

Situation Overview: Jonglei State, South Sudan

April 2017

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

Introduction

Displacement and humanitarian needs continued to rise within Jonglei, as conflict between armed groups and inter-communal conflicts, which became progressively worse, adversely impacted populations' capacity to meet their primary needs and access basic services. Food security continued to deteriorate in April, as access to food for IDPs and non-displaced populations has reached the lowest recorded levels since REACH data collection began.

REACH has been conducting an assessment of hard-to-reach areas in South Sudan since April 2016, to inform the response of humanitarian actors working outside of formal settlement sites. This settlement data is collected across the Greater Upper Nile region on a monthly basis. REACH interviewed 759 Key Informants (KIs) displaced from 274 settlements in eight of the 11 counties in Jonglei State, between 10 and 28 April. Due to conflict in Uror and Nyirol, and the evacuation of humanitarian staff from Greater Akobo (Uror, Nyirol and Akobo), data collection in Akobo Town was temporarily suspended between 18 and 21 April.

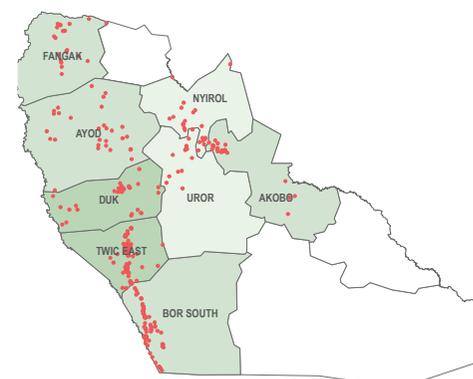
To ensure a current understanding of dynamics of humanitarian conditions in settlements from which displacement occurred, new arrivals (17%) are specifically targeted during the data collection phase. The remaining KIs (83%)

reported to be in regular contact with someone living in the assessed settlement within the last month.

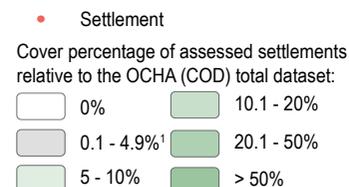
In April, KI interviews were triangulated with 10 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). These included: a) four FGDs conducted with new arrivals displaced from Nyirol and Uror Counties in Akobo Town and Bor PoC b) two FGDs with new arrivals and those in contact with populations in Fangak c) three FGDs with new arrivals from Torit, Magwi and Juba in Bor PoC d) one FGD with refugees returning from Uganda to Mingkaman Informal Settlement. FGDs also involved a participatory mapping exercise to understand the routes that new arrivals took in coming to their respective arrival destinations. Livelihoods (2) FGDs were also conducted with KIs from Twic East, in Mingkaman, as well as with new arrivals from Uror in Akobo Town.

REACH also conducted a rapid needs assessment across Duk County, between 20 and 22 April 2017. The assessment involved: 1) an IPC survey assessing 100 households (HHs) 2) four FGDs on displacement with IDPs in Duk Padiet from Ayod, Fangak and Uror in Jonglei, and Bentiu in Unity State 3) one FGD on displacement with IDPs and one with the local community in Pajut 4) one FGD with the local community on livelihood activities and 5) two FGDs with returnees from outside Jonglei in Payuel and Poktap respectively. All the data

Map 1: REACH assessment coverage of Jonglei State, April 2017



Assessed settlements



collected in Duk has also been included in the triangulation of information.

This Situation Overview provides an update to key findings from the March Situation Overview for Jonglei State.¹ The first section of this overview analyses displacement in Jonglei State in April, with the second section evaluating access to food and other basic services for both IDPs and non-displaced communities.

Population Movement and Displacement

In April 2017, incidents of conflict increased along common political faultlines as political divisions between SPLA-controlled areas to the west in the surrounding areas of Bor, SPLA-IO-controlled areas to the east, and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area in the Murle and Anuyak dominated southeast have intensified. Fighting broke out between armed actors in Greater Akobo, displacing at least 100,000 people from numerous locations – including Yuai, Waat and Walgak to Kaikuiny, Wei-kol and Akobo Town amongst others remote locations.² Additionally, increased localised inter-communal fighting and cattle raiding have been reported close to Nanam in Pibor and in Akobo East close to Gheni in April, causing further displacement from and tensions within these locations. The accumulation of armed and intercommunal clashes across the state have caused a weakening in security conditions in comparison to March.

Reflective of the decrease in security conditions in the Jonglei, displacement continued to rise during April. Of the 99% of settlements assessed indicating that at least some of their local community population had been displaced, 68% reported a population decrease of 50% or more, an increase

¹ Due to a change in methodology from community- to settlement-level analysis, the numbers in this report are not directly comparable with those of Situation Overviews from pre-December 2016. REACH used to aggregate and analyse data at the community, or sub-clan, level. As of December 2016, data is analysed at the settlement, or village, level.

² OCHA South Sudan: Humanitarian Snapshot, April 2017.

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 receive 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 Bentiu Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites, Bor Town, Akobo Town, as well as in Nyal, throughout April 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.

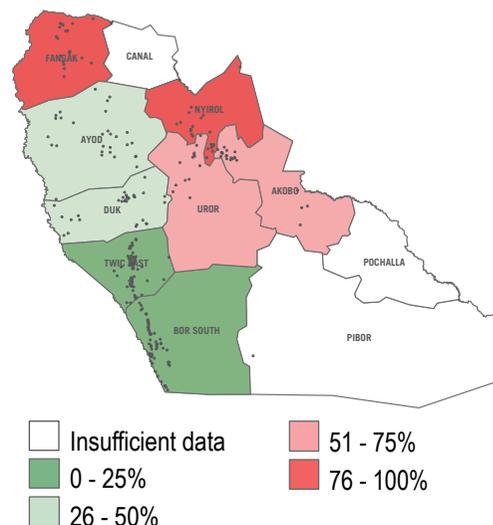
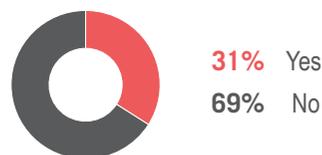
After data collection was completed, all data was examined at the settlement level, and settlements were assigned the modal response. When no consensus could be found for a settlement, that settlement was not included in reporting. Descriptive statistics and geospatial analysis were then used to analyse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

It must be noted that this represents a **change in methodology as of December 2016**, as REACH previously analysed data at the community level. Meaning that **this report is not directly comparable with Situation Overviews from before December 2016**.

from 61% indicated in March. De-population remained highest across Western Jonglei (Bor South, Duk and Twic East), reported in 87% of assessed settlements compared to 79% in March. De-population followed a similar trend in Greater Akobo (Uror, Nyirol and Akobo), as 56% of assessed settlements reported de-population, an increase from the 34% indicated in March. This increase in de-population is most likely because of lack of access to food and increased fighting across state.

