

Situation Overview: Upper Nile State, South Sudan

May 2017

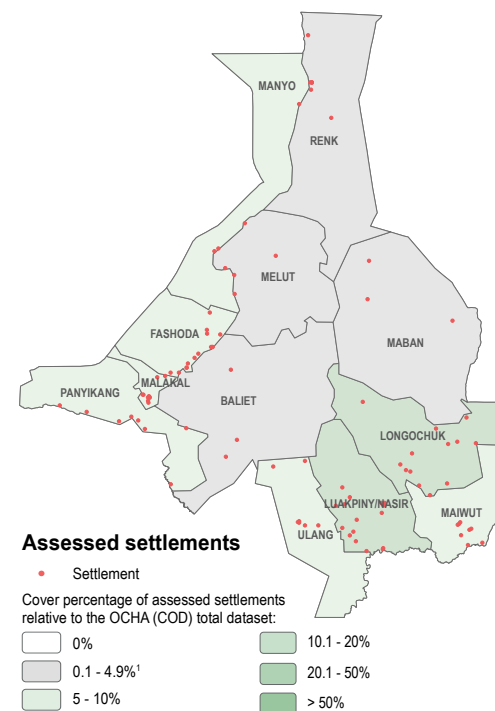
REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

Introduction

In a continuation of the hostilities that began in April, conflict in Tonga, Panyikang County, and along the western bank of the Nile has caused further widespread displacement, with many Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) fleeing Upper Nile State west and northwards into Sudan. **The intensification of conflict along the western bank continued to restrict vital humanitarian access throughout the month, which in turn has triggered further displacement as people move in search of basic services such as food and healthcare.** The rainy season will likely further reduce the limited humanitarian access in many parts of the state as access roads and airstrips become flooded and unusable.

To inform the response of humanitarian actors working outside of formal settlement sites, REACH has been conducting an ongoing assessment of hard-to-reach areas in South Sudan since 2015, for which data on settlements across Greater Upper Nile, Greater Equatoria and Western Bahr el Ghazal region is collected on a monthly basis.

Between 12-31 May 2017, REACH interviewed 158 Key Informants (KIs) from 99 settlements in all 12 counties in Upper Nile State. Ninety-eight percent of KIs interviewed had arrived in their displacement location in April or May, and therefore had up-to-date information about the



Map 1: REACH assessment coverage of Upper Nile State, May 2017

village from which they had been displaced, thus ensuring an accurate understanding of current displacement and population dynamics. Other respondents had recent information about the village through contact with someone (usually a relative) that is currently living there. Findings have been triangulated using three Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), secondary data, and previous REACH assessments of hard-to-reach areas of Upper Nile State.

This Situation Overview outlines displacement and access to basic services in Upper Nile in May 2017. The first section analyses displacement trends in Upper Nile State. The second section outlines the population dynamics in the assessed communities, as well as access to food and basic services for both IDP and non-displaced communities.

Baliet, Maban, Melut and Renk Counties had less than 5% settlement coverage (map 1), and were therefore not analysed at county level. However, data from these counties was included in the state-level analysis. May coverage grew to include Manyo, Fashoda, Panyikang and Ulang so the primary conclusions delivered in this Situation Overview cover the western and south-eastern parts of the state. Increasing settlement coverage to include areas where fighting was more intense and displacement was ongoing facilitates the provision of information from areas known to have access difficulties and information gaps.

Population Movement and Displacement

There was an estimated 256,577 IDPs residing in Upper Nile State in May and reported clashes in Manyo, Panyikang, Maban, Longochuk and Luakpiny/Nasir counties.¹ Insecurity has caused substantial internal displacement, particularly along the western and eastern banks of the Nile, and cross-border displacement into

Sudan, with refugees predominantly fleeing to White Nile and South Kordofan. In Maban armed clashes resulted in unconfirmed reports of a number of deaths, numerous injuries and people fleeing to the surrounding bushes.^{2,3} Aid workers in Longochuk were forced to relocate in May and in both Longochuk and Maban active hostilities directly impacted humanitarian work.⁴ Finally, small numbers of people reportedly began returning from Kodok and Aburoc to Wau Shilluk, Ogod and Lul, although exact figures were unconfirmed at the time of writing.

In a reflection of continued fighting across the state throughout May, **insecurity was reported as the biggest push factor for displacement in Upper Nile this month, cited by 67% of assessed settlements across the state.** Although this figure remains similar to April, May saw an increase in the number of conflict-affected counties where more KIs were reporting insecurity as a push factor. These include Manyo (85% of KIs), Malakal (83%), Panyikang (82%) and Fashoda (73%). Insecurity also remained a prime concern in counties where fighting took place earlier this year, specifically Luakpiny/Nasir (79%) and

1. OCHA: South Sudan: Humanitarian Snapshot May 2017.
2. Radiotamazuj. Violent brawl leaves 20 dead at Gendrasa camp in Maban. 26 May 2017.
3. See the REACH report South Sudan: Enhancing Peaceful Co-existence and Resilience in Maban County for background.
4. OCHA: South Sudan Humanitarian Bulletin. Issue 9, 12 June, 2017.

METHODOLOGY

To provide an overview of the situation in largely inaccessible areas of Upper Nile 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 Renk County, Upper Nile, Akobo in Jonglei State, and Juba Protection of Civilians (PoC) site throughout May 2017.

