



Food Security and Livelihoods County Profiles

South Sudan Food Security Crisis - Unity State

May-July 2017

Background and Methodology

As of June 2017, an estimated 45,000 South Sudanese were facing catastrophic humanitarian conditions and 1.7 million experienced emergency levels of food insecurity, according to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).¹ With the aim of facilitating a better understanding of the food security and livelihoods situation in South Sudan and to inform the IPC September 2017 Update, REACH has developed food security and livelihood (FSL) profiles of counties where settlements have been assessed using the Area of Knowledge (AoK) methodology. REACH employs its remote AoK monitoring methodology to collect relevant information in hard-to-reach and inaccessible areas to inform humanitarian planning and interventions outside formal settlement sites.

Using the AoK methodology, REACH remotely monitors needs and access to services in Greater Upper Nile, Greater Equatoria and Western Bahr el Ghazal. The information presented in these FSL profiles refers to the settlements level rather than the household level and is collected through interviews with the following typology of Key Informants (KIs):

- KIs who are newly arrived internally displaced persons

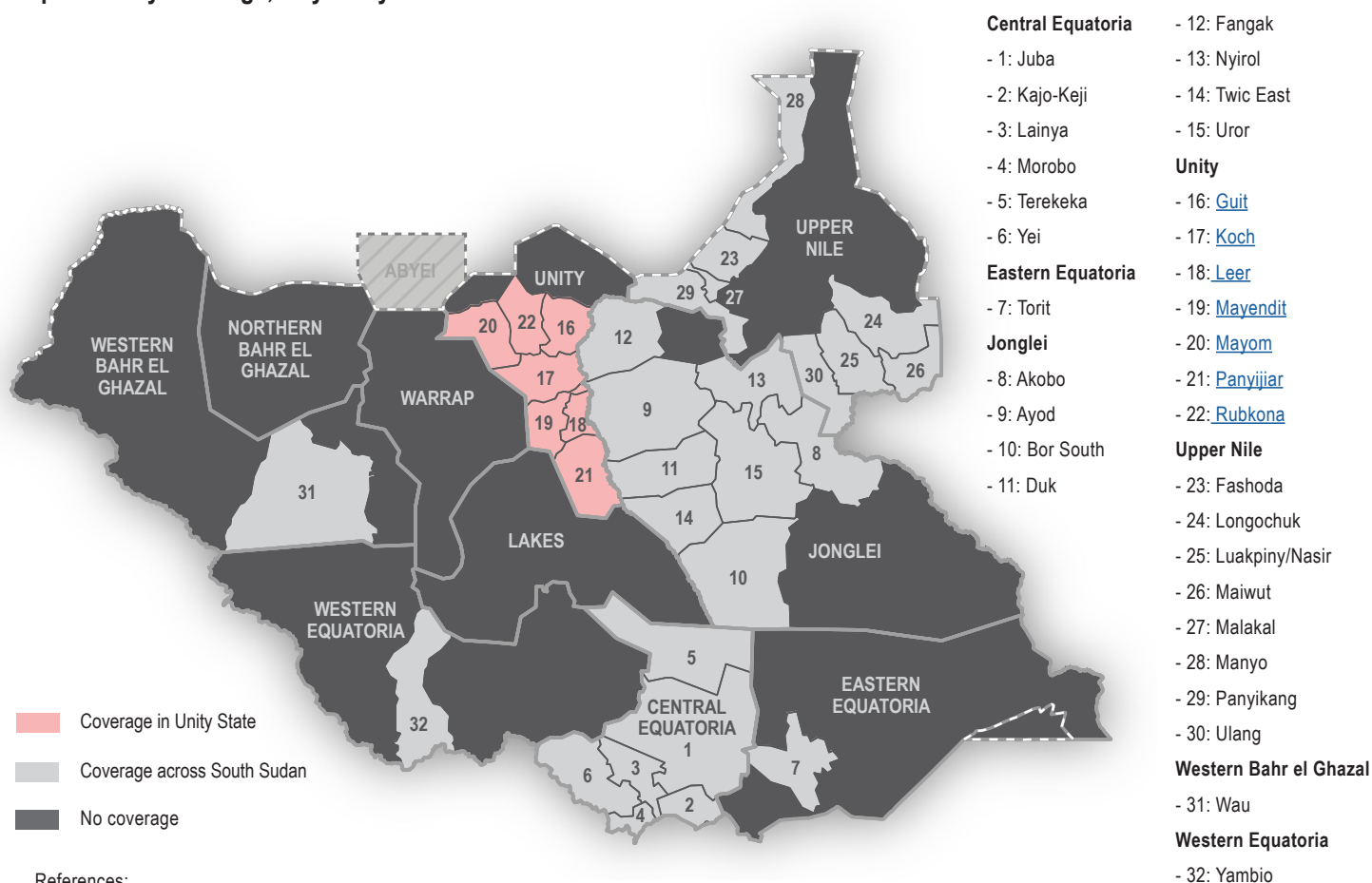
(IDPs) who have left a remote settlement in the last month

- KIs who have either been in contact with someone living in, or who have been to a remote settlement in the last month (traders, migrants, family members etc.)
- KIs who are remaining in remote settlements, contacted through phone

Findings presented are based on primary data collected from 915 KIs covering 358 settlements in 7 counties in Unity State from May to July 2017. Unless otherwise stated, figures in the profiles refer to averages across May, June and July 2017. Informing further analysis of food security trends, KI surveys were triangulated with 16 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 4 semi-structured KI interviews on livelihoods and coping strategies, as well as secondary data sources.

Data from counties where less than 5% of settlements have been assessed across the May to July period have not been included in these profiles. Further, AoK data are not collected on the basis of random sampling, and therefore trends presented in these profiles, unless stated otherwise, should be taken as indicative rather than representative of the geographic areas assessed.

Map 1: County coverage, May - July 2017



References:

IPC South Sudan, Communication Summary, May 2017.

Interactive: please click on county name to go directly to the respective FSL profile.



Mayom County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Unity State, South Sudan, May-July 2017

of KI interviews conducted: 79
of assessed settlements: 34
of FGDs conducted: 2

Livelihoods Overview

Typical Livelihoods

Located along the western floodplains of the Nile in the northwest of Unity State, pre-crisis livelihoods in Mayom were traditionally characterised by agriculture, rearing of livestock and fishing. Main crops grown were maize and sorghum, which were harvested starting from August until October. Pre-crisis, Mayom used to produce a maize surplus, which was sold in external markets. Cowpeas, pumpkin and okra vegetables were furthermore cultivated on a smaller scale with harvests starting from January. The maize harvests of poorer households usually lasted until February after which they relied on market purchases of staple food and vegetables until August. Primary sources of income included the sale of firewood and elephant grass, as well as, although to a lesser extent, domestic work. Rivers and swamps furthermore provided a source for fishing.¹

Hazards (Shocks)

- Conflict spilled over from Juba to Unity State in December 2013.
- Throughout 2014 and 2015 conflict displaced many people to the bushes and Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) site.²
- A cattle disease outbreak led to high cattle mortality in 2015.³
- Seasonal flooding in 2016 led to displacement and harvest losses.
- In 2016 and 2017, localized dry spells caused a reduction in harvests.

Vulnerability (Resilience)

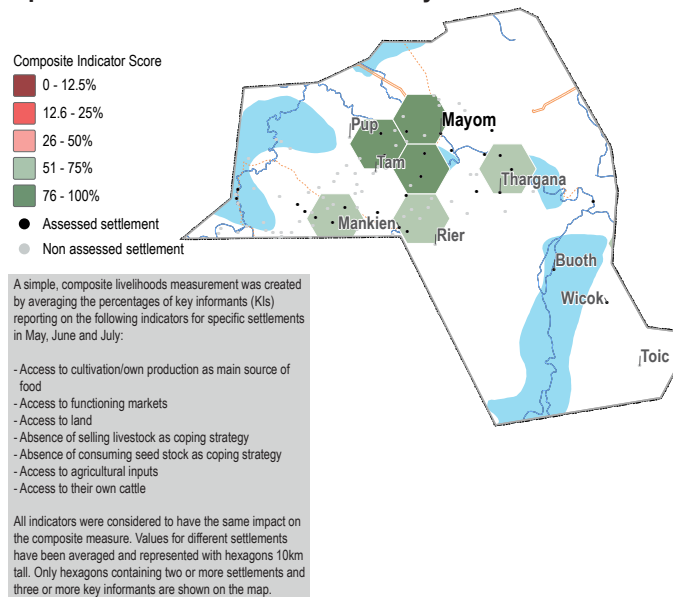
Natural disasters severely hampered traditional livelihoods in Mayom; From May to July an average of 88% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported natural disasters were the main reasons for lack of food. In particular, seasonal flooding in 2016 led to harvest destruction and displacement especially in areas around Mankien, Wankay, Reek and parts of Taam payam. Other parts of Mayom were hit by dry spells, which reportedly caused a reduction in harvests. As a result, only 5% of assessed settlements reported own production as the primary food source (Figure 1).

Mayom had traditionally been an important cattle trading centre in Unity State. However, in 2015 a cattle disease broke out, which led to increased livestock mortality rates. A rapid needs assessment conducted by ACTED in March 2017 found that 93% of households in Mayom lost an average of 12 cattle in 2015 due to the disease.⁴ Despite these massive livestock losses, AOK proxy indicators suggest that livestock presence in Mayom is still higher than in other counties in Unity State; for example, all assessed settlements reported that at least some members possessed cattle and 72% reported that at least some

Figure 1: Reported main source of food

Purchased	33%	<div style="width: 33%;"></div>
Foraged	30%	<div style="width: 30%;"></div>
Family and friends	18%	<div style="width: 18%;"></div>
Fishing and hunting	10%	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>
Own production	5%	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Humanitarian assistance	3%	<div style="width: 3%;"></div>

Map 1: Level of livelihood vulnerability



members engaged in livestock rearing. With almost no food stock from own cultivation left at the peak of the lean season, people in Mayom heavily relied on their livestock for subsistence. The decreased number of livestock therefore negatively affects the capability of the population to mitigate food consumption gaps.

