

# Situation Overview: Jonglei State, South Sudan

October 2017

**REACH** An initiative of  
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ACTED and UNOSAT

## Introduction

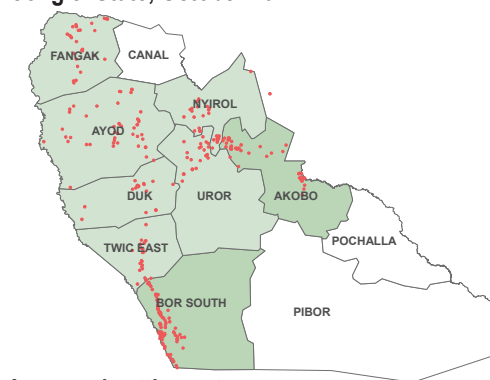
Displacement trends, humanitarian access and population needs in Jonglei continued to be negatively affected by violent conflict during October. Humanitarian needs remained high as tensions between armed groups and the subsequent displacement continued to affect populations' ability to meet their primary needs.

REACH has conducted an assessment of hard-to-reach areas in South Sudan since December 2015, to inform the response of humanitarian actors working outside of formal settlement sites. This settlement data is collected across South Sudan on a monthly basis. Between 3 and 20 October, REACH interviewed 730 Key Informants (KIs) with knowledge of humanitarian needs in 307 settlements in 8 of the 11 counties in Jonglei State.

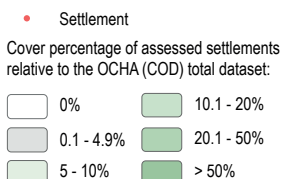
In order to ensure an understanding of current displacement trends and humanitarian conditions in settlements from which displacement took place, new arrivals, representing 30% of KIs, were specifically targeted. The remainder of the KIs interviewed (70%) reported having been in the settlement or having had regular contact with someone from the settlement within the last month.

In October, displacement data from KI interviews were triangulated with six Focus

**Map 1: REACH assessment coverage of Jonglei State, October 2017**



### Assessed settlements



Group Discussions (FGDs), which involved participatory mapping exercises to understand the routes that internally displaced persons (IDPs) took. These included: a) three FGDs with new arrivals from Greater Akobo in Akobo Town b) two FGDs with new arrivals from the Equatorias in Bor Town and c) one FGD with new arrivals from Ugandan refugee settlements in Mingkaman.

Informing further analysis on food security trends across the state, REACH also conducted eight Food Security and Livelihood (FSL) FGDs with new arrivals and people who had recent

contact with those in relevant settlements, including: a) two Coping Strategies FGDs for Greater Akobo in Akobo Town b) two FGD on Coping Strategies and one on Livelihoods for Greater Fangak in Bor PoC site c) two FGDs on livelihoods and one on Coping Strategies in Bor-Duk in Bor Town and Mingkaman. All this information is included in the data used for this Situation Overview.

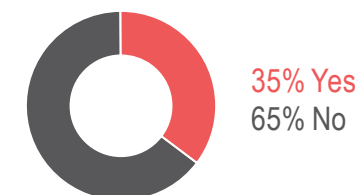
This Situation Overview provides an update to key findings from the September Situation Overview.<sup>1</sup> The first section analyses displacement and population movement in Jonglei during October, and the second section evaluates access to food and basic services for both IDP and non-displaced communities.

## Population Movement and Displacement

Insecurity and restricted access to services continued to drive displacement in Jonglei in October. Depopulation remained high but stable, with 46% of assessed settlements reporting that half or more of the local community had left, similar to 49% in September.

Reflective of the overall stabilisation in depopulation, the proportion of assessed settlements in October reporting IDP presence was 35% (Figure 1), similar to the six-monthly

**Figure 1: Percentage of assessed settlements hosting IDPs, October 2017**



average of 38%. Moreover, the most common month of arrival was June 2017, reported by 24% of assessed settlements with IDPs. This suggests the large influxes of new arrivals occurring due to conflict in the 2017 dry season have slowed, but that high numbers of people remain displaced across Jonglei. Among recently displaced KIs interviewed for AoK, inadequate access to food was the most common primary reason for their displacement, cited by 32% of newly arrived KIs. This was followed by lack of healthcare (22%), followed by insecurity (19%).

