

Situation Overview: Unity State, South Sudan

April - June 2018

REACH An initiative of
IMPACT Initiatives
ACTED and UNOSAT

Introduction

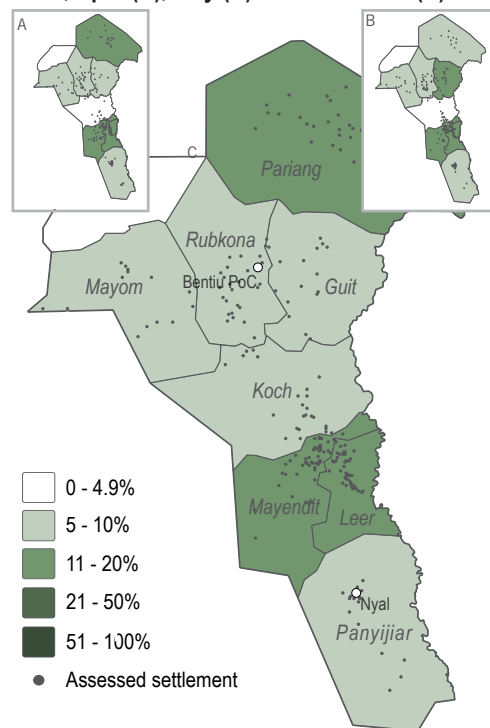
A wave of violence in Unity State, beginning in late April and continuing through June 2018, imperilled lives, spurred displacement, undermined livelihoods, and reduced access to food and services across the state.¹ Incidences of conflict were reported in nearly all counties of the state and most intensely in Koch, Mayendit, and Leer Counties. As a result, the state saw an extreme reversal of the positive trajectory of humanitarian trends reported in the previous quarter.

To inform humanitarian actors working outside formal settlement sites, REACH has conducted assessments of hard-to-reach areas in South Sudan since December 2015. Data is collected through interviews on a monthly basis from settlements across the country.

In Unity State, REACH interviewed a total of 910 Key Informants (KIs) in the Bentiu Protection of Civilians (PoC) site and Nyal in the second quarter of 2018 (April, May and June). The KIs were from 639 settlements situated in 8 of the 9 counties in the state. Survey findings were

of key informant interviews conducted: **910**
of assessed settlements: **639**
of counties covered: **8 (of 9)**
of focus group discussions conducted: **9**

Map 1: REACH assessment coverage of Unity State, April (A), May (B) and June 2018 (C)



triangulated through 9 displacement and food security and livelihoods (FSL) focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted in Bentiu and Nyal and secondary data.

This Situation Overview focuses on changes in observed humanitarian needs across Unity State in the second quarter of 2018. The

first section analyses protection challenges, displacement and population movement, and the second evaluates access to food and basic services.

Three reporting caveats are important to note. First, the majority of interviews for April were collected prior to the increase of violence in Unity State.² As such, reported numbers for the month primarily capture the situation prior to the violence. Second, REACH was unable to conduct a sufficient number of interviews from Koch in April and May to report on the county (see Map 1).³ Supplementary secondary data is provided where possible but information on Koch for this period remains scarce. Any omission of the county in below discussions should be understood as a lack of data, and not necessarily the absence of a dynamic. Sufficient data was collected in June to report on the county for the final month of analysis. Finally, this is the first reporting quarter that REACH collected data for Pariang County.

Protection, Displacement, and Population Movements

Protection

A large-scale escalation of violence beginning in April resulted in widespread displacement across Unity State, especially in the state's

METHODOLOGY

To provide an overview of the situation in largely inaccessible areas of Unity State, REACH uses primary data provided by key informants who have recently arrived from, recently visited, or receive regular information from a location or "Area of Knowledge" (AoK). Information for this report was collected from key informants in the Bentiu PoC site and Nyal town in April, May and June 2018.

In-depth interviews were conducted over the first three weeks of each month. The standardised survey tool includes questions on displacement trends, population needs, food security and livelihoods, and access to basic services. After data collection was completed, all data was aggregated 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.

Data was analyzed at the county level using descriptive statistics and geospatial analysis. Only counties with interview coverage of at least 5% of settlements for a given month were included in analysis. Due to access and operational constraints, the specific settlements assessed within each county each month vary. Thus, some changes over time reported in this situation overview might be due to variations in coverage.

1. UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) Human Rights Division (HRD). Indiscriminate attacks against civilians in Southern Unity. April-May 2018. May 2018. OCHA. Humanitarian Bulletin. April 2018.

2. April interviews were conducted 2-20 April.

3. For internal reporting thresholds, interviews from 22 distinct settlements in Koch are required. In April, REACH interviewed 29 KIs on Koch, but covered only 18 distinct settlements. In May, 29 KIs were interviewed about settlements.



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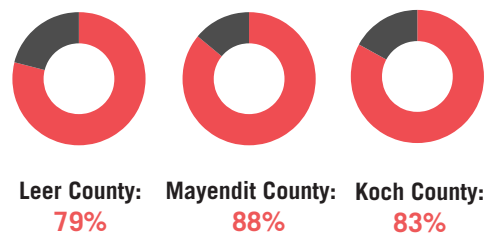
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central and southern counties. Beginning in mid-April, armed groups launched attacks in Rubkona, Guit, and Koch Counties, after which the violence shifted south into Leer and Mayendit Counties.⁴ Over the subsequent two months, towns and settlements were attacked repeatedly, with the much of reported violence located in Leer, Mayendit, and Koch.