Between May and July, 54% of assessed settlements had access to functioning markets, with the two most important functioning markets located in Mayom town and Mankien town. Access and utilization of markets in Mayom are relatively higher than in the rest of Unity with 33% of assessed settlements reporting purchased food as a primary food source compared to an average of 5% for all of Unity State. However, limited purchasing power, high prices and hyperinflation reduced amounts that could be purchased, which further strains possibilities to cover for consumption gaps.

In the light of low cultivated food stock levels, reduced livestock ownership and high market prices, fishing - once considered a secondary livelihood - has become the main source of food in 10% of assessed settlements (Figure 1). However, it was mentioned during FGDs that lack of fishing kits led to low fishing outputs.

Coping Strategies

The population in Mayom heavily relied on gathering wild foods to cope with the disruption of livelihood sources. This is reflective of 30% of assessed settlements reporting foraged food as the primary source of food (Figure 1) and 47% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reporting gathering of wild foods as a coping strategy (Figure 2). These proportions are the highest proportions across all assessed counties in Unity State between May and July, indicative of increasingly severe food consumption gaps in Mayom.

With no food stock from own cultivation left at the peak of the lean season, 32% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported selling additional livestock to purchase food. Due to the reportedly small herd sizes, the selling of additional livestock, traditionally considered a livelihood, has become a coping strategy, especially for poorer household, which lose their last savings and important food source by selling the few remaining animals they have left.

Mayom County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Figure 2: Main livelihood-based coping strategies in assessed settlements without adequate access to food



Another common coping strategy is to borrow food from relatives, which was reportedly practised in 24% of assessed settlements between May and July, as shown by Figure 2. Women reportedly travelled as far as Bentiu PoC site, a day and a half walk, to receive food from relatives there, which exposed them to gender-based violence and looting along the travel route, according to FGDs.

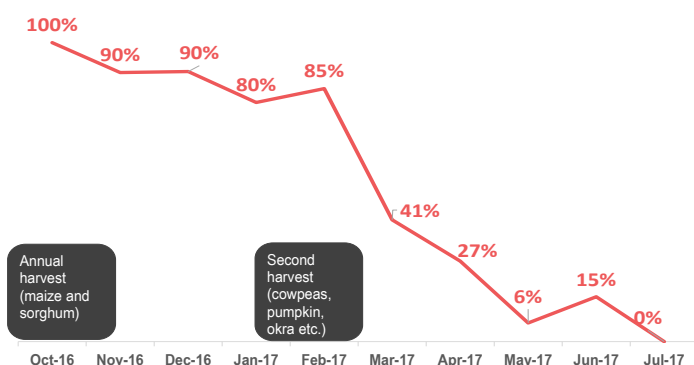
Food Security Overview

Food Availability and Access

The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food in Mayom has dropped drastically over the past 11 months, from all of assessed settlements in October 2016 down to none in July 2017⁵, likely due to a rapid depletion of food stocks during the lean season. Adequate access to food was reportedly highest from October to February, when between 100% and 85% of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food, likely attributable to crop and vegetable harvests around these months.

The sharp decrease in adequate access to food appears to have occurred despite rapid response missions that were deployed to Mayom mostly on a - however often irregular⁶ - 90-days delivery cycle. A recent assessment conducted in Mayom town in June 2017 further found that on average the food received through food distributions lasted for only two weeks.⁷ This finding might be closely related to coping strategies described above, which suggest that many families share received food with other family members, likely leading to a quicker depletion of food stocks.

Figure 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food



Assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported a number of consumption-based coping strategies in July (Figure 4), such as skipping meals in 67% of assessed settlements, limiting meals sizes (56%), skipping entire days of eating (44%) and letting only children eat (11%). The majority of these coping strategies, including skipping meals, skipping entire days of eating and letting only children eat, are

Map 2: Level of access to food

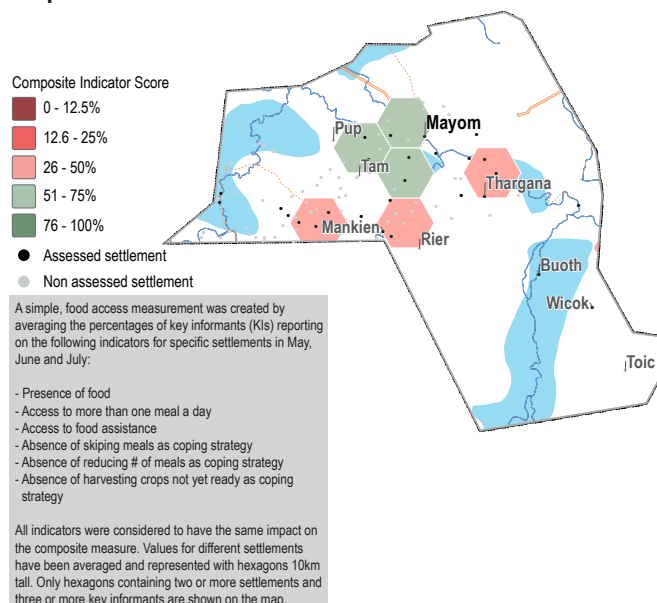


Figure 4: Main consumption-based coping strategies in assessed settlements without adequate access to food



often considered severe strategies and are only used in emergencies, which suggests severe food consumption gaps in large proportions of assessed settlements.

Stability of Food Access

Adequate access to food deteriorated continuously from February to July 2017 with the progression of the lean season. Over half (51%) of assessed settlements in Mayom reported that at least some members of the community engaged in subsistence farming and following seasonal patterns access to food will likely improve towards August and September with the first harvests for the year. Due to observed reduction in maize yield caused by dry spells, crop yields will probably however be limited, reducing the ability to replenish food stocks fully.

Furthermore, assessed settlements depended on selling productive assets to purchase food. Unsustainable coping strategies will likely continue, limiting households' ability to recover access to livelihoods.

1 Fewset, South Sudan Livelihood Zone and Description, August 2013.

2 FGD, August 2017.

3 FAO, The Impact of Conflict on Livestock in South Sudan, February 2016.

4 ACTED, RNA Mayom county, March 2017.

5 In July only nine settlements (9% of full OCHA settlement list) were assessed, less settlements than the months before, which might have contributed to low reported adequate access to food.

6 Distributions in Mayom town (approximately 50,000 caseload) took place at the end of March and end of August 2017.

7 DRC, RNA Mayom town, June 2016.



Rubkona County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Unity State, South Sudan, May-July 2017

of KI interviews conducted: 199
of assessed settlements: 73
of FGDs conducted: 2

Livelihoods Overview

Typical Livelihoods

Located along the western floodplains of the Nile in the centre-north of Unity State, pre-crisis livelihoods in Rubkona were traditionally characterized by agriculture, rearing of livestock and employment in the oil industry. Main crops grown were maize and sorghum, which were harvested starting from August until October. Traditionally, Rubkona produced a maize surplus, which was sold in external markets. Cowpeas, pumpkin and okra vegetables were furthermore cultivated on smaller scale with harvests starting from January. The maize harvests of poorer households usually lasted until February after which they relied on market purchases of staple food and vegetables until August. Main sources of income included sale of firewood and/or elephant grass, domestic work as well as employment in oil fields. Lake Rubkona and other smaller water sources furthermore provided a source for fishing.¹

Hazards (Shocks)

- Conflict spilled over from Juba to Unity State in December 2013.
- Throughout 2014 and 2015, villages were attacked, and food resources and seed stocks as well as most of the livestock were looted or destroyed.²
- A large proportion of the population from Rubkona County sought protection in Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) site, which is located in Rubkona County, with no access to cultivation.³
- Dry spells in 2017 are having a negative effect on crop growth.

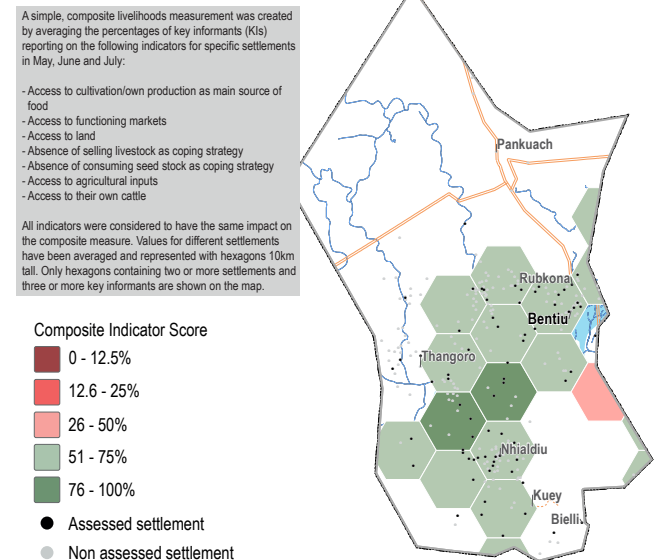
Vulnerability (Resilience)

Conflict and displacement over recent years in northern Unity State resulted in a disruption of cultivation as well as loss of agricultural assets such as seeds and tools. While 70% of assessed settlements in Rubkona reported that at least some members of the community engage in cultivation, FGD participants emphasized that conflict has severely limited its scale. Reflective of this, nearly three quarters (70%) of assessed settlements with no access to food reported that insecurity was a top three reason for a reduction in access to food, including destruction of crops by armed actors, unsafe planting environments and looting. Extensive forced recruitment in Rubkona has also led many men to seek protection inside Bentiu PoC site or to hide in the bush, which reduced households' ability to cultivate enough land and subsequently led to lower harvest outputs and lower food stock levels. As a consequence only 12% of assessed settlements reported own production as a primary food source between May and July (Figure 1).

Extensive cattle raiding in 2014 and 2015 led to large losses of livestock among communities in Rubkona. According to AoK data, only half (52%) of assessed settlements reported that at least some members of the community engaged in livestock rearing. Due to the importance of cattle in South Sudanese diet, culture and economic activity, depletion of cattle ownership suggests a reduction in wealth and resilience against shocks across assessed settlements.⁴

Pre-crisis, Rubkona was home to some of the most productive oil fields in South Sudan and was a strong contributor to formal employment in the region. However, the outbreak of heavy fighting led

Map 1: Level of livelihood vulnerability



to closure of the fields and production has not been resumed since. As a result, employment opportunities are minimal, reflected by only 6% of assessed settlements reporting that some members of the community are engaged in formal employment positions.