### Displacement within Jonglei

#### Displacement from and within Greater Akobo (Akobo, Nyirol and Urur)

FGD participants reported that displacement from Urur and Nyirol was driven by conflict in the counties in June, as well as renewed clashes in Waat and Motot in late October.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the high rate of displacement, new

1 REACH South Sudan, Situation Overview, September, 2017.

2 UNOCHA South Sudan: [Humanitarian Snapshot](#), October 2017.



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## METHODOLOGY

To provide an overview of the situation in largely inaccessible areas of Jonglei State, REACH uses primary data provided by key informants who have recently arrived, or received regular information, from their pre-displacement location or “Area of Knowledge”.

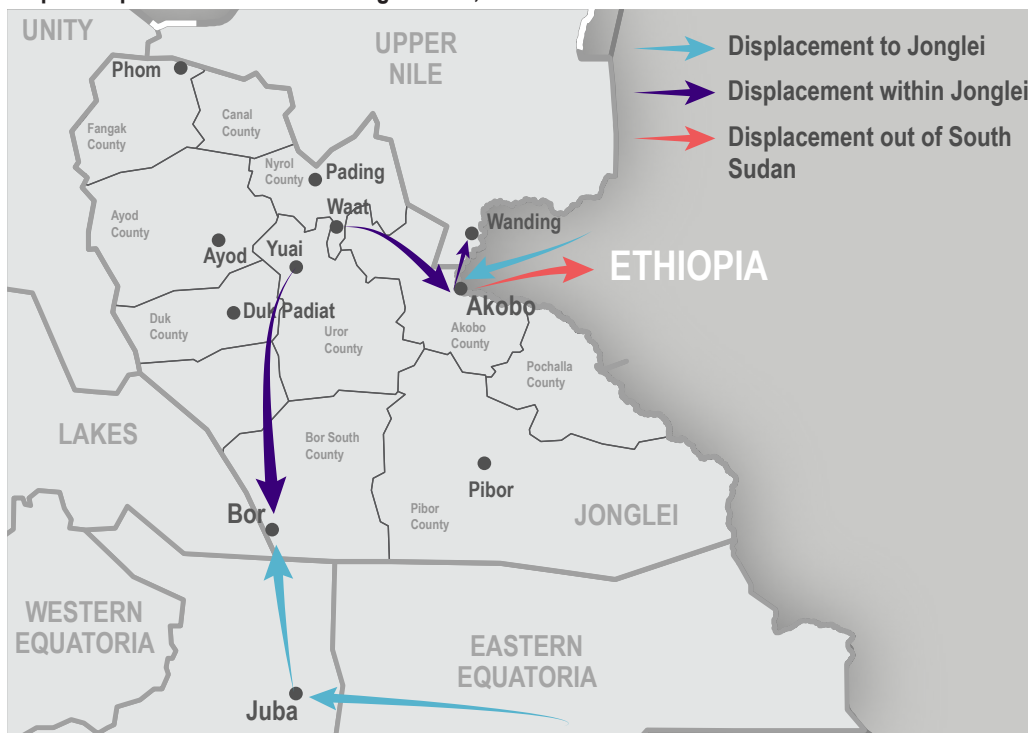
Information for this report was collected from key informants in the Mingkaman Spontaneous Settlement, Bor and Juba Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites, Bor Town, Akobo Town, as well as in Nyal, throughout October 2017.

The first phase of the assessment methodology comprised a participatory mapping exercise to map the relevant settlements in Jonglei State. In-depth interviews were then conducted with selected participants, using a standardised survey tool comprising questions on displacement trends, population needs and access to basic services.

After data collection was completed, all data was examined at the settlement level, and settlements were assigned the modal response. When no consensus could be found for a settlement, it was not included in reporting. Descriptive statistics and geospatial analysis were then used to analyse the data.

