



# FAMINE HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2021

VIRTUAL HIGH-LEVEL EVENT: ACTION IN SUPPORT OF PREVENTING AND ENDING FAMINE NOW



Photo: OCHA/Damilola Onafuwa

## South Sudan

Last updated: 29 September

People in South Sudan face their highest levels of food insecurity since independence 10 years ago. According to the latest IPC analysis, between April and July 2021, 7.2 million people were estimated to be in IPC 3 or worse; Of these, 2.4 million people were in IPC Phase 4 or above; **108,000 people in the six counties - Akobo, Pibor, Aweil South, Tonj East, Tonj North and Tonj South- faced catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 5) at the height of the lean season in July.** In five of these locations, conflict was the major driver of acute food insecurity and displacement leading to loss of lives, assets and livelihoods. It is important to note that humanitarian action brought the six counties back from the brink of famine. Over 500,000 severely food insecure people were reached with lifesaving assistance in the six counties, and 100,000 families received livelihoods assistance. Overall, some 1.4 million children, the highest number since 2013, and 480,000 pregnant and lactating women are estimated to be acutely malnourished in 2021.

The main drivers of food insecurity and rising vulnerability among the population are man-made and climate related shocks, including organized violence ranging from national conflict to sub-national and localized, and compounded by a third consecutive year of flooding. All such shocks have led to displacement, the destruction of assets and livelihoods, and the erosion of coping mechanisms. This was further aggravated by the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, while interference by armed male youth with humanitarian activities, and the absence of rule of law hampered the response.

Humanitarian access constraints increased with a surge in attacks against humanitarian staff and assets, including the killing of four aid workers this year alone, making South Sudan one of the most dangerous places in which to work. Bureaucratic impediments by the government at various levels impact humanitarians' ability to respond to people's needs, with NGOs particularly vulnerable to impediments.



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Beginning in December 2020, humanitarian undertook a targeted multi-sectoral scale-up in the most food insecure areas. Food rations increased from 50 to 70 per cent for people projected to be in IPC 5, including over 83,000 people in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area. Over 545,000 families received essential livelihood packages in time for the main planting season, ensuring a steady supply of nutritious food for almost 3.3 million people. These gains come despite a limited change in behaviour of non-state armed groups (including youth), and the ability of government security forces to facilitate and ensure the protection of humanitarian activities.

The [South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan](#) is funded at 58 per cent (27 September). Lack of funding impacts the overall humanitarian response in South Sudan. Resources, including reducing food rations for IDPs in camps, were re-prioritised from other areas resulting in gaps and potentially resulting in increased vulnerability in other parts of the country. WFP has warned of a potential pipeline break as of October 2021. A multi-sectoral response is essential. For example, many of the children who are under-nourished are ill often due to chronic illness, such as TB with HIV/AIDS, or due to diarrhoea due to poor water quality, lack of safe sanitation, or poor hygiene practices. All sectors are underfunded, with critical underfunded levels for all major sectors. Funding levels [as of 27 Sept] are: WASH – 28%; Health – 17%; Nutrition – 30%; Emergency Shelter/NFIs – 22%; Protection – 40%; and Food Security and Livelihoods – 43%. Early financing at scale for the 2022 HRP will be critical as people's vulnerability deepens.

No IPC projections are available beyond July 2021 as the next IPC round will follow the conclusion of the independent IPC review. The upcoming IPC process must be allowed to proceed smoothly as the results underpin the food insecurity analysis, with the independent results to be accepted by all parties.

We urge States to carry out high-level advocacy with the government at the national, regional and local levels to reduce the level of violence and protect civilians, to ensure unimpeded humanitarian access, and provide sustained and timely funding to prevent an increase of food insecurity into 2022.