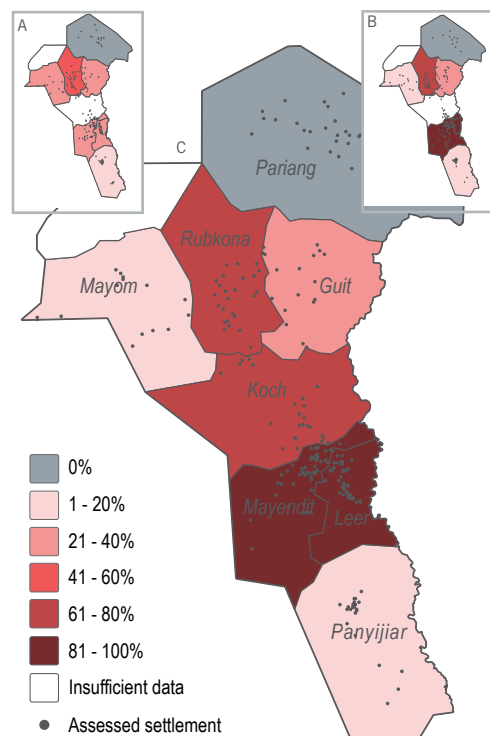
According to REACH data, more than 90% of assessed settlements in Leer and Mayendit Counties in both May and June reported the occurrence of an incident of conflict that had killed a civilian or damaged property (see Map 2). In June, 71% of assessed settlements in Koch County reported the same. In June, approximately 80% of assessed settlements in Leer, Mayendit and Koch Counties reported that conflict was the main cause of death (Figure 1). This is a marked increase from the less than a quarter of assessed settlements that reported the same in March (16%, 14%, 23%, respectively).

Focusing on Leer and Mayendit, the UNMISS

Figure 1: Percentage of assessed settlements reporting conflict was the main cause of death in past month, June 2018



Map 2: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting an incident of conflict in the previous month, April (A), May (B) and June 2018 (C)



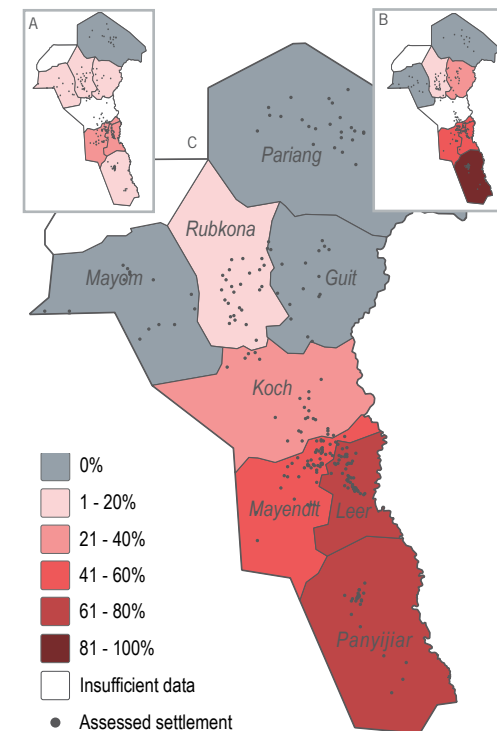
Human Rights Division (HRD) documented attacks on at least 40 villages or settlements between mid April and late May.⁵ Multiple UN agencies and humanitarian organizations documented gross violations of human rights, including widespread rape and abduction of girls and women, forced recruitment, destruction of food stock, and burning of shelters.⁶

Displacement

Widespread insecurity and violence displaced thousands throughout Unity State in the second quarter of 2018.⁷ Given protracted conflict and displacement dynamics, assessed settlements in Unity State have consistently report the presence of internally displaced persons (IDPs) across counties. The second quarter of 2018, however, saw a notable increase in reports of new arrivals of IDPs, especially in Southern Unity. In April, only about a quarter or less of assessed settlements in Mayendit, Leer and Panyijiar reported the presence of IDPs who had arrived in the last three months. In May, this proportion more than doubled. More than 50% of assessed settlements in Leer and Mayendit Counties and a startling 91% of assessed settlements in Panyijiar County reported the presence of newly arrived IDPs (see Map 3).

Some civilians fled to areas protected by the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission or to main population centres. The population of the Temporary Protection Area in Leer increased from 575 in early April to 1,995 by mid-May.⁸ In the same period, more than 3,000 newly displaced persons arrived at the Bentiu PoC site.⁹ Estimates of the number of newly displaced arriving in main population centres vary. A May joint humanitarian assessment estimated that about 8,000 persons had been displaced to Leer town, Mer, Koch town, Mayendit town and Nyal.¹⁰ A Concern Worldwide assessment found that Koch town

Map 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting presence of IDPs who arrived in last 3 months, April (A), May (B) and June 2018 (C)



was hosting 7,064 newly displaced IDPs from Koch County and an unknown number from Leer and Mayendit Counties.¹¹ Another report estimated 18,000 displaced individuals had arrived in Mayendit town alone.¹² South of most of the active fighting, REACH port monitoring saw a marked increase in new arrivals to Nyal town, Panyijiar.¹³ In the first four months of 2018, there was a net outflow of people from Nyal; in May, however, REACH interviewed 1,102 people arriving in Nyal

4. UNMISS HRD. Indiscriminate attacks. May 2018.

5. Ibid.

6. UNMISS RRP, Snapshot of the Situation in Southern Unity. 14 May. UNMISS HRD. Indiscriminate attacks. May 2018. OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin, April 2018, May 2018.

DRC. Weekly Security Updates: Bentiu. May-June 2018.

7. OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin, April 2018, May 2018.

8. DRC. Rapid Assessment Report for Leer Town and TPA. 21 May.

9. UNMISS HRD. Indiscriminate attacks. May 2018.

10. DRC. Rapid Assessment Report for Leer Town TPA, 21 May.

11. Concern. NFI and Emergency Shelter Assessment Report. 17 May 2018.

12. UNMISS HRD. Indiscriminate attacks. May 2018.

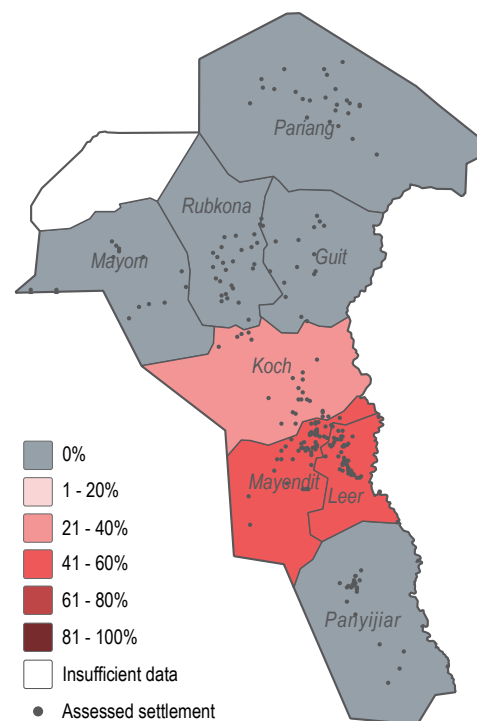
13. See REACH. Nyal Port Monitoring. May 2018. FGDs, Displacement. Nyal. April and

and only 350 people departing. The vast majority (88%) of new arrivals reported Leer and Mayendit Counties as their previous location and insecurity (59%) as their primary reason for leaving. FGD participants further suggested that a proportion of departures recorded in May were likely newly arrived IDPs temporarily returning to conflict-affected areas to collect remaining displaced family members and transport them to Nyal.¹⁴

Other civilians remained trapped in areas of conflict or hiding in the bush, unable to leave or to access life-saving assistance.¹⁵ Supporting such reports, in June, 51% of assessed settlements in Mayendit, 46% in Leer, and 22% in Koch reported that the majority of the local community was living in the bush (see Map 4). In mid May, the HRD estimated that about 8,000 displaced civilians were sheltering in the bush and swamps of southeastern Leer County. Repeat attacks on civilians attempting to return home forced them to remain in hiding.¹⁶ Similarly, FGD participants from Leer and Mayendit reported repeated attacks and multiple displacements before deciding to journey to Nyal or Bentiu.¹⁷

The influx of newly displaced persons placed additional pressure on already stressed host community resources. FGD participants in Panyijiar reported that many families were hosting up to 8 people in their homes.¹⁸ As a result, food that was meant to last 60 to 90 days was reportedly only lasting half a month. Similarly, new arrivals in Bentiu reported

Map 4: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting majority of local community living in the bush, June 2018



arriving in the PoC with nothing - in several cases, not even clothed - and subsequently relying on community networks within the PoC to provide clothing and other essentials.¹⁹

It is notable that the start of the rainy season in May and June would typically see return population movement patterns. Under less insecure conditions, displaced populations might return home, at least temporarily, to cultivate land.²⁰

Finally, displacement patterns in Pariang County were distinct from the rest of the state (see Map 3), as the county remained largely removed from the violence. Less than 30% of assessed settlements reported the presence of IDPs for any month of the reporting quarter and none reported the presence of newly arrived IDPs.

Situation in Assessed Settlements

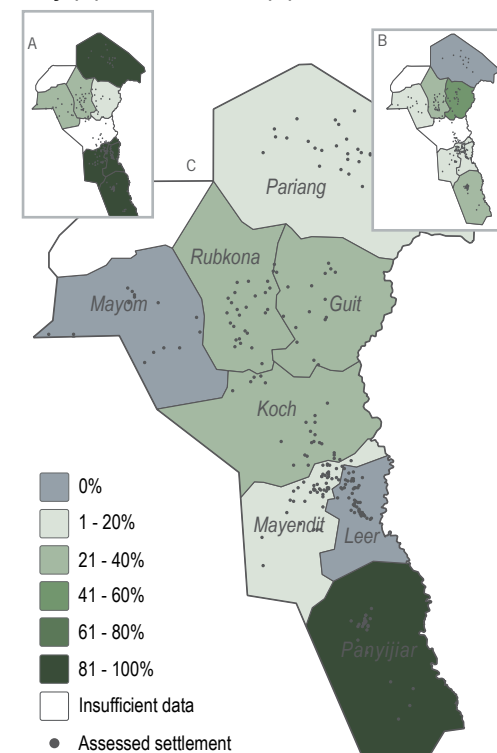
Access to food and services deteriorated markedly in the second quarter of 2018. Escalation of violence across the state resulted in the destruction of villages, crops, and humanitarian facilities and supplies. The increased insecurity not only displaced communities but also severely disrupted the provision of humanitarian aid.²¹

In April, OCHA reported 30 incidents of humanitarian access constraints in Unity State - including restriction of movement, active hostilities, and the relocation, abduction, and killing of humanitarian staff - followed by another 14 incidences in May and 12 in June.²² Nine aid workers were killed across the state in separate incidents in Rubkona, Leer, Mayendit, Panyijiar, and Mayom Counties. By May, the continued deterioration of the security situation forced the widespread suspension of aid operations in central and southern Unity State.²³ As a result, the provision of humanitarian assistance contracted precisely when and where population needs increased.

Food Security and Livelihoods

Food security deteriorated dramatically in central and southern Unity State, especially between April and May, and remained consistently poor in northern Unity (see Map 5). Poor rains reduced harvest yields, violence destroyed crops, and the insecurity delayed or prevented planned distributions of food and humanitarian aid. Figure 2 illustrates how

Map 5: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food, April (A), May (B) and June 2018 (C)



May 2018.

14. FGDs. Leer and Mayendit. Displacement. Nyal. May and June 2018.

15. OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin. 16 July 2018. UNMISS HRD. Indiscriminate attacks. May 2018.