It must be noted that this represents a **change in data aggregation as of December 2016**, as REACH previously analysed data at the community level. This means that although data collection methods have remained the same since September 2016, **this report is not directly comparable with Situation Overviews from before December 2016.**

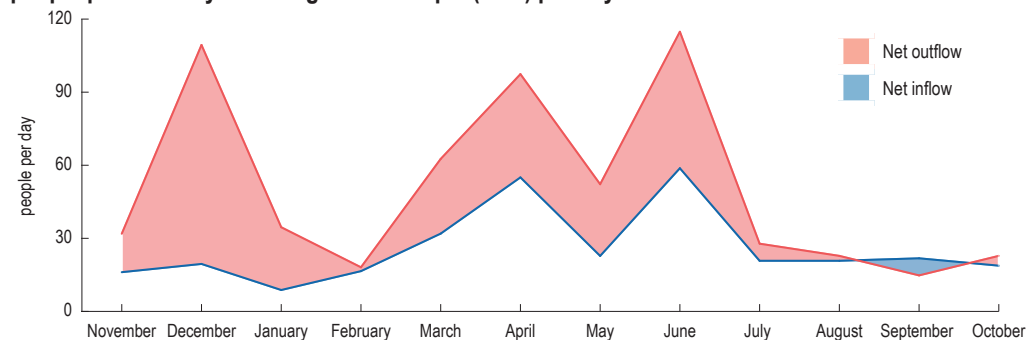
Map 2: Displacement Overview Jonglei State, October 2017



arrivals in the key IDP receiving locations of Akobo Town and Bor PoC have been lower in the rainy season. In Akobo County, no assessed settlements with IDPs reported

that they had predominantly arrived between August and October 2017, whereas 86% reported that IDPs had predominantly arrived between May and July. Similarly, in Bor PoC

Figure 2: Average monthly movement trends of people permanently leaving Akobo Town (red) and people permanently returning from Ethiopia (blue) per day from November 2016 to October 2017.



site, only 11 new arrivals coming from Greater Akobo were recorded in October.<sup>3</sup>

Reduced movement to these locations is likely attributable to the difficulties associated with travel during the rainy season. FGD participants reported that roads were impassable to all but a few vehicles, which most IDPs could not afford. Moreover, insecurity restricted movement as FGD participants reported that many men from conflict-affected settlements either had been killed or were involved in the fighting. With fewer men to accompany them, displaced women and children were more vulnerable to attacks on the road. Across Jonglei, 81% of assessed settlements with IDPs reported that these IDPs were mostly or all female.

**Unable to travel long distances to Akobo Town or Bor PoC site, many IDPs were instead displaced in remote locations in Uror and Nyirol.** Nyirol, in particular, reported a recent influx, as 61% of assessed settlements with IDPs reported that they had arrived in October 2017. These IDPs predominantly came from Canal, Ayod and Uror, as reported by 33%, 27% and 20% of assessed settlements with IDPs respectively. FGD participants reported that the IDPs in remote locations faced limited access to basic services and humanitarian assistance.

## Displacement out of Jonglei

### Displacement from Akobo Town to Ethiopia

In 2017, thousands of refugees have moved to Ethiopia from Akobo. However, this movement appears to have slowed during

<sup>3</sup> Bor PoC Movement Trend Tracker, October 2017.

the rainy season (Figure 2). REACH Port Monitoring in Akobo Town tracks movement of South Sudanese heading to and returning from Ethiopian refugee camps in Gambella.<sup>4</sup> According to this data, an average of 21 individuals per day reported permanently leaving for Ethiopia in October, similar to 19 individuals in September. KIs reported that the reduced movement is likely attributable to the high water levels impeding boat movements.

For those who did still report permanently leaving for Ethiopia, conflict was the main reason in October, reported by 47% of individuals, compared to 16% in September. The increase might be attributable to the

#### Returned South Sudanese refugees in Mingkaman Informal Settlement

During September, REACH teams in Mingkaman Informal Settlement in Lakes State, witnessed the arrival of several households of South Sudanese refugees returning from refugee settlements in Uganda. The returning populations, who are originally from Jonglei, had left Nyamazi settlement due to the reduction in food rations and perceived worsening relationships with the local community, especially when collecting firewood. As returnees are mostly dependent on relatives or other IDPs from Jonglei for food and shelter whilst in Mingkaman, FGD participants cited access to food, shelter and NFIs as their most immediate needs.

renewed clashes in Greater Akobo. A lack of food was the second most common reason (14%), followed by a lack of education services (12%). Sixty-one percent (61%) of individuals reported that they intended to stay in refugee camps in Ethiopia.