As high levels of displacement persists, the overall number of settlements assessed reporting the presence of IDPs in their area was similar in April (31%) to March (30%), as illustrated in Graph 1. Thirty-three percent of assessed settlements reported that IDPs arrived between March and April, with the majority of IDPs arriving during April (81%). An increase in the presence of IDPs can be seen in Fangak, Duk and Bor-South. As illustrated in Map 2, with 76% of assessed settlements in Fangak reported the presence of IDPs, similar to 70% in March, which may be attributed to the food shortages and clashes in Ayod during March.³ In Bor South, which had not reported any IDPs in March, indicated that 8% of assessed settlements hosted IDPs in April. In Duk, 34% assessed settlement reported IDPs

Graph 1: Percentage of settlements assessed hosting IDPs, April 2017



Map 2: Percentage of settlements reporting presence of IDPs, April 2017

in April as compared to March.

Nyirol, Uror and Akobo continued to host the largest populations of IDPs in Jonglei, as illustrated on Map 2. Due to the ongoing conflict in Greater Akobo, it is anticipated that in May more IDPs possibly will be reported in these counties, as FGDs have also indicated that many IDPs are currently living in bushes or remote areas due to insecurity.

Overall, the findings suggest that recent clashes in Greater Akobo may have led to increased displacement within Jonglei. Akobo Town also continued to serve as destination for IDPs displaced by recent fighting.

The following sections provide a more detailed overview of displacement to, within and from Jonglei. However, it is likely that recorded movement does not reflect the full extent of

ongoing displacement in Jonglei in April.

Displacement to Jonglei

New arrivals from the Equatorias to Bor

In March, Bor Town continued to receive IDPs displaced from the Equatorias, in particular from Torit, Magwi, Juba and Yei. Those returning from the Equatorias are originally from Jonglei, and were residing in key towns in the Equatorias since the crisis in 2013.

Following attacks against civilians in Pajok, Magwi County in early April, forcing at least 7,000 people to flee to Uganda and displacing a further 20,000 people to nearby villages or bushes, IDPs from Magwi arrived to Bor Town.⁴ IDPs used government facilitated vehicles between Magwi and Juba and then travelled to Bor either by commercial vehicle or by boat. This was similar for IDPs from Juba.

Bor Town served as a favourable destination as IDPs perceived it to be safer and provide better access to basic services. Those leaving Juba also cited insecurity and the price and access to food as a primary concern of leaving Juba. FGD participants indicated that there is a further need for assistance in food, provision of shelter as well as access to health and education facilities in Bor.

In April, IDPs continued to arrive from Yei to Bor Town, seeking better basic services, security and better access to food. For more information on displacement from Yei to Bor, please refer to the October and January Situation Overviews.⁵

Overall, in addition to the already steady

3 REACH: Situation Overview Jonglei State, March 2017.

4 OCHA South Sudan: Humanitarian Bulletin 6, 20 April 2017.

5 REACH: Situation Overview Jonglei State, October 2016 and January 2017.

movement of populations from Yei to Bor, increasing movements from parts of Eastern Equatoria to Bor need to be further monitored.

Displacement within Jonglei

Displacement from Fangak and Uror to Bor

In April, due to the ongoing conflict in parts of Greater Akobo since February, and food scarcity in Fangak, new arrivals from Uror and Fangak were seen in Bor. In a FGD new arrivals from Greater Akobo indicated that fighting in Yuai, Pieri and Motot was the main reason for their displacement. After being forced to leave their homes and living in bushes, IDPs were suffering due to a lack of access to food and fearing intercommunal attacks and child abductions.

It took IDPs from Uror two days and from Nyirol five days to travel to Bor PoC. The journey was started by foot on the Lou-Nuer side but then continued by car from the Pajut and Padiet roads, which cost on average 3800 SSP. The road taken to Bor was described as challenging, due to the language differences as well as ongoing security threats and the lack of drinking water. As the offensives still continued at the end of April in Greater Akobo, further displacement to Bor may be expected during the month of May.

REACH interviewed new arrivals from Fangak and those in recent contact with relatives from there, as movement was seen toward Bor. FGD participants indicated that those who left Fangak are doing so due to lack of access to food as flooding destroyed crops last year and