The first phase of the assessment methodology comprised a participatory mapping exercise to map the relevant settlements in Upper Nile 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.

Please note that REACH is in the process of establishing sustained data collection in Upper Nile State. As a result, the current coverage is limited. The conclusions drawn are therefore indicative of likely trends in the state.

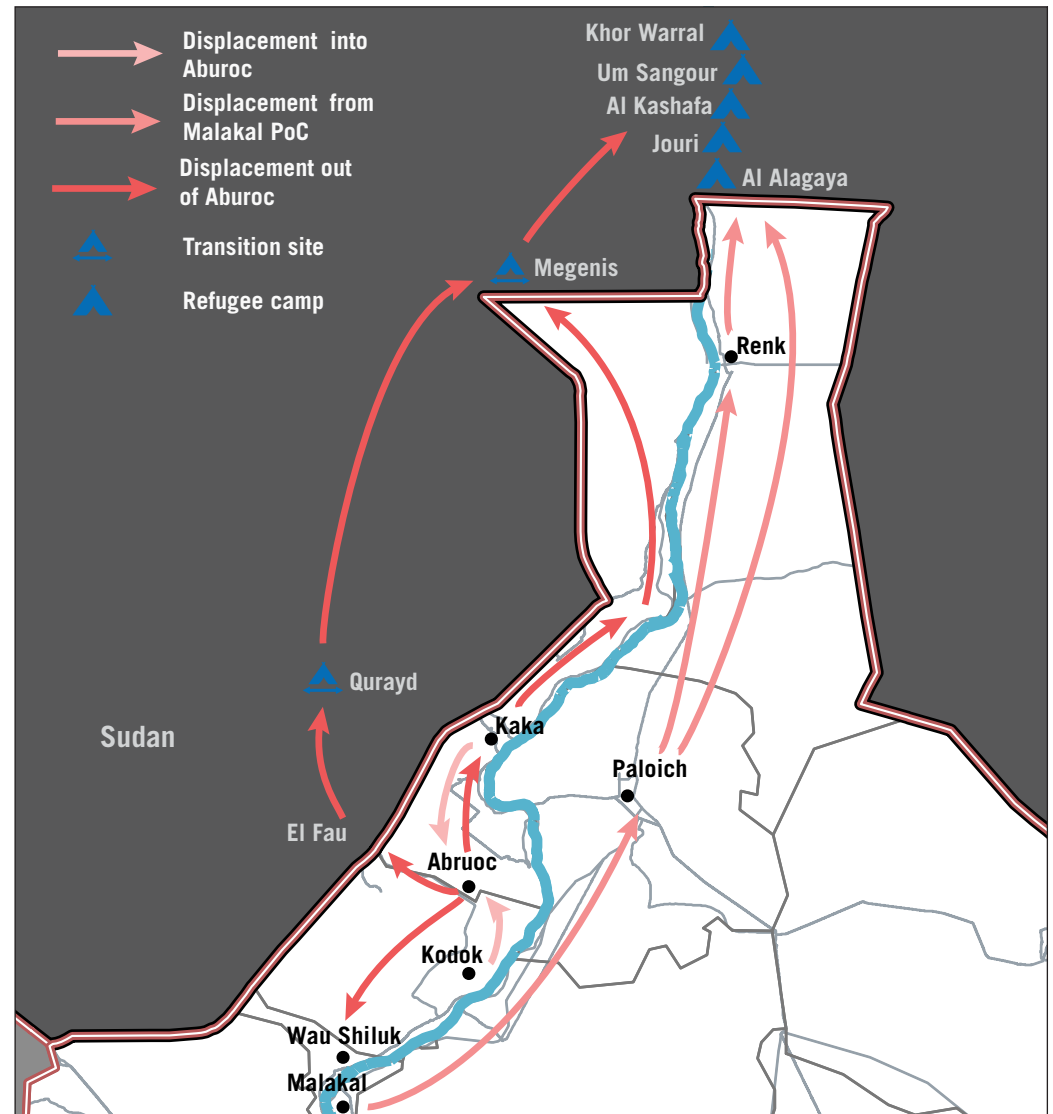
Ulang counties (82%).⁵

The onset of the lean season has been reflected in the sharp increase in the percentage of assessed IDPs reporting lack of food (63%) as a push factor in May, compared to 30% in April. A lack of access to healthcare services was the second most commonly reported push factor, cited by 56% of IDPs, compared to 34% in April. These push factors could be indicative of ongoing insecurity interrupting agricultural activities, as well as hindering and preventing medical assistance from reaching those in need.