#### Movement to Jonglei

##### Movement from Ethiopia to Akobo Town

High waters during the rainy season may also have reduced returns from Ethiopia. The number of South Sudanese moving from Ethiopian refugee camps was an average of 17 individuals per day in October (Figure 2), a slight decrease from September (20). Coupled with fewer new arrivals from Greater Akobo, this suggests that the number of displaced people in Akobo Town remained high but stable during the rainy season.

##### Movement from the Equatorias to Bor

In September, IDPs originally from Bor South continued to return to Jonglei from parts of the Equatorias. FGD participants who had travelled from Juba mainly reported they were moving due to crime-related insecurity, high prices and a lack of shelter in the capital. For FGD participants who had travelled from Kapoeta, main reasons for leaving were reported to be high crime rates in the town, limited humanitarian assistance and heightening tensions between IDPs and the host community.

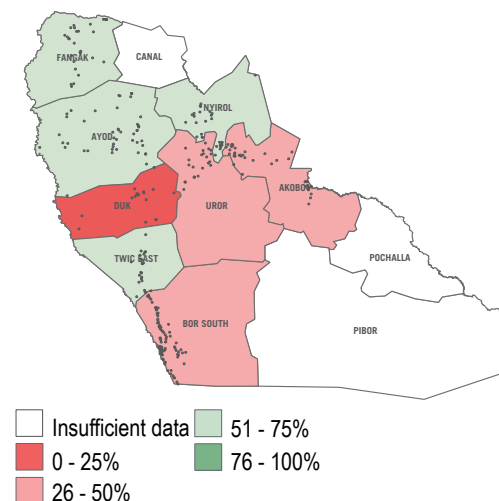
## Situation in Assessed Settlements

### Food Security and Livelihoods

Access to food rose slightly in Jonglei during the harvest season but remained low overall (Map 3). Forty-nine percent (49%) of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food in October, compared to 43% in September and 35% in August. However, there are important exceptions to the general increase, with the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food falling by more than 10 percentage points compared to September in Akobo, Ayod and Duk (Figure 3).

This gradual increase in most parts of Jonglei is likely partly attributable to increased produce from the harvests as the increase in agricultural activity reported in September largely continued into October. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting growing crops in October was 77%, similar to 76% in September. This represents a considerable improvement from the low rates in June at the peak of the lean season (45%). Correspondingly, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting cultivation as their

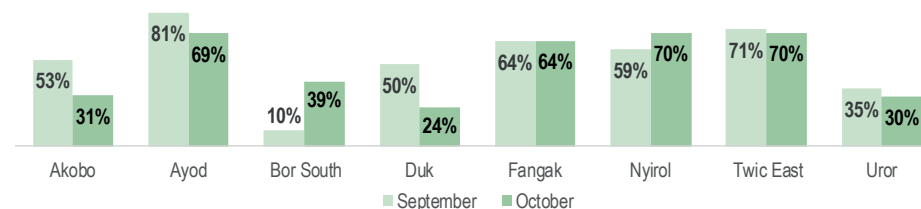
Map 3: Percentage of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food, October 2017



primary source of food rose from 36% in September to 47% in October.

Moreover, reported cattle ownership also remained high, reported by 92% of assessed settlements in October, similar to 96% in September. Fishing and hunting continued to be important livelihood activities as well, reported by 54% of assessed settlements in October. This proportion has risen steadily since June (24%), likely due to higher waters enabling

Figure 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food in September and October 2017.



4 REACH SSD, [Akobo Port Monitoring Factsheet](#), October 2017.

fishing in the rainy season. These findings suggest many settlements have temporarily increased self-sufficiency during the harvest season.

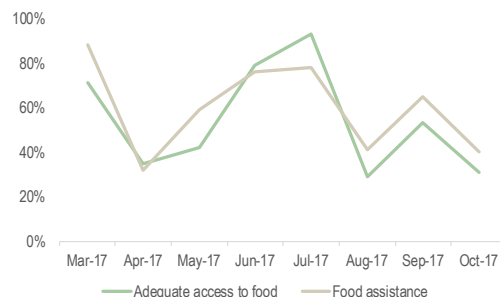
Despite these slight improvements, insecurity continued to disrupt livelihoods. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of assessed settlements with inadequate access to food reported an unsafe cultivation environment to be the primary reason, similar to 35% in September. FGD participants reported that this largely refers to localised violence, as people fear being attacked by members of other communities when working in the fields. A lack of land and the halting of food assistance were the second most common primary reasons for inadequate access to food (10% each).