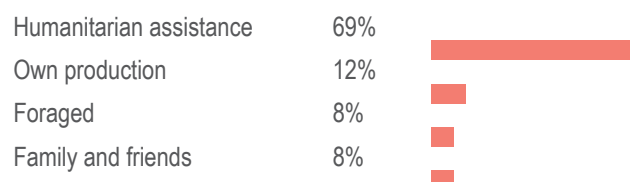
Notwithstanding conflict, which led to the disruption of supply chains, two important markets have recovered in Rubkona town and Bentiu town. The markets are functional and have become important suppliers to other smaller markets in Rubkona County, Guit County and Koch County.⁵ However, only less than half of the assessed settlements (47%) reported access, likely due to large distance from remote settlements, especially from the southern and western parts of Rubkona. Because of the distance to markets coupled with low purchasing power and hyper inflation⁶, only 1% of the assessed settlements reported purchased food as a primary food source between May and July, indicative of shifts in traditional lean season livelihood patterns.

All of the above indicate that traditional livelihoods in Rubkona have been limited due to insecurity, lack of agricultural assets and livestock coupled with poor economy which reduced the population's capacity to meet their basic needs.

Coping Strategies

Livelihood-based coping strategies are limited in Rubkona. One of the strategies is gathering of wild foods (especially water lily and fish), which has been the primary food source in 8% of assessed settlements between May and July (Figure 1). However, FGD participants explained that due to dried out riverbanks in parts of Rubkona it has become increasingly complicated to access these wild foods. For better opportunities to fish, some men therefore venture to Guit County, often for several weeks, to bring back dried fish for their families from there.

Figure 1: Reported main source of food



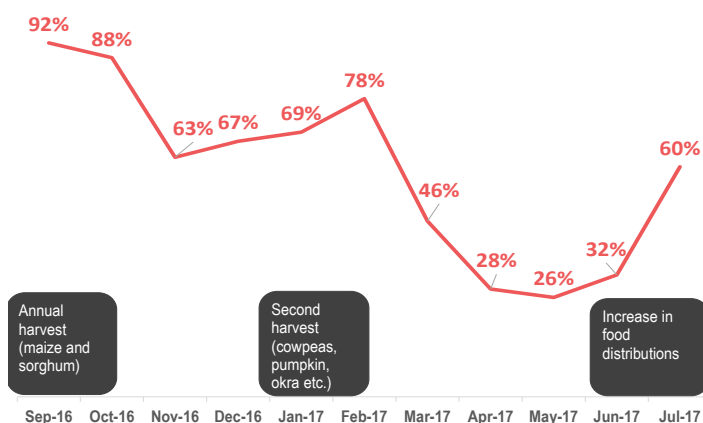
Rubkona County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Food Security Overview

Food Availability and Access

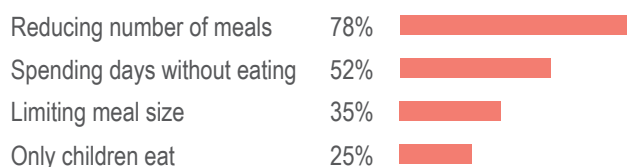
The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food in Rubkona has heavily fluctuated over the past 11 months (Figure 2). Access to food was reported lowest in May, when only 26% of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food, due to the depletion of lower than average food stocks during the lean season. Peaks in reported adequate access to food around September and February are likely attributable to maize and vegetable harvests, which might have complemented food aid distributions. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food has increased since May to 60% in July, likely exclusively due to increase in food aid distributions, which has become the main food source in the majority (69%) of assessed settlements between May and July.

Figure 2: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food.



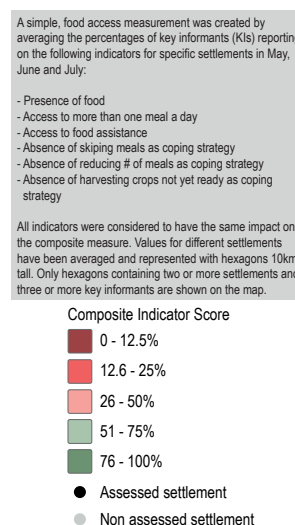
Also attributable to an increase in humanitarian assistance, 84% of assessed settlements reported consuming two meals a day. However, assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food also reported members engaging in a number of severe consumption-based coping strategies such as skipping meals (in 78%), skipping entire days of eating (52%), limiting meal sizes (35%) or letting only children eat (25%), which suggest that despite access to humanitarian assistance and reported number of meals there are still large consumption gaps within assessed settlements. (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Main reported consumption-based coping strategies in assessed settlements without adequate access to food



Geographically, it appears that settlements closer to Bentiu PoC site and Bentiu town have better access to food and less severe reported food-consumption coping strategies (Map 2), reflective of the high concentration of humanitarian assistance in these two areas. Out of a total of 210,627 people biometrically registered for food distribution in Rubkona in July, 97% received their food distribution in the central-eastern part of Rubkona (Bentiu PoC site, Bentiu and Rubkona towns, Ding Ding). In

Map 2: Level of access to food



comparison, food distributions in Nhialdiu (in the south) supplied only 3% (5,708) of the total registered population. Although this likely reflects demographic distributions - Bentiu PoC site, Bentiu town and Rubkona town areas are more densely populated - this also suggests that remote settlements in the south might have more difficulties to register for distributions.

Assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food nevertheless reported a poor diet quality, which is reflective of the rapid depletion of food stocks and sudden increase in humanitarian assistance. All assessed settlements with adequate access to food reported staple food (sorghum) was consumed, while 35% of assessed settlements reported regular consumption of pulses (beans or lentils) and one-third used oil to cook. Other food types are reportedly only consumed in small proportions, such as dairy products (in 17%), fish (14%), vegetable (9%) and meat (3%). FGD participants reported that the one-sided nutrition of sorghum and especially the absence of dairy products disproportionately affects children, which often show signs of malnutrition.

Stability of Food Access

Access to food has reportedly improved from May to July. Although this improvement marks a positive development, this is however likely exclusively due to humanitarian assistance as other alternative food sources, especially cultivated food stock were getting depleted quickly during the lean season. Should food aid stop, settlements would likely experience a severe reduction in food availability. Following seasonal patterns access to food will probably improve towards September and October with the first harvests for the year, which will complement food received during distributions. However, as a result of the decreased scale of cultivation and recent dry spells during the growing period, crop yields will likely be limited, which will impact future lean seasons in the longer term.

1 Fewset, South Sudan Livelihood Zone and Description, August 2013.
 2 FGD, August 2017; HRW, "They Burned it All", July 2015.
 3 IOM, Bentiu PoC site profile for July indicates that as of mid-July almost 46,000 inhabitants are originally from Rubkona.
 4 FAO, Impact of conflict on livestock sector, South Sudan, February 2016.
 5 DRC, Market assessment report, Rubkona, Guit and Koch, May 2017.
 6 Year on year inflation rate of 362% and a food inflation rate of 358%, according to VAM, South Sudan market price monitoring, July 2017.



Guit County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Unity State, South Sudan, May-July 2017

of KI interviews conducted: 141
of assessed settlements: 52
of FGDs conducted: 2

Livelihoods Overview

Typical Livelihoods

Located along the Nile basin in the northeast of Unity State, pre-crisis livelihoods in Guit were traditionally characterized by fishing, agriculture and rearing of livestock. The river Nile and other smaller rivers provided a source for fishing, which often served as the main food source especially for poorer households as well as a source of income through selling fish in the market. The crops grown during the rainy season were mainly maize and sorghum, which were harvested between September and November. Cultivation of pumpkin, cowpeas and okra mainly took place during the dry season, with first harvests starting from January. The maize harvests of poorer households usually lasted until February, after which they purchased staple food and vegetables on markets until the next harvest cycle. Main sources of income for those households included sale of fish, goats, charcoal, firewood, papyrus mats and local brew, while richer households relied on the selling of livestock products such as milk, ghee and yoghurt, as well as trade and few cases of formal employment.¹

Hazards (Shocks)

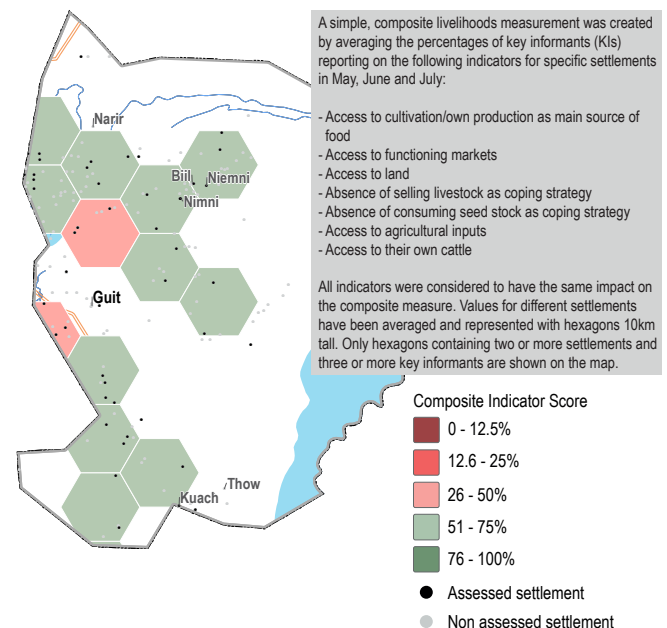
- Conflict spilled over from Juba to Unity State in December 2013.
- Throughout 2014 and 2015, most villages were attacked and food resources and seed stocks as well as most of the livestock looted.²
- A large proportion of the population from Guit County sought protection in Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) site, in Rubkona County, with no access to cultivation.³
- Renewed upsurge in violence in July 2016 led to further waves of displacement.
- Dry spells in 2017 are having a negative effect on crop growth.