Displacement inside Upper Nile

Movement from Malakal

Movement out of Malakal PoC site continued throughout May, with an estimated 1,170 individuals leaving the camp between 1-26 May.⁶ Whilst these figures indicate a gradual decline over the past three months (1,491 individuals reportedly left in April and 1,856 in March), at the start of June a reported 30,600 IDPs were still in the PoC site.⁷ These figures remain indicative of an ongoing trend of movement northwards; however, as the rainy season may make the road to Renk and Sudan inaccessible, whether this will continue is unknown. Danish Refugee Council (DRC) data indicated that, as in April, the vast majority (96%) of those leaving the camp reported that they intended to travel to Sudan, with only 3% citing Renk as their final intended destination.⁸ The most commonly reported reason for leaving



Map 2: Displacement along the western and eastern banks, and into Sudan, May 2017

the camp was the intention to rejoin family site (16%), and insecurity (15%).⁹ members (60%), followed by dissatisfaction with the lack of available services in the PoC

5. For more information see REACH SSD. Upper Nile Situation Overview, March 2017.

6. DRC: CCCM Exit Tracking, Malakal PoC, May 2017.

7. IOM: Humanitarian Update #76 South Sudan 12 June 2017.

8. DRC: CCCM Exit Tracking, Malakal PoC, May 2017.

9. Ibid.

10. UN News Centre: South Sudan: UN Peacekeepers deployed to enable aid delivery to Upper Nile's Aburoc area. 7 May 2017.

11. IOM: Humanitarian Update #76 South Sudan 12 June 2017.

12. IOM: Aburoc Intentions Survey Report. May 2017.

To and from Aburoc

Fighting in Kodok and Kaka continued into May and caused further displacement towards the temporary IDP settlement of Aburoc. Despite this continued movement, the number of people in Aburoc continued to decrease, as also reported in April. At the beginning of May between 35,000 and 50,000 IDPs were reported to be sheltering at Aburoc,¹⁰ with this number having decreased to 10,298 by the beginning of June.¹¹ An IOM intentions survey conducted towards the end of May indicated that 79% of the remaining IDPs in Aburoc intended to stay there, rather than attempt the move across the border.¹² However, humanitarian access to Aburoc has become increasingly limited by the rains, with reports of both the roads and airstrip becoming waterlogged in the first two weeks of May.¹³

Additionally, by mid-June the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) plans to have withdrawn its contingent of peacekeepers originally deployed mid-May. This raises concern about continued safe access to the area for humanitarian organisations beyond that time. IDP perceptions of safety may also change, as 35% of IOM respondents stated insecurity was the most commonly reported reason for wanting to leave Aburoc and 83% were unaware that the UNMISS force was leaving.¹⁴ As those leaving Aburoc are reportedly increasingly moving within Fashoda County in search of food and better living conditions,¹⁵ re-thinking resource distribution to meet the needs of the greater county and indeed the entire state population

should be considered.

Displacement out of Upper Nile

Displacement out of Tonga

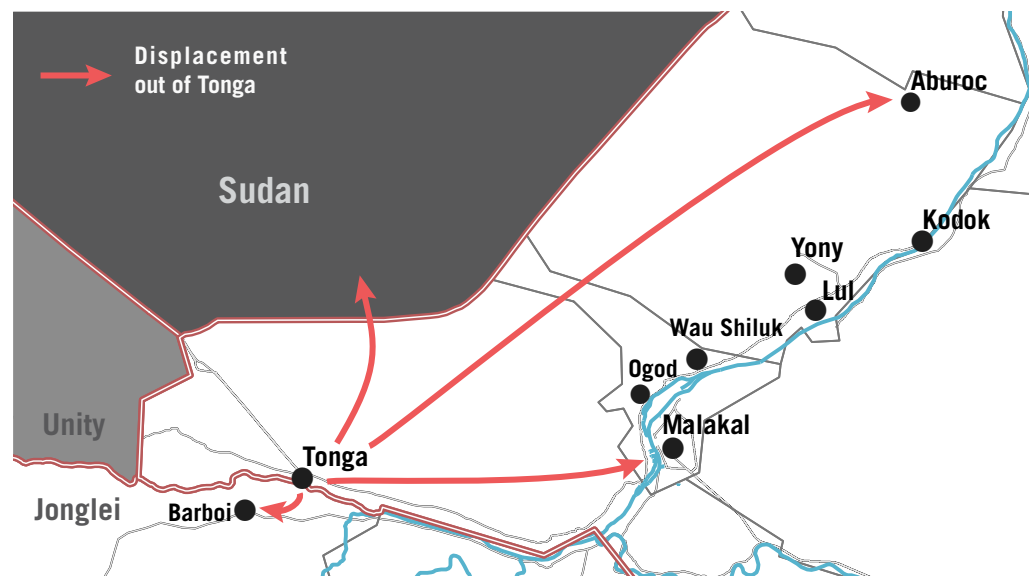
Clashes around Tonga, Panyikang County, at the beginning of May caused displacement in multiple directions (map 3). An Inter-Agency Rapid Needs Assessment (IRNA) conducted in early May confirmed the arrival of IDPs displaced from Tonga into Baboi Payam, Fangak County in Jonglei.¹⁶ Small numbers of IDPs from Tonga also reportedly reached Malakal PoC site and Aburoc.

There was very limited humanitarian access to Panyikang County in May due to the ongoing insecurity, so exact figures on the displaced population are unknown.