### Greater Akobo

Despite overall increases in Jonglei, reported access to food failed to increase in Greater Akobo. Half (50%) of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food in October, similar to 41% in September.

In Akobo County, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food decreased considerably, from 53% in September to 31% in October. This is likely, at least in part, explained by a decrease in access to humanitarian assistance, with the proportion of assessed settlements reporting receiving food assistance falling from 65% in September to 40% in October. Since March 2017, reported access to food has fluctuated in Akobo in accordance with the proportion of assessed settlements reporting having

**Figure 4: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food and food assistance in Akobo County, October 2017.**



received food assistance (Figure 4). This suggests that food assistance has played an important role in access to food in Akobo. During FGDs in Akobo Town, IDPs have reported that they struggle to access food from means other than humanitarian assistance. The overall reliance on assistance in Akobo County may, therefore, be partly due to the increase in IDPs since March. Other factors that likely increased reliance on humanitarian assistance may be the delayed rains in June and the spread of fall armyworm, which have both reduced the yields in Akobo according to humanitarian actors.

In Urur, access to food was more stable but remained low at 30% in October, similar to 35% in September. The renewed clashes in the county appear to be disrupting the harvest as 18% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported that the primary reason was crops being destroyed by fighting. A further 18% reported the primary reason to be an unsafe planting environment.

At the same time, access to food assistance

decreased. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting having received food assistance in the past three months fell from 16% in September to 0% in October. Corroborating this, the World Food Programme (WFP) reported no missions in Urur during the three weeks of REACH data collection in October.<sup>5</sup> This suggests that humanitarian assistance was unable to meet the needs in food access created by the conflict in Urur.

Conversely, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food rose overall in Nyirol from 59% in September to 70% in October. This may be partly attributable to the harvest and partly attributable to the scale up of assistance to Nyirol since the outbreak of fighting in April. Some populations in Nyirol may still be facing extreme food insecurity as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) September update has found that 5% of households in Nyirol was in phase 5 humanitarian catastrophe levels of food insecurity in September.<sup>6</sup> In part, these may be IDP populations who have less access to harvest than local communities. Further, according to FGD respondents, high levels of sharing of assistance is another potential factor contributing to poor food consumption outcomes in Nyirol.

### Bor-Duk Corridor (Bor South, Twic East and Duk)

In contrast to Greater Akobo, adequate access to food rose overall in the Bor-Duk corridor, from 24% of assessed settlements in September to 43% in October. However, reported access to food was not equal, being

much higher in Twic East (70% of assessed settlements), than in Bor South (39%) and in Duk (24%).

In Bor South, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food increased slightly from 10% in September to 39% in October. However, flooding continued to disrupt livelihoods. In particular, FGD participants reported that the flooding had spread livestock diseases, corroborated by the fact that 72% of assessed settlements reported an outbreak of livestock disease. Livestock diseases may have led to a subsequent reduction in the proportion of assessed settlements reporting cattle ownership, which fell from 93% in September to 83% in October. For more information on the floods in Bor South see the shelter section of this SO.

In contrast to Bor South, access to food fell in Duk from 50% in September to 24% in October. The decrease may be largely attributable to insecurity disrupting livelihoods and harvests. Cattle raiding was reported in Duk Padiet<sup>7</sup> and 50% of assessed settlements with inadequate access to food cited an unsafe cultivation environment as the primary reason. Correspondingly, the proportion of assessed settlements in Duk reporting cultivation as the primary food source was the lowest in Jonglei (31%).

### Fangak and Ayod

Reported access to food in Fangak and Ayod was relatively high compared to other counties in Jonglei. In Fangak, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate

<sup>5</sup> WFP IRRM Updates, 09 October 2017, 16 October 2017 and 23 October.

<sup>6</sup> IPC, [Current and Projected Acute Food Insecurity](#), September 2017.

<sup>7</sup> UNOCHA South Sudan: [Humanitarian Snapshot](#), October 2017.

access to food remained steady at 64% in both September and October. Conversely, in Ayod the proportion fell slightly from 81% to 69%. This still represents a significant improvement on recent months, as just 3% of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food in August.