Vulnerability (Resilience)

Insecurity and conflict severely hampered traditional livelihoods in Guit. The renewed upsurge in violence in July 2016 - in the midst of the cultivation season - led to renewed wave of displacement and loss of productive assets. Reflective of this, two-third of assessed settlements with no access to food reported that destruction of crops by armed actors and unsafe planting conditions were the main reasons for inadequate access to food, which contributed to low harvest yields in 2016. As a result, only 6% of assessed settlements reported own production as the main food source between May and July, indicating that food stocks have been rapidly depleted with the progression of the lean season.

Extensive cattle raiding and looting of settlements between 2014 and 2016 drastically reduced livestock ownership in Guit. FGD participants reported that before the crisis almost all families possessed some cattle, however, only 32% of assessed settlements reported that at least some

Map 1: Level of livelihoods vulnerability



members of the community are engaging in livestock rearing between May and July. According to FGD participants, the lack of livestock negatively affected resilience against shocks, such as low harvest yields or sudden health expenditures, which were usually covered with additional sale of livestock.

Furthermore, access to functioning markets is limited in Guit, where reportedly on average only 18% of assessed settlements had access to markets between May and July, the lowest reported proportion among all assessed counties in Unity State. The main market in Guit town had been abandoned by traders after the outbreak of conflict in December 2013 and has not been reopened since. A new market has opened in Nyng town, however it reportedly has limited supplies.⁴ As result of absence of markets, coupled with low purchasing power and hyperinflation⁵, only 6% of assessed settlements reported purchased food as a primary food source between May and July.

All of the above indicate that traditional livelihoods in Guit have been limited due to insecurity, lack of agricultural assets and livestock coupled with poor economy, which reduced the population's capacity to meet consumption needs.

Coping Strategies

Livelihoods-based coping strategies are limited. To cover the reduction in livelihood sources, including limited access to cultivation and trade, the population in Guit relied heavily on foraging for wild food during the lean season. Foraged food was reportedly the main food source in the majority of assessed settlements (67%) in May while reported reliance on foraged food has since decreased to only 10% of assessed settlements in July (Figure 1). This decrease is likely attributable to the increase in food distributions, which might have decreased the need to forage for food. FGDs however additionally indicated that the main wild food type, namely waterlily, is not available anymore due to its seasonality, while there is increased competition over other wild foods such as "net" (leaves of a tree) and "leaw" (similar to onion).

Other commonly reported coping strategies include eating less expensive food in 29% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food and borrowing money in 15%.

Figure 1: Reported main source of food

	May	June	July
Humanitarian assistance	22%	42%	77%
Foraged	67%	16%	10%
Purchased	6%	11%	3%
Own production	6%	11%	3%

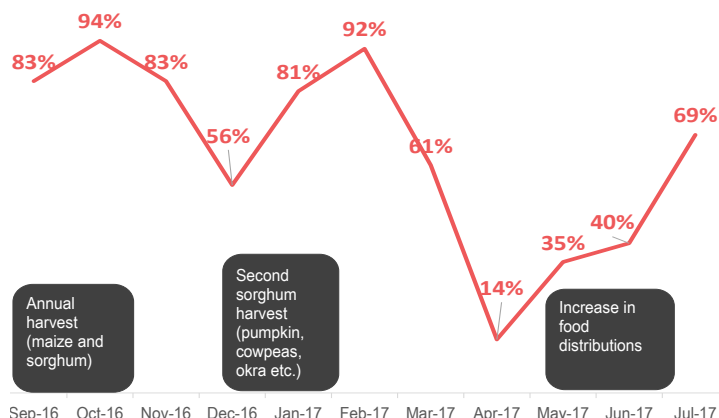
Guit County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Food Security Overview

Food Availability and Access

The proportion of assessed settlements in Guit reporting adequate access to food has heavily fluctuated over the past 11 months (Figure 2). It had been lowest around April, when only 14% of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food and has steadily increased to 69% in July. Peaks in reported adequate access around October and February are likely attributable to crop and vegetable harvests which might have complemented food aid. Unlike spikes in October and February, the increase in adequate access to food from April to July is likely exclusively due to increased food aid. FSL partners operating in Guit confirmed that new registrations took place in December and May, which has likely contributed to the increase in access to food around these months. As a result, food aid has become the main food source in the majority of assessed settlements in June (42%) and July (77%) (Figure 1).

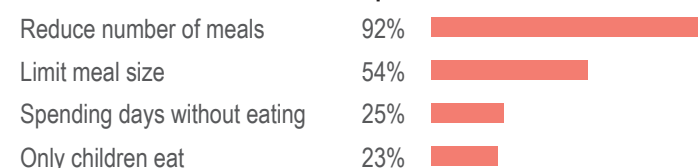
Figure 2: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food



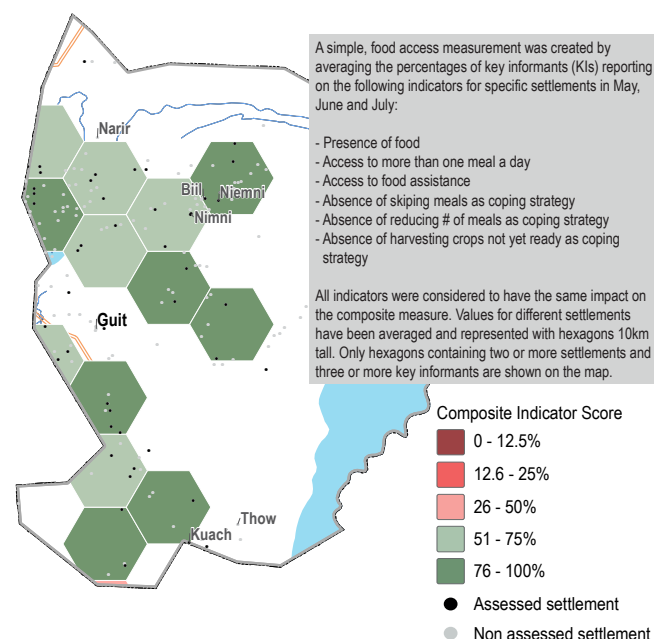
The majority (92%) of assessed settlements reported consuming two meals per day between May and July, indicating comparatively better food access than other parts of the country. However, a large proportion of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported a number of consumption-based coping strategies (Figure 3), such as skipping meals (in 92% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food) or limiting meals sizes (54%), which suggests severe food consumption gaps.

The diets of assessed settlements with adequate access to food reflect increased reliance on food assistance. The main food type regularly consumed in all assessed settlements with adequate access to food was staple food (sorghum), while only 27% of assessed settlements reported regular consumption of pulses (beans or lentils) in July. Other

Figure 3: Main consumption-based coping strategies in assessed settlement without adequate access to food



Map 2: Level of access to food



food types, such as dairy products, vegetables, fish and meat, are reportedly only consumed in small proportions of assessed settlements with adequate access to food (in respectively 19%, 16%, 15% and 4%). FGD participants explained that the one-sided nutrition of sorghum and especially the absence of dairy products disproportionately affected children, which often showed signs of malnutrition.

FGDs further indicated that people in Guit had started to consume premature maize to cover for food consumption gaps which will negatively impact harvest yields for this year.

Stability of Food Access

Access to food has improved from April to July, almost exclusively due to increased distributions. Other alternative food sources, especially food stocked from own production have rapidly depleted during the lean season. Should food aid stop, it would therefore be likely that settlements would experience a severe reduction in food availability. Following seasonal patterns access to food will probably improve towards September and October with the first harvests for the year, which will complement food received during distributions. Due to continued insecurity and reduced acreage coupled with observed reduction in maize harvest due to dry spells, crop yields will likely be limited, which will impact future lean seasons in the longer term.

1 Fewset, South Sudan Livelihood Zone and Description, August 2013.

2 FGD, August 2017, HRW, "They Burned it All", July 2015.

3 As of mid-July, over 18,000 IDPs in Bentiu PoC site are reportedly from Guit County (see IOM, Bentiu County Profile, July 2017).

4 DRC, Market assessment report, Rubkona, Guit and Koch, May 2017.

5 Year on year inflation rate of 362% and a food inflation rate of 358%, according to VAM, South Sudan market price monitoring, July 2017



Koch County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Unity State, South Sudan, May-July 2017

of KI interviews conducted: 88
of assessed settlements: 42
of FGDs conducted: 1

Livelihoods Overview

Typical Livelihoods

Koch is a part of the oil resources, cattle and maize livelihood zone¹ characterised by a combination of forest, bush scrub and grasslands, with natural resources including oil, timber, gum arabic, fish in Lake Rubkona and special grasses suitable for thatching. Pre-crisis, the predominant livelihood was mixed farming, a combination of crop and livestock rearing. Traditionally, agro-pastoralist livelihoods in Koch did not generate sufficient food stocks to carry households (HHs) through the lean season, as a result HHs depended on markets to cover consumption gaps. Traders from Bentiu and Mayom supplied staple foods to the main markets in Koch, including Koch town, Rier and Bieh, and HH members could also engage in casual labour at markets. Pre-crisis, some HH members were also employed by a nearby oil production facility, however, since the onset of the conflict the refinery has been abandoned.

Hazards (Shocks)

- Koch has experienced continued conflict since 2013, including an upsurge of conflict during the first half of 2017.
- Hyperinflation, insecurity and seasonality of roads have severely depleted local market capacity, including the inflow of goods from secondary markets.
- Dry spells in 2017 are having a negative effect on crop growth.

