven to be a valuable tool in shifting harmful norms and promoting safer environments for women, girls, and other vulnerable groups.

Following an interagency GBVIMS (Gender-Based Violence Information Management System) training in April, the rollout of the system continued, enabling eight partners to integrate the new system into their operations. This marked a significant step forward in strengthening the coordinated response to gender-based violence, ensuring better data management and informed decision-making processes. The revised Information Sharing Protocol (ISP), which now systematically incorporates refugee data, further enhances the ability of partners to respond more effectively to the

needs of affected populations. Another significant achievement during the period was the development of GBV Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for refugee settings.

Finally, safety audits were conducted in Torit, Yei, and Bor in collaboration with partners from various sectors. Renk Safety Audit was published during the reporting period. These audits aimed to address the safety and security concerns of women and children in transit centres. The findings identified barriers to accessing services and informed programming to mitigate the risks faced by vulnerable groups in these locations, ensuring that safety and protection remain at the forefront of the humanitarian response.

Education

A total of 59,474 refugee children were enrolled at the primary level (including 2,969 new arrivals), and 6,565 at the secondary level (including 338 new arrivals) in refugee camps and settlements. These enrollments were supported by improvements in school infrastructure, the provision of teacher incentives, and the distribution of learning materials. However, refugees in transit, particularly in Renk, and in other out-of-camp locations across the country, continue to face significant challenges in integrating into existing schools due to a lack of adequate infrastructure and teaching staff. As a result, some children have been out of school for nearly a year.

Education facilities in Maban, Gorom, and Jamjang refugee camps were expanded to accommodate new arrivals, ensuring every child had access to learning opportunities. School governance was strengthened through training and efforts to encourage school attendance, particularly for girls. Intensive English language training was conducted to support the transition into the South Sudan curriculum and provide mental health and psycho-social support. The 'champions of change' enhanced linkages to protection through awareness-raising sessions. Cash-based interventions supported exam uptake, and scholarships were provided for secondary students. Regular school attendance was supported by WFP's school feeding program, with the additional assistance of cash transfers for girls from the Girls Education South Sudan Project. IGAD and UNHCR EHAGL shared the country report on progress made by South Sudan against the Djibouti Declaration Commitments for review by the government counterparts.

The DAFI Programme remained pivotal in providing tertiary and higher education opportunities in South Sudan. 251 continuing DAFI scholars were facilitated with their monthly stipends and had their semester fees paid, while no new enrolments took place. The 2024 DAFI new call for applications was launched and concluded with over 1,800 applications received compared to 500 in 2023, indicating a significant increase in higher education needs. Four new Mastercard Foundation scholars were earmarked to join USIU-Africa; however, challenges related to the lack of Non-Machine Readable Conventional Travel Documents have delayed their reporting. In this period, 72 scholars have completed their studies and are earmarked to graduate and enter the labour market.

The inadequate funding remained challenging, leaving many educational needs unmet, minimum standards compromised and exacerbating protection concerns in an already weak education system. The proportion of children and young people enrolled in schools decreased significantly, with primary and secondary gross enrolment rates dropping to 47.14 per cent and 12.42 per cent, respectively, from 50.93 per cent and 13.72 per cent in 2023, attributed to the significant increase in the primary (6-13 years) and secondary (14-17 years) age population because of Sudan crisis.

Food Security

During the reporting period, WFP and partners provided a mixed food basket of in-kind food and cash-based transfers for 321,696 new refugee and returnees arrivals in transit in Renk, Abyei and Malakal and upon arrival to 23,354 new refugees in the refugee hosting locations in Maban, Jamjang and Aweil. Additionally, WFP provided a protective ration through cash-based transfers (CBT) to complement the nutrition-specific support to families with children below two years in the Renk transit centres who arrived between April 2023 and April 2024. This brought the number of households reached since the start of the protective ration to 838 (4,484 people) in the first round and 725 (3,826 people) in the second round. This intervention's last and final round is planned to start in September 2024.