This increase in Ayod is likely the result of sustained and large-scale humanitarian assistance provided by humanitarian partners. In Fangak too, the reportedly higher access to food appears to be driven primarily by humanitarian assistance rather than own production. In Fangak, all assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food cited food assistance as their main food source. Similar trends were observed in Ayod, with 83% of settlements reporting adequate access to food citing food assistance as their main food source. This matches with 63% of settlements in the two counties reporting to have received food assistance in last three months.

### Coping Strategies

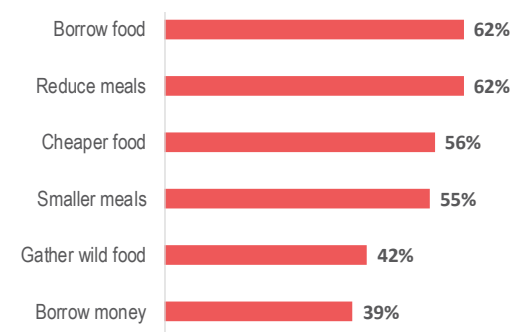
Indicative of continued food shortages, short-term coping strategies were prevalent across Jonglei (Figure 5). The proportion of assessed settlements reporting borrowing food, typically from neighbours and relatives, rose from 51% of assessed settlements in September to 62% in October. Borrowing money, again typically from friends and relatives, was also common, reported by 39% of assessed settlements in October. The prevalence of these strategies shows the importance of social networks throughout Jonglei. However, borrowing food

may also suggest a reliance on humanitarian assistance in many cases: FGD participants from Nyirol, Ayod and Uror explained that this coping strategy is often dependent on food assistance, as relatives in different settlements share food from distributions.

Consumption-based coping strategies to reduce food intake were also common. Sixty-two percent (62%) of assessed settlements reported reducing the number of meals, while 56% reported eating less expensive food and 55% reported eating smaller meals. Less expensive food typically refers to foods held to have less nutrition, such as red sorghum. These strategies suggest that many households still struggled to access sufficient food despite the harvest season.

In the parts of Jonglei affected by cattle raiding and conflict, more long-term and irreversible coping strategies were also common. In Duk, selling livestock was extremely common, reported by 94% assessed settlements, compared to 28% in Jonglei overall. FGD

**Figure 5: Coping strategies by proportion of assessed settlements, October 2017.**



participants reported that selling livestock was a key means of purchasing food as prices rose and KIs reported that cattle are seen as more risky assets due to higher rates of cattle raids, therefore households exchange them for cash or for a wife. However, households in Duk may be depleting future food sources by over relying on this strategy, as their herds' ability to reproduce is reduced. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting cattle ownership fell in Duk from 100% in September to 88% in October.

Furthermore, in the conflict-affected region of Greater Akobo, the extremely severe coping strategies of skipping meals for entire days was reported by 40% of assessed settlements. This suggests serious food shortages and may negatively affect the health of residents.

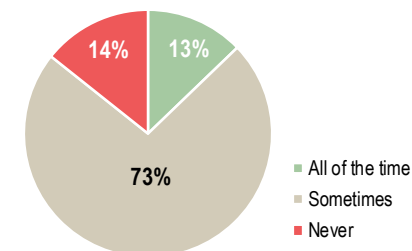
**The prevalence of long-term, irreversible coping strategies is likely eroding resilience and increasing vulnerability to future shocks in Duk and Greater Akobo.**

### Protection

Perceptions of insecurity remained high in Jonglei, with only 13% of assessed settlements reporting that residents felt safe all the time in October, similar to 10% in September (Figure 6). FGD participants reported that this was likely attributable to the high threat of cattle raids and intercommunal conflict across Jonglei.

Reflective of the nature of the violence, killing or injuring by perpetrators from outside the community was the primary protection concern in October for men, reported by 62%

**Figure 6: Perceptions of security by proportion of assessed settlements, October 2017.**



of assessed settlements, and for women, reported by 38%. This is similar to September (63% and 36% respectively).

For children, abduction was the most frequently reported protection concern for both girls and boys, reported by 32% and 33% of assessed settlements, respectively. FGD respondents reported that children are often abducted during cattle raids, suggesting the perceived threat of abduction may be linked with high rates of cattle raiding.