16. Ibid.

17. FGDs. Leer and Mayendit. Nyal and Bentiu. June 2018.

18. FGDs, Panyijiar, Food Security and Livelihoods. Nyal. June 2018.

19. FGDs, Leer and Mayendit, Displacement. Bentiu PoC. May 2018.

20. FGDs: FSL. Leer, Mayendit, Rubkona, Guit. Bentiu PoC. May 2018.

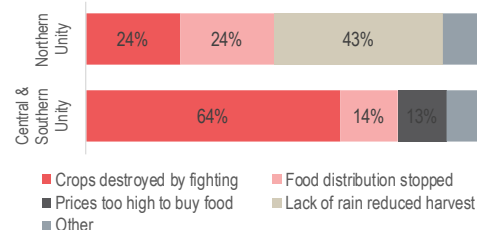
21. OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan, Issue 6. 16 July 2018

22. OCHA Humanitarian Access Bulletin. April 2018. May 2018. June 2018.

23. Ibid, May 2018. WFP. IRRM Update. 23 April 2018.

the primary reported reasons for inadequate access to food differed across the State.

Figure 2: Primary reason for inadequate access to food, Northern versus Central and Southern Unity, June 2018



Central and Southern Unity State (Koch, Mayendit, Leer, and Panyijiar)

Insecurity in the second quarter of 2018 severely limited humanitarian access to central and southern Unity State counties, leading to an extreme reversal in reported adequate access to food in conflict-affected areas. In the first quarter of 2018, massive humanitarian efforts throughout southern Unity had led to these counties reporting the highest levels of adequate access to food in the state.²⁴ In April, approximately 90% of assessed settlements in Mayendit, Leer and Panyijiar Counties still reported adequate access to food; however, in May, only 38% reported the same in Panyijiar County and less than 10% reported the same in Mayendit and Leer Counties.

Populations in Leer and Mayendit Counties especially lacked sufficient livelihood activities to access adequate food in the absence of humanitarian assistance. In May, only 13% of assessed settlements in Leer and 6% in Mayendit reported access to necessary

agricultural inputs. Only 4% of assessed settlements in Leer and none in Mayendit reported engaging in livestock rearing as a livelihood activity. Humanitarian assistance had been the primary reported main source of food for all assessed settlements in Mayendit and 93% in Leer in April. In late April and May, however, planned WFP distributions in Leer, Mayendit, and Koch were all put on hold indefinitely because of the insecurity.²⁵ WFP was not able to safely return for two months. In late June, it reached 4,000 people with CSB++ in Leer and Mayendit, but had yet to re-establish regular distribution centres in Leer, Mayendit and Koch Counties.²⁶ At the same time, humanitarians documented cases where previous food distributions had been subsequently destroyed in the violence, including in Rubkuai and Thaker.²⁷ Absent humanitarian aid, foraging became the main source of food reported by assessed settlements in both Leer (53%) and Mayendit (57%), followed by fishing and hunting (12% and 4%, respectively) and cultivation (10%, 2%). Figure 3 shows how closely correlated were adequate access to food and humanitarian aid as the main source of food in Leer County. It also illustrates how predictable (yet inadequate) the strategy of substituting foraging for food for humanitarian aid was. A similar pattern was seen in REACH data for Mayendit County.

Humanitarian access challenges in southern Unity State remained particularly concerning. February IPC findings warned of the possibility of a large-scale Humanitarian Catastrophe

leading to Famine (Phase 5) in Leer, Mayendit and Koch in the case of precisely such protracted absence of humanitarian assistance and conflict-related restrictions to population movement.²⁸ Indeed, REACH data

captured an alarming increase in self-reported hunger in all three counties (see Figure 4). In April, 9% of assessed settlements in Leer and none in Mayendit reported that hunger was bad and communities had limited options

Figure 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food versus main reported source of food, Leer County

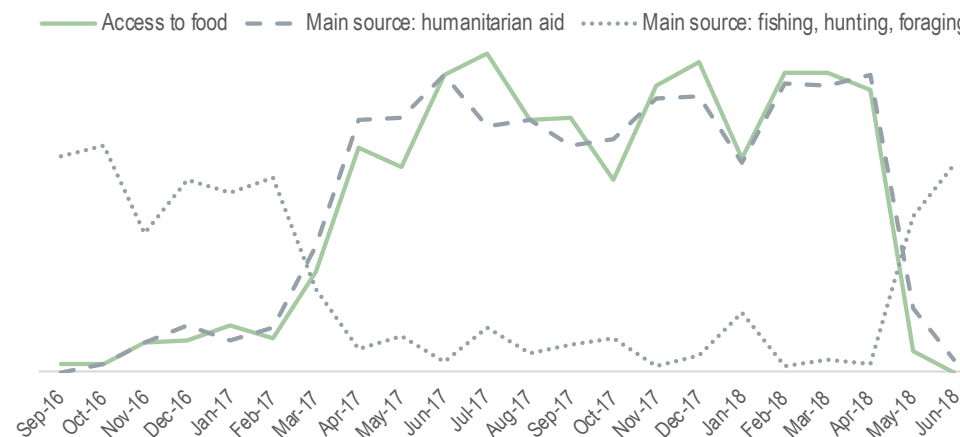
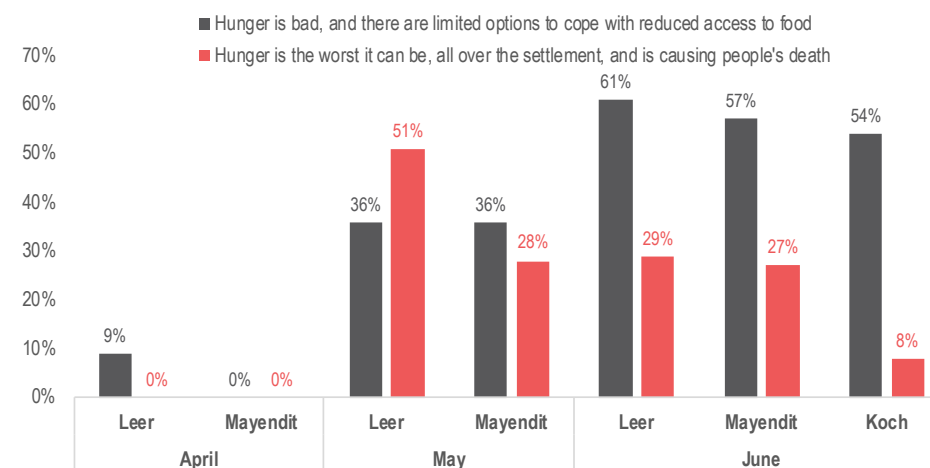


