

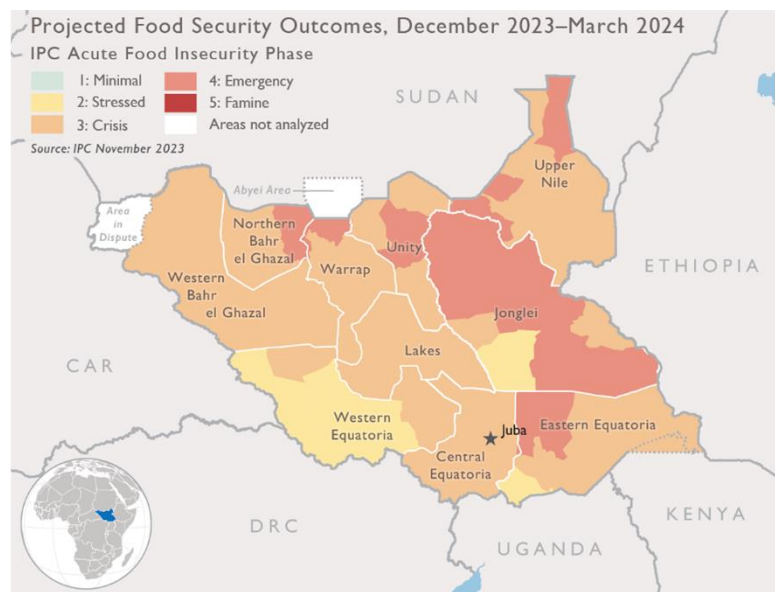
South Sudan – Complex Emergency

FEBRUARY 1, 2024

SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- Nearly 532,000 people fled into South Sudan from neighboring Sudan between mid-April 2023 and January 30, 2024, with new arrivals facing high levels of humanitarian needs in overcrowded transit centers, according to the UN. In response to rising needs, the UN allocated \$10 million from its CERF on January 14.
- The number of South Sudanese refugees returning from Ethiopia’s Gambella Region continued to increase as of mid-January due to limited resources and insecurity at refugee camps, relief actors report.
- South Sudan’s MoH declared an outbreak of yellow fever in Western Equatoria State in late December 2023, recording nearly 30 suspected cases as of January 20.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

For the South Sudan Response in FY 2024

USAID/BHA¹ \$237,927,418

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 6

Total \$237,927,418

¹ USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Arrivals From Sudan Face Overcrowded Conditions at Transit Centers, Require Humanitarian Assistance

Since the outbreak of the conflict in Sudan on April 16, 2023, nearly 532,000 people have crossed into South Sudan, representing more than 30 percent of the 1.5 million people who fled from Sudan into neighboring countries as of late January, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Approximately 81 percent of the new arrivals during this period were South Sudanese returnees while 19 percent were Sudanese refugees and third country nationals, the UN reports. Tens of thousands of returnees and refugees continued to arrive in South Sudan in 2024, with the UN recording more than 40,000 people crossing the border during the first three weeks of January, averaging nearly 2,000 arrivals daily. The majority of new arrivals reside in host communities and transit centers in Upper Nile State and urgently require essential relief commodities, food, health, nutrition, onward transportation assistance (OTA), protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support, according to relief actors.

On December 7, South Sudan's Ministry of Health (MoH) confirmed one imported cholera case from Sudan in Upper Nile's Renk transit center. Relief actors have raised concern about the potential spread of cholera in transit centers due to congestion and poor WASH conditions. Notably, Upper Nile's Renk transit center lacks sufficient WASH infrastructure, with a ratio of one latrine for every 200 individuals, well below the Sphere standard requiring a minimum of one latrine per 50 individuals in emergency settings, according to UNHCR.² Limited access to food, basic health services, and WASH facilities are also contributing to high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition among returnees, according to relief organizations.

In addition, OTA from transit centers to other areas of South Sudan remains one of the most critical needs due to overcrowding at transit centers as arrivals outpace available onward transportation, IOM and UNHCR report. Notably, Renk transit center and its new extension site—opened on January 2 to ease congestion—are sheltering more than 23,000 individuals as of January 19 despite the intended capacities of approximately 1,500 and 2,100 people, respectively. Overcrowding in transit centers limits peoples' access to WASH facilities in the sites, exacerbating poor sanitation conditions and increasing the risk of disease transmission among the displaced population. OTA remains a challenge due to high transportation costs, limited resources, and road inaccessibility, IOM reports. Additionally, some Sudanese refugees sheltering in Renk are reluctant to relocate to refugee camps located in Upper Nile's Maban County due to uncertainty over available services, the UN reports. Between January 1 and 19, U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) partner UNHCR conducted five relocations, transporting more than 1,300 people from Renk to refugee camps in Maban via the recently reopened Renk–Maban road, previously flooded during the May-to-November rainy season. UNHCR also recorded a small number of self-relocations, at least 70 individuals, from Sudan's Blue Nile State via the Elfoj border crossing point to Maban during this period.