Against this backdrop of high rates of violence, incidents of localised conflict remained high in October, with 40% of assessed settlements reporting violent conflict in their settlements, similar to 33% in September. Most strikingly, the proportion rose in Uror, from 84% to 100%. This may be associated with the escalation of conflict between armed actors in and around Waat in neighbouring Nyirol in October.<sup>8</sup>

The conflict and associated displacement in Greater Akobo appears to be increasing protection concerns for vulnerable groups as reported concerns of sexual violence and family separation were the highest in Jonglei.

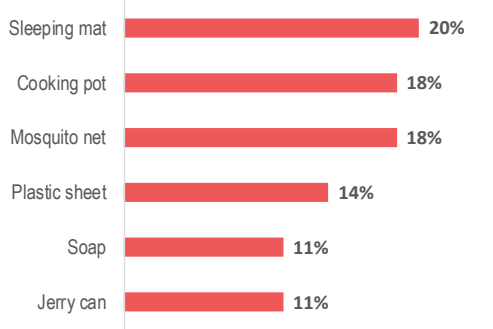
Across the three counties, 36% of assessed settlements in October reported sexual violence to be the most pressing protection concern for women, a slight decrease from 47% in September. This is still much higher than the overall proportion for Jonglei, which was 16% in October.

Moreover, the proportion of settlements reporting unaccompanied children in Greater Akobo was 80% in October, similar to 74% in October. This is much higher than the statewide total of 44% of assessed settlements. KIs explained that unaccompanied children were extremely rare in pre-crisis rural areas as relatives and friends would typically take care of orphans. The reported increase, therefore, highlights the extent of disruption the conflict and associated displacement is bringing to childcare in Greater Akobo.

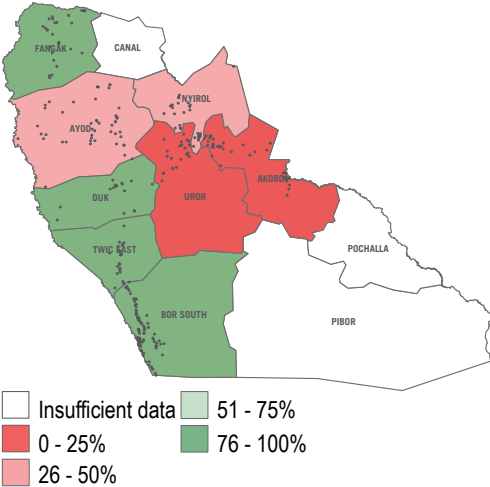
### Shelter and NFI (Non-Food Items)

Insecurity in Jonglei has forced many households to suddenly flee, without shelter or essential non-food items (NFIs). The most

**Figure 7: Primary NFI need for IDPs by proportion of assessed settlements, October 2017.**



**Map 4: Percentage of assessed settlements reporting access to healthcare, October 2017**



common primary NFI need for IDPs was sleeping mats, reported by 20% of assessed settlements in October. This was followed by mosquito nets and cooking pots, reported by 18% each (Figure 7).

Moreover, in Ayod, Nyirol and Uror, where IDPs are reportedly stranded in remote locations, only 18% of assessed settlements in which IDPs were present reported that none of those IDPs was sleeping in the open in October. For more details see the shelter section of the September Situation Overview.<sup>9</sup>

In Bor South heavy flooding created shelter needs. In October, 77% of assessed settlements reported severe flooding, a slight decrease from 88% in September. FGD participants from settlements such as Jalle and Achiengdiir reported that this flooding was much more severe than in previous years.

The FGD participants further reported that residents were reportedly forced to sleep on islands in the Nile, or seek shelter in Bor Town. In most settlements, FGD participants reported that most residents had returned by mid November due to fears of their shelters being destroyed by members of other communities.