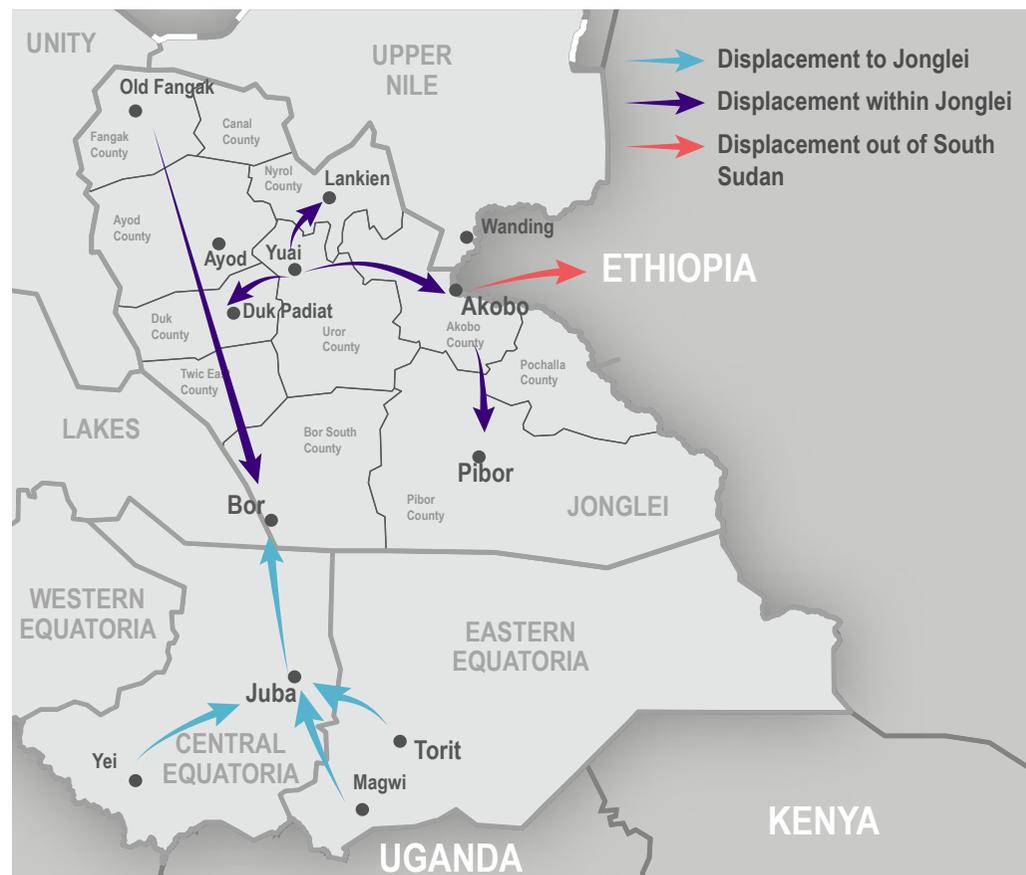
communities don't have any seeds to cultivate. With an influx of IDPs to Fangak from Malakal and Tonga in Upper Nile State, there is also additional strain on food and educational resources in the state, such that people who are staying are moving to areas where humanitarian assistance is being provided. The journey to Bor took approximately nine days, and FGD participants raised concerns about not having sufficient food on the road as well as the possible spread of cholera, given the rise in incidences of cholera along the Bor South-Fangak Corridor.

Displacement to Duk

A REACH assessment conducted in Duk during April found that, IDPs arrived in Duk from Uror, Ayod, Nyirol and Fangak of Jonglei State and Rubkona in Unity State. Ongoing fighting, access to food and a lack of humanitarian services in their areas of origin were the primary reasons provided for fleeing. While travelling to Duk, IDPs reported that they feared being attacked by armed groups and cattle raiders but chose to come to Duk as humanitarians are known to be present and it is perceived as relatively safe.⁶

Local authorities also reported that there has been a considerable number of local community returns between January and April 2017, estimated at 5,183 HHs (31,497 individuals). Reportedly most returnees left refugee settlements in Uganda and Kenya due to deteriorating camp conditions, whilst others returned from Mingkaman Informal Settlement and Bor Town, leaving due to rising food costs.⁷

The influx of IDPs and returnees places further



Map 3: Displacement Overview Jonglei State, April 2017

pressure on food resources, as assessed settlements reported the need to employ coping strategies during April as IDPs and returnees are mostly reliant on the local community for food.

There is a need to better track IDPs and returnees in Duk for improved humanitarian response, especially given the urgent need for increasing provision of emergency food assistance to IDPs, returnees and local communities alike.

Displacement in and from Greater Akobo

As mentioned previously, renewed clashes in several areas including Waat and Walgak has displaced 100, 000 people to various locations such as Akobo Town, Lankien, Kuikuiny, Weikol and other inaccessible locations.⁸

In addition to discussions with IDPs from Uror displaced to Bor, REACH also conducted FGDs with new arrivals from Greater Akobo in Akobo Town, following the offensives in Waat. Similar to previous months, KIs reported that they

⁶ REACH: Draft Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment, Duk County, Jonglei, South Sudan April, 2017.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ OCHA South Sudan: Humanitarian Snapshot, April 2017.

predominantly travelled by foot to Akobo, while small numbers of people used commercial vehicles due to high costs of traveling by vehicle.

KIs and FGD participants indicated that they used the road from Yuai through Mwot Tot, Waat, Walgak, Kaikuiny, and then reaching Akobo East. This route as well as additional reports of people going to Lankien in Nyirol may account for the large presence of IDPs hosted in Nyirol, as seen in Map 2.

Movement to Akobo Town was described as

Returned South Sudanese refugees in Mingkaman Informal Settlement

In April, following the trend seen in February and March, **REACH teams in Mingkaman Informal Settlement in Lakes State, continued to witness the arrival of South Sudanese refugees returning from refugee settlements in Uganda.** The returning populations, who are originally from Jonglei, had left Ayilo, settlement camps due to worsening settlement conditions and lack of access to food. FGD participants indicated that they received government-facilitated escort for part of their journey, whilst moving from Nimule to Juba. Returnees who returned to Mingkaman with expectations of a more secure environment and better access to basic services, **continued to cite access to food, improved shelter and NFIs as their most immediate needs.**

necessary due to the anticipation of further attacks as well as food and water shortages especially in transit destinations like Buong and Kuikuiny.

Akobo Town is thus a favourable destination for IDPs seeking food security, as it has a functioning market and monthly GFDs. It is also perceived to be safer, providing healthcare facilities and an exit port to Ethiopia should it be necessary. IDPs in Akobo have expressed intentions to stay in Akobo should they have access to food and NFIs as going to Ethiopia as is more costly for families.

Overall, this influx of IDPs in Akobo, has placed additional pressures on resources such as food, healthcare and the provision of water supply. Scaling up of assistance in terms of food, NFIs and healthcare would be essential for the humanitarian response.