In response to increasing arrivals from Sudan and worsening humanitarian conditions at transit centers, the UN allocated \$10 million from its Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to support the humanitarian response in South Sudan on January 14. The allocation includes \$4 million to support OTA for at least two months while the remaining balance will provide cash transfers for food, shelter, and

² The Sphere Project was launched in 1997 by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UN, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and donors to develop a set of universal minimum standards for humanitarian assistance and thereby improve the quality of assistance provided to disaster-affected persons and to enhance the accountability of humanitarian agencies.

WASH assistance to the displaced population. In addition, with support from USAID/BHA and State/PRM, humanitarian organizations continued to provide vital multi-sector assistance to new arrivals as of late January.

South Sudanese Refugees in Ethiopia Return to Jonglei and Upper Nile

More than 109,000 South Sudanese—previously displaced by insecurity in their host communities—returned from refugee camps in Ethiopia’s Gambella Region between August 2023 and mid-January 2024, citing the lack of access to basic services, including food, intercommunal violence in and near refugee camps in Gambella, and a desire to reunite with family members as top contributing factors, according to IOM and UNHCR. Returnees require urgent food, health, nutrition, and protection support, according to relief organizations. The areas experiencing the highest share of returnees—more than 82,000 individuals—are Upper Nile’s Maiwut and Ulang counties and Nasir town, remote areas where resources are already strained. Other returnees are sheltering across Jonglei State, with Akobo County receiving nearly 14,000 people as of mid-January. Upon arrival, 58 percent of surveyed returnees indicated their intention to remain in South Sudan while the remaining intend to temporarily stay or are unsure of how long they plan to stay in the county. Population movement dynamics into South Sudan remained highly fluid as of mid-January, according to REACH.

MoH Declares Yellow Fever Outbreak in Western Equatoria in December 2023

The MoH declared a yellow fever outbreak in Western Equatoria State’s Ezo, Ibbo, Nzara, Tambura, and Yambio counties in late December 2023, with health actors recording five suspected yellow fever-related deaths, nearly 30 suspected cases, and one confirmed case as of January 20. In response to the outbreak, the MoH activated the Public Health Emergency Operations Center—its national public health emergency support unit—and deployed a rapid response team, along with support from USAID/BHA partner the UN World Health Organization (WHO), to conduct investigations of suspected cases and active case identification, as well as community mobilization and sensitization activities. The MoH is also working with WHO to reduce disease transmission in at-risk areas. However, the MoH and WHO report challenges faced in responding to the outbreak, including few partners to support the response; inadequate existing health infrastructure; limited capacity for sample collection, packing, and transportation to testing laboratories; and weak disease surveillance capacities. South Sudan has experienced several yellow fever outbreaks in past years, with one of the worst outbreaks occurring in May 2003, when health actors recorded approximately 180 cases and 27 deaths in the Eastern Equatoria State’s Imatong Region, WHO reports.

Security Incidents Affect Humanitarian Workers and Limit Access in 2023

Nearly 30 security incidents—including armed robbery, detention, and physical assault—affected humanitarian workers and access in December, with a total of nearly 400 security incidents recorded between January and December 2023, the UN reports. The frequency of security incidents remained relatively consistent throughout the year, underscoring the complex and dangerous operating environment relief actors face across South Sudan. Most recently in December, bureaucratic impediments, operational interferences by state and non-state armed actors, and ongoing violence affected aid workers, according to the UN. In at least three instances, airport authorities seized official and personal belongings, such as cash and laptops, from humanitarian staff in Unity State’s Koch County and Upper Nile’s Bunj town. In addition, ongoing armed clashes and intercommunal violence across South Sudan adversely affected humanitarian movements and operations in December, resulting in the relocation of at least eight humanitarian personnel from Guit County to Unity’s Bentiu County and an interruption in humanitarian flights to the Abyei Administrative Area.

KEY FIGURES



4.4 Million

In cash transfers for food to meet needs of refugees and returnees from Sudan between April and December 2023



\$5 Million

In dedicated USG support for life-saving health care programming in FY 2024



\$13 Million

In dedicated USG support for WASH programming in FY 2024

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY

USAID/BHA supports multiple UN agencies and NGOs to bolster food security across South Sudan. USAID/BHA partners provide emergency food assistance—including cash transfers for food, regionally and internationally procured commodities, and U.S. in-kind food assistance—to food-insecure households across the country. USAID/BHA continues to support WFP to sustain emergency food assistance as food needs increase in vulnerable areas of South Sudan. State/PRM NGO partners also provide agricultural inputs, fishing kits, and livelihood training to support at-risk populations. With USAID/BHA support, the UN World Food Program (WFP) reached more than 397,000 refugees and returnees from Sudan, providing more than 2.4 million beneficiaries in 2023, including 3,100 metric tons of in-kind food assistance and \$4.4 million in cash assistance at border entry points, transit centers, and refugee camps across South Sudan between mid-April and December 2023.