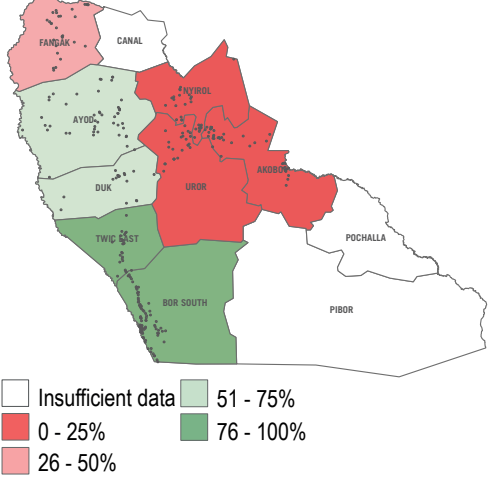
### Health and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene)

Given the continued need for mosquito nets, inadequate shelter conditions and higher rainfall, cases of malaria remained high in Jonglei in October. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of assessed settlements reported Malaria to be the leading cause of death, reaching 59% in both Nyirol and Bor South, where shelter needs were high due to conflict-related displacement and flooding.

The high rates of malaria are particularly concerning when coupled with restricted access to healthcare. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to healthcare fell slightly from 76% in September to 66% in October. The most common primary reason reported by settlements without access was a lack of staff, reported by 36% of assessed settlements.

As seen in previous months, access to healthcare was lowest in the conflict-affected regions of Ayod and Greater Akobo (Map 4). In Greater Akobo in particular, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting access to healthcare fell, from 38% in September to 22% in October, as conflict re-erupted in the region. This represents a serious reduction

**Map 5: Percentage of assessed settlements reporting access to education, October 2017**



from 97% in February before the outbreak of conflict in the region.

In Fangak, waterborne diseases were a serious health concern. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting waterborne diseases as the main cause of death was 46%, the highest in Jonglei by 25 percentage points. Cases of cholera were confirmed in New Fangak, though the disease appears to have been contained.<sup>10</sup>

The prevalence of waterborne diseases is likely due to pressing WASH needs. Half of all assessed settlements (50%) in Fangak reported their main water source to be swamps or ponds, the highest proportion in Jonglei. Moreover, 86% of assessed settlements reported that none of the residents was using latrines, well above 59% for Jonglei overall, indicating high WASH needs in the county.

9 REACH South Sudan, Situation Overview, September, 2017.  
10 Republic of South Sudan, [Cholera Situation and Response Updates](#), October 2017.

## Education

Similar to healthcare, the presence of education services remained lowest in the conflict-affected region of Greater Akobo (Map 5). Overall, the proportion of assessed settlements in Jonglei reporting access to education services was low but stable in October at 52%, similar to 60% in September. Conversely, only 12% of assessed settlements in Greater Akobo reported access to education, compared to 21% in September. The low proportion is a considerable decrease from 91% in January.

Overall attendance rates remained similar to previous months, with clear gender disparities. The proportion of settlements with access to education reporting that the majority of boys attended school regularly was 59%, similar to 54% in September. For girls, the proportion was much lower at 9%, similar to 6% in September. Reflective of the strained resources throughout Jonglei, fees were the most common primary reason for non-attendance, reported for boys by 49% of assessed settlements with access to education, and by 66% for girls. For more details on barriers to education, see the September Jonglei Situation Overview.<sup>11</sup>

## Conclusion

In October, the slight improvements to access to food reported in September were sustained in most counties due to the ongoing harvest. However, food insecurity increased for vulnerable populations. In contrast, the slight increase in protection and access to services in September were reversed as conflict re-

errupted in Greater Akobo.

Humanitarian needs continued to be the most pressing in Ayod and Greater Akobo, where access to education and healthcare were the lowest. Poor roads and insecurity en route left many IDPs stranded in remote locations throughout the region. Faced with a lack of basic services and shelter, many IDPs are vulnerable to malnutrition and malaria.

However, large-scale conflict was not the only driver of humanitarian needs in Jonglei. In Duk, intercommunal violence limited access to food, while in Fangak, a lack of latrines and difficulty accessing safe drinking water increased the risk of waterborne diseases.

With food stocks expected to deplete and conflict expected to continue in the upcoming dry season, it seems likely that humanitarian needs will continue to increase in Jonglei in the coming months.

## About REACH

REACH facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. All REACH activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms.

For more information, you can write to our in-country office: [southsudan@reach-initiative.org](mailto:southsudan@reach-initiative.org) or to our global office: [geneva@reach-initiative.org](mailto:geneva@reach-initiative.org).

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<sup>11</sup> REACH South Sudan, Situation Overview, September, 2017.