WORLD REFUGEE DAY

EVERYONE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE: EVERY ACTION COUNTS

Every year, June 20, is celebrated to mark the World Refugee Day, to honor refugees and those forcibly displaced for their resilience and their contribution to society, and to build empathy and understanding for their plight.

The South Sudanese people are all too familiar with what it means to be a refugee. Conflict in South Sudan has forced more people from their homes than any other country in Africa and few other places in the world. Here, more than 300,000 refugees from six countries, some 4,000 asylum seekers, and nearly 1.7 internally displaced South Sudanese live side by side with local communities.

This year, while the world is grappling with COVID-19, World Refugee Day is dedicated to highlighting how these communities are working together to address shared challenges despite juggling often complex pre-existing challenges. Everyone can make a difference. Every action counts.

This year, we honor the Government of South Sudan for opening its borders to refugees and asylum seekers from all over the region despite dealing with unrest and COVID-19 within its own. Because of this, people like eight-months-pregnant Marie and her four children, who recently walked for five days with little food to seek refuge after an attack on their village in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have respite.

World Refugee Day is also for people like Dr. Evan Atar Adaha, 2018 Nansen Refugee Award Laureate, who works seven days a week, from dawn to night, to run Upper Nile State’s only referral hospital, serving more than 200,000 refugees and local community members. Speaking from Bunj Hospital in Maban County, his message resonates with solidarity: “Everyone can contribute to save lives and protecting people from COVID-19.”

We celebrate people like Jackline and David, South Sudanese UNHCR staff who grew up as refugees in the Central African Republic and Uganda. David, who attended university with a UNHCR scholarship, now specializing in increasing access to education. And Jackline, a trilingual community-based protection associate, uses her experiences to empower women and girls. This is a day to recognize the internally displaced tailors in Malakal, and the community women’s group in Wau, who are sewing masks to be donated to their community and frontline workers. It is a day for the boda-boda riders who are...
contributing to COVID-19 awareness raising campaigns, the refugee builders constructing additional wards at health centers and all those who have been forcibly displaced, who are contributing in their new locations until they are able to go back home.

“As Somali-British poet Warson Shire says in her poem Home, ‘No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark,’ South Sudan UNHCR Representative, a.i., Adan Ilmi recalls.

“And it is true that refugees and all forcibly displaced persons have lost much. But they should not be defined solely by their tragedy, but also by the role they play within the communities they live in.

On World Refugee Day, and on every other day, the United Nations in South Sudan stands in solidarity with the forcibly displaced and the government of South Sudan in strengthening international protection, in search of durable solutions.”

On the Day of the African Child (DAC) on 16 June, the Government of South Sudan and UNICEF have called for more support to children in conflict with the law. The theme of this year’s DAC, decided by the African Union, was Access to a Child-Friendly Justice System in Africa.

Minors in conflict with the law are entitled to social support and legal representation to help them throughout the process; informing them about their rights, navigating them in the judiciary system and supporting their defense.

“As adults, our job is to guide the youth and help them when they stumble; supporting them to become productive members of the society. It is said, it takes a village to raise a child. We are all members of this village,” said Dr Mohamed Ayoya, UNICEF Representative in South Sudan.

More on: www.unicef.org/southsudan
WHEN STAYING AT HOME BECOMES A RISK DURING THE PANDEMIC

Staying at home may be a safe way to avoid COVID-19, but for some women and girls in Bentiu, it could also mean greater vulnerability to gender-based violence.

A social worker from a UNFPA-supported woman-friendly space noted an increase in domestic violence reports with the stay-at-home policy.

The suspension of classes has also left young girls idle and some are being forced into marriage by their parents. Women and girls in Bentiu are highly vulnerable to GBV. They are often the ones responsible to provide food for the family, including doing mundane tasks as gathering firewood outside of the POC – this is where the physical assaults and rape by armed men also commonly happen.

UNFPA works with IRC and other partners, including the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, to keep Women and Girls-Friendly Spaces and one-stop centers for GBV survivors open amidst the COVID-19 crisis so that women and girls can get help when they need it. Read the full story on UNFPA website: https://bit.ly/37BazSJ

LEARNING WHILST HERDING IN SOUTH SUDAN

Through radio or in classrooms, cattle camp schools ensure education, and greater food security and peace.

In South Sudan, livestock means life. As South Sudanese herders put it: here, cattle can chase away hunger. Over 65 percent of the population relies on livestock for their survival. Children grow up on milk. Families survive on meat, milk and cattle’s blood.

Losing one’s cattle is like losing one’s life savings. So, when the dry season sets in and water and grass get scarce, herders must move. They move with their families and animals – up to three, four times or more per year – in search of pasture and water.

This means herders’ children can’t go to school and miss out on an education. In 2016, FAO and UNESCO, with support from the European Union, have teamed up to roll out an educational programme in the cattle camps of Lakes and Central Equatoria states, in the center and south of the country.

First, the two UN agencies worked with the Government of South Sudan on a curriculum, and developed training materials for teachers and manuals for students. Then, they trained community members who already had a basic education to roll out a numeracy and literacy programme and teach skills that enable herders to engage in a range of activities to meet their needs.