Displacement to Sudan

Clashes in Tonga also led to a number of IDPs fleeing northwards into South Kordofan State in Sudan. Serious protection concerns were raised following reports of over 300 people dying of dehydration and starvation whilst making this journey on foot.¹⁷

Although some of the displaced from Kodok and Kaka moved to Aburoc at the beginning of May, a high number of IDPs left Aburoc throughout the month, the majority of whom crossed into Sudan. Over 20,000 people reportedly crossed the border into Sudan in the first week,¹⁸ citing poor conditions and fear of further attacks in the area as push factors for leaving. As illustrated



Map 3: Displacement from Tonga, May 2017

in map 2, IDPs broadly followed two routes into Sudan; either heading west to the border crossing at El Fau, or travelling northward through Manyo County and crossing into Sudan at the Megenis border point. The majority of those leaving Aburoc appeared to head for the refugee settlements north of Renk County, particularly Khor Warral camp.

IDPs travelled to the border on foot or in trucks that they hired. Some trucks were allegedly paid for by South Sudanese communities living in Sudan.¹⁹ The increasing volume of people arriving in Sudan is likely to put pressure on existing refugee camps along the border in White Nile and South Kordofan States. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reported that by May 12 approximately 50,000 refugees had

arrived at Khor Warral, a camp initially intended for 18,000 people.²⁰ These data indicate that increased humanitarian planning and an upscaling of camps hosting newly arrived refugees may be advisable to meet the basic needs of displaced people.

Situation in Assessed Communities

Demographic profile

IDP and local community populations in assessed villages

In May, 42% of assessed settlements in Upper Nile State reported the presence of IDPs, compared to 28% in April. A similar rise was also reported by assessed settlements along the

13. UNMISS: Rainy season creates new risks for a dire humanitarian situation in Aburoc. 18 May 2017.

14. IOM: Aburoc Intentions Survey Report. May 2017.

15. DMT: Aburoc, Fashoda County Population Head Count Summary, June 2017.

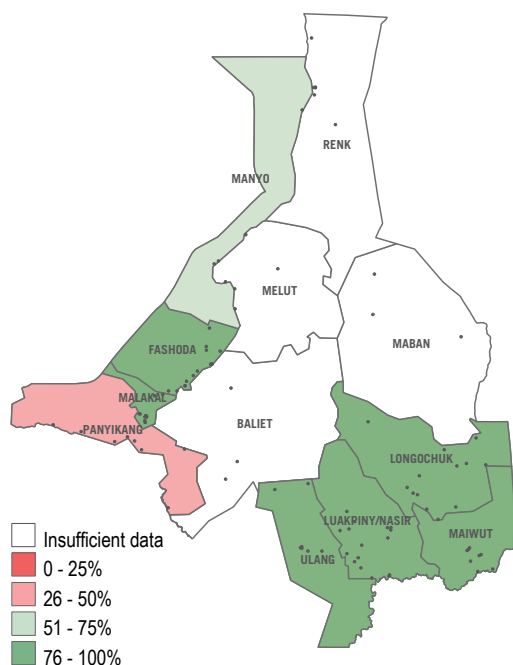
16. IRNA Report: Displacement into Fangak County 29 April - 2 May 2017.

17. Radio Tamazuj: Over 300 displaced people die of hunger and thirst in Upper Nile, NGO says. 15 May 2017.

18. MSF: 20,000 People Flee Fighting and Deplorable Conditions in Aburoc Camp. 12 May 2017.

19. MSF: Fighting and lack of food and water driving people north of the border. 11 May 2017.

western bank (40% in May, compared to 21% in April), which may be indicative of the ongoing conflict in those counties as a cause of further displacement. It appears that in Panyikang County displacement both drove people out and potentially restricted access to those seeking assistance. Panyikang County was the only county where half of all assessed settlements reported that the local community had left. Additionally, it had the lowest percentage of assessed settlements that reported an IDP presence (22%), with all assessed settlements reporting IDPs were living in the bush. The higher percentage of assessed settlements in



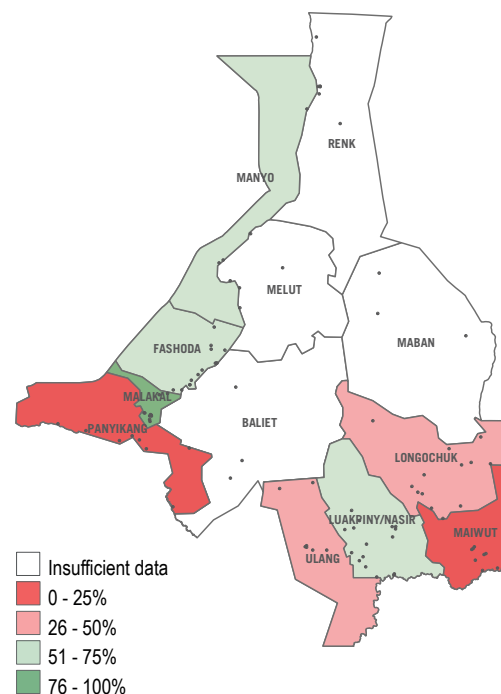
Map 4: Proportion of settlements reporting presence of local community, May 2017

Manyo County reporting IDPs were present (67%) is not necessarily indicative of a more secure county, rather it could be attributed to the displacement paths that flow through the region. Taking this into consideration, additional support may be needed in areas that received higher numbers of IDPs, such as Manyo County.