Figure 4: Self-reported levels of hunger in Leer, Mayendit and Koch Counties, proportion of assessed settlements reporting, April-June 2018



24. See REACH. Situation Overview: Unity State, January-March 2018. April 2018.

25. WFP. IRRM Update. 23 April 2018. 13 May 2018.

26. WFP. Situation Report #222. 22 June 2018.

27. RRP, Snap Short of the Situation in Southern Unity, 14 May.

28. IPC. Key Findings, January-July 2018. Feb 2018.

to cope. The proportion jumped to 36% of assessed settlements in both counties in May, and increased again to more than half of assessed counties in Leer, Mayendit, and Koch Counties in June. Even more concerning, KIs in all three counties reported for the first time that “hunger was the worst it can be, all over the settlement, and is causing people’s death.”²⁹ In May, 51% of assessed settlements in Leer and 28% in Mayendit County reported such extreme hunger. Additionally, 56% of assessed settlements in Leer County reported that members of the settlement were going entire days without eating; 36% of assessed settlements in Mayendit County reported the same. In June, more than a quarter of assessed settlements in Leer (29%) and Mayendit (27%) Counties continued to report that hunger was the worst and causing deaths; a further 8% of settlements in Koch reported the same.

Food security dynamics in southernmost Panyijiar County reflected second-order conflict dynamics. Between April and May the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food dropped from 94% to 38%, reflecting the stress of hosting a wave of new arrivals.³⁰ FGD participants in Panyijiar County reported hosting up to 8 new arrivals in their homes and explained that humanitarian assistance that was meant to last 60 to 90 days was subsequently only lasting half a month.³¹ Additionally, flooding that destroyed early crops in April, cattle disease, and high prices in May were also referenced by FGD participants and reflected in AoK data as

reasons for inadequate access to food.³² In June, reported adequate access to food in Panyijiar County rebounded and all assessed settlements again reported adequate access to food.

Violence in the second quarter of 2018 severely undermined food security in central and southern Unity counties. The effects of displacement, the destruction of crops from fighting, and the cessation of humanitarian assistance were most acute in Koch, Leer and Mayendit Counties, but secondary effects from displacement also undermined food security in neighbouring Panyijiar County. Re-establishing humanitarian assistance is crucial in light of the absence of alternative livelihoods and given the warnings outlined by the IPC.

Northern Unity (Rubkona, Guit, and Mayom)

Access to food remained low in the Northern Unity Counties of Rubkona, Guit and Mayom throughout the second quarter of 2018 (see Map 5). In Mayom, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food decreased from 31% in April to an alarming 0% in June. Reported access was more volatile in Guit and Rubkona Counties; in June, only about a third of assessed settlements in both counties reporting adequate access to food (39% and 36%, respectively).

Both insecurity and environmental factors contributed to inadequate access to food in Unity’s northern counties (see Figure 5). In Mayom County, the vast majority of assessed settlements reference inadequate rain as the main reason for inadequate food, while

Figure 5: Most commonly cited reasons for inadequate access to food, May & June 2018

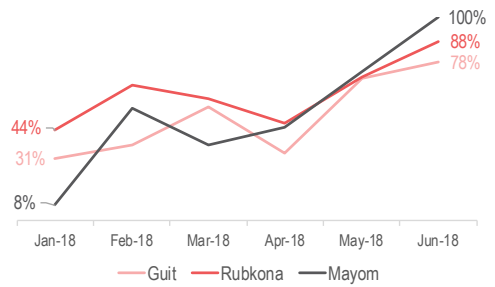
	Mayom	Rubkona	Guit
May	Lack of rain	100%	38%
	Food distribution stopped	0%	19%
	Crops destroyed by fighting	0%	14%
June	Lack of rain	71%	44%
	Food distribution stopped	21%	38%
	Crops destroyed by fighting	0%	13%

in Rubkona and Guit Counties, assessed communities more frequently referenced the destruction of crops and stopping of food distributions, both linked to insecurity. FGD participants from Rubkona and Guit Counties especially stressed the impact of the recent violence on their access to food, explaining that community members would typically have started preparing for cultivation in April and May but few remained in rural areas for fear of armed groups.³³ Assessed settlements in all three counties reported increasing reliance on sending family members to displacement camps to receive food aid (see Figure 6). In June, humanitarian assistance was the most frequently reported main source of food among assessed settlements in Guit (67%), and those

in Rubkona equally reported cultivation and humanitarian assistance as a main source of food (48% each).

Overall, the violence in the second quarter of 2018 exacerbated food insecurity throughout Unity State. In southern and central Unity, widespread destruction of food resources combined with the suspension of humanitarian severely undermined populations’ ability to obtain sufficient food in conflict-affected areas. At the same time, the influx of IDPs into Panyijiar stressed host community’s resources, so much so that the county recorded its lowest reported levels of access to food in REACH’s history of data collection on the county. Insecurity also played a role in northern Unity State, undermining normal cultivation livelihood patterns and pushing populations towards coping strategies such as moving to displacement camps. In all cases, ensuring humanitarian access and sufficient food assistance to stressed communities is vital to forestall dire IPC predictions in the absence of aid.

