

UPDATE ON THE FLOODING SITUATION IN SOUTH SUDAN

Week of 5-11 August 2024

Flood overview and key events

- As of 10 August, severe flooding has impacted 18 counties across seven states in South Sudan, including Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Warrap, Western Bahr el Ghazal, Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile and Central Equatoria, with heavy rains and subsequent floods affecting over 300,000 people. The United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT) released a comprehensive [analysis](#) covering South Sudan from 1 to 5 August, revealing that approximately 29,000 km² of land — out of a 610,000 km² cloud-free area — was submerged by floodwaters. This represents a significant increase of around 13,000 km² in water-covered land between 11 and 15 July. Based on [Worldpop](#) data and the maximum floodwater extent, an estimated 475,000 people are directly exposed to or live near flooded areas.
- On 8-9 August 2024, the UN and government met to address the ongoing flooding issues at the airport. A Technical working group of experts, including engineers from both the government and UNMISS, and OCHA, to examine both short-term and long-term solutions to mitigate the impact of the flooding on the airport's operations. In the short term, it was agreed that the immediate removal of the culverts obstructing water flow would be the most effective measure. This action is expected to allow water to move freely, helping to clear the runway and prevent further flooding. For a more sustainable solution, the long-term proposal focused on the comprehensive cleaning of the existing drainage system around the airport. Furthermore, the construction of a permanent concrete drainage system was identified as essential to ensure the airport's resilience against future flooding.
- On 7 August, a high-level delegation led by the Humanitarian Coordinator visited Malakal, Upper Nile State. Discussions with the State Floods Task Force Committee addressed preparedness, mitigation gaps, challenges and funding needs. The humanitarian team updated on the low stock of relief supplies and funding challenges for transportation. The Humanitarian Coordinator urged for a reprioritization of the most vulnerable counties, identification of key gaps and data-sharing for further advocacy.
- On 6 August, the Humanitarian Coordinator led a high-level delegation to Bentiu, Unity State, where the authorities highlighted lack of resources to scale up mitigation measures as a main challenge. The Governor informed the delegation on their preparedness plan, ongoing flood messaging and establishment of county level mitigation committees, while the Deputy Governor emphasized ongoing mapping and early warning efforts. The Humanitarian Coordinator stressed the importance of a Government-led response, with further discussions on priorities and funding.
- On 5 August, the Humanitarian Coordinator led a high-level delegation to the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA). The delegation met with the Chief Administrator, his cabinet and community leaders and held discussions with humanitarian partners to get updates on the ongoing mitigation, preparedness and response efforts. The Humanitarian Coordinator advised humanitarians and local authorities to strengthen communication and messaging and pre-position supplies in critical locations where people will relocate to in the event of flooding.
- In a press [release](#) on 12 August, the South Sudanese Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation reported that the water level of Lake Victoria has decreased from 13.66 m to 13.26 m due to the off-season period in the lake basin. As a result, the Government of Uganda has reduced the water release regime from 2,600 cubic metres per second (m³/s) to 2,400 m³/s. Further reduction to 2,200 m³/s is anticipated from 16 August. Outflow from Jebel Aulia dam is reported to be about

1,500 m³/s. According to the Minister, the southern hemisphere is getting drier with no additional rains over the basins draining into Lake Victoria. However, heavy rains are reported in the Democratic Republic of Congo, increasing the volume of water of Lake Albert flowing into South Sudan.

Areas affected by floods

- In **Northern Bahr el Ghazal State**, humanitarian partners reported on 6 August that floods caused by torrential rains affected over 102,000 people across all five counties. This includes an estimated 53,000 people in Aweil East County, more than 5,000 in Aweil North County, about 5,000 in Aweil West County, 37,500 in Aweil South County and 1,500 in Aweil Center County. The Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) confirmed that the rains and floods have damaged or destroyed homes, crops, road infrastructure and sanitation facilities. Flood-affected areas have reported an increase in Malaria cases. Some of the affected people sought shelter in nearby villages and later returned home after the floodwaters receded, while some 400 households in Aweil West and 100 households in Aweil Centre counties moved to higher grounds. Urgent needs include shelter, non-food items, food, clean water, medical assistance and protection. The Governor has established an 11-member high-level flood management committee to work with humanitarian partners to identify flood-prone areas and develop strategies to assist the flood-affected people.
- In **Central Equatoria State**, flooding in Terekeka and Juba counties displaced more than 11,600 people. An inter-agency assessment conducted from 7 to 9 August identified urgent needs among the affected population, including shelter, non-food items, health services, nutrition, education, protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). As the River Nile's water levels continue to rise daily, the humanitarian situation is expected to deteriorate further. The floods have damaged or destroyed homes, crops, road infrastructure and sanitation facilities in the affected areas. The displaced and host communities are surviving on fishing and selling firewood. The state and county authorities are engaging the communities and raising awareness about the impending floods and encouraging them to relocate to higher ground for safety. Humanitarian partners are mobilizing to respond to the escalating crisis.
- In **Unity State**, a humanitarian partner reported on 9 August that the River Nile's water level has risen to 1.5 m from an initial height of less than 0.5 m in Mayendit County. Through multi-purpose cash assistance, an international NGO is supporting the communities in dyke rehabilitation covering 2.5 km in Tutnyang and Tharjiatbhor payams. Local authorities have mobilized the community to rehabilitate the dykes, with some 1.5 km of dyke maintained and repaired between Rubkuay, Thaker, Tutnyang and Tharjiatbhor as of 8 August. The communities have requested tools for dyke construction and rehabilitation, including pangas, axes, sickles, sandbags, poles, digging bars, spades, tarpaulins and wheelbarrows. In Panyijiar County, an international NGO reported on 8 August the displacement of an estimated 100 households due to floods from Pathiel and Majak villages to Nyal centre. An ad hoc Inter-Cluster Coordination Group met in Bentiu on 8 August to discuss flood preparedness. Flood risk mapping indicates that Panyijiar, Leer and Mayendit counties – with a combined population of 297,598 – are severely affected. Key issues include the flooding of former high ground areas and gaps in flood protection, with communities manually protecting critical infrastructure. Resource shortages such as hand tools and sandbags and delays in funding for health activities are significant concerns.
- In **Jonglei State and the GPAA**, the flood crisis in Old Fangak County has forced thousands of people to abandon their homes due to the rising water levels having submerged most villages, leaving only the payam headquarters accessible as a refuge for hundreds of displaced residents. Efforts to support the affected communities are hindered by limited resources and ongoing isolation. Local youth have mobilized to reinforce broken dykes, with about 2 km of the 4 km