Reflective of improvements in security, and likely as a result of the start of planting season, 89% of assessed settlements reported a local community presence, similar to April. More local community members remained in areas that enjoyed relative stability throughout May, namely around Luakpiny/Nasir where 94% reportedly were living in their own homes. While the rate of people leaving the Malakal PoC site continued to decrease, the percentage of assessed settlements in Malakal County with a local community presence increased (75% in May, compared to 27% in April and 17% in March). These changes, combined with the onset of the rainy season, suggest that population movements both within and out of the county are decreasing.

Food security

In May areas of high insecurity along the western bank continued to have low levels of access to food. Ongoing conflict in Tonga and insecurity throughout Panyikang were the primary reported reasons that **only 22% of assessed settlements in Panyikang had adequate access to food**, considerably less than the 53% reported at a state level. Insecurity in assessed settlements led to 86%



Map 5: Proportion of settlements reporting adequate access to food, May 2017

reporting that it was unsafe to plant, while 71% of assessed settlements stated that fighting destroyed crops.

Malakal maintained the highest proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food (80%), followed by Fashoda (75%), although the high percentage in Malakal could be attributed to International Nongovernmental Organisations (INGOs) in Malakal PoC site. Manyo, the county with the lowest proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food in April (0%)²¹ jumped to 67% in May. However, this increase

may not be representative of the entire county, as those with access to food were based close to Renk town. FGD participants reported that it was easier to acquire food there than in other settlements, due to better market access and more employment opportunities.

In Maiwut County, south-eastern Upper Nile, a decrease in access to food was reported by assessed settlements. **Only 14% reported adequate access to food, down from 58% in March and 38% in April.** This could be attributed to flooding, with 83% of assessed settlements citing natural disasters as the main reason for inadequate access to food. The remaining 17% of assessed settlements saw fighting as the primary reason for the destruction of crops, meaning that the potential overlapping impact of flooding and insecurity has created an unsafe planting environment in Maiwut. Deficient access to food in both Maiwut and Maban was also reflected by the May upgrade of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, from stressed to crisis.²² As insecurity and flooding appear to have had a negative impact of food security in Upper Nile State, conditions should be monitored closely during the rainy season; in particular in

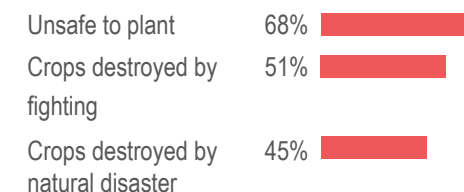


Figure 1: Top three reported reasons for inadequate food access, May 2017

20. Ibid.

21. April coverage was below 5% in Panyikang, however, 1/3 settlements reached reported access to food.

22. FEWS NET: South Sudan Food Security Outlook Update. April 2017.

counties where both are reportedly concurrently occurring.

Cultivation was the main source of food in 36% of settlements assessed, however in conflict-affected areas in the western bank this dropped to 13% of assessed settlements. Crop destruction has left settlements to deal with a potential lack of food, at a time when food shortages were already likely due to the start of the lean season. This is in addition to an inability to plant crops, potentially as a result of insecurity over a prolonged period, which may lead to low future harvests. This reported inability to cultivate is backed by a Food Security Outlook Update by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSN) which predicted parts of Upper Nile State will experience Emergency outcomes from June to September.²³

An inability to cultivate may lead settlements to rely on alternative forms of securing food: fishing/hunting and foraging. Fishing was the only food source available in the assessed settlements in Panyikang reporting access to food. In assessed settlements along the western bank with reported access to food from Nongovernmental Organisations (NGOs), reported fishing/hunting and foraging rates were lower to non-existent. In Malakal, where 44% of assessed settlements reported access to food from NGOs, only 11% reported fishing/foraging. Similarly, in Manyo, where 50% of assessed settlements reported access to food from NGOs, no settlement reported fishing/hunting or foraging. In addition, the low proportion

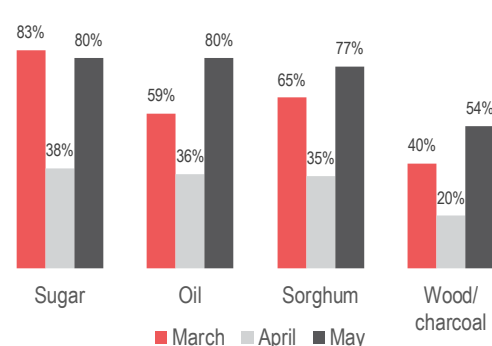


Figure 2: Proportion of settlements reporting market price increases by types of goods

of settlements in Manyo and Malakal that reported fishing/hunting or foraging is indicative of the impact of insecurity on those activities. FGD participants also reported that insecurity prevented them from fishing as before.

Reduced access to food has resulted in settlements reporting increasingly severe consumption coping strategies and health concerns. **Only 1% of assessed settlements in Upper Nile State consume three meals per day and 32% consume one meal per day.** In Panyikang and Maiwut counties, the two worst-affected by food shortages, no assessed settlements reported consuming three meals per day. **Additionally, 78% of assessed settlements in Panyikang consumed one meal per day and 75% in Maiwut consumed two.** While food shortages exist across Upper Nile State, rapidly addressing the indicated severe food shortages in Panyikang and Maiwut should be considered.

Livelihoods

Just over half (51%) of all assessed settlements reported having access to land in May, substantially less than March (81%). Access to land reportedly decreased further in areas with reported insecurity: 20% in Malakal, 33% in Manyo and Panyikang, and 38% in Fashoda.