Figure 6: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting members of community sending families to displacement camps to receive food aid, Northern Unity, 2018



29. REACH introduced this question to the AoK survey tool in February 2018.
 30. This is a dramatic decrease. Prior to this, the lowest recorded levels of adequate access to food in Panyijiar was 69% of assessed settlements in November 2016.
 31. FGDs, Leer and Mayendit, Displacement. Bentiu PoC. May 2018.

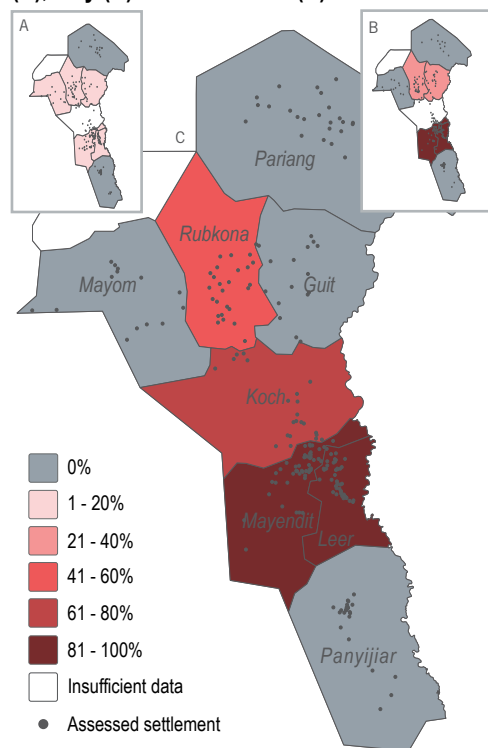
32. In AoK data, 62% of assessed settlements reported high prices as the main reason for inadequate access to food in May. Flooding and cattle disease were both mentioned in FGDs, and evidence of both was visible in Nyal town.
 33. FGD, Rubkona and Guit, FSL, May 2018.

Shelter and NFIs

The wave of violence in the second quarter of 2018 resulted in substantial shelter damage throughout Unity State. In mid May, an RRP snapshot assessment of the situation in southern Unity reported that over 300 shelters had been burnt at various locations throughout Leer and Mayendit Counties.³⁴ By June, more than half of assessed settlements in Rubkona and Koch and nearly all of assessed communities in Leer and Mayendit reported shelter damage from the conflict (see Map 6). The insecurity and shelter loss impacted shelter conditions for local community and IDPs alike.

As Map 4 above illustrated, a substantial proportion of assessed settlements in the most conflict affected counties - Koch, Leer and Mayendit - reported that the majority of the local community was living in the bush in June 2018 (22%, 46% and 51%, respectively). Similarly high proportions of assessed settlements reported that IDP populations were also living in the open. In May, 72% of assessed settlements in Mayendit, 58% in Leer, and, perhaps most alarmingly, 88% in Panyijiar reported that IDPs were living without shelter. REACH first included this question in September 2017 and this is the highest proportion of assessed settlements so reporting in Panyijiar. FGD participants explained that this was happening even as local communities were hosting as many IDPs as possible - as many as 8 or more additional persons per tukul.³⁵ Similarly, a Medair assessment of southern Mayendit

Map 6: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting shelter damage due to conflict, April (A), May (B) and June 2018 (C)

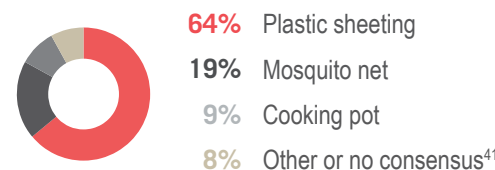


County found that IDPs sharing shelters with host community had resulted in severe overcrowding challenges, with reports of 8 to 15 people sleeping per tukul, on average, when each was only built to accommodate 5 individuals.³⁶

REACH and other humanitarian assessments consistently found reports of IDPs arriving at displacement locations without any NFIs, having lost their possessions either in the violence or from looting along displacement routes.³⁷ According to REACH data, plastic

sheets and mosquito nets were consistently the most frequently reported main NFI need (see Figure 7). Plastic sheeting was also the most frequently requested item in Koch (according to Concern) and Mayendit (according to Medair). Other prioritized items included water containers, cooking sets, blankets, and sleeping mats.³⁸ In the Leer TPA, DRC found that, on average, one saucepan was being shared between five families.³⁹ Similarly, 65% of Medair's interviewees in southern Mayendit reported that they were borrowing containers in order to collect water.⁴⁰

Figure 7: Main NFI need of IDP population, proportion of assessed settlements reporting each, Unity State, May 2018



Shelter conditions in conflict-affected parts of Unity State were particularly concerning in the second quarter of 2018. In addition to helping restore household resources that the displaced have lost in the violence, providing plastic sheeting and mosquito nets will be crucial in light of the advancing rainy season.