Displacement to and within Pibor

Due to intercommunal clashes and cattle raiding, which took place in Akobo East at the start of April, the local level peace agreement, in place since September 2016, between the community of Akobo East and the community of Lekuangle was put under pressure. **IDPs who arrived in Akobo Town on 1 March 2017, are in need of assistance due to the ongoing drought as well as food shortages in Pibor County, were forced to return to Pibor due to insecurity.**

Reports of cattle raiding in Nanam has continued to be a source of intercommunal conflict in April, further contributing to displacement within

Pibor. As insecurity persists in Pibor, food provision should continue to be a priority for humanitarian actors.

Displacement out of South Sudan

REACH Port Monitoring in Akobo Town, which tracks movement of South Sudanese heading to and returning from Ethiopian refugee camps in Gambella, found that displacement from Jonglei to neighbouring Ethiopia has increased in April.⁹ There was a large increase in the net outflows of South Sudanese permanently leaving the country to Ethiopia, rising from an average of 62 individuals per day in March to an average of 97 individuals per day in April, as illustrated in Graph 2.¹⁰

The main reasons provided by individuals who have decided to permanently leave for Ethiopia was the conflict and a lack of access to food. Continued outflows are likely, if humanitarian assistance is not scaled up to accommodate for the continued influx of IDPs into Akobo Town.

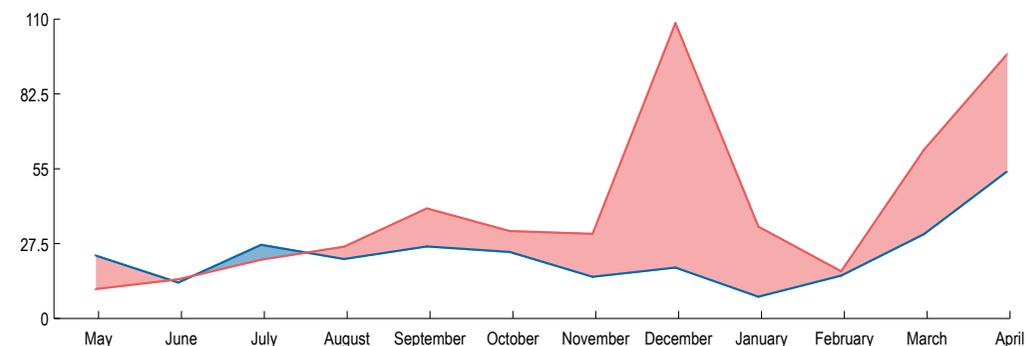
Net inflows from Ethiopia to Akobo Town increased from an average of 31 individuals per day to an average of 53 individuals per day during April. Returnees have cited the need for ration cards as well as needing to be closer to family as primary reasons for returning to Akobo Town. In addition, KIs have cited the distance between the border crossings and the refugee camps and inadequate shelter provision in refugee camps amongst the reasons for returning to Akobo Town.

Situation in Assessed Communities

Food Security and Livelihoods

Access to Food

As a result of an escalation of armed clashes as well as the progression of the lean season **access to adequate amounts of food was at only 31% in settlements assessed in April, compared to 35% in March. This represents the lowest value recorded by REACH to date and is indicative of declining food access**



Graph 2: Average daily movement trends of people permanently leaving for Ethiopia (red) and people permanently returning (blue) via Akobo Town; May 2016 to April 2017.¹¹

9 REACH: South Sudan Displacement Crisis – Akobo Port Monitoring, April 2017.

10 Ibid.

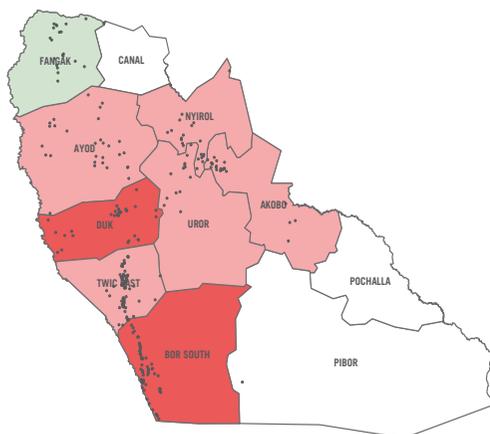
11 Ibid.

levels in Jonglei since January when assessed settlements reported access to food at 40%.

Bor South - Duk Corridor

Across the state, food access was particularly low in Duk, Twic East and Bor South. **In Duk, only 10% of assessed settlements reported sufficient access to food, the worst county in terms of reported access to food in the assessed areas of South Sudan.** The REACH assessment in Duk found that, overall **82% of HHs assessed had poor food consumption scores, indicative of severe food consumption gaps of the vast majority of the population.**¹² In terms of food quantity, measured through the **Household Hunger Scale (HHS)**, findings from the IPC survey suggest that **16% of HHs assessed were classified as “severe”**, characterized by food deprivation and actual hunger, whilst the majority of HHs assessed (74%) falls within the category of a “moderate” HHS.¹³ For more information on the situation in Duk, please refer to the forthcoming REACH Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment in Duk.¹⁴

As illustrated in Graph 3, Duk, Twic East and Bor South, **consistently reported the lowest food access levels in Jonglei since January.** Reflective of this region being particularly prone to cattle raids and child abductions, unsafe planting environments were cited as top reason for a lack of food access, reported by an average of 69% of assessed settlements in April, as had been the case in previous months. **Localised insecurity has translated into very low cultivation levels over time**, with only



Map 4: Percentage of assessed settlements reporting access to adequate amounts of food, April 2017

10% of assessed settlements citing cultivation as main source of food in April. Additionally, according to FGD respondents **flooding in parts of these counties had destroyed crops during the previous planting season**, having resulted in low harvest levels.

Food insecurity in the region is further exacerbated by persistently low access to food assistance, with only 14% of settlements reporting they had received assistance in the past 3 months. Consequently, only 6% of settlements assessed in Duk, 13% in Bor South and 18% in Twic East relied on NGO assistance as main food source in April. Given a lack in alternative food sources, 44% of assessed settlements in Duk reported fishing as primary food source, with fish on the Duk mainland originating from the Duk islands on the Nile.

