



# Juba County: Food Security and Livelihoods Profile

Central Equatoria, South Sudan, May-July 2017

# of KI interviews: 53

# of assessed settlements: 42

# of FGDs conducted: 0

## Livelihoods Overview

### Typical Livelihoods

Juba County, in Central Equatoria, was classified as part of the high land forest and sorghum livelihood zone. Pre-crisis livelihoods consisted largely of cultivation (both for personal consumption and for sale) supplemented by wild foods (hunting, fishing and foraging of roots, fruits, berries and leafy greens) and to a lesser extent livestock keeping of goats, sheep and poultry. The primary crops in the region were maize, sorghum (both short and long-term varieties), millet, sesame, cow peas and to a smaller degree sweet potatoes and cassava. Wealthier households sold their surplus production of maize, sorghum and millet while poorer households relied on casual labour and sale of charcoal and bamboo. During the lean season (from July to August), poor households typically purchased food staples from the market<sup>1</sup>. Juba was a key trading and import hub for the country, with Konyo Konyo market being the largest market in the region<sup>2</sup>.

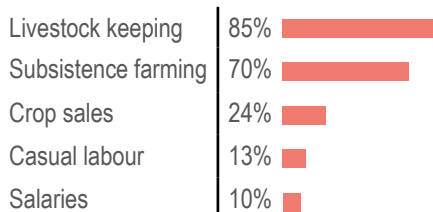
### Hazards (Shocks)

- Conflict in Juba initiated in July 2016. The security situation remains tense although active fighting has ceased.
- A fuel shortage across the country began in June 2017<sup>3</sup>.
- Hyperinflation following the July 2016 outbreak of violence peaked in October 2016 (at 835.7%) and has remained high (361.90% as of June 2017)<sup>4</sup>.

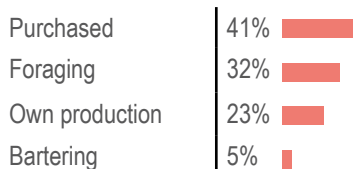
### Vulnerability (Resilience)

**Figure 1: Main sources of livelihood in assessed settlements**

Participants could choose multiple responses.

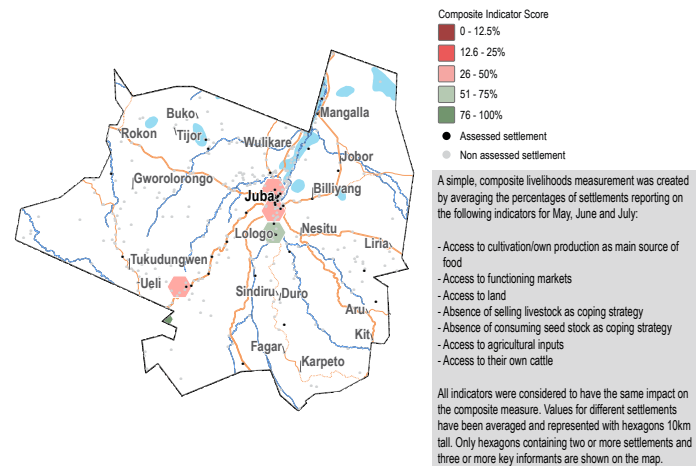


**Figure 2: Main sources of food in assessed settlements**



The primary reported source of livelihood in Juba County was livestock keeping (85%) (Figure 1), although this was mostly of goats and sheep as only a quarter (26%) of assessed settlements reported cattle ownership. This represented a change to pre-

**Map 1: Levels of livelihood vulnerability**



crisis livelihoods in the county, as livestock keeping was reported to be a relatively small source of livelihood in 2013<sup>5</sup>. However, the 2016 conflict affected settlements' ability to safely graze and water livestock, with 42% of assessed settlements with cattle reporting not having access to their cattle.

Subsistence farming was the second most commonly reported source of livelihood in Juba County (70%) (Figure 1). However, a combination of limited land and insecurity adversely affected settlements' ability to cultivate. One-fifth of assessed settlements with inadequate access to food reported that a leading cause of limited food access was a lack of land on which to cultivate. This lack of land was not directly tied to insecurity but was likely reflective of the concentration of Juba County inhabitants residing in an urban context with limited cultivation land. Conflict reduced reliance on cultivation as a livelihood source by reducing safe access to land, reported by 21% of settlements with inadequate access to food as a leading cause of limited food access. Currently, 73% of assessed settlements reported not having access to land and 32% reported that livelihood tools had been abandoned, hidden or looted during the conflict. Reflective of this, only 23% of assessed settlements reported cultivation as a primary food source (Figure 2).