Access to Services: WASH, Health, and Education

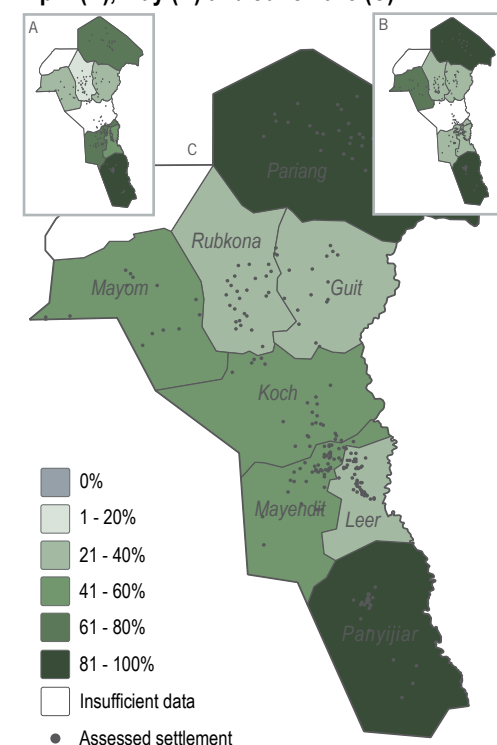
Access to services, including WASH, health and education did not measurably improve during the second quarter of 2018. In conflict-affected Leer and Mayendit access to most

services deteriorated. Widespread violence resulted in the suspension of life-saving humanitarian responses to thousands in need, and clinics, schools and INGO compounds were looted and staff relocated.⁴²

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Access to improved water sources (e.g., boreholes, tap stands, or water yards) remained challenging across most of Unity State in the second quarter of 2018 (see Map 7). In June, 43% of assessed settlements

Map 7: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting access to a improved water source, April (A), May (B) and June 2018 (C)



34. RRP, Snap Short of the Situation in Southern Unity, 14 May

35. FGD. Mayendit, FSL and Displacement. May 2018.

36. Medair. Multisector ERT: Southern Mayendit. June 2018.

37. FGDs. Bentiu PoC and Nyal. May 2018. Concern. NFI and Emergency Shelter Assessment Report: Koch County. 17 May 2018. Medair. Multisector ERT: Southern

Mayendit. June 2018.

38. Ibid.

39. DRC, Rapid Assessment Report for Leer Town TPA, 21 May.

40. Medair. Multisector ERT: Southern Mayendit. June 2018.

41. No consensus answers occur when KIs from the same settlement disagree and

reported access to an improved water source, which is not measurably different from the 46% reporting the same in March. In contrast, in conflict-affected Leer and Mayendit Counties, access to improved water sources decreased markedly from 52% and 69% of assessed settlements respectively in April to just 31% and 22% in May. FGD participants from both counties explained that armed actors frequently prevented populations from accessing available water sources, including those in neighbouring settlements and along main displacement routes. Supporting such reports, more than 70% of assessed settlements in both counties reported that people had not been able to access preferred water points for fear of their safety.

In northern Unity, more than a quarter - and as many as half - of assessed settlements in Guit, Rubkona and Mayom Counties reported that a river or swamp was the main source of drinking water for every month of the second quarter. At the other extreme, reported access to improved water remained especially high in Panyijiar and Pariang Counties, with more than 80% of assessed settlements consistently reporting that their primary water source was a borehole, tapstand or water yard (see Map 7).

State wide, nearly a third of assessed settlements continued to report that livestock or other animals currently used the same source of water as people. This trend was especially prominent in the northern counties of Guit, Mayom and Rubkona. Also contributing to poor hygiene and sanitation, open defecation remained a common practice within assessed

settlements throughout the second quarter of 2018. Consistently more than 70% of assessed settlements reported that none of the community used latrines. Such practices increase the potential transmission of parasitic water-borne diarrhoeal diseases, including cholera.

The combination of minimal access to improved water sources, frequency of shared water sources, and open defecation is a cause for concern; in particular, ahead of the approaching rainy season when waterborne disease outbreaks seasonally increase.

Health

Conflict and displacement dynamics severely undermined access to facilities and imperilled the health of populations in conflict-affected Leer and Mayendit Counties. In April, 98% of assessed settlements in Leer and 85% in Mayendit reported that health facilities were accessible; by June, less than 10% were reporting the same (see Map 8). The most frequently reported reason for why health care was inaccessible was that facilities were destroyed or unsafe to access (see Figure 8). Indeed, an RRP snapshot assessment documented the destruction and looting of multiple clinics in southern Unity State, while OCHA reported that the destruction of health facilities and disruption of services made it impossible to implement planned vaccination campaigns across the state.⁴³

Malaria continued to be the main health concern reported by 49% of assessed settlements across Unity in June, followed

Map 8: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting access to health facilities, April (A), May (B) and June 2018 (C)

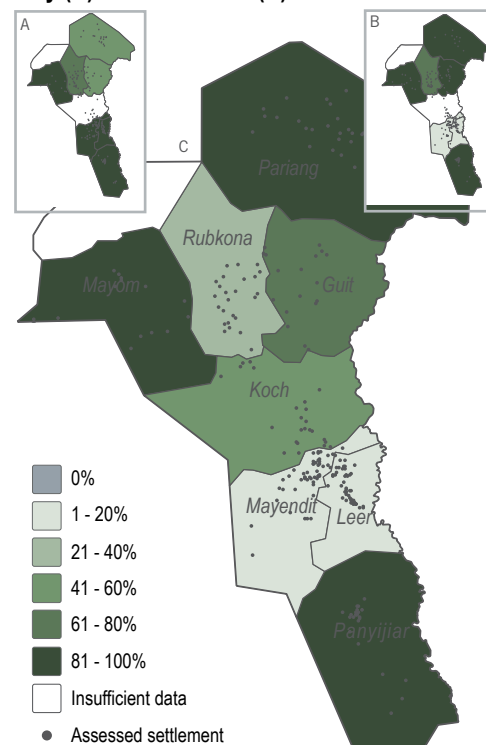


Figure 8: Main reasons health facilities inaccessible, proportion of assessed settlements reporting, Leer and Mayendit, June



by diarrhoea (17%). Displaced populations were especially vulnerable to malaria and related illness as the rainy season began.⁴⁵

Displacement to the bush and nearby islands for safety exposed populations to the elements without shelter or mosquito nets.