In Twic East, foraging, reported by 35% of assessed settlements served as primary food source whilst in Bor South, where populations are in closer proximity to the Bor market, purchase constituted the main food source in April, although purchase levels remained low at 33% of assessed settlements.

Overall, these findings suggest that the combination of low cultivation levels, persistent localised insecurity and low access to aid have led to high food needs in the area. **An up-scale in food assistance, in particular in worst-affected Duk, is urgently recommended** before food further anticipated deterioration during the peak of the lean season.

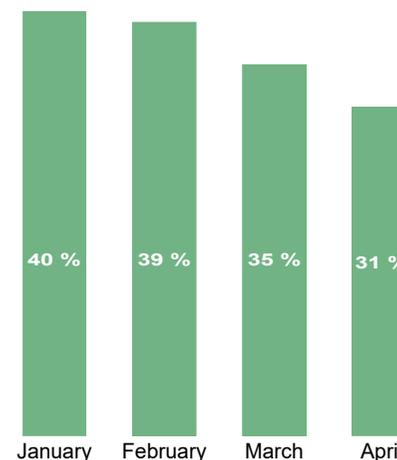
Ayod and Fangak

With only 27% of assessed settlements reporting adequate food access, which is similar to March (28%), **Ayod reported the third lowest food access levels in Jonglei in April.** In Fangak, food access has improved from 25% in March to 57% in April, continuing a pattern of fluctuating access levels since January that may be related to the bi-monthly aidrop cycles.

Indicative of relatively high conflict levels between armed actors in Ayod in March, **38% of assessed settlements in Ayod attributed insufficient food access to unsafe planting environments, whilst 23% cited that crops had been destroyed by fighting.** In Fangak, the destruction of crops by floods has consistently been cited as main driver for a lack of food access in previous months,

and has been reported by 67% of settlements assessed, as well as by new arrivals from Fangak interviewed through FGD in Bor PoC in April. Despite this, cultivation was cited as the main food source of assessed settlements in Fangak (57%), whilst in Ayod 37% of assessed settlements reported foraging as the main food source, indicative of the precarious food security situation in the county.

Access to food distributions appears to have slightly improved in Ayod in recent months, from 18% in January to 31% in April. However, it remained lower than in Fangak, where 57% of settlements assessed in April reported receiving food distributions in the previous three months, which may explain the higher food access levels in comparison to Ayod. **Given the overall very poor food security levels in Ayod, it is highly likely that without**



Graph 3: Percentage of assessed settlements reporting access to adequate amounts of food, January - April 2017

¹² REACH: Draft Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment, Duk County, Jonglei, South Sudan April, 2017.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

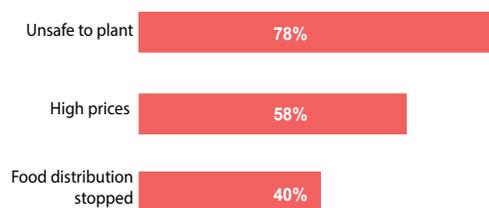
substantial humanitarian assistance, the already precarious food security situation will continue to deteriorate in the coming months.

Akobo, Nyirol and Uror (Greater Akobo)

Although food access levels in Greater Akobo remained above state-average in April, food access appears to be in rapid decline. **In January, prior to the start of large-scale clashes, an average of 80% of assessed settlements reported sufficient food access, which dropped to 44% at the peak of the conflict in April.** The largest relative decline between March and April was reported in Akobo County, from 71% of assessed settlement reporting food access to only 35%. Despite half of settlements assessed in Uror County reporting sufficient food access in April, qualitative findings from FGDs with new arrivals originating from different settlements in Uror suggest rapidly increasing food needs for populations remaining in Uror.

Reflective of these trends, **the top reported reasons for a lack of access to food in Greater Akobo were conflict-related**, with 44% of assessed settlements citing the destruction

Graph 4: Top three reported reasons for inadequate access to food, April 2017¹⁵



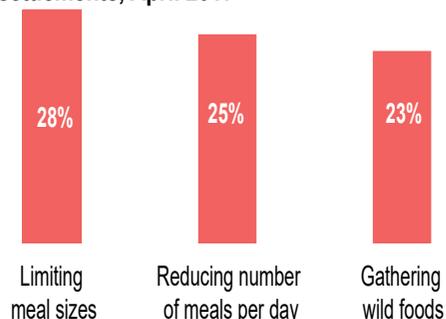
of crops by fighting and 29% reporting it had been unsafe to cultivate. Further, likely as a result of the relocation of humanitarian actors from the area in mid-April, **there was a sharp drop in reported access to food distributions from 65% of assessed settlements in March to 25% in April.** This has resulted in a lower proportion of settlements, 33% in April compared to 59% in March, reporting they relied on NGO assistance as main food source. Consequently, settlements increasingly relied on alternative food sources, such as family/friends, bartering and cultivation where crops remained unaffected by conflict.

Finally, **increased pressure on local communities due to large-scale internal displacement**, in particular into Akobo County, further decreased food access in April, with many new arrivals reporting they were reliant on local community members in their arrivals and transit locations sharing food. These findings indicate an **urgent need to attempt to resume emergency food assistance provision to meet displaced and local community members' rising food needs in the three counties.** In light of restricted humanitarian access to the area, Rapid Response Missions may be one of the few viable means of delivery. Whilst food assistance in IDP arrival destinations such as Akobo, Kaikuiny and Lankien is urgently needed, **food actors should equally focus on populations seeking protection in remote locations, in particular around Yuai.**

Coping Strategies

The complex combination of a reduced ability to cultivate, declining levels of access to humanitarian assistance and seasonally lower access to customary alternative food sources in the lean season, has contributed to a situation of rising food insecurity across much of Jonglei. **Half of settlements assessed reported hunger/malnutrition as a cause of death in April.** Further, **56% of assessed settlements in April reported eating only one meal per day** (46% in March), with the largest increases in reduced consumption reported in Duk, Bor South, Ayod, Akobo and Nyirol. As in March, limiting the size of meals (28% of assessed settlements), reducing the number of meals eaten per day (reported by 25%), and gathering wild foods (23%) were some of the most commonly used consumption-related coping strategies in April. **Qualitative FGD findings from Duk and Uror suggest that reliance on wild foods exceed lean season norms**, with KIs reporting reliance on certain types of wild vegetables (Wor and Keye), which are only consumed in emergency times when no other

Graph 5: Coping strategies used in assessed settlements, April 2017



food sources exist. KIs also highlighted that these seasonal wild foods are running out.