Vulnerability (Resilience)

As a result of the continued conflict in Koch County, assessed settlements have experienced a severe disruption of livelihood sources and limited market capacity. Nearly two-thirds (69%) of assessed settlements reported unsafe planting environments and the destruction of crops as the primary reasons for inadequate access to food. In addition, of the 42% of assessed settlements without agricultural inputs, such as seeds and tools, 80% indicated that agricultural inputs were looted, abandoned or hidden, reinforcing that conflict is negatively affecting the ability to cultivate. As a result, only 53% of assessed settlements were engaged in subsistence farming (Figure 1). Furthermore, according to KIs cattle raiding and livestock looting continue to be serious concerns

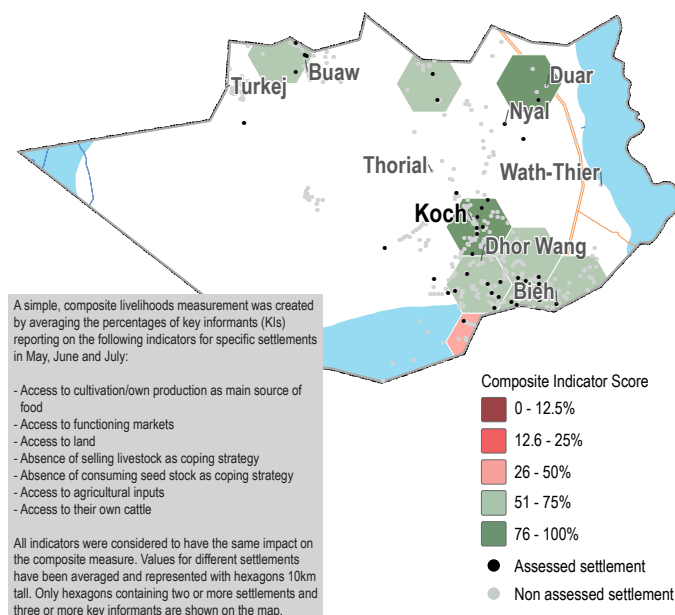
Figure 1: Main livelihood sources reported by assessed settlements

Subsistence farming	53 %	<div style="width: 53%;"></div>
Livestock rearing	37 %	<div style="width: 37%;"></div>
Casual labour	28 %	<div style="width: 28%;"></div>
Fishing or hunting	15 %	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>
Remittances	11 %	<div style="width: 11%;"></div>

Figure 2: Top livelihood coping strategies in assessed settlements without adequate access to food

Borrowing money	18 %	<div style="width: 18%;"></div>
Borrowing food	11 %	<div style="width: 11%;"></div>
Selling livestock	12 %	<div style="width: 12%;"></div>

Map 1: Level of livelihood vulnerability



among assessed settlements, with only 53% reporting ownership and access to their herds, and 37% engaging in livestock rearing. Overall, insecurity disrupts livelihood sources, pushing assessed settlements to rely on other means to meet basic needs.

The decrease in market capacity due to hyperinflation² and disruption of trade routes limit assessed settlements' ability to engage in commerce to cover consumption gaps³. More than one third (40%) of assessed settlements reported no access to markets, while those with access to markets indicated that prices continue to rise. Nearly all (97%) assessed settlements with access to markets reported an increase in the price of sugar, 97% reported the price of oil increased or oil was unavailable, and 88% reported an increase in price or unavailability of sorghum. The continued increase in the price of commodities is diminishing settlements' ability to supplement reduced livelihood sources through the purchase of staple foods at markets.

Coping Strategies

According to AoK data, assessed settlements without adequate access to food are employing livelihood based coping strategies to mitigate the shift in access to livelihood sources. Over a quarter (29%) of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported borrowing food or money from friends and relatives (Figure 2), suggesting that social networks are still comparatively strong. In addition, 12% reported generating additional cash through selling livestock; although low, these proportions are relatively high compared to other counties in Unity State. This suggests that assessed settlements without adequate access to food are relying on social networks and excess selling of productive assets to match the continued increase in commodity prices.

In addition, even with moderate market access and additional income, assessed settlements still rely heavily on humanitarian aid to cope with the disruption of livelihood sources. Seventy two percent (72%) reported access to humanitarian assistance and 68% indicated it as their primary source of food (Figure 3), suggesting that assessed settlements main method of subsistence is ongoing access to aid.

Koch County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Food Security Overview

Food Availability and Access

The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food in Koch has notably increased after February, from 21% in of assessed settlements in February to 59% in June, up to 76% in July. This increase in reported adequate access to food is however likely exclusively due to the upscale in humanitarian assistance through rapid response missions, which took place after localized famine had been declared in central Unity State. As a result, 68% of assessed settlements reported humanitarian assistances as the primary food source, while only 4% reported own production (Figure 3).

Assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported moderate coping strategies which reflected the need to reduce current consumption to extend the availability of food stocks. These strategies include reducing meal sizes (65%), eating less expensive or preferred food (29%) and limiting portion sizes (29%), suggesting food consumption gaps in assessed settlements with non-adequate access to food.

Gathering wild foods was also reported by 38% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food, reflective of 11% of assessed settlements reporting foraging as the primary source of food. According to FGD participants, waterlillies, and the fruit and leaves from the Lalup tree are readily eaten, which KIs emphasized are associated with periods of severe food shortages.

Food types consumed by assessed settlements with adequate access to food suggest a reasonable diet diversity, reflecting the moderate cattle ownership combined with increased humanitarian assistance. All assessed settlements consumed staple foods, 53% consumed pulses, 44% drank milk and 22% used oil. Fruits were consumed to a lesser extent (10%), and vegetables were not reported to be consumed in any

Map 2: Level of access to food

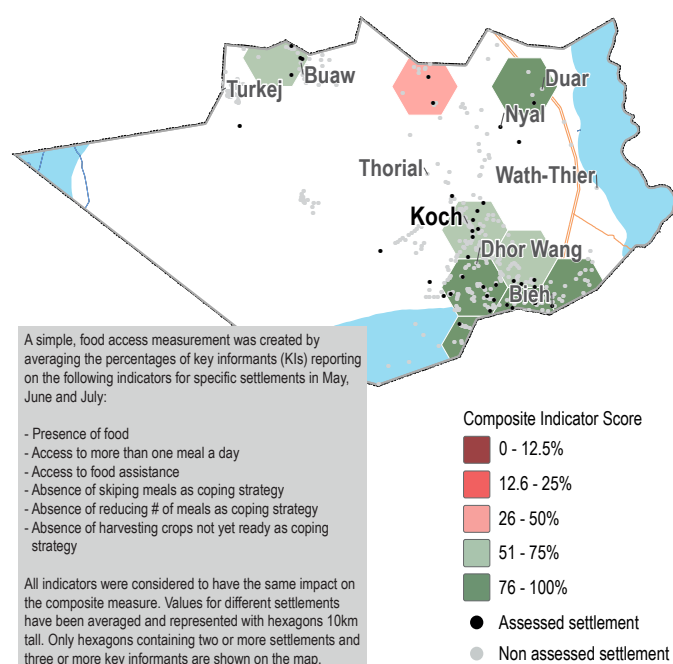
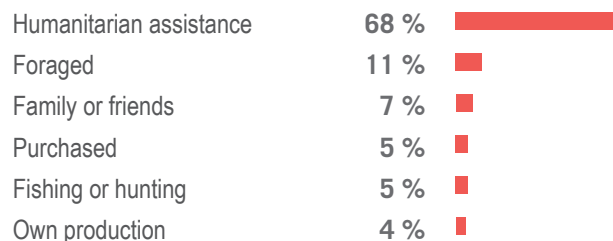


Figure 3: Primary source of food reported by assessed settlements



of the assessed settlements. Furthermore, as aforementioned, reliance on foraging as the primary source of food (i.e. gathering wild leaves) was relatively low (11%), suggesting access to food groups with a higher nutritional value.

Over half (51%) of assessed settlements reported gastrointestinal health concerns, including stomach pains, diarrhoea and suspected cholera. These issues are likely linked to the consistently high levels of open defecation with 95% of assessed settlements reportedly not using latrines, which can reduce local water quality and increase the spread of gastrointestinal diseases. As a result, the benefits of an increase in access to food and moderate diet diversity are limited by the inability to absorb key nutrients from food.

Stability of Food Access

Assessed settlements in Koch reported limited cultivation and a dry spell in June which reportedly damaged local crops, suggesting expected crop yields will be low. As a result, it is likely that there will not be sufficient food stocks for the lean season and assessed settlements will continue to rely on food aid to meet consumption gaps.

Furthermore, local market capacity remains strained. In April 2017, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) conducted a rapid market assessment on three key markets in Koch (Rier, Bieh and Koch town) to understand market capacity relating to cash based transfers (CBTs). The report indicated that Bieh could not fully support an increase in demand from a CBTs, Koch town could partially support one, and Rier had a more favourable capacity³. This suggests market capacity is partially conducive to improve in the longer term, however, due to the continued increase in commodity prices and unpredictability of supply chains it is unlikely assessed settlements will be able to readily access food and non-food items through trade in the near to medium term.

If conflict stabilizes and market capacity continues to increase then access to food could also improve in the medium to long term. However, if insecurity peaks during the dry season then it is likely that assessed settlements will experience a reduction in access to food, through a decrease in food stocks linked to looting and disruption of supply chains. As a result, assessed settlements would likely revert to similar coping strategies reported in January and February 2017, including consuming seed stocks, begging and skipping meals.

1 FEWSNET Livelihood Zones Report 2013.

2 Year on year inflation rate of 362% and a food inflation rate of 358%, according to VAM, South Sudan market price monitoring, July 2017.

3 WFP VAM Price Update June 2017.

4 DRC, Rapid Market Assessment Report to investigate the feasibility of cash based interventions in Guit, Koch and Rubkona Counties, April 2017.



Mayendit County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Unity State, South Sudan, May-July 2017

of KI interviews conducted: 107
of assessed settlements: 49
of FGDs conducted: 4

Livelihoods Overview

Typical Livelihoods

Households (HHs) in Mayendit traditionally practiced agro-pastoralist livelihoods, consisting of smallholder farming and livestock rearing¹. Pre-crisis, HHs engaged in cultivation from May through September to build up food stocks for the year. Most HHs produced insufficient crop yields to carry them through the lean season and traded livestock and engaged in casual labour combined with minor coping strategies to fill consumption gaps. Major market hubs included Mayom and Bentiu with smaller secondary markets within Mayendit and nearby Leer. At these markets HHs traded crops and livestock for additional staple foods and essential non-food items (NFIs), such as shelter material and medicine.

Hazards (Shocks)

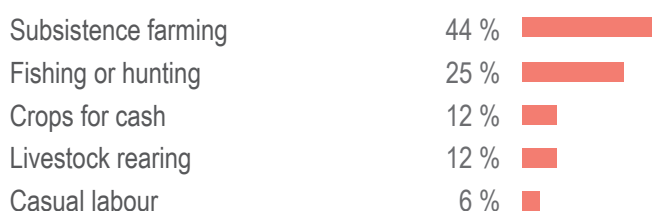
- An outbreak of conflict in 2015, followed by an upsurge of insecurity in March 2017 severely disrupted livelihood sources and trade.
- Prolonged food insecurity has led to the depletion of some food items, such as fish and water lilies, often consumed to cope with a lack of other types of foods
- Continued insecurity has disrupted access to humanitarian assistance.