Of assessed settlements with access to land, 50% reported that they are engaging in subsistence farming. Twenty-seven percent of assessed settlements with access to land reported carrying out farming in order to sell produce in May compared to 43% in April, a sign of less cultivation in May. This is likely suggestive of less available food in Upper Nile.

The number of assessed settlements having access to a functioning market in Upper Nile State surpassed half (54%). However, only 11% reported purchasing as a food source (21% in April); a low percentage that may be attributed to the reported increase in prices of general food items (figure 2) and a continuation of the worsening economic situation outlined in the April Situation Overview.²⁴ **In Panyikang County, another sign that food access was problematic was that only 11% of assessed settlements reported access to a market.** In Maiwut, the proportion of settlements reporting access to a market increased (43%, compared to 13% in April), and so did purchasing as a food source (14% of settlements, compared to 0% in April). Insecurity, inadequate access to land and functioning markets, and the FEWSN prediction of emergency outcomes indicate

that there may be an increase in reliance on humanitarian assistance.

Protection

Reflective of the increasing insecurity in the State, a quarter of all assessed settlements reported that residents never felt safe compared to 14% in April. Men and women alike were increasingly reported to never feel safe, as reported by 24% and 21% of settlements respectively (compared to 18% and 11% respectively in April). **In conflict hotspot areas, specifically Panyikang, the perceived lack of safety at all times for males and females was dramatically higher: 89% for males and 78% for females.** These high rates are a cause for concern and reflective of the growing insecurity within the county.

The main protection concerns stemmed from high insecurity: killing/injury inflicted by members of a different community, sexual violence and abduction. There has been an increased number of conflicts along the

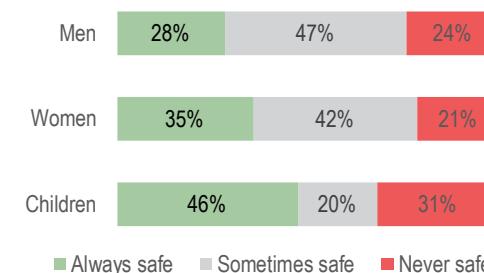


Figure 3: Percentage of settlements assessed reporting feeling safe by gender and age, May 2017²⁵

23. FEWS NET: South Sudan Food Security Outlook Update. May 2017.

24. For more information see REACH SSD. Upper Nile Situation Overview, April 2017.

25. A portion of assessed settlements chose not to answer or were not sure: 1% for men, 2% for women and 3% for children.

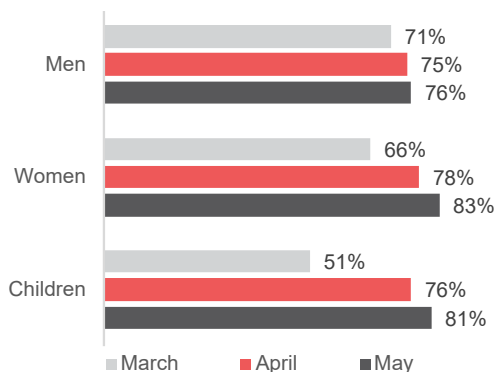


Figure 4: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting armed groups as the perpetrators of violence against men, women and children in March, April and May 2017

western bank, spreading up into Manyo County, and an increased presence of armed groups in communities. As a result of the increased presence of armed groups, an increased proportion of settlements reported fearing that armed groups would perpetrate violence against men, women and children alike (Figure 4). Across Panyikang, Fashoda, Malakal and Manyo, 94% of settlements reported fearing that armed groups would perpetrate violence.

Sexual violence remained the most reported concern for females, with 30% of assessed settlement reporting it in May, compared to 20% in April. Of those assessed settlements who reported females fearing sexual violence, 75% stated that the most likely perpetrators of violence against women would belong to armed groups, (61% in April), and as mentioned in the April Situation Overview, these figures are in line with continuous allegations of rape by armed actors.²⁷ The

second most reported concern for females in assessed settlements was killing/injury inflicted by members of a different community (25%). However, this percentage was higher in counties along the western bank: Fashoda (64%), Manyo (50%), Panyikang (33%) and Malakal (29%).

Thirty-four percent of assessed settlements reported that the main safety concern for males remained killing/injury from someone from a different community, down from 42% in April. This fear was reported more often in conflict-affected Panyikang (78%) and Fashoda (55%). Forced recruitment (26%) rose from 10% in April. Noticeably this was the main fear for 67% of assessed settlements in Manyo county, one of the pathway counties for IDPs moving north.

The main concern for children was separation from family members, reported by 25% of assessed settlements, although in conflict-affected areas this percentage was higher: 31% in Fashoda and 33% Malakal. The second most reported fear for children in assessed settlements was abduction (17%, April 5%). Again, along the western bank this increased, specifically in Manyo County where it was the only fear. Notably 50% of assessed Maiwut settlements cited abduction as their main fear for children, followed by family separation (33%). This may be reflective of the changing conditions in the county, as April's main concern was early marriage (38%).

