



URGENT APPEAL

South Sudan Emergency Floods Response

Since late August 2019, heavy rains and flooding have devastated areas in South Sudan. Greater Maban County in north-east South Sudan, bordering Sudan, is one of the hardest hit areas. Over 150,000 Sudanese refugees hosted in four refugee camps and an estimated 50,000 South Sudanese host community members living side-by-side in Maban have been badly affected. Flooding has destroyed homes and displaced families from both refugee and host communities. Roads have become impassable, crops have been destroyed and humanitarian operations interrupted. Given the limited infrastructure in South Sudan, the Bunj airstrip—often referred to as the ‘lifeline of Maban’—was submerged and heavily damaged. The roads connecting Maban with other parts of the country have been impassable since August. Access roads from Bunj town to the refugee camps and host community areas, as well as roads within the camps, are heavily damaged. Many remain unusable by any vehicle. With the rainy season expected to continue through November, there is a high risk that more flooding will affect these vulnerable families.



Estimated population affected: 200,000 people

Refugees: 151,962 as of 31 October

Host community: 70,000 people

UNHCR is urgently appealing for **\$10 million** to support the response to the flooding in Maban. The operation will provide core relief items, emergency shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assistance and health support to refugees and members of the host community affected by the floods.

Working environment

South Sudan is on a gradual path to recovery from six years of civil war and now faces flooding that the region has not witnessed in recent decades, and which is destroying lives, livelihoods and infrastructure. Although floods are a chronic and acute problem during rainy season excess water from Ethiopian highlands, where rainfall is becoming more intense and irregular, is now carving through neighborhoods in broad, swift rivers.

In Maban, families from both refugee and host communities have been displaced, roads are impassable, crops have been destroyed, and humanitarian operations have been interrupted. Approximately 200,000 people—refugees and members of host communities—are being significantly affected by this year’s unprecedented flooding. By damaging or restricting access to public services, including to hospitals and damaged sanitation facilities, health risks to the population have increased.

As of 11 November, approximately 175 metric tons of core relief and emergency shelter items have been airlifted, drawing from the limited stocks available in country. Additional resources are urgently needed to replenish these stocks and enable continuous support to affected families. Due to the continuing rains and flooding, residents of Greater Maban County have been forced to seek safety on higher and dry grounds anywhere they could—in the middle of roads, at health centres, or in humanitarian offices and schools.

Urgent needs

- **Emergency core relief items:** purchase, transportation and distribution of core relief items for the affected population, including multi-purpose tarpaulins, mosquito nets, sleeping mats, blankets, kitchen sets, jerrycans and buckets.
- **Emergency shelter:** procurement and distribution of emergency shelter kits and materials, which will include plastic sheets, ropes and poles.
- **Infrastructure repair:** repairs to estimated 50 kilometers of roads to access refugee camps. Repairing damaged roads and bridges is critical to ensure access for humanitarian assistance. Additional repairs are needed for the only airstrip in Maban, which was entirely flooded and is the only access point for all humanitarian workers serving the refugee operation.
- **Repairs to damaged facilities** such as health centers, schools and communal centres.
- **Emergency WASH assistance:** procurement and distribution of sanitary materials, soap, plastic sheets, slabs and poles, to enable the reconstruction of damaged latrines. Chlorine for water treatment and disinfection of latrines.
- **Emergency health support:** procurement of essential medicines and medical supplies to ensure 9 health facilities in 4 refugee camps are supported.

Key challenges

- Destruction of homes has forced men, women and children into unsafe living conditions, either in makeshift structures or communal shelters.
- High risks of an increase in communicable and water borne diseases.
- Limited access to affected populations: while some access has been regained in the refugee camps in Maban, parts of Yusuf Batil refugee camp are still flooded and the only bridge giving access to Kaya refugee camp, the furthest camp from Bunj town, is heavily damaged.