The provision of food in refugee camps continued during the reporting period at 50 per cent rations (15 feeding days per month), benefitting more than 310,400 refugees. WFP and its partners offer lifesaving food, nutrition, protection, livelihood (in the form of general food distribution +), and other assistance in nine major refugee camps and settlements (Aweil, Gorom, Makpandu, four Maban camps, and two Jamjang camps). The partners ensure food security and related needs are adequately addressed through appropriate food assistance and promoting self-reliance among beneficiaries. Starting in September, four refugee camps in Maban and two refugee camps in Jamjang will switch to targeted food assistance, benefitting 15-25% of the most vulnerable refugee population in each camp, compared to the previous blanket coverage. Other camps in Gorom and Yambio have already transitioned to the targeted approach. CRA, WFP and UNHCR have been working with communities to ensure awareness and readiness for such a change, including how to appeal the decision individually. These changes will not affect new arrivals from Sudan, who will continue receiving reduced food rations for the next 12 months.

Assessments have revealed high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition among children and mothers in families crossing the border and among those staying in transit for more extended periods, as no recurrent food assistance is provided in Renk Transit Centre. This has been the primary reason for recommending the protective ration approach.

Families receive cash assistance to buy food and other necessities in Renk where the majority of refugees and returnees are crossing the border from Sudan. © WFP / Eulalia Berlanga

Public Health & Nutrition

Medical and nutrition teams screened children under five and pregnant and lactating women at the transit centers, reaching over 14,823 individuals with interventions to prevent malnutrition, including vitamin supplementation. Vaccination efforts targeted over 1,341 children under 15 for polio, measles, and other vaccine-preventable diseases, including COVID-19, at the transit centres in Renk and other locations.

Preliminary data indicates that malnutrition rates are alarmingly high, with Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) exceeding the 15% emergency threshold in transit areas. Preventive interventions and treatment for malnourished children were provided at border points, transit sites, refugee camps, and settlements. These included the distribution of high-energy biscuits, blanket supplementary feeding programs, and community-based treatment for acute malnutrition using Plumpy'Nut and other specialized nutrition products. A total of 923 children were discharged after recovering from malnutrition treatment, achieving a 93% cure rate in Outpatient Therapeutic Programs (OTPs), which meets the international standard for effective treatment. Additionally, preliminary findings from the SENS survey conducted in the Maban refugee camps in May 2024 revealed a GAM rate of 17%, surpassing the emergency threshold and underscoring the urgent need to scale up prevention and response interventions, including livelihood initiatives, which are especially critical against the backdrop of the ongoing roll-out of targeted food distribution programs.

Health services continued to expand as 116,441 primary medical consultations were conducted for refugees, with each clinician attending an average of 49 consultations daily. Safe motherhood programs were also provided at the primary healthcare centres, resulting in 1,625 skilled deliveries, achieving a skilled birth attendance rate of 93%. In addition, 175 community births were managed despite the stretched capacity, leading to 1,750 live and stillbirths.

The under-five mortality rate stood at 0.20 per 1,000 per month, and the crude mortality rate at 0.14 per 1,000 per month, reflecting relatively well-maintained health conditions despite the challenges. However, gaps remained in antenatal care coverage, with only 72% of pregnant women receiving four or more visits.

In terms of infectious disease control, 811 individuals received HIV treatment services and management of opportunistic infections. Despite these efforts, challenges persisted due to insufficient WASH facilities, compounded by the influx of new arrivals and the rainy season, which led to increased disease transmission. Communicable diseases, particularly diarrhoea and malaria, emerged as primary health concerns, exacerbating the overall health risks in the camps. The health facility utilisation rate reached 2.01 visits per refugee per year, reflecting the population's high demand for medical services.

