

Alert

South Sudan

Famine Crisis Response

Nairobi, 28 February, 2017

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

Across South Sudan, more than 3 million people have been forced to flee their homes and nearly 7.5 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection (OCHA, Humanitarian Response Plan 2017) as a result of multiple and deepening crises, including conflict, inter-communal violence, economic decline, disease, and climatic shocks, which have led to displacement, distress, destitution and death.

Monday 20 February, 2017 marked the most historic declaration of famine in parts of South Sudan, affecting mostly Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who are dispersed and the host communities already affected by the on-going conflict. According to Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) phase 3 and above report of 2017, the number of people who are already food insecure are 4.9 million (42%), out of which 100,000 are facing famine conditions. The highest proportions of populations in Crisis, Emergency and Catastrophe are observed in Unity and Northern Bahr el Ghazal (61%) and people currently facing famine or risk of famine are in Leer, Mayendit, Koch and Panyijiar in former Unity state.

Conflict and insecurity are the main drivers of this acute food insecurity compounded by the coming lean season and resulting in devastating effects on livelihoods and the nutrition situation. Acute malnutrition is also a major public health emergency in the country. Evidence shows that, in the Southern part of Unity, one in three children are acutely malnourished. This unprecedented situation is exceedingly spilling over to the former ten (10) states of South Sudan that may result into death, and massive displacement of people.

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

The South Sudan Catholic Bishops have already issued a pastoral statement to support the initiatives aimed at assisting affected population. With a message of solidarity for their people: "We have heard what God is saying to us through you and through your sufferings... you are not abandoned." An ACT response is needed to urgently help the 100,000 people already in famine conditions, 4.9 million people who are severely food insecure and rescue the 7.5 million people across the country who are in desperate need of humanitarian life-saving assistance.

The ACT Alliance members and other ecumenical organizations of the Church under the auspices of the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) and their Church networks and organizations can reach the worst-affected and most remote affected populations and are able to provide a much needed assistance. An urgent humanitarian action is critically required for address this crisis situation in order to rescue lives, protect livelihoods, diminish food consumption gaps and reduce acute malnutrition.

3. National and international response

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The ACT Alliance secretariat is certified with the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership's 2010 HAP Standard for accountability and quality management.

On 21 February, 2017 local and international humanitarian actors witnessed the launch of the South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan (SSHRP) 2017 by UN-OCHA and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management (South Sudan). The UN through OCHA is already appealing for US\$1.6 billion to support 7.5 people in need of humanitarian assistance with the Government of South Sudan committing to contribute 1% of the total UN-Appeal including removal of the existing bureaucratic impediments to ease access and protection of humanitarian aid workers in the country.

4. ACT Alliance response

ACT Forum members through coordinated efforts have been supporting the deteriorating humanitarian situation through the ACT Appeal SSD151 and bilateral funding in the areas of Food & NFIs, Protection and Psychosocial support. PRDA, World Renew, Christian Aid, NCA, FCA, LWF, DCA, DKH, ICCO-Cooperation & MCC are still actively responding to the needs in WASH, Education in Emergency (EiE), Food Security & Livelihoods, Protection, Health, Nutrition and NFIs.

5. Planned activities

South Sudan ACT Forum members- Christian Aid, DCA, DKH, FCA, ICCO –Cooperation, LWF, MCC, NCA and PRDA are planning to respond jointly through an ACT Appeal. The key response sectors are Food Security, Nutrition, WASH, NFIs, Emergency Health, Protection & Psychosocial Support, seeds and tools. This intervention will be targeting at least 250,000 severely crisis affected population across South Sudan.

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6. Constraints

South Sudan humanitarian operations are highly challenged by numerous constraints including series of bureaucratic impediments, accessibility due to poor roads, insecurity and climatic shocks, economic decline with inflation (>835%) and shortage of currencies in the banks as well as goods in the market.

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