Livelihoods

Despite 96% of settlements assessed reporting the availability of land in April, this has not translated into high levels of agricultural activities. **Agricultural inputs were available in only 40% of assessed settlements, with 45% reporting agricultural inputs had been stolen, looted or abandoned.** Similarly, only 40% of assessed settlements reported subsistence farming as the primary livelihood activity, and 20% reported growing crops to sell. As we are currently entering the planting season, **ongoing insecurity in the state is reducing the capacity to cultivate, which will likely result in a worsening long term trajectory of Jonglei state in terms of food security.**

Low availability of daily labour further restricted populations' income earning opportunities and related access to food. Whilst market access remained relatively high in April (73% of assessed settlements), **only 16% of settlements reported relying on purchase as food source.** Given the low incomes as well as reportedly increased prices of common goods such as sorghum, oil and sugar in the majority of settlements in April, buying food from the market may not be sustainable due to the low purchasing power of individuals.

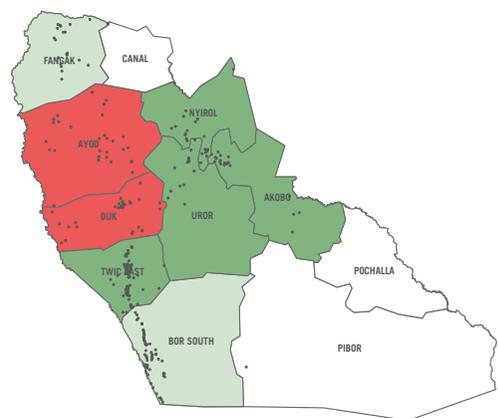
In response to these negative livelihood trends, numerous coping strategies aiming at improving resource capacity were reported by assessed settlements, such as buying less

¹⁵ Rank three reasons adequate food is not available

expensive food (31%) and borrowing money (24%). **The sale of cattle to meet immediate household needs was reported by 23% of assessed settlements in April, compared to 15% in March**, with the largest increases in reported sales in areas of deteriorating food security such as Duk, Bor South, Ayod and Akobo. Selling of livestock not only depletes populations' asset bases but also reduces access to critical food sources, such as dairy and protein.

WASH and Health

Low healthcare access, coupled with poor hygiene and sanitation conditions, as well as a lack of access to safe water, have resulted in an ongoing cholera outbreak. In April, new cases were confirmed in Duk, Ayod

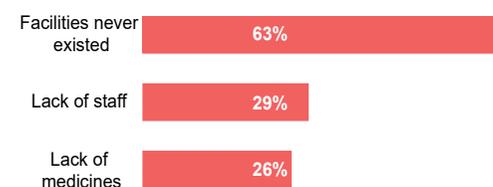


Map 5: Percentage of assessed settlements reporting access to healthcare, April 2017

and Fangak, demonstrating active transmission of the disease in these counties. With the exception of Twic East which remained on cholera alert, all counties in Jonglei along the Nile have at some point been affected since the initial outbreak in June 2016, with a total cumulative caseload of 1,239 as of April 28.¹⁶

Recent spikes in reported cases were associated with an increase of suspected cases in cattle camps, located along swampy areas of the Nile to which pastoralist communities had increasingly moved to towards the end of the dry season as pastures and seasonal water sources had dried up.¹⁷ Given the common lack of health facilities in these remote locations, exposing populations to an increased risk of mortality from cholera. Although mobile teams were able to respond to outbreaks in camps such as Tar (Ayod) and on the mainland in Duk and Fangak¹⁸, uninterrupted sustained transmission continues to pose concerns as timely delivery of prevention and treatment activities remain challenging due to accessibility of locations during the rainy season. **There is a need to urgently pre-position supplies and response efforts in anticipated cholera hotspots before the heavier rains are due in May/June.**

Graph 6: Top three reported reasons for inadequate health access, April 2017



Given the rising need for health facilities across the state, access to health facilities was reported by 69% of assessed settlements in April, with overall access levels lowest along the Bor South-Fangak corridor, which had also been the case in previous months. Across the state, the top reported reason for a lack of healthcare was that health facilities never existed in the first place (63%), followed by a lack of staff (29%) and drugs (26%). **In conflict-affected Nyirol County, 50% of settlements assessed reported the destruction of health facilities as top reason restricting healthcare access.** Further, a NGO source reported that since the escalation of conflict in Greater Akobo, attendance to its hospital in Lankien, Nyirol County had dropped to 40% capacity due to the majority of women and children having fled. Similarly, all settlements assessed in Akobo, which reported a lack of access to health facilities, cited that this was due to insecurity. In addition, according to humanitarian actors, large parts of displaced populations in Greater Akobo were unable to reach existing health facilities in April, reportedly attributable to looting of facilities and relocation of humanitarian staff. Given that displacement is likely to remain fluid, **there is an urgent need to prioritize rapid response missions according to population movements**, in particular around locations such as Karam, Padol, Pieri, Nyambor and Buong where according to humanitarian actors people remain without access to essential services.

In preventing the spread of diseases such as

cholera, populations need access to clean water sources. Eighty-six per cent of assessed settlements reported access to safe drinking water in April (usually from a borehole), with a similar proportion (85%) reported in March. In April, assessed settlements in Duk (73%), Fangak (66%) and Ayod (58%) reported the lowest levels of access to safe drinking water and newly arrived FGD participants in Bor PoC and Akobo Town highlighted water shortages posed challenges for displaced populations moving through bush terrain. Further, KIs also stated that armed groups were reportedly blocking access to boreholes in some areas of Uror affected by conflict. Whilst ensuring clean water access for populations on the move is likely to remain challenging, **the provision of portable water filter systems** such as LIFESTRAW or LIFESAVER Cubes¹⁹ through **aidrops over locations where populations remain otherwise unreachable**, could be an alternative for populations with access to rivers or other natural water sources.