Data are reflective of a growing situation

where protection infrastructure is proving to be inadequate and not capable of providing real safety for the population. Additionally, the availability of services is decreasing as the situation worsens, leaving communities highly vulnerable. Only 71% of assessed settlements in Upper Nile State reported that physical protection is available. In May, fewer assessed settlements reported that local authority actors and local community actors were providing protection services in their settlements (45% and 43% respectively, compared to 75% and 65% respectively in April). This decrease is worrying as there may be an increased need for protection services in the coming months, as May data showed that no community reported receiving protection from the UN and only 5% from an NGO.

Shelter

High conflict levels along the western bank resulted in the assessed settlements reporting a high percentage of destroyed shelters: 93% in Fashoda, 90% in Malakal, 89% in Panyikang and 75% in Manyo. This was higher than the percentage of assessed settlements in Upper Nile State that reported shelters were partially or completely destroyed because of fighting (65%, from 44% in April).

May also saw a decrease in reported host communities from assessed settlements living in tukuls (77%, 88% in April), indicating that destruction appears to have had a negative impact on shelter availability. There was also a reported decrease in the number of

IDPs living in tukuls as their primary shelter (42%, 67% in April). As health concerns are increasing and the rainy season has begun in Upper Nile State, appropriate shelter options for host communities and IDPs may currently be in higher demand. Communities along the western bank already dealing with poor shelter conditions may be placed under greater pressure as IDP movements spread throughout the region and communities are asked to share. For this reason, these areas should be prioritised when planning distribution of housing materials, although continuing insecurity may obstruct efforts.

Health and WASH

The combined impact of insufficient access to healthcare and WASH services and facilities in Upper Nile State remains, alongside conflict, another driving force for displacement and has led to problematic health concerns developing in the state; the development of cholera and as the wet season progresses, the spread of Malaria.²⁶ As the River Nile is a key point of active cholera transmission, humanitarian partners deployed cholera vaccinations in Malakal Town and Aburoc.²⁷ This was part of a rapid response by humanitarians implemented after an armed offensive in April.²⁸ Despite preventative steps taken to circumvent a cholera outbreak, in May there were reported cholera cases in Aburoc.²⁹ Counties along the Nile should be closely observed for further cases, as a high prevalence of open defecation increases the potential that drinking water could be contaminated. Additionally, the increased

26. UNICEF: South Sudan Situation Report, 31 May 2017.

27. OCHA: Humanitarian Bulletin South Sudan Issue 9, 12 June 2017.

28. For more information see REACH: SSD. Upper Nile Situation Overview, April 2017.

29. OCHA: Humanitarian Bulletin South Sudan Issue 9, 12 June 2017.

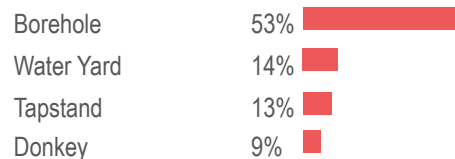


Figure 5: Top four main reported sources of drinking water, May 2017

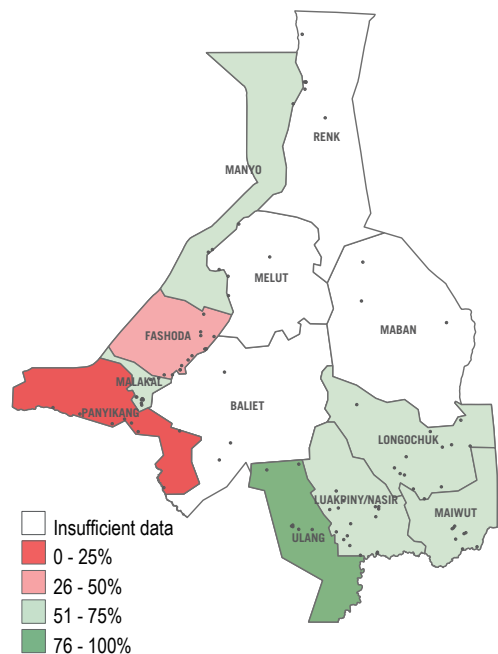
66% of settlements assessed in Upper Nile State. With 91% of settlements assessed reporting insufficient access to malaria medication, communities may need to be supported with malaria medication to cope with the anticipated rise in malaria cases during the rainy season. Malnutrition was reported by 59% of all assessed settlements, worryingly as only 24% of settlements reported having access to feeding programs. **As more assessed settlements reported hunger and malnutrition as the leading attributed cause of death (61%, compared to 43% in April),** the problematic food shortage predictions mentioned in this Situation Overview mean that this number may rise. Well facilitated healthcare facilities (staff and supplies) are also needed to meet the increasing presence of conflict related injuries. **In conflict-affected counties such as Panyikang and Fashoda, the availability of healthcare facilities was particularly low (11% and 13% of assessed settlements respectively),** as insecurity prevented people from accessing clinics, and led to the destruction of health facilities and departure of staff. Managing the consequences of fighting has become increasingly difficult as 39% of settlements referred to wounds as a health concern, and 64% reported no first aid

equipment.

Only 58% of assessed settlements reported access to healthcare facilities. A lack of staffing was the key issue in all assessed settlements in Ulang County and half of all assessed settlements in Longochuk County. In Fashoda and Panyikang, where respectively 75% and 44% of assessed settlements reported hunger and malnutrition as the leading attributed cause of death, insecurity should be taken into consideration in addressing health concerns. Insecurity may also play a role in Maiwut, where a third of assessed settlements reported facilities were destroyed by fighting and another third reported a lack of staff. As an increasing number of new IDPs reported insufficient healthcare facilities as a primary push factor, efforts to improve facilities could both address the needs of local communities and help slow the rate of displacement.