Vulnerability (Resilience)

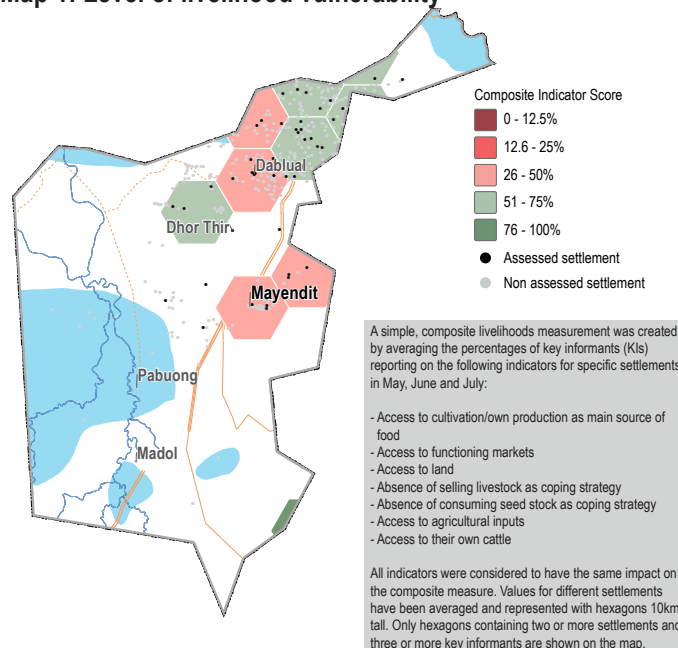
As a result of increased insecurity, the majority of assessed settlements were unable to cultivate or rear livestock. The destruction of crops, unsafe planting environments and looting by armed actors were reported by 48% of assessed settlements as primary reasons for inadequate access to food. Additionally, around two-thirds (63%) of assessed settlements reported no access to agricultural inputs, and three-quarters (74%) indicated that tools were looted, abandoned or hidden, all indicators of insecurity within the area. Furthermore, only 15% of assessed settlements owned and had access to their cattle, likely linked to increased cattle raiding. As a result, only 44% of assessed settlements engaged in subsistence farming, 12% in livestock rearing and 25% relied on fishing or hunting.

Furthermore, 62% of assessed settlements did not have access to markets. Assessed settlements with access to markets experienced a continued rise in prices, including the price of sugar and oil increasing in 84% and 63% of assessed settlements with

Figure 1: Main livelihood sources in assessed settlements



Map 1: Level of livelihood vulnerability



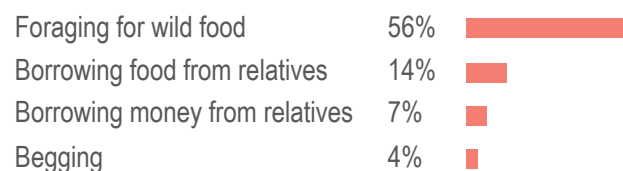
access to markets, respectively. Sorghum was also unavailable or increased in price in 47% of assessed settlements. This is likely a combination of macroeconomic instability, prolonged conflict and disrupted trade routes which have led to a severe reduction in available goods and increased commodity prices². Additionally, minimal access to cattle coupled with limited market access prevent assessed settlements from selling additional livestock to cover consumption gaps. As a result, assessed settlements have minimal ability to engage in traditional livelihoods or trade, limiting their options for mitigating adverse shocks.

Coping Strategies

Assessed settlements heavily relied on gathering wild foods to cope with the disruption of livelihood sources. This is reflective of 23% of assessed settlements reporting foraged food as the primary source of food (Figure 3) and 56% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reporting gathering of wild foods as a coping strategy (Figure 2). FGD participants indicated that due to competition over wild foods and fish, the collected amounts are often insufficient to meet the consumption needs.

Other livelihood-based coping strategies include borrowing food from friends or relatives (14%), borrowing money (7%) and begging (4%), to compensate for adverse livelihood shocks. The low usage of those livelihood based coping strategies is likely attributable to limited access to markets and general low

Figure 2: Main livelihood-based coping strategies in assessed settlements without adequate access to food



Mayendit County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

availability of resources. According to FGD participants, HHs do rely less on borrowing from kinship or neighbours than before because no one has excess food to spare, a change from previous years when it was common to borrow food. Additionally, borrowing money or selling livestock to generate extra revenue is not an effective strategy due to the limited supply of commodities at markets.

Food Security Overview

Food Availability and Access

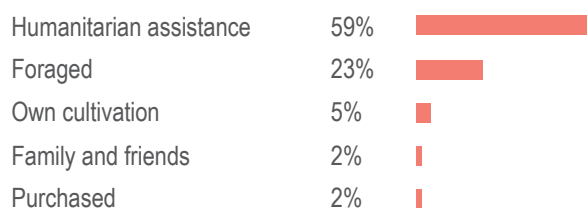
The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food increased from on average 23% from January to March to on average 57% for May through July, largely attributable to the upscale in humanitarian assistance in response to the declaration of localized famine in Mayendit in February. As a result, 59% of assessed settlements reported humanitarian assistance as primary food source from May to July (Figure 3), compared to only 19% reporting the same from December to February (before the upscale), suggesting increased reliance on food distributions.

Despite improvements in reported adequate access to food, 41% of assessed settlements reportedly consume only one or less meals a day on average, which is the lowest reported proportions in Unity State, suggesting severe food consumption gaps. Similarly, assessed settlements without adequate access to food also reported a number of consumption-based coping strategies, such as reducing the number of meals eaten in a day (in 44%), limiting meal sizes (43%) and spending whole days without eating (26%).

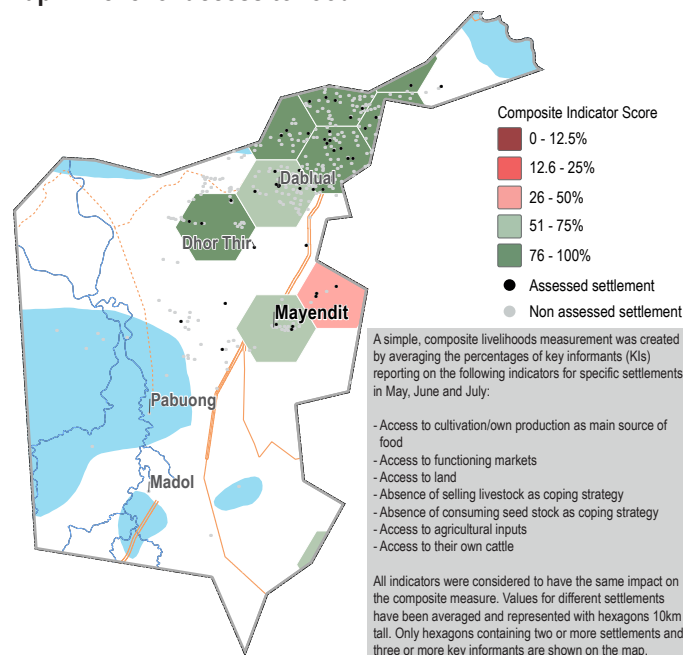
Reflective of reliance on food distributions, the reported food types consumed by assessed settlements with adequate access to food are mainly staples in all assessed settlements, followed by pulses in 69%, while 59% used oil to cook. To lesser extent assessed settlements consumed fish (13%), vegetables (3%), meat (3%) and milk/dairy (3%). This suggests that food diversity in assessed settlements with adequate access to food remained poor.

In addition, 61% of assessed settlements reported diarrhoea, suspected cholera or stomach pains as the top three reported health concern. This is likely attributable to the lack of access to clean drinking water and latrines, with less than half (45%) of assessed settlements reporting access to clean water and 87% reporting using latrines, a proxy for open defecation. This raises concerns as to the ability of HHs in assessed settlements to absorb key nutrients and limits the benefits of an increased access to food.

Figure 3: Reported main source of food



Map 2: Level of access to food



Stability of Food Access

Across assessed settlements availability and access to food has reportedly increased, yet, there is a high reliance on general food distribution (GFDs) and foraging as primary sources of food, suggesting that the current access to food is not sustainable in the long run. While rains have reportedly been normal throughout the cultivation period, agriculture is minimal due to high levels of insecurity. Therefore, expected crop yields are low, likely reducing the ability of HHs to stockpile for the upcoming lean season.

Moreover, it is likely that clashes between armed actors will increase during the dry season, further inhibiting HHs from returning to productive livelihood sources. According to KIs, in locations where there is no access to GFDs due to insecurity, local resources have been depleted, forcing HHs to travel long distances to find food. Although access to food seems to have improved in assessed settlements since early 2017, HHs' ability to cope with additional adverse shocks remains concerning, particularly in settlements isolated from humanitarian assistance.

1 FEWSNET Livelihood Zones Report 2013.

2 World Food Program Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Unit, Price Bulletin July 2017.

3 Wild Foods in South Sudan, Oxfam 2015.



Leer County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Unity State, South Sudan, May-July 2017

of KI interviews conducted: 171
of assessed settlements: 64
of FGDs conducted: 3

Livelihoods Overview

Typical Livelihoods

Pre-crisis livelihood activity in Leer involved a mixture of livestock rearing and smallholder farming¹. Unity state consistently had a cereal deficit², requiring it to import cereals from nearby regions. Households (HHs) travelled to key market hubs, such as Leer town, Bentiu and Mayom, to sell livestock off take in exchange for food. At markets HHs also engaged in labour to purchase additional food. During years of low rainfall, HHs reportedly used to increase fishing activity, while better off HHs sold additional livestock to purchase staple foods. Increased consumption of wild foods was also a common coping strategy during the lean season. These livelihood sources played a critical role in ensuring that HHs met food needs, both in times of abundance and during the lean season.