perimetre rehabilitated as of 9 August. The waters from the river have started to enter Fangak town. A national NGO provided multi-purpose cash assistance to communities in five locations, including Old Fangak, New Fangak, Paguir, Toch and Pulita to support dyke construction efforts. In Twic East, the weak section of a dyke from Padol northward requires secondary repair as the water levels rise and flow towards the settlement areas. Shortages of essential supplies and access constraints complicate rehabilitation efforts. Severe flooding from the Oboth River struck Pochalla in the GPAA on 8 August, displacing some 3,000 people in Akilla payam according to the RRC. Their urgent needs include shelter, food, clean water and medical supplies. Pochalla town is reported to be at risk of flooding. The County Commissioner of Pochalla has formed a flood management council, which is organizing meetings to initiate preparedness activities in Pochalla. In Bor South County, heavy rains flooded several residential areas in Bor town, displacing some 2,600 people, with more displacements expected in the coming days as the rainfall continues. The RRC has requested humanitarian partners to respond to the urgent needs of the displaced people.

- In **Upper Nile State**, Malakal town and all counties experienced heavy rainfall, with the River Nile's water level increasing daily. Readings from the Malakal town Telemetric Station indicate that the water in River Nile rose from 1.38 m to 1.42 m between 8 and 9 August. This week, Maiwut County experienced continuous heavy rains, leading to flash floods and displacement of residents in low-lying areas. According to reports, about 400 households are displaced to higher ground, with assistance provided to 200 households. Humanitarian partners are working to support the remaining affected population. Flood mitigation activities are ongoing for communities in flood-prone locations in Nasir, Maiwut, Ulang, Panyikang, Fashoda, Manyo, Renk, Melut, Maban and Malakal. On 9 August, the Upper Nile Inter-Cluster Coordination Group convened to address flood preparedness and response, focusing on critical gaps in supplies and logistical challenges. The Logistics Cluster proposed a 50/50 cost-sharing arrangement for transport and urged the clusters to submit requests with consignment details.
- In the **Abyei Administrative Area**, heavy rainfall impeded the movement of humanitarian convoy and activities along the main supply route in southern Abyei. The UNHCR-organized convoy of 13 vehicles from Aweil, Northern Bahr el Ghazal State to transport some 167 refugees and asylum-seekers to the Wadweil refugee camp in Aweil West County was stuck in Abyei for two nights. On 8 August, the acting Chief Administrator for Abyei formed the Abyei Area High Committee for Emergency, Disaster and Crisis Management (flood task force) to support the implementation of the flood contingency plan. Engagements with stakeholders on preparedness efforts are ongoing. Humanitarian partners and local governments have flagged significant gaps in the availability of heavy machinery, including excavators, graders, trucks, sandbags, and fuel essential for an effective flood response. The flood task force leadership is engaging with UNISFA to secure the necessary engineering assets to address these needs.
- In **Warrap State**, as 11 August, an estimated 114,000 people have been affected by floods, particularly in Tonj North and Gogrial East counties. Assessments report widespread submersion, snakebites and rising cases of malaria. The floods have damaged or destroyed homes, crops, road infrastructure and sanitation facilities and affected the education of children. Some of the displaced are sheltering with relatives in highland locations, while others are sheltering in the open and in urgent need of shelter and non-food items assistance. Other urgent needs include food, medical care and WASH services. The State Government urgently called for national and international support to address these critical needs, indicating that they have exhausted all available resources to mitigate the impact of the flooding. In Twic County, the construction of a 3 km dyke by the communities is ongoing under WFP's multi-purpose cash assistance to protect the health facilities, market and schools.

- **Key asks** include immediate funding to fill critical gaps for flood mitigation, requiring US\$500,000 for dyke rehabilitation and repair in Bor town and an additional \$3 million for dyke rehabilitation in Rubkona County, Unity State. Urgent provision of relief supplies, particularly for nutrition requiring \$1.7 million, is critical. The shelter/non-food items pipeline is set to break by August and is in urgent need of replenishment, with a funding gap of \$9.7 million. The WASH Cluster's gap is \$9 million for critical relief supplies to mitigate and prepare for floods. Logistics and CCCM clusters need \$2.7 million for immediate mitigation activities (\$1.3 million for IOM for dyke repairs in Bor, Bentiu, Rubkona towns and Bentiu internally displaced persons site and \$1.4 million for WFP for emergency dykes repairs and dykes to protect critical roads in Bor South, Twic East and Ayod counties).

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