Livelihoods & Economic Inclusion (LEI)

New arrivals from Sudan are prioritised for life-saving assistance while in transit, with the priority remaining to move new arrivals away from border areas as fast as possible. With the changing nature of the crisis, and considering that up to 10% of new arrivals choose to remain in Renk, there is now a need to look into the possibility of livelihoods and economic inclusion programming in some border areas while continuing to maintain a policy of minimum assistance in transit centres. South Sudan's notably progressive policies on livelihoods and financial inclusion of refugees actively promote employment opportunities for new arrivals, particularly in self-employment. The skillset of new arrivals is notably high, with expertise in fields such as education, health, engineering, and technical sciences. Plans are underway to systematically profile the skills of these new arrivals and match them with potential job opportunities, thereby fostering resilience from the onset.

During the reporting period, RRP partners intensified efforts to enhance refugees' economic and financial inclusion, supporting the local community. RRP partners extended their reach to refugees in Maban, Jamjang, Yambio, Aweil, and Juba, focusing on economic and financial empowerment initiatives that have benefited 11,227 individuals in need.

A total of 5,280 individuals received targeted support in agriculture and livestock production. This assistance included the distribution of seeds, farming tools, fishing kits, poultry, and tillage services. Additionally, beneficiaries gained access to key production infrastructure, such as poultry pens and tractors, as well as agricultural extension services and training.

By August, RRP partners had enrolled 137 refugees (62 women and 75 men) in various technical vocational training programs. These programs covered computer literacy, hairdressing, garment making, welding, and carpentry skills. The training facilities were further enhanced by providing ICT equipment, including 60 laptops, two printers, and two projectors, and solarising the ICT facility in Maban with an 8KWP solar system.

To further bolster economic and financial inclusion, 1,545 individuals (1,235 women and 310 men) participated in initiatives such as coaching for Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA), receiving revolving capitalisation grants,

entrepreneurship training, and business startup grants and kits. Furthermore, 92 refugees were supported in opening bank accounts with Equity Bank and enrolling in a credit scheme to access business capital.

The livelihood response also integrates environmental considerations by mainstreaming environmental protection and providing access to alternative briquette cooking energy. Additionally, solar-powered electric cooking stoves were provided to meet the energy needs of individual households and institutions. Altogether, these initiatives benefited 941 individuals (683 women and 258 men).

Logistics, Supply & Telecommunications

From May to August, 28,648 refugees and asylum seekers were successfully transported from the border to transit sites. Additionally, UNHCR relocated 3,197 refugees from transit locations such as Renk and Abyei to refugee-hosting areas across South Sudan. In close consultation with the Government and refugees, UNHCR expanded its relocation programme, allowing movement to additional locations beyond Maban, the sole destination in 2023. Refugees can now relocate to Jamjang, Wedweil, and Yambio. In addition to the 4,424 refugees relocated from Renk to Maban and Jamjang between January and April 2024, UNHCR relocated another 2,697 refugees during the reporting period, including 282 to Maban, 1,359 to Jamjang, and 1,056 to Yambio.

Upon arrival in Jamjang camps, refugees who are recently relocated from Renk receive essential items to help them get settled in their assigned plots. They also receive food for 14 days, while women and girls of reproductive age are given dignity kits.
© UNHCR / Sarah Velasco

The relocations faced significant logistical challenges, primarily due to South Sudan's inadequate road infrastructure. The route between Renk and Maban proved especially difficult, with frequent road blockages and vehicle breakdowns. This led to increased reluctance among transporters to commit resources, further complicating the relocation process. When air transport was employed, adverse weather conditions compounded logistical difficulties, escalating costs and operational complexity. Given the flood-prone nature of Renk's airstrip, refugees had to be transported by river to Malakal before being airlifted to Jamjang and other locations, requiring Malakal's more reliable airport.