Due to insecure access to land and cattle, households in Juba County became more dependent on markets to purchase food, with 41% of assessed settlements reporting that markets were the primary source of food (Figure 2). While this partially reflects the concentration of the population in an urban environment, assessed settlements across the county reported high reliance on markets for food. Market functioning in Juba County declined as a result of insecurity on key market supply routes<sup>6</sup>, resulting in decreased supply and corresponding increased market prices. Compounding this, the national fuel shortage increased the cost of supply transport<sup>7</sup> and national hyperinflation reduced the purchasing power of consumers. Most (83%) settlements with market access indicated that the prices of sorghum, cooking oil and sugar had increased in the past three months. While Juba

1. FEWSNET Livelihood Zones Report 2013.

2. ODI. Markets in Crises: South Sudan Case Study. 2015.

3. Sudan Tribune. South Sudan faces acute fuel shortage. 21 June 2017.

4. Trading Economics. South Sudan inflation rate. 2017.

5. FEWSNET Livelihood Zones Report 2013.

6. ODI. Markets in Crises: South Sudan Case Study. 2015.

7. As reported by REACH national staff.

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County had the highest proportion of settlements reporting access to markets across Central Equatoria (52%), the combined impact of increased market prices (reflecting the increased cost of transport due to insecurity and the fuel shortage) and countrywide inflation made market goods more expensive, limiting the quantity and quality of food purchased.

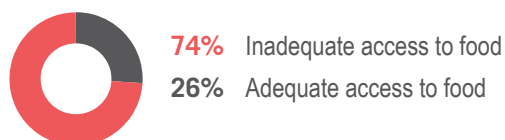
## Coping Strategies

To cope with limited access to livestock, land and markets, settlements with inadequate access to food reported increasing the short-term availability of food through foraging (59%) and consuming seed stock (55%). Reflective of this, foraging was the second most reported source of food for assessed settlements (32%) (Figure 2). These two coping strategies were more frequently reported by assessed settlements with limited food access than rationing strategies, indicating that settlements were first trying to increase the immediate availability of food before reducing intake.

## Food Security Overview

### Food Availability and Access

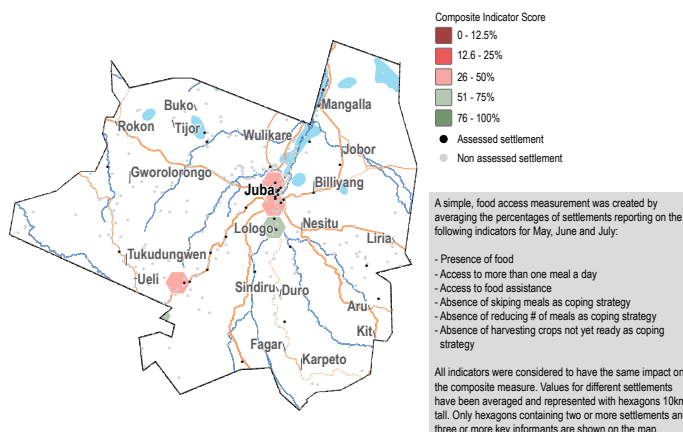
**Figure 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food**



Although Juba County had the highest proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food across Central Equatoria for the reporting period (26%) (Figure 3), this was still low compared to reported access in other parts of the country. The presence of a number of large markets (despite high prices) in the country's largest city likely contributed to increased food access compared to more rural counties in Central Equatoria. Settlements with inadequate access to food reported rationing food and changing their diets to preserve limited food stocks. Dietary changes involved consuming less expensive foods (reported by 70% of settlements with inadequate food access), reflecting the increased price of goods in markets. Rationing strategies included limiting portion sizes (64%), prioritising feeding children over adults (58%), reducing the number of meals consumed daily (42%) and skipping days without eating (39%). Across all settlements, the average number of meals consumed daily was 1.6.

Among settlements reporting adequate access to food, dietary diversity was relatively high, reflective of the variety of foods available in Greater Equatoria and in Juba markets more specifically: staples, pulses, meat and fish were reportedly

**Map 2: Level of access to food**



available in all assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food. Fruit (92%), dairy (92%) and vegetables (85%) were also reportedly available in most of these settlements. Despite the availability of a diverse range of foods, low reported food access and high reports of settlements restricting food intake make it unlikely that these foods were consumed in high quantities.

Most (85%) assessed settlements had access to clean water with which to prepare food, primarily from boreholes (83%) accessible within a 30-minute to one-hour walk, reducing the likelihood of waterborne illness and corresponding poor nutritional uptake.

## Stability of Food Access

Although the security situation in Juba County is currently stable, insecurity along key routes continues to restrict market supplies. Humanitarian assistance in areas outside of Juba (city) remains challenging, with frequent reports of attacks on main access roads<sup>8</sup>. This corresponds with reports from assessed settlements, 96% of which reported that there had not been a food distribution in the past three months. Similarly, no assessed settlements reported humanitarian assistance as a main food source.

Although reported food access was low, proximity to Juba city and markets provided a safety net for populations in the county. However, increased reports of settlements with inadequate food access consuming seed stock (55%) indicate that next season's cultivation cycle will be reduced. Markets in Juba County currently constitute the most important source of food. The inflation rate has remained relatively stable, albeit high, over the past six months, indicating that purchasing power has remained consistent in the county. The fuel shortage represents a potential shock that may continue to raise market prices and impact settlements' ability to access food.

8. NGO Forum. Weekly Security Report. 19 June 2017.