

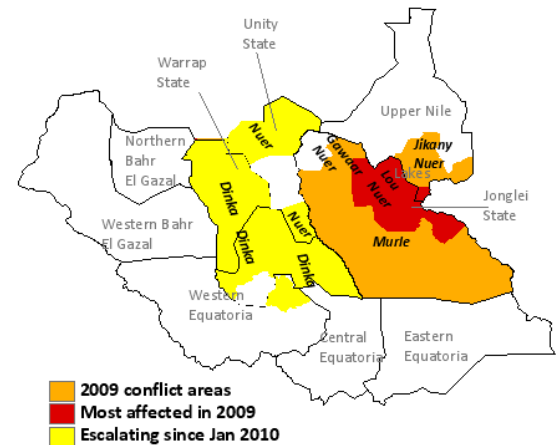
SOUTHERN SUDAN Food Security Alert

March 31, 2010*

Conflict exacerbates hunger season and could disrupt cultivation

The food insecure population in Southern Sudan has increased significantly since January, following escalated inter-tribal/clan and cattle-raiding conflicts during 2009, combined with poor rainfall that led to reduced crop and off-farm production. Areas affected by conflict include Jonglei, Warrap, Unity, and Lakes states, as well as Mvolo and Mundri East counties in Western Equatoria (Figure 1). Elections in April 2010 could exacerbate these conflicts. The continuation or escalation of conflict between now and June could severely disrupt preparations for the June–September cultivation season. This would negatively affect crop performance in all of the affected areas (Figure 1). Due to poor crop production in 2009 and reduced off-farm production in 2010 to date, the hunger season has begun earlier than normal (in March/April rather than May/June), and food security in conflict-affected areas is not expected to improve until the September harvest. Continued food assistance will be needed until then. It is critical to monitor ongoing conflicts and their impact on food security and the delivery of food aid.

Figure 1. Locations of ongoing and escalating conflicts and corresponding ethnic groups



Source: FEWS NET

Conflicts in Jonglei State, typically the center of conflict in Southern Sudan, escalated in early 2009 and continued throughout the year. The conflict has had numerous impacts on food security. More than 100,000 people failed to cultivate during the 2009 cropping season because they were displaced from their homes; as a result, they are expected to remain highly food insecure until September. For households that were not displaced, conflict levels reduced the area under cultivation and restricted the flow of goods to the few markets that serve the area, resulting in increased prices of staple foods. The conflict has particularly reduced dry-season wild food collection in central parts of Jonglei, as most women fear being attacked in forests where fruits are abundant. Conflict has also interrupted the transport of dry fish from fishing/grazing areas to homesteads. Parts of some areas, such as Akobo and Wuror areas bordering Pibor County, have been abandoned.

Between Warrap (Dinka Tribe) and Unity (Nuer Tribe) states, conflict has rapidly escalated since the end of December 2009 and has continued to date. This has curtailed humanitarian access, which could worsen conditions in areas that were already highly food insecure. In addition, internal conflict between groups within Warrap (Tonj) and Lakes (Rumbek, Cuibet, Yirol East, and Yirol West) has escalated.

More than 390,000 people were displaced due to conflict during 2009; 230,000 were still displaced at the end of the year. At least an additional 36,000 have been displaced in early 2010, raising the number of currently displaced to 267,000. Including the host population, the total number of people affected by displacement is approximately 500–600,000.

In the past, conflicts were mostly seasonal, inter-tribal/clan-based, and often triggered by competition over resources (see Table 1). During 2009, conflict was more prolonged than usual and did not follow typical seasonal patterns. The current causes of conflict are complex, as they are a combination of historical-traditional hostilities, conflict over resources and boundaries, and politics, compounded by the presence of arms among civilians. To address the situation, the Government of Southern Sudan embarked on a disarmament program in December 2009 that is still ongoing.

Food assistance will be needed until September to mitigate the impact of the hunger season in conflict-affected areas. However, though food assistance is a critical intervention, especially for displaced households, it is not a sustainable solution for persistent intra-ethnic conflicts. Comprehensive government-led peace building and public order initiatives could mitigate many of these recurrent conflicts.

* This Alert provides an update to the January 2010 alert for Southern Sudan. See www.fews.net/sudan.

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Table I. A summary of groups in conflict during 2010 by state: a potential monitoring tool

Jonglei		Lake State		Upper Nile State	
<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>	<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>	<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>
Murle – Dinka Murle –Lou Nuer Lou – Jikany	Tribal Tribal Clan	Dinka and Jur (Wullu) Dinka-Nuer SPLA – Dinka Dinka and Mundari Dinka - Dinka	Tribal/livelihood Tribal Disarmament Tribal Clan	Dinka - Shilluk Lou –Jikany	Tribal/border
Warrap		Unity		East Equatoria	
<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>	<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>	<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>
Dinka - Nuer Dinka -Dinka	Tribal Clan	Nuer – Dinka Nuer - Misseriya Dinka – Misseriya SPLA – Misseriya	Tribal Livelihood Livelihood	Toposa–Turkana/Kenya	Tribal
Western Equatoria		Central Equatoria		Western Bahr El Gazal	
<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>	<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>	<i>Group/Area</i>	<i>Type of conflict</i>
All areas Dinka -Jur (Mvolo) Dinka-Moro (Mundri)	Livelihood Livelihood	Bari – Mundari	Tribal	Raga	LRA attacks starting October 2009

Source:UNDSS