- Limited infrastructure means all relief items and personnel must be airlifted, with the restricted access causing prices in local markets to skyrocket. The main road connecting Bunj to the other towns in Upper Nile was already inaccessible due to damage from flooding earlier this year. Marram, the material used in roads, is usually obtained from a location near Kaya refugee camp, but where the bridge is heavily damaged and hard to access.
- Rains may continue through November, which could cause additional flooding and further hamper relief efforts.

Implementation

In due consideration of urgent needs and the scale of the emergency, priority will be given to the provision of core relief items including emergency shelter materials. UNHCR’s global distribution tool has been used to ensure accountability through biometric verification integrated with BIMS (the Biometric Identity Management System). Following distributions, results are shared with partners as well as other relevant units and post-distribution results are generated in a compatible format to be imported directly to partners systems.

UNHCR and partners have concluded inter-agency rapid needs assessments in Doro and Gendrassa refugee camps and host communities in Bunj. Assessments in the remaining locations in Batil and Kaya refugee camps as well as surrounding host communities are planned in the coming week.

Persons with specific needs: UNHCR's response will take the vulnerability of particular groups into consideration, in particular persons with specific needs such as elderly persons, single-headed households with small children, unaccompanied and separated children, and persons living with disabilities. UNHCR will continue to assess and analyze specific needs based on various levels of vulnerabilities, and support persons with specific needs during distributions and facilitate case management through protection desks to address issues raised.

Coordination

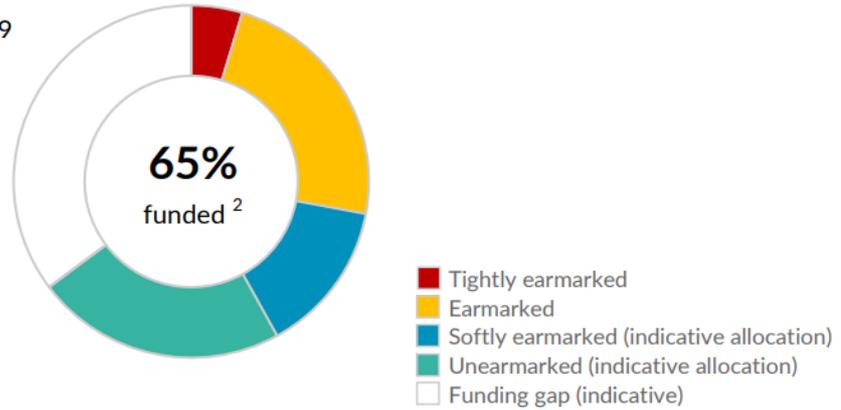
As Maban is a major refugee-hosting area in South Sudan, the response is being coordinated with government counterparts (the Commission of Refugee Affairs, the Relief Rehabilitation Commission, and the county authorities), refugee and host community leaders, and UN agencies and partners through the Refugee Coordination Model. Inter-agency coordination meetings take place three times a week to ensure arising needs are addressed and interventions are complementary and addressing the needs of both refugees and host communities. UNHCR is working closely with WFP to ensure timely emergency food distributions, and UNICEF has pledged support with early childhood development, school tents and cholera kits. The response will be aligned with inter-agency flood response plans at the country level, and coordinated with and through the Humanitarian Country Team and the Inter-Cluster Working Group.

Funding the response

UNHCR is urgently appealing for an additional **\$10 million** to respond to the immediate lifesaving humanitarian needs for the next two months.

UNHCR's financial requirements 2019

\$152.2 million
as of 11 November 2019



2019 financial requirements for the South Sudan flooding response

Activities	USD
Emergency core relief items	6,532,000
Emergency shelter assistance and infrastructure repairs	1,968,000
Emergency WASH assistance	1,200,000
Emergency health support	300,000
Total	10,000,000

The importance of flexible funding

Flexible financial support, particularly unearmarked funding, greatly facilitates UNHCR being able to kick-start an emergency response, bolster forgotten or under-resourced crises, and enable the fullest possible implementation of programmes. They enable UNHCR to plan and manage its resources efficiently and effectively, contributing to the collective success in every life that is transformed and saved.

UNHCR is grateful to the donors which have provided unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions. Additional financial and operational information is available on the Global Focus website (reporting.unhcr.org).