Logistical challenges intensified further in the second half of 2024 due to heavy rains and flooding, particularly in Unity State, severely disrupting operations in Jamjang and Bentiu. The Upper Nile region faced similar difficulties, affecting Maban and Malakal. With roads becoming impassable, the operation increasingly relied on river transport. While river transport was a more cost-effective solution for transferring non-food items (NFIs) and other essential supplies from Juba to field locations involved in the Sudan response, it resulted in significant delays in delivery times. The operation worked closely with the WFP Logistics Cluster to ensure the safe delivery of items. However, river transport combined with the consolidated cargo system employed by the Logistics Cluster further slowed down deliveries.

To mitigate these disruptions, RRP partners pre-positioned emergency supplies in strategic locations before the onset of the rainy season. This proactive measure helped cushion the impact of logistical challenges, ensuring essential services could still be delivered with minimal disruption despite adverse weather conditions.

Since the onset of the emergency, critical internet access and essential security communication services have been provided to partners, the broader humanitarian community, and some refugees and asylum seekers. Reliable connectivity has been established at four key locations: the Renk Transit Center, UNHCR Renk Field Unit, Wedweil Refugee Settlement, and Gorom Refugee Settlement, enabling over 500 humanitarian workers to access the internet and deliver essential protection services. IT teams conducted missions to Renk, Aweil, and Wedweil during the reporting period, providing technical guidance for successfully implementing connectivity and security communication systems. A backup VSAT internet link was installed at the UNHCR office in Renk to enhance network performance and reduce downtime. Additionally, connectivity services were extended to the new transit centre to support registration activities.

Moreover, Wedweil underwent critical infrastructure upgrades, including enhanced internet connectivity. Satellite-based radio communication systems were installed at the UNHCR offices in Renk and Aweil, significantly improving security communications. UNHCR will continue to provide ongoing IT and telecommunications support to further strengthen the IT infrastructure and user services across all locations, boosting overall operational efficiency.

Settlement & Shelter/Housing

During the reporting period from May to August 2024, RRP partners constructed 1,711 emergency household shelters and distributed 751 family tents, benefiting 13,822 refugees and asylum seekers. The construction and distribution efforts were concentrated in Jamjang, Maban, and Wedweil, providing immediate, life-saving support and ensuring access to safe and dignified living conditions amidst ongoing challenges. In addition to emergency shelters, more durable shelters were provided to the most vulnerable populations. Seventy-one transitional shelters were constructed in Jamjang, benefitting 355 individuals. These shelters, allocated to the most vulnerable families, offer a more stable and resilient living environment, improving safety and protection for those who need it most. In Renk, nine communal shelters were constructed, and 37 existing ones were rehabilitated, increasing capacity to accommodate an additional 2,500 individuals in the transit centres. This intervention was critical to mitigate overcrowding. Additionally, RRP partners have regularly monitored the situation in transit centre 1 and transit centre 2, releasing monthly service profiles available here.

Complementing shelter construction, essential non-food items (NFIs) were distributed to 35,186 individuals, including kitchen sets, dignity kits, assorted clothes, jerry cans, plastic sheets, solar lamps, and other core relief items (CRIs). These NFIs helped meet the basic needs of displaced families, ensuring they can maintain hygiene, cook meals, and protect themselves from the elements, significantly improving living conditions and well-being.

Despite these achievements, challenges remain. Additional resources are urgently needed to improve communal shelters in Bulukat transit site in Malakal Moreover, transit centres (TCs) need improvements, including drainage works and dyke construction, to mitigate the impact of seasonal flooding and improve the resilience of shelter solutions.

Without these investments, the protection, health risks, and deteriorating living conditions remain high. Addressing these challenges will be critical to ensuring the continued safety and dignity of displaced populations in South Sudan.

Doro Refugee camp in Bunj, South Sudan, showing temporary shelters to accommodate newly arrived refugee families, mainly from Sudan. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)

Safe drinking water was provided at all transit and reception sites through emergency water treatment systems, water trucking, and borehole rehabilitation. Efforts are ongoing to repair the water systems in Renk town. Across the country, the average per capita water supply is 18 litres per person per day, which falls within the emergency threshold. However, Maban has the lowest supply, at just 14 litres per person, due to the impact of floods. More resources are needed to expand the water supply system and improve water treatment capacity to ensure a consistent and safe water supply for all refugees.