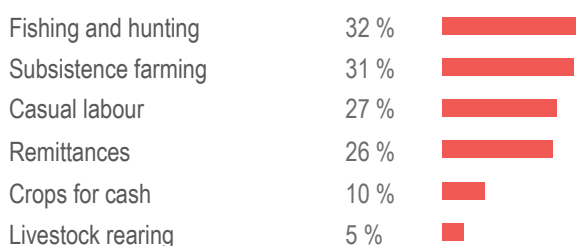
Hazards (Shocks)

- Since 2015 there has been continued conflict in central Unity.
- Flooding during the rainy season coupled with an upsurge in conflict in 2016 during the dry season caused a large portion of HHs to flee to Panyijiar County or to Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) site.
- Spikes in insecurity between end of 2016 and early 2017 in Leer forced the majority of remaining HHs to temporarily flee to nearby islands in Leer.

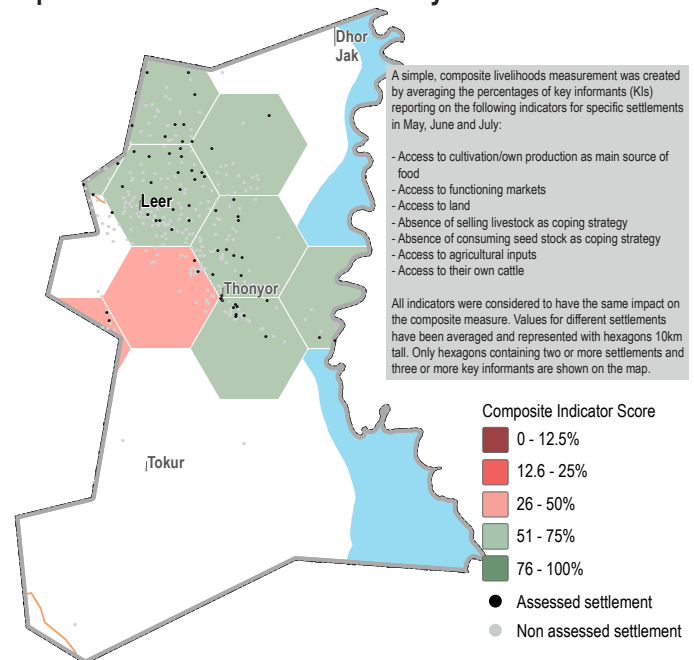
Vulnerability (Resilience)

Conflict continues to be the leading cause of a sustained disruption of livelihood sources and minimal market access in Leer. From May through July, an average of 40% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported that crops were destroyed by conflict, indicating a large reduction in expected crop yields. In addition, looting or abandonment were the main reasons for the lack of agricultural inputs in 86% of assessed settlements, limiting HHs' ability to cultivate. Furthermore, only 6% of assessed settlements reported ownership and access to cattle. Due to the importance of cattle in South Sudanese diet, culture and economic activity, the continued depletion of cattle ownership suggests a reduction in wealth across assessed settlements. A low percentage of assessed settlements reported engaging in traditional livelihood sources that promote food production and resilience to adverse shocks, with 32% considering fishing or hunting

Figure 1: Main livelihood sources reported by assessed settlements



Map 1: Level of livelihood vulnerability



a current livelihood source, and only 31% considering smallholder farming or livestock rearing (5%) as ongoing livelihood sources.

Traditionally, HHs in Leer sold livestock off take or engaged in casual labour at markets in exchange for staple foods. However, assessed settlements reported minimal access to livestock to trade for food. The breakdown of market capacity linked to continued insecurity, hyperinflation and seasonality of roads has disrupted the flow of goods to markets, such as Leer town. As a result, suppliers are no longer providing sufficient goods to secondary markets³. Prices of commodities continue to rise in 61% of assessed settlements reporting access to markets; the price of sugar reportedly increased in 91%, the price of oil in 60% and the price of sorghum in 41%. With no surplus crops to sell, minimal livestock ownership and only a quarter of assessed settlements reporting someone employed in casual labour, assessed settlements are unable to sell assets to generate additional revenue, further limiting HHs' access to food through markets.

Coping Strategies

HHs remaining in Leer often have limited options for coping with the disruption of livelihood sources. One strategy is to move to nearby islands in Leer county. According to FGDs, the islands protect HHs from armed actors and provide access to wild foods, such as water lilies and fish. However, there is no access to services, such as markets, health facilities and clean water, and transportation is minimal, leaving island settlements exposed to additional adverse shocks

Due to persistent insecurity and lack of livelihood options most assessed settlements rely heavily on humanitarian assistance. According to AoK data, 88% of assessed settlements reported general food distributions (GFDs) as their main source of food, instead of their own production. According to KIs, IDPs from Leer return from other locations solely to access humanitarian aid in Leer before heading back to Panyijiar or Bentiu PoC site. Without access to other livelihood options humanitarian aid appeared to be the primary coping vehicle for assessed settlements.

Leer County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Food Security Overview

Food Availability and Access

Leer has experienced a substantial increase in food availability, largely linked to the upscale of humanitarian aid. From May to July the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food rose from 67% to 100%, with most assessed settlements reportedly consuming two meals per day. However, food availability through local production is negligible, with only 31% of assessed settlements engaging in subsistence farming and none considering cultivation the primary source of food.

The decline in local food production and minimal market access coupled with an upscale of humanitarian aid have led to a change in food consumption patterns in Leer. The majority of assessed settlements with adequate access to food consumed food groups closely related to GFDs, such as staples (100%), pulses (77%) and oil (57%), and consumed minimal levels of fruit (1%), vegetables (3%), milk (3%) and meat (8%). Overall, consumption patterns have improved since early 2017 when on average from January to March 80% of assessed settlements with adequate access to food consumed fruit, likely linked to wild foods, and less than half (45%) reported eating staple food and none reported eating pulses. Although the food groups currently consumed have a relatively higher nutritional value, depending on a handful of food groups does not promote diet diversity.

The proportion of assessed settlements eating fish rose from May to July (18% to 53%) suggesting a higher reliance on fishing to cover consumption gaps. This is reflective of 38% of assessed settlements reporting a reliance on wild food consumption as a coping strategy. According to FGDs, HHs still consume water lilies despite an overall increase in food availability, particularly on island settlements, likely due to limited access to food sources from the mainland. According to KIs, due to rising water levels both fishing and gathering water lilies will likely decline in the near term.

Map 2: Level of access to food

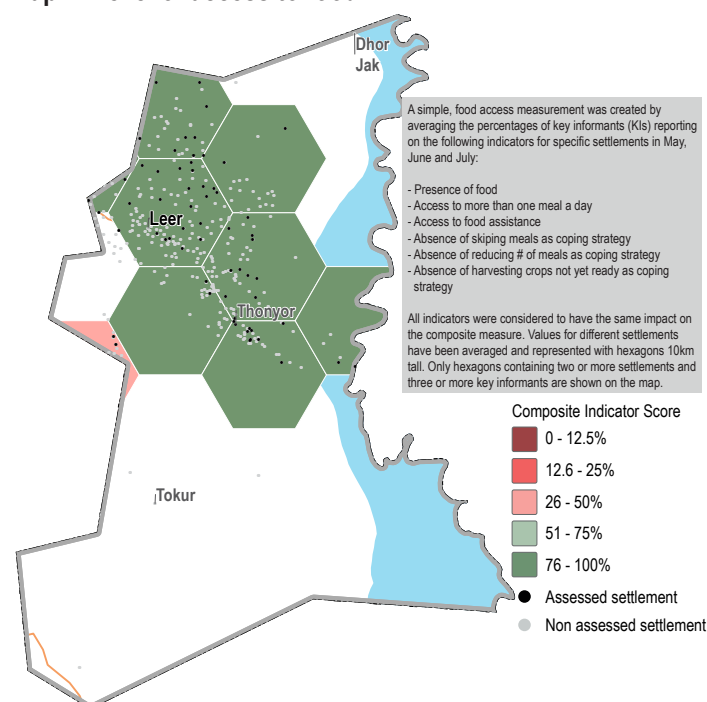
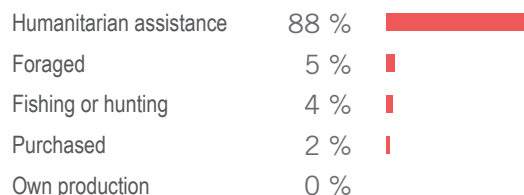


Figure 2: Primary source of food from May through July in assessed settlements



Across assessed settlements, 54% reported diarrhoea, suspected cholera or stomach pains as a top three health concern. This is likely linked to a combination of lack of access to cooking supplies and poor water quality also due to high levels of open defecation. As a result, assessed settlements are susceptible to gastrointestinal diseases, which decrease the absorption of key nutrients associated with elevated access to food.

Stability of Food Access

Overall, the increase in food availability in Leer is a promising upward trend. However, the continued dependency on humanitarian aid, low diet diversity and poor food utilization leave assessed settlements prone to adverse shocks.

It is quite evident that if humanitarian aid ceased, assessed settlements would experience a severe reduction in food availability. Ideally, continued effort by partner organizations to increase access to agricultural inputs would decrease reliance on food aid and promote sustainable livelihoods. Unfortunately, the cultivation period is nearly over, and based on livelihood sources and percentage of assessed settlements reporting that crops have been destroyed it is likely that crop yields will be limited this year.

In the event of an upsurge of conflict during the dry season, it is likely that there will be a further disruption of market access, livelihood sources and overall access to food. Due to previous insecurity, HHs are reluctant to cultivate and key trade routes have been closed down, leaving HHs with limited options. As a result, any reduction in food aid combined with the low expected crop yields from this years harvest, minimal livestock and limited market access will lead to a large decrease in food availability for assessed settlements, and likely increase the usage of severe coping strategies to meet food needs.

1 FEWSNET Livelihood Zones Report 2013.

2 FAO projected cereal deficit for 2017 is 9,669 tonnes. FAO, Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission to South Sudan, May 2017.