While health challenges persisted across Unity State in the second quarter of 2018, access to health was of particular concern in conflict-affected areas of Leer and Mayendit Counties, where insecurity either restricted access to or destroyed already limited health infrastructure.

Education

As in other sectors, reported access to education declined sharply in Leer County and Mayendit over the second quarter of 2018 (see Map 9). In April, 73% of assessed settlements in Leer and 54% in Mayendit reported access to education services; however, in May and June, 6% or fewer reported the same. Again, the destruction of facilities (42%), insecurity (19%) and displacement of staff (8%) were frequently cited as reasons that services were inaccessible among assessed settlements in the two counties in June.

Elsewhere in Unity State, reported access to education remained largely similar to prior quarters, with the highest proportion of assessed communities reporting access in Panyijiar County (>95% in all three months), followed by Guit and Mayom Counties (50-75%), and then Koch, Rubkona, and Pariang Counties (<50%). Where schools were accessible, pronounced gender disparities persisted in the school attendance rates.

In June, only 29% of assessed settlements with access to education reported that more than

there is no modal answer. Percentages add up to 100% but are rounded to the nearest integer.

42. OCHA. Humanitarian Access Snapshot. April 2018.

43. RRP, Snap Shot of the Situation in Southern Unity, 14 May. OCHA, Humanitarian

Bulletin: South Sudan, Issue 6. 16 July 2018.

44. See footnote 41 for "no consensus" explanation.

45. OCHA, Humanitarian Bulletin: South Sudan, Issue 6. 16 July 2018.

Map 9: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting access to education facilities, April (A), May (B) and June 2018 (C)

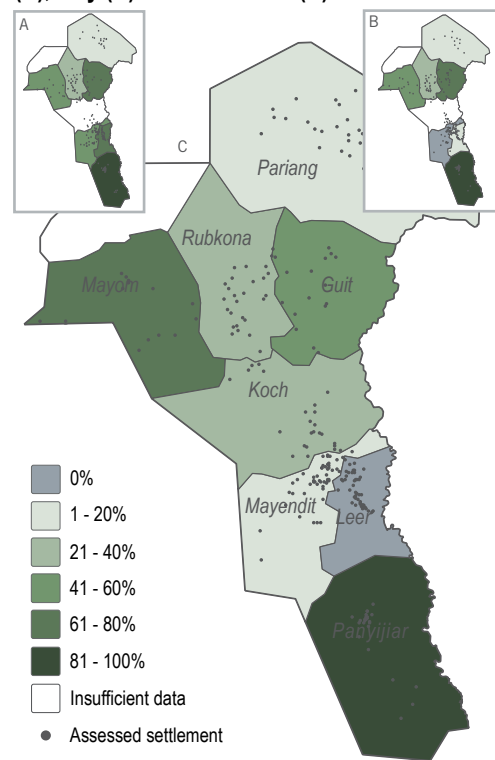
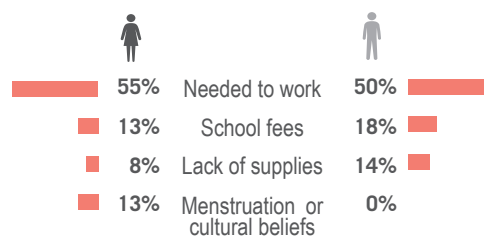


Figure 9: Primary reason reported for lack of school attendance for girls and boys, Guit, Koch, Mayom, Panyijiar, Rubkona, and Pariang, June 2018



half or all of the girls attended school, while 63% reported the same for boys.⁴⁶ Where less than all children were attending school, the need to work was the most commonly reported main reason preventing both boys (50% of assessed settlements) and girls (55%) from attending school (see Figure 9).

Conclusion

The combination of renewed large-scale violence, widespread displacement, and suspension of humanitarian access resulted in the severe deterioration of personal security, food security, and access to services across Unity State between the months of April and June 2018. Trends in the most conflict-affected areas of Leer, Mayendit and Koch Counties are of particular concern. In prior months, humanitarian assistance had been the main reported source of food for the vast majority of assessed settlements in both Leer and Mayendit; absent this assistance, reported access to food plummeted throughout central Unity in May and June. In all three counties, the self-reported prevalence of hunger increased alarmingly over this period. The destruction of humanitarian assistance and facilities combined with continued security obstacles to humanitarian access are particularly concerning given the most recent IPC's warnings of the potential for a large-scale Humanitarian Catastrophe in Leer, Mayendit and Koch Counties in the case of such protracted absence of humanitarian assistance and conflict-related restrictions to population movement.⁴⁷

Reported access to services throughout the state either remained stagnant or decreased during this reporting period. Adequate shelter for displaced populations is of particular concern, in light of the ongoing rainy season. Substantial damage to shelters across the state were reported in the recent violence and local and displaced populations alike moved to the bush and islands for security. The long-term lack of shelter combined with any short-term exposure to the elements increases the risk of malaria and the spread of cholera and water-borne diseases. It exacerbates already concerning state-wide WASH and health conditions and the suspension of planned health interventions.

Overall, adequate and sustained humanitarian access to enable the delivery of life-saving assistance is vital to reverse negative developments in conflict-affected and -adjacent areas and to forestall the dire food situation outlined by the IPC in the absence of assistance.

About REACH

REACH facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. All REACH activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. For more information, you can write to our in-country office: southsudan@reach-initiative.org or to our global office: geneva@reach-initiative.org.

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46. These numbers include assessed settlements for Guit, Rubkona, Mayom, Panyijiar, and Pariang, but not Leer and Mayendit. The attendance numbers are similar to those reported in the first quarter of 2018: 32% of assessed settlements (in all of Unity State) reported that more than half or all girls attended school, while 75% reported the same

for boys. REACH. Situation Overview: Unity State, Jan-March 2018.

47. IPC. Key Findings, January-July 2018. Feb 2018.