Emergency sanitation facilities were installed, but significant challenges remain in meeting minimum standards. Latrine coverage currently stands at just 24%, with an average of 29 people per latrine, highlighting serious gaps in funding for the construction, operation, maintenance, and desludging of sanitation facilities. RRP partners successfully advocated for borehole drilling and solarisation projects to address these issues, reducing water trucking costs. However, additional boreholes are urgently required to meet the needs of the growing refugee population in the refugee-hosting areas.

Insufficient resources for WASH services, including non-food items (NFIs) and menstrual hygiene management kits, in transit centres, continue to elevate the risk of waterborne disease outbreaks. Increased funding and support are essential to address these critical gaps.

Cross-Cutting Response

Accountability to Affected People (AAP)

During the reporting period, RRP partners prioritised community engagement through various channels, including regular meetings and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to foster meaningful dialogue and gather feedback from the refugee population. These efforts were complemented by enhanced feedback mechanisms such as suggestion boxes and digital platforms, which allowed refugees to submit complaints, suggestions, and inquiries. Information dissemination activities, particularly those targeted at newly arrived refugees, ensured communities were well-informed about available services and entitlements. This approach fostered greater transparency and accountability while helping to strengthen the relationship between service providers and refugee communities.

Internews runs a project to address the humanitarian information needs of refugees and returnees in South Sudan, focusing on Renk, Malakal and Aweil. The initiative connects displaced populations with verified, actionable information from humanitarian actors by establishing a two-way communication platform through community correspondents. The objective is to elevate community voices, improve access to services, and inform decision-making, including collecting feedback, disseminating public service announcements, and coordinating with local agencies to address gaps in the response.

To improve service delivery, RRP partners conducted a series of community consultations and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) across refugee camps and settlements in Maban, Jamjang, Yambio, and Juba. These consultations allowed refugees to share their feedback on food targeting and prioritisation strategies.

During the reporting period, UNHCR and RRP partners conducted participatory assessments across all refugee-hosting locations. Engagement with various refugee groups (youth, elderly, male, and female) allowed a better understanding of the specific needs and suggested future programmes.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

RRP partners implemented various community engagement initiatives, including regular awareness-raising campaigns reaching over 17,895 individuals. 1,266 posters and banners (English and Arabic) with key messages on GBV/PSEA prevention and response were disseminated in the field locations. Capacity-building efforts were also a priority, with numerous training sessions conducted for partner staff. In total, 182 staff members participated in training sessions covering recognising and reporting SEA, understanding power dynamics, and prioritising survivor-centred approaches. These sessions aimed to enhance the capacity of partner staff and raise awareness about SEA reporting mechanisms and response strategies.

Active communication, participation, and accountability enhanced the community engagement and feedback mechanism. UNHCR coordinated the PSEA task force's monthly meetings in field locations (Maban, Jamjang, Renk, Yei, Bentiu, Torit), where UNHCR is leading/co-leading coordination.

Under-resourcing of PSEA programming compounds the problem of underreporting by victims and witnesses of SEA. Inadequate capacity to provide victims assistance exacerbates harm to victims, erodes trust and discourages reporting.

Cash-based interventions (CBI)

Several targeted cash assistance programs delivered assistance to displaced populations. In the Maban camps, cash assistance for sanitary napkins was distributed to 4,218 refugees, including 2,152 newly arrived refugees. Additionally, in Upper Nile State, 80 asylum seekers benefited from multi-purpose cash support to meet their essential needs.

Technical assistance was provided to the national NGO SADOO, enabling the delivery of cash assistance to 4,550 beneficiaries in the Wedweil Refugee Settlement. UNHCR leads the sub-national Cash Working Group in Renk and has successfully coordinated cash assistance for approximately 176,223 individuals.

