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In Upper Nile State's Renk County, USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) partner Medair is providing acutely malnourished children with life-saving nutrition support through two temporary emergency health clinics, eight mobile nutrition clinics, and a nutrition stabilization center.

Alleviating Child Malnutrition in Food-Insecure South Sudan

More than 1 million children in South Sudan are facing acute malnutrition as a result of the country's ongoing civil war, which has prompted widespread population displacement and related health system collapse, disrupted livelihoods, and exacerbated acute food insecurity and malnutrition. According to the UN, severely malnourished children are nine times more likely to die than their healthy peers and often experience long-term damage that can limit physical growth, inhibit learning ability, increase infection risk, and result in bone loss or organ failure.

USAID is coordinating with UN agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other international donors to address the urgent nutrition needs of the country's most vulnerable individuals, including children younger than five years of age.

Critically malnourished children with medical complications are frequently referred to the stabilization center, which offers treatment free-of-charge to children like one-year-old Naima. Naima's grandmother brought her to the center after Naima became ill and underweight from subsisting on a scant diet of milk and porridge—the only foods the family could afford given high food prices in local markets and limited livelihood opportunities. After receiving intensive treatment in the stabilization center, Naima was able to return home, where she continues to receive vital nutrition support from Medair through an outpatient therapeutic feeding program.

Stabilization center staff also recently treated 18-month-old Khamis, who was seriously malnourished and fighting an infection of *plasmodium falciparum* malaria—the most dangerous type of malaria. When Khamis' father brought his son to the center, he did not think Khamis would survive. Luckily, after medication for malaria and two months of intensive treatment for severe acute malnutrition, Khamis is thriving and his father is hopeful for his future.