Read the full article.
The COVID-19 Addendum to the 2020 South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan requests US$390 million and brings the overall humanitarian appeal for the year to $1.9 billion. The humanitarian community aims to assist 7.4 million people in 2020, up from the 5.6 million planned before the outbreak.

COVID-19 is affecting countries around the world and is now spreading rapidly in South Sudan. It is already having a significant negative impact on the humanitarian situation and any socio-economic and political progress the country has made over the past few years. The main addendum objective is to support the national effort to contain and prevent the spread of COVID-19 while responding to the ongoing humanitarian emergency. The humanitarian community is working alongside the Government, development partners and donors to support the response, placing an emphasis on prevention and mitigation.

To find out more visit

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/south-sudan/
UNMAS SUPPORTS SOUTH SUDANESE RETURNEES TO REBUILD LIVELIHOODS

Established in 1997, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) works to eliminate the threat posed by mines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices by coordinating United Nations mine action, leading operational responses at the country level, and supporting the development of standards, policies and norms.

It has an impartial work force policy which empowers and engages local community members and supports them in building sustainable livelihoods.

Ms. Poni Betty Towe, who fled to Uganda with her family at an early age and grew up in a refugee camp, is now a Mechanic and Driver for UNMAS in South Sudan.

After finishing her secondary education in the refugee camp in Uganda and inspired by her childhood experience, Poni Betty joined a mechanic training program after coming back to South Sudan in 2005.

UNMAS valued her professional competency and invited her to join the organization in 2019. She now proudly delivers high quality work throughout the country, supporting UNMAS to deliver its mandates and helping her people.

Nyanyei Nyei Manjok is among a group of 15 youth who benefited from a unique vocational training opportunity provided by Bangladeshi peacekeepers in collaboration with UNHCR and the Humanitarian Development Consortium.

The youngsters were taught carpentry and other skills needed to build floating jetties which will enhance economic and peacebuilding activities. “I’m very happy to be able to develop my skills, particularly in such an unusual area,” said Nyanyei. “Building jetties helps improve infrastructure which is something women in South Sudan are not usually involved in.

This jetty means a lot to our communities because it will help us access Malakal town and get to the other side of the Sobat riverbank. This enables our families to move around more easily even during the rainy season so we can buy necessary supplies.”

Hellen Joseph a tailor trained by UN Women Economic Empowerment Program in 2017 has ventured to mask production when the corona virus pandemic emerged.

Before the pandemic, she was making African dresses and diverse African designs for both men and women.

“I am currently putting my focus on production of masks to save my community from contracting the corona virus. Previously, i designed all kinds of African wear as my business and now with the shift to mask production, I am encouraging people to always wear masks and follow the health measures put by the Ministry of Health in order to prevent the spread of the Corona Virus”.

UNMISS SUPPORTS VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN ADONG

A vocational training session facilitated by UNMISS in Adong.

Photo Credit: UNMISS

HELLEN ENCOURAGES CITIZENS TO ADHERE TO HEALTH’S GUIDELINE AMIDST COVID-19
ENHANCING THE PROVISION OF COVID-19 TREATMENT IN SOUTH SUDAN

Over 100 health workers have been trained in the last three weeks with the aim to rapidly increase trained healthcare workers in response to COVID-19 outbreak in the country.

With support from World Health Organization (WHO) and other partners the Ministry of Health has trained health workers on COVID-19 case management and infection prevention and control (IPC). Participants are equipped with knowledge and skills on patient screening, isolation, contact tracing, use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and waste management.

These trainings are aimed to establish a surge capacity health workforce for COVID-19, provide adequate knowledge on infection prevention and control, and contribute to building a resilient human resource capacity for emergency response country-wide.

“The national case management strategy recommends that severe and critical cases are isolated in health facilities, said Dr Angok Gordon, the Incident Manager for COVID-19 at the Ministry of Health. “Hence it is pertinent for joint effort to fight COVID-19, the unseen enemy”.

South Sudan confirmed its first COVID-19 case on 5 April 2020 and has since recorded 1864 cases and 34 deaths and 122 recoveries from COVID-19 reported as of 22nd June 2020.

“The training will build confidence for effective case management of COVID-19 patients”, said Dr Olushayo Olu, WHO Representative for South Sudan. “Continuous learning should be part of health care workers approach as much is yet to be known about the virus”.

As part of the technical support for the COVID-19 response activities at national, subnational and community levels, WHO in collaboration with Ministry of Health and other partners are conducting regular trainings targeting frontline health care workers on COVID-19 in the country.

Since the start of the preparedness and response activity, WHO and partners have conducted eight online interactive training sessions on COVID-19, focusing on case management, IPC, contact tracing, rationale use of PPEs and waste management.

In addition, 119 health care workers were trained with hands on practical sessions at the Dr John Garang infectious diseases unit. The trained health workers will cascade the training to the states for effective COVID-19 case management.

The case management trainings are supported by WHO, Centres for Disease Control (CDC), UNICEF, ICAP, International Medical Corps and South Sudan Red Cross.