3 WFP VAM Price Update June 2017.



Panyijiar County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Unity State, South Sudan, May-July 2017

of KI interviews conducted: 67
of assessed settlements: 39
of FGDs conducted: 2

Livelihoods Overview

Typical Livelihoods

Pre-crisis, households (HHs) in Panyijiar relied on a combination of smallholder farming, livestock rearing and fishing as their primary sources of livelihoods. Settlements located near the Sudd¹, such as Nyal, were relatively more reliant on fishing than settlements located in northwest Panyijiar. HHs typically cultivated maize and sorghum. However, due to consistent low crop yields, HHs also relied heavily on market access to sell livestock products or engage in casual labour to purchase staple foods. In addition, during the lean season, HHs reportedly also increased fishing activity and gathered wild foods, while better off HHs increased the amount of livestock sold.

Hazards (Shocks)

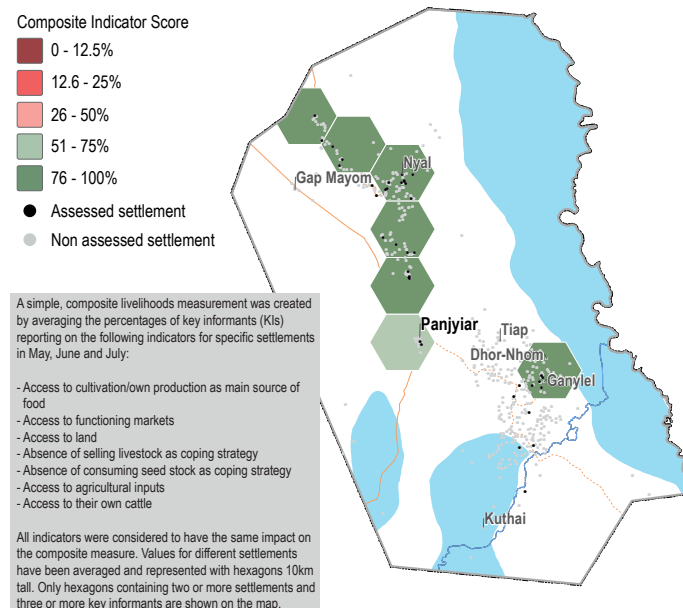
- Flooding in August through October 2016 reportedly destroyed crops.
- Sharp influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs), mainly from Mayendit and Leer, in early 2017 led to a sharp decline in available resources for IDPs and local communities.
- In July, outbreaks of inter-communal fighting in Lakes State, displaced an estimated 1,000-1,500 people to Ganyelel and nearby locations².
- Hyperinflation, the disruption of key supply routes and a sharp influx of IDPs have severely reduced local market capacity.

Vulnerability (Resilience)

Data suggest that assessed settlements in Panyijiar have a higher resilience to adverse shocks compared to other counties in Unity State. From May to July, nearly all assessed settlements reported access to land (92%) and agricultural inputs (98%). In addition, 94% of assessed settlements reported ownership and regular access to cattle. As a result, 98% of assessed settlements reportedly engage in traditional livelihood sources, such as smallholder farming or livestock rearing (Figure 1) and 60% reported own cultivation as main source of food (Figure 2) - by far the highest recorded proportion in Unity for both indicators.

Due to traditionally low crop yields, linked to low seed quality and poor agricultural practices, Panyijiar is highly reliant on imports and market access to supplement HHs' food production. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Panyijiar's projected cereal deficit for 2017 is -5,686 tonnes³. Although, 66% of assessed settlements reported access to markets, continued strain on local resources from influx of IDPs coupled with high commodity prices have severely diminished HHs' terms of trade (i.e. the amount of food a HH can receive by selling one head of cattle)⁴. The price of sugar, oil and sorghum increased in nearly every assessed settlement with access to markets (97%, 97% and 94%, respectively). Furthermore, markets still lack the capacity

Map 1: Level of livelihood vulnerability



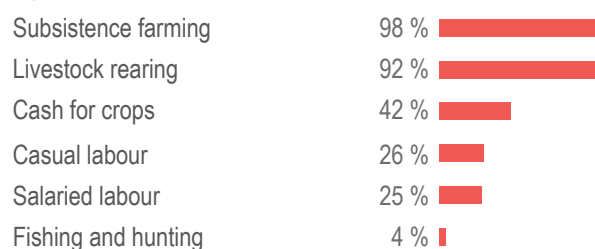
to supply food to local communities efficiently. As a result, none of assessed settlements' primary source of food came from trade (Figure 2), raising concerns about HHs' ability to cover consumption gaps through trade during the lean season.

Coping Strategies

In line with comparatively better access to livelihood sources, the only reported livelihood-based coping strategy is foraging for wild foods, reported by 15% of assessed settlements without adequate access to food. Although foraging for wildfoods is usually also practiced in times where there is no shortage of food, it particularly becomes a coping strategy when foraged food remains the primary source of food, as is reportedly the case in 2% of assessed settlements (Figure 2).

Nevertheless, it must be noted that pockets of populations on island settlements, which are less likely to be captured by REACH AoK data, are reportedly unable to adequately access food, health services or markets. For example, on Buthony island, Oxfam⁵ reported no cultivation of staple crops, no livestock and no shops. As an indication on heavy reliance on relatives to deliver food to those population, 43% of people departing from Nyal for island settlements reportedly do so to take food from Nyal to family on islands.⁶ Furthermore, HHs on islands

Figure 1: Main livelihood sources in assessed settlements



Panyijiar County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

are typically registered for World Food Program (WFP) general food distributions (GFDs) in Nyal and have recently experienced increased access to distributions through canoe voucher programmes⁷.

Food Security Overview

Food Availability and Access

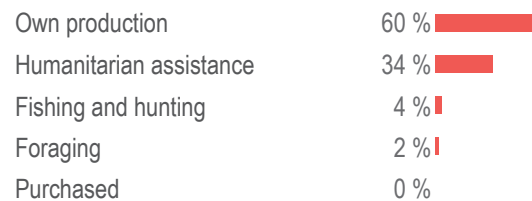
The proportion of assessed settlements in Panyinjar reporting adequate access to food has constantly been far above Unity State average since September 2016⁸, likely due to stable security coupled with access to livelihood sources and presence of humanitarian actors in the county. From May through July, 92% of assessed settlements reported having adequate access to food, while the state average was at 60%.

In line with high proportions of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food, 93% reported an average of two meals a day between May and July. However, a large proportion of assessed settlements without adequate access to food reported a number of consumption-based coping strategies, such as limiting meal sizes (in all assessed settlements without adequate access to food), spending entire days without eating (50%) or reducing number of meals eaten in a day (25%), which suggests severe food consumption gaps.

Food types consumed by assessed settlements with adequate access to food reflect the moderate cattle ownership combined with accessible humanitarian assistance. Nearly all assessed settlements (96%) consumed staple foods, 87% consumed milk or dairy products, 43% consumed meat products, and around one-third consumed fruits (38%) and vegetables (31%), suggesting access to food groups with a higher nutritional value.

However, 44% of assessed settlements reported suspected cholera, a deadly gastrointestinal disease linked to poor water quality, as a top three health concern, suggesting that unsafe cooking practices and

Figure 3: Primary source of food in assessed settlements



high level of open defecation are still persistent. As a result, HHs may not be absorbing key nutrients linked to higher access to food and diverse diets.

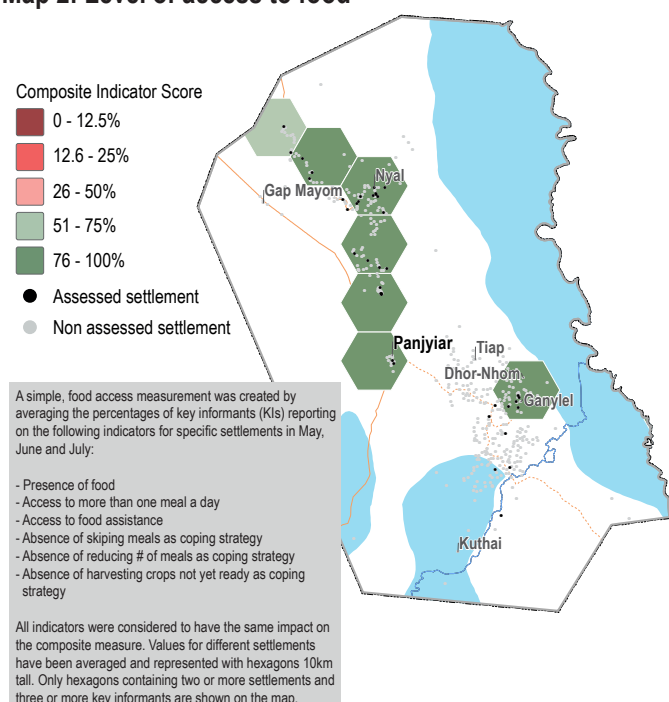
Stability of Food Access

Stable access to livelihood sources across assessed settlements is promoting sustainability. From May through July assessed settlements reported high levels of cultivation and livestock ownership, contributing to diverse diets. Furthermore, rainfall patterns and expected harvest are reportedly normal, providing HHs with the opportunity to restock food supplies for the lean season.

However, the county remains exposed to adverse shocks. Local markets are currently unable to maintain adequate supplies, and a contious influx of new arrivals from neighbouring counties could further put pressure on markets. Moreover, flooding due to atypical rainfall is still possible and an outbreak of disease among cattle or the destruction of crops would depress expected food stocks and limit available coping strategies, likely resulting in HHs reverting to severe coping strategies.

The expanded access to livelihoods and diverse diets are positive steps towards increasing food availability, access and utilisation in Panyijiar. However, as economic conditions remain unstable and IDPs from central Unity continue to move south for resources, prices will likely continue to rise to reflect reduced supply and increased demand, reducing HHs' ability to purchase food and non-food items (NFI).

Map 2: Level of access to food



1 Third largest swamp in the world, formed by the White Nile.
2 International Rescue Committee (IRC) registered 1,000 – 1,500 IDPs from Lake State between early July and August.
3 FAO/WFP Crop and Food security Assessment Mission to South Sudan, May 2017.
4 WFP VAM Price Update.
5 Oxfam, Buthony Island Assessment, May 2017.
6 REACH, Nyal Port Monitoring Factsheet, July 2017.
7 Oxfam is currently running a canoe voucher programme in Nyal.
8 Start of comparable AoK dataset.