HEALTH

USG partners continue to provide health support in South Sudan through community health facilities and mobile medical units (MMUs), which provide a range of maternal, mental, and primary health care services. South Sudan has the highest year-on-year rate of maternal mortality in the world, and MMUs provide life-saving maternal and newborn health care services to reduce the prevalence of maternal and infant deaths. USAID/BHA also supports integrated community case management services in South Sudan, which deliver life-saving health interventions for common childhood illnesses, particularly in areas with limited access to health facility-based services.

To mitigate the effects of infectious disease outbreaks in South Sudan, USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners continue to assist in training local health care workers in infection prevention and control methods, provide support for vaccination campaigns, and strengthen community health coordination. Additionally, State/PRM supports UNHCR and NGOs to address the health care needs of refugees and returnees while USAID/BHA support addresses health care needs for internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees from Sudan, and other vulnerable populations. Health interventions are integrated with nutrition and WASH services wherever possible to promote a comprehensive and efficient system of clinical services.

WASH

USAID/BHA and State/PRM support partners implementing critical WASH programs, including activities to provide access to safe drinking water, handwashing facilities, sanitation services, and solid waste disposal, especially

in large displacement and transit sites. Additional WASH programming includes interventions to help prevent cholera outbreaks among vulnerable populations and to mitigate the risk of gender-based violence by providing safe access to latrines, sanitation services, and other WASH facilities. Additionally, USAID/BHA and State/PRM continue to support efforts by UN and NGO partners to respond to recent flooding throughout South Sudan by rehabilitating WASH infrastructure and providing WASH supplies to flood-affected populations. USAID/BHA also supports hygiene promotion activities through public health campaigns and the distribution of essential supplies, such as dignity and hygiene kits, soap, and water containers.



273,000

Children ages 6–59 months treated for severe acute malnutrition between January and November 2023 by UNICEF

NUTRITION

USAID/BHA supports partners to prevent and treat wasting—the deadliest form of malnutrition—across South Sudan. USAID/BHA supports NGOs, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and WFP to provide nutrition assistance—including specialized food products to treat wasting—for children and pregnant and lactating women countrywide. Additionally, State/PRM supports UNICEF’s nutrition efforts for refugee and returnee populations fleeing Sudan. Using a community-based approach, USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners promote recommended infant and young child feeding practices through one-on-one counseling and group education to manage wasting.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- On October 5, 2023, U.S. Ambassador Michael J. Adler reissued a declaration of humanitarian need in South Sudan for FY 2024 due to ongoing insecurity, widespread population displacement, climatic and economic shocks, and the Sudan crisis, all of which have significantly exacerbated food insecurity and humanitarian needs.
- Fighting between Rapid Support Forces and Sudanese Armed Forces elements began on April 15, 2023, significantly escalating the humanitarian crisis in Sudan and generating widespread displacement to neighboring countries. In South Sudan, the arrival of refugees, returnees, and third-country nationals fleeing conflict in Sudan has exacerbated humanitarian needs among host communities with limited resources due to years of armed conflict, heightened food insecurity, and climatic shocks.
- After nearly seven years, USAID transitioned the South Sudan Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) and Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Team (RMT) to a normalized response under USAID/BHA on November 6 and November 20, 2020, respectively. USAID/BHA remains committed to maintaining a robust humanitarian response in South Sudan, and USAID/BHA partners continue to carry out life-saving programs to meet the humanitarian needs of the South Sudanese people.
- On December 15, 2013, clashes erupted between factions within the Government of South Sudan—the country’s pre-2018 governing body—in the capital city of Juba and quickly spread into a protracted national conflict, generating displacement and exacerbating humanitarian needs. On December 20, 2013, USAID activated a DART to lead the USG response to the crisis in South Sudan and stood up an RMT to support the DART.

- The January 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the southern-based Sudan People’s Liberation Army officially ended more than two decades of north–south conflict during which disease, famine, and fighting killed an estimated 2 million people and displaced at least 4.5 million others within Sudan. In July 2011, South Sudan became an independent state following a referendum earlier in the year.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR SOUTH SUDAN RESPONSE IN FY 2024¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
USAID/BHA			
Concern	WASH	Countrywide	\$64,000
IOM	Health; Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA); Logistics Support; Protection, Shelter and Settlements; WASH	Abyei, Upper Nile, Unity, Western Bahr el Ghazal	\$31,000,000
Mercy Corps	WASH	Unity	\$365,229
UNICEF	Protection	Countrywide	\$2,000,000
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$1,000,000
WFP	Food Assistance—Cash Transfer for Food, Local, Regional, and International Procurement; Logistics Support; Nutrition	Countrywide	\$53,500,000
	Food Assistance—U.S. In-Kind Food Aid, U.S. In-Kind Specialized Nutrition Products	Countrywide	\$149,998,189
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$237,927,418
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE SOUTH SUDAN RESPONSE IN FY 2024			\$237,927,418

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of February 1, 2024.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at interaction.org.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed, often in the affected region; reduce the burden on scarce resources, such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space; can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: cidi.org
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at reliefweb.int.

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)