$1.6 billion needed to provide life-saving assistance and protection to 5.8 million people

Humanitarian organizations have appealed for US$1.6 billion to provide life-saving assistance and protection to 5.8 million people across South Sudan under the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).

“The humanitarian situation in South Sudan has deteriorated dramatically due to the devastating combination of conflict, economic decline and climatic shocks,” said Mr. Eugene Owusu, the Humanitarian Coordinator for South Sudan. “In 2017, we are facing unprecedented needs, in an unprecedented number of locations, and these needs will increase during the upcoming lean season.”

Humanitarian organizations estimate that some 7.5 million people across South Sudan are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection in 2017. “With needs rising rapidly, we have rigorously prioritized the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan to target those who most urgently require assistance and protection,” said Mr. Owusu. “It is imperative that this appeal is funded early, and funded fully, so that the aid workers deployed across South Sudan can respond robustly and rapidly.”

FAO distribute fishing kits to famine-affected areas

In recent weeks, FAO has ramped up the distribution of fishing kits to beneficiaries in southern Unity, distributing 7,000 fishing kits in Madol, Mayendit County. This activity is part of FAO’s Dry Season Campaign targeted to assist 155,000 households in the coming months. The main priority will be to distribute kits to households classified through food and nutrition security assessments as
extremely vulnerable, residing mostly in the areas of Greater Upper Nile and southern Unity.

Households in Mayendit are unable to sufficiently meet their food needs for many reasons. One of which is that they have not been able to cultivate for the last three years and their stocks are insufficient. Also, they have lost nearly all of their assets including livestock, and struggle daily to find their next meal. The fishing kits offer a life-saving source of food.

“Fishing kits have replaced our livestock, because when we get fish we eat it with our children and we feel better,” said Martha Nyadiel Nguen from Mayendit, Madol.

Distributing fishing kits to people affected by long-term crisis long-term crisis, FAO helps bridge food consumption gaps. In many cases, beneficiaries have fled from their homes and have lost all their assets and/or do not have the means to replace fishing gear that has been damaged. The fishing kits can provide an immediate source of food, providing a means to survive, and might also, in the long-term, offer income opportunities to enhance their ability to bounce back after shocks inflicted by the conflict.

“WHO and ECHO deliver essential medicines to communities affected by the cholera outbreak in South Sudan

WHO with support from the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) have delivered essential medicines and supplies to the communities affected by the cholera outbreak in the Islands of Jonglei and Greater Lakes.

The shipment included full Diarrhoeal Disease Kits (DDKs) sufficient to treat 2,800 cases, ORS modules and cholera investigation kits, as well as cholera preparedness and response guidelines. The supplies were deployed along with rapid response teams that are currently working alongside local teams to control the raging outbreaks.

“The Islands affected by the cholera outbreak in Jonglei have been hard to reach for over 6 months, leaving people in desperate need of food, water, sanitation, health services and medicines”, said Dr. Allan Mpairwe.

“Living conditions are very difficult and people’s day-to-day lives are characterized by lack of basic social services including basic and lifesaving medicines, medical supplies and laboratory reagents in the health facilities,” Dr Mpairwe added.

Rapid response teams have been deployed to augment the local response in Bor South, Awriel and Yirol East Counties, offering essential medical care as a first step towards improving the humanitarian situation in the area. With the inaccessibility and instability in the area, great concern remains that the situation may further deteriorate and humanitarian access may be further threatened.

“Supplies were provided thanks to funding from ECHO” said Dr Abdulmumini Usman, WHO Representative to South Sudan. “The humanitarian supplies provide vitally needed aid to the most affected population by the conflict”, Dr. Usman said.

ECHO and other partners have been supporting the emergency response through provision of IEHK, trauma kits, DDKs and outbreak investigation kits to ensure humanitarian supplies are delivered and distributed as efficiently as possible.

WHO is committed to ensuring that all South Sudanese continue to have access to health services, including those in the hardest to access areas through the provision of lifesaving medicines.

IOM provides health, shelter aid in volatile areas of South Sudan

IOM is providing emergency health care and shelter assistance to South Sudanese forced to flee their homes due to violence in volatile areas of the country, including Unity and Central Equatoria.
IOM, in coordination with partners, conducted an emergency shelter and non-food item (NFI) kit distribution from 22 February – 3 March for over 9,400 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nyal, Unity. The kits include blankets, nylon and rubber rope, plastic sheeting, a kanga (cloth) and a large carrying bag.

IDPs in Nyal are living in very difficult circumstances, having fled with little-to-no belongings. They are largely relying on support from local host communities, where already limited resources are rapidly becoming exhausted.

Panyijiar is located in one of the most food insecure areas of South Sudan. IOM is currently collaborating with WFP to biometrically register the population in Nyal to inform humanitarian distributions for the area.

In Central Equatoria, an IOM rapid response team completed a five-week mission on 23 February to provide emergency health care to over 30,000 IDPs sheltering in Kajo Keji County at IDP sites in Ajio, Kerwa and Logo. IDPs in the area fled fighting in nearby counties, and the majority of reported multiple displacements.