Education

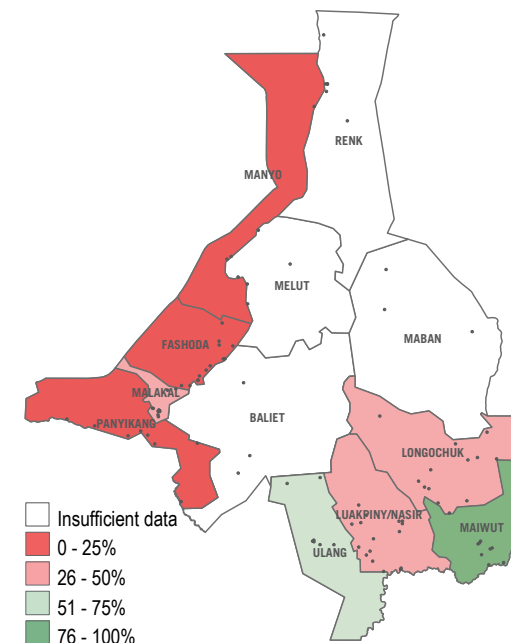
In May, education was increasingly unavailable with only 39% of all assessed settlements reporting access (49% in April). Along the conflict-affected western bank availability of education services decreased further. None of the assessed settlements in Panyikang and Manyo reported having access to education, compared to 15% of settlements in Fashoda and 37% in Malakal. In Ulang and the more stable Maiwut County, 57% and 86% of settlements reported having access to education respectively. Thirty-one percent of assessed settlements in Upper Nile State



Map 6: Proportion of settlements reporting access to healthcare facilities, May 2017

population movements may contribute to a rise in the number of confirmed cases along the Nile throughout the rainy season. Although reported access to safe drinking water reached 92% in all assessed settlements, reportage usage of latrines has decreased from the already low level in April. **Only 9% of assessed settlements reported that the whole settlement used a latrine, while 41% reported there was no use of a latrine (34% in April) and 40% reported that less than half the population uses them (15% in April).**

In May, malaria remained the most commonly reported health concern by



Map 7: Proportion of settlements reporting access to education facilities, April 2017

reported that fighting destroyed their education facilities. However, insecurity is not the sole reason why services are lacking, as 45% of all assessed settlements reported having no educational facilities, up from 33% in April. While this increase in the number of settlements without educational facilities and facilities destroyed by fighting could be attributed to the expansion of REACH coverage in Upper Nile, it does not detract from the fact that a significant percentage of children are unable to access education.

Recorded gender disparities in terms of school attendance for girls and boys have continued in May, suggesting gender gaps in terms of

education access persist. **Only 37% of all assessed settlements reported 50% or more of girls between the ages of 6 and 17 attend school, compared to 71% of boys from the same age group.** While there are programmes in South Sudan aimed at increasing the attendance of girls in schools, such as Girls' Education South Sudan, further efforts are needed to raise participation. Low attendance rates at schools can still be taken as a sign of the deteriorating economic context in South Sudan as fees remain the main reason why children do not attend school in 64% of assessed settlements.³⁰

Conclusion


The unstable security situation in Upper Nile State and local population displacement continued throughout May. Intensified conflict along the western bank continued to limit humanitarian actors access to areas in great need of support, which placed greater stress on the local populations and contributed to the continued movement of IDPs. Despite a slight decrease in displacement in areas such as Aburoc, clashes that flared up in other areas of the State, including in Tonga, have sustained the high levels of internal movement in and out of the state. In addition, the impact of the reported clashes in Manyo county³¹ in the second week of June remains to be seen, be it cutting off another migration path for those moving north to Sudan or restricting humanitarian work in the north of the State.

This also comes at a time when **food insecurity**

in the State remains a priority humanitarian need, with numerous counties expected to enter emergency conditions. With the arrival of the rainy season and 47% of all assessed settlements reporting not having access to enough food, delivery of aid to settlements reliant of humanitarian assistance may face significant problems. However, as 61% of assessed settlements reported hunger and malnutrition as the leading attributed cause of death, the situation is likely to worsen.

Concerns about access to food are joined by the threat of cholera and malaria within Upper Nile State. Although some settlements in Malakal and Fashoda Counties have been vaccinated against cholera, they remain in the minority. As the Nile River is a known area of active cholera transmission, the prevalence of open defecation in the state increases the potential for cholera to become a significant problem. **Malaria remained the most common health concern in May, reported by 66% of assessed settlements,** a concern that is likely to grow as the rainy season also brings the increased risk of Malaria.

The expanded coverage in Upper Nile State given in this Situation Overview sheds light on basic needs in hard-to-reach areas. Security, food and health remain at the forefront and will require substantial support as the rainy season progresses.

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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.

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

Visit www.reach-initiative.org and follow us @REACH_info.

30. For more information see REACH SSD. Upper Nile Situation Overview, April 2017.

31. IOM: Humanitarian Update #76 South Sudan 12 June 2017.