450 refugees received cash assistance specifically allocated for energy-related needs, ensuring they could access essential energy resources. In addition, 190 refugees were supported through cash-based interventions to enhance their livelihoods, helping them develop sustainable income-generating activities. Furthermore, 413 refugees benefited from cash assistance to cover their basic needs, providing them with essential resources such as food, shelter, and other necessities.

Additionally, food assistance in Renk and numerous refugee camps and settlements is provided through CBI.

Localisation

In 2024, out of 42 RRP partners, 14 are local partners.

In 2024, four refugee-led organisations actively contribute to the humanitarian response across Magbi, Yei, and Juba, primarily focusing on promoting self-reliance. In addition to these self-reliance initiatives, these organisations are implementing an Education and Drama for Peace project, which uses drama as a tool for education and peacebuilding in Renk.

The Girl Shine GBV project, implemented by a women refugee-led organisation in Juba and Jamjang, focuses on building the capacity of female facilitators and mentors within women-led groups, empowering them to play a critical role in GBV prevention and response efforts.

Climate Action

RRP partners actively engage refugee community groups in managing tree nurseries across Maban, Jamjang, and Makpandu to promote afforestation, with a production capacity exceeding 100,000 seedlings. These efforts support both reforestation and biodiversity conservation in refugee-hosting areas. Various approaches are being implemented, including agroforestry, woodlot plantations, and tree planting at household and institutional levels, encouraging the growth of fruit-bearing and shade trees.

Six community disaster preparedness committees involve community members in flood preparedness activities and early warning systems. RRP partners are rehabilitating flood protection infrastructure, such as dikes, and improving road networks to strengthen resilience against climate-induced disasters, thereby protecting both lives and livelihoods.

In refugee-hosting areas, RRP partners are also advancing climate action by promoting sustainable and clean cooking solutions. This includes the distribution of 50 ECOCA institutional solar electric cookers at four health facilities in Maban, with installations currently underway. In addition, commercial distribution campaigns are marketing 50 subsidised solar e-cooking kits at the community level. These eco-friendly kits offer refugees a sustainable alternative to traditional cooking methods, helping to reduce deforestation and air pollution. Moreover, over 34 women, organised into two production groups, are supported to produce over 700 kg of carbonised briquettes, distributed to 600 households with heightened protection risks.

Partnership & Coordination

The refugee response in South Sudan aligns with the framework of the Refugee Coordination Model, led by the CRA and UNHCR. At the national level, the Refugee Coordination Meeting provides an inclusive platform for partners to engage in strategic discussions, fostering collaboration and information exchange. Additionally, sectoral coordination mechanisms facilitate technical-level discussions, promoting a comprehensive approach to addressing the multifaceted needs of refugees and asylum-seekers while maintaining active engagement with government counterparts.

The coordination model also establishes liaison with the cluster system, building synergies across different sectors. This collaborative approach extends to providing regular updates on refugee-related matters to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). By leveraging the Refugee Coordination Model, the South Sudan refugee response ensures a cohesive and well-informed strategy, demonstrating a commitment to effective coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders involved in addressing the challenges faced by displaced communities.

The emergency response to the Sudan crisis in South Sudan is comprised of three phases. These consist of a first phase of emergency response covering reception at the border, transit centres, and transportation; a second phase of immediate intervention in return areas; and a third phase to support resilience and integration.

Funding

The South Sudan chapter of the Sudan Situation RRRP is currently funded at only **24%**, leaving a significant gap in resources needed to address the full scope of the response. RRP partners in South Sudan continue to emphasise the critical need for flexible funding, which enables them to respond swiftly and prioritise the most urgent needs across the country. For more detailed insights into the funding status, the Refugee Funding Tracker offers a comprehensive overview of interagency funding allocations for the response.

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