“Families ran from their homes with next to nothing, leaving behind their farms and livelihoods,” explained IOM Health Rapid Response Team Coordinator Derebe Kintamo. “Within three weeks of displacement, our clinics began seeing increasing numbers of cases of malnutrition among children under five. We coordinated with a nearby medical centre to ensure cases of acute malnutrition received prompt treatment.”

The team conducted over 7,700 health consultations, providing general health care, vaccinations against common diseases, nutrition screening and maternal health care.

On completion of the mission, IOM handed over responsibility for the three clinics to the American Refugee Committee and the County Health Department.

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**Creating co-operative societies for development in Torit**

“I learned from my twin [civil servant from an IGAD country] how to create a cooperative society and now I am teaching others how to develop theirs. I help them to be self-sufficient and self-sustainable. They all contribute with their own money and with their own harvest. Every person feels responsible for their own contribution.”

Kilara Nasser Tanya is the Deputy Director for Field Management in Torit State Ministry of Agriculture. As part of the IGAD Regional Initiative for Capacity Enhancement in South Sudan, a project funded by Norway and implemented by UNDP and the Ministry of Labour, he receives support from Francis Kisia, a civil servant from Kenya.

Since 2011, more than three hundred CSSOs have come to South Sudan to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the country’s civil service in sectors like agriculture, aviation, finance, and public health.

“My job is to know what the community needs and link their interests with the government plan. I go to visit the traditional leaders and ask them what their challenges are, what they think would be helpful for their people. I teach them how to organize and get the maximum benefits from their own resources, transferring skills and tools to improve their life,” explained Kilara.

“Francis proposed we train communities in rural development. When you do not have anything to feed your family, you need to start thinking of other ways to get incomes,” he said.

Kisara is now member of a cooperative society which provide credit to him and to the rest of the farmers’ members, the most needed thing in the farming communities. They also have access to top quality fertilizers, seeds, insecticides, pesticides and more, at reasonable prices.
“With the cooperative we are independent and we can share our products with the broader community,” said Kilara.

**South Sudan journalists trained in conflict sensitive reporting**

Fifty one journalists working for radio stations located in various states in South Sudan have been trained in conflict sensitive reporting and peace journalism from 31 January to 02 February 2017 at the Juba Regency hotel in Juba.

The training was conducted under the “Communicating with Communities” project being implemented by UNESCO and UNDP.

Speaking at the opening of the training, Hon. Justine Aler De Mayen, the Under Secretary at Ministry of Information, said the government will continue to promote press freedom. “The government respects freedom of the press because it is this freedom that we fought for until we gained independence in 2011 so we have to defend it”

At the same event, Mr. Henric Rasbarant, Head of Office, Embassy of Sweden in South Sudan which funds the “Communicating with Communities” project emphasized the importance of press freedom and its role in promoting democracy. “Press freedom is the cornerstone of any democracy,” said Mr Rasbarant.

Mwatile Ndinoshiho, UNESCO’s Communication Specialist, pledged her organization support to build capacity of media practitioners, to advocate for safety of journalists as well as to provide platforms for all voices to be heard.

At the end of the three day training, the journalists said it had helped improve their understanding of how the media can be used to promote peace.

“I am a fresh graduate. But now I know how to report conflict. I learned that in a conflict a reporter should not only focus on parties involved in the conflict but also on solutions being proposed to address the conflict,” said Viola Elias, 24, one of the workshop participants.

Conflict Sensitive Journalism is a part of the safety and protection training mechanism that UNESCO and its partners offer to journalists working in post-conflict and conflict countries.

**South Sudan launches the National Adaptation Programme of Actions for Climate Change**

Over 120 people representing national, regional and international institutions – including five national ministers, member of parliaments, donors, UN Resident Coordinator, Head of UN agencies, non-governmental organizations, and media houses – attended the launch of the National Adaption Programme of Action (NAPA) for climate change in Juba, South Sudan on 15 February. The NAPA document is prepared with technical support from UN Environment (UNEP) as part of the Government of South Sudan’s action to lessen effects of climate change on vulnerable communities.

Speaking at the launch, the guest of honour, the Minister of Energy and Dams, Dr Dhieu Mathok, said that the legal framework and the government’s efforts to create more awareness and appropriate funding for the plan are very important to the successful implementation of the document’s findings and recommendations.

The Minister of Environment and Forestry, Josephine Napwon Cosmas, said the threat of climate change in South Sudan is real, giving examples of heat waves and prolonged drought.

In his remarks, Mr. James Janga Duku, the Minister of Livestock and Fisheries, said climate change has resulted in the loss of pastures for communities rearing cattle in South Sudan.

The UN Resident Coordinator and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (DSRSG/RC/HC) in South Sudan, Eugene Owusu, stressed that climate change accelerates poverty and is particularly severely felt by the poor. Mr. Owusu said that since a vast number of South Sudanese live in poverty, and 90% of the population depends on natural resources, it is essential to prepare the local communities to deal with climate change.

Arshad Khan, the Country Programme Manager of UNEP said it is very important for South Sudan to adopt policies to reduce its vulnerability by building resilience against the impact of climate change through involving all tiers of the government and communities. “If today you think it is not your problem, I am certain, tomorrow it will be yours,” he added.

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