Sanitation conditions have continued to worsen across Jonglei as latrine usage remained extremely low in April, with 77% of settlements reporting that none of the population in their village was using latrines. In April, along the Bor South-Fangak Corridor this accounted for 88% of assessed settlements. This negative trend in deteriorating sanitation conditions since January (57%), is likely to increase contamination of food and water and related spread of diseases. **The distribution of WASH NFIs as well as improved access to safe drinking water along the Bor South-Fangak**

¹⁶ Republic of South Sudan - Ministry of Health: Situation Report #118 on Cholera in South Sudan, 28 April 2017/20 Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.; UNICEF South Sudan: Humanitarian Situation Report 108, 16-30 April 2017.

¹⁸ Ibid.

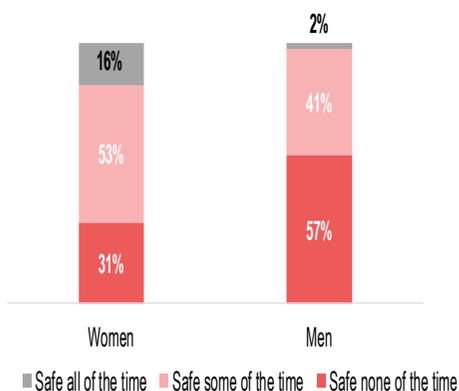
¹⁹ To ensure correct usage a simple pictogram may need to be provided.

corridor is necessary in contributing to limiting the further spread of diseases.

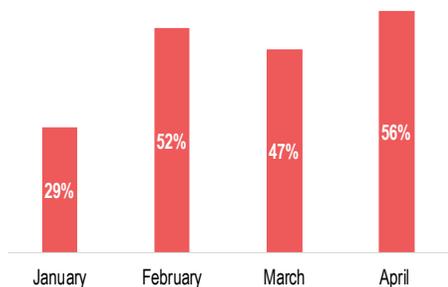
Protection

Despite increase in conflict in Jonglei in April, the overall proportion of settlements assessed reporting that men and women felt unsafe at all times remained similar to March, at 57% and 31% of assessed settlements, respectively. However, **Greater Akobo, affected by heavy clashes in April, saw an increase in the proportion of settlements reporting men and women were unsafe during both day and night.** Within this region, Akobo County reported the largest increase in men's deteriorating perceptions of safety between March (52% of assessed settlements) and April (74%), whilst for women this was reported in Nyirol County (21% in March compared to 37% in April).

Graph 7: Percentage of settlements assessed reporting feeling of safety by gender and period of day, April 2017



Graph 8: Percentage of settlements assessed in Greater Akobo (Uror, Nyirol and Akobo Counties) reporting sexual violence as main protection concern for women, by month



Such large proportions of the population feeling unsafe at all times was reportedly because of **fears they might be killed or injured by another community.** As in previous months, this represented the **main protection concern for men in 83% of assessed settlements, and in 63% for women.** Likely as a reflection of an escalation in fighting, in Greater Akobo the proportion of settlements reporting this as main concern for men has increased, with the largest spike in Akobo County, from 48% of assessed settlements in March to 68% in April.

Similarly, **Akobo, Nyirol and Uror Counties also reported the highest proportions of settlements assessed citing sexual violence as main protection concern for women in April.** In January, prior to the 2017 conflict in Greater Akobo, an average of 29% of settlements assessed in the three counties had reported sexual violence, whilst in February, when fighting started around Yuai, this rose to 52%. In March, when clashes in the region temporarily became more sporadic, sexual violence saw a small drop to 47% of

settlements assessed in Greater Akobo. In April, at the height of the clashes and resulting displacement, this proportion increased again to 56%. New arrivals from Greater Akobo, interviewed through FGDs in Bor PoC between February and April, also reported conflict-related cases of sexual violence, and had attributed these to parties in the conflict.

In FGDs, these respondents as well as other new arrivals interviewed in Akobo Town, also cited other severe protection issues related to the fighting in Greater Akobo. According to KIs, civilian populations were reportedly exposed to indiscriminate shelling and shooting and related loss of life, looting and burning of homes, forced displacement and family separation, whilst they also recounted events of active targeting of civilians by armed groups. Further, KIs reported that they had feared attacks and harassment by armed youth on the journey to their arrival destination. These qualitative findings are consistent with a report on the situation in Greater Akobo published by the Protection Cluster following the clashes in April.²⁰

Across Jonglei, the protection situation of children in settlements assessed has remained comparable to that of previous months. **Almost half of settlements (49%) reported in April that children were unsafe at all times, with the largest protection threat consisting of fears of child abductions, cited by 72% of settlements.** In Western Jonglei's Bor South, Duk and Twic East Counties nearly all settlements assessed cited this as the most common protection issue for children. This is reflective of the region's conflict pattern

with communities in neighboring counties that surrounds cattle raids and related child abductions.

Overall, these findings suggest that increased armed conflict in parts of Jonglei had a negative impact on protection trends in April, **with men, women and children increasingly vulnerable to severe protection issues,** particularly those remaining within and fleeing from Greater Akobo.

Shelter

Shelter conditions of displaced populations appear too fluid to accurately capture shelter trends during April, however, some indications can be provided for local communities.

For the local community the most frequently cited shelter type was the tukul (96%) and the rakooba (74%), similar to what was reported by assessed settlements in March, indicating the prevalence of formal shelter, ahead of the rainy season.

Reflective of conflict in Greater Akobo, the proportion of settlements assessed reporting that shelter was damaged in the previous month as a result of fighting, was overall highest in Uror,

Graph 9: Top two reported shelter types used by local community, April 2017



²⁰ Protection Cluster South Sudan: Update Conflict Displacement in Jonglei, 4 May 2017.

²¹ Key informants could choose more than one answer; responses refer to percentage of settlements having a reported shelter type, not the percentage of the population living in them.

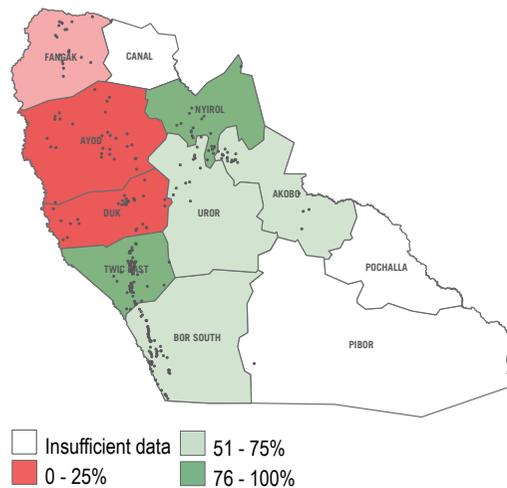
Nyiröl and Akobo. In January, an average of only 6% of settlements assessed in Greater Akobo had reported shelter damage, which at the peak of conflict in April rose to 38%.

These findings are consistent with qualitative FGD data, in which new arrivals from Greater Akobo had reported the destruction and looting of homes following armed clashes in their areas of origin. Whilst further research is needed to fully assess the scale of shelter damage in Greater Akobo, findings suggest that there is a need to assist local communities in this region with reconstruction efforts once security conditions permit returns.

Further, given the large scale of displacement in Greater Akobo, which is likely to exceed local communities' capacity to absorb IDPs' shelter needs, **there is an urgent need to support IDP receiving communities with shelter materials used for the construction of temporary shelters.**

Education

More than half of settlements assessed (56%) reported access to education services in April, with a similar figure reported in March (52%). **As in previous months, Duk, Ayod and Fangak reported the lowest access levels to education, which in these areas was largely attributable to a lack of facilities,** cited by 47% of settlements assessed in these counties. In Twic East, education access has improved from 21% of settlements assessed in March to 76% in April. According to education actors, this improvement was due to recently increased NGO-related education support in the county,



Map 6: Percentage of assessed settlements reporting access to education, April 2017

part of which is under UNICEF's Back-to Learning Campaign, launched in Panyagor in late March.²²

Education access in conflict-affected Greater Akobo remains relatively high but has declined from an average of 92% of settlements assessed in March to 72% in April. This is likely to be linked to the combined negative impact of two main factors: **reflective of a spike in conflict in the area in April, 54% of settlements assessed cited the destruction of facilities by fighting as the main factor for a lack of education access.** Further, NGOs operating in Greater Akobo have downscaled their support to education activities since February, which has reportedly led to the absence of staff in primary schools as payment of teacher salaries presents a challenge. Although lack of education services was no longer the top reported reason for

departures from Akobo to Ethiopia, reported by 14% of KIs in April, compared to 35% in March, it still represented an important displacement driver for those seeking refuge in Ethiopia.²³

Overall, these findings indicate a need to continue increasing education provision through the equipment of existing schools and the construction of new schools in locations of Duk, Ayod and Fangak which are considered stable. Whilst persistent insecurity and related access challenges in Greater Akobo will likely lead to a further deterioration in education access in the weeks to come, humanitarian actors should focus on increasing schooling support in IDP receiving communities to which they have access such as Akobo and Lankien.

Conclusion

Armed clashes in Greater Akobo, as well as inter-community tensions across Jonglei, has negatively affected displacement trends and humanitarian needs in April.

Displacement Overview

Displacement into Jonglei, and particularly internal displacement from (Uror) and within Greater Akobo (Nyiröl and Akobo) due to conflict, placed further strain on resources in IDP receiving communities such as Akobo and Duk but also transit towns such as Kuikuiny. Due to the same insecurity, these needs are met with decreased humanitarian access. **There is a need for greater humanitarian assistance in responding to the needs of displaced populations in IDP hosting towns as well as to communities in close proximity**

to fighting.

Outflows of South Sudanese seeking humanitarian assistance and security in refugee camps in Ethiopia continued to increase considerably as a result of increased instability in April. **In the coming weeks, further population outflows are anticipated from Akobo Town to Gambella,** which would require an up-scale in humanitarian response in camps in Gambella.

Priority needs and geographic targeting of response

Critically high levels of food insecurity continued across the state in April, with 69% of assessed settlements reporting no adequate access to food. Efforts by humanitarian actors to provide emergency food assistance needs to target counties such as Duk, Twic East and Bor South to prevent further declines. Furthermore, priority needs to be given to Uror and Nyiröl because of ongoing insecurity, a dramatic decline in access to food is anticipated. In addition actors should also continue to monitor IDP receiving communities such as Akobo and surrounding transit towns, in order to prevent deteriorating food access levels by local and displaced communities.

Ongoing cholera cases have thus far have been concentrated around the Nile, but factors such as displacement, further decreases in access to food and water and worsening sanitation

²² UNICEF South Sudan: Humanitarian Situation Report 107, 1-15 April 2017.

²³ REACH: South Sudan Displacement Crisis – Akobo Port Monitoring, March 2017 and Ibid., April 2017.

conditions across Jonglei, may increase the potential for the spread of cholera to areas not previously affected. As contaminated water sources is likely the cause, preventative efforts by WASH and HEALTH actors should prioritise the improvement of access to clean water through distributions of WASH NFIs along the Bor South-Fangak corridor as well as conflict affected communities in Uror in Nyirol.

Overall humanitarian needs are critical along the Bor South-Fangak Corridor, with ongoing cases of cholera, low access to basic services and worsening food insecurity. Further humanitarian needs in Greater Akobo have risen due to increased clashes and the reduction in humanitarian access, which has raised concerns about the ability and rate of response to displaced populations and local communities alike. As we enter the rainy season and in response to population needs, it is essential for humanitarian actors to find ways through rapid response missions or airdrops, to reach those areas most affected, and in the long-term, likely to be affected.

About REACH Initiative

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.

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