Field assessment in Greater Kapoeta East County

Napwotasigiria, Nanyangacor, Lotimor, Kuron, Jebel Boma, Jie Lopet, Mogos Mixed PS

21-28th of March 2019
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Introduction

A team of AVSI Foundation along with the County Education Director of Losolia County organized a field assessment to remote areas of Kapoeta East county, currently under the jurisdiction of a newly formed county called Kauto. The assessment took place from the 21st to the 28th of March and aimed at gathering general information about the area, its basic needs and challenges. A major emphasis was given to coping mechanisms of people living in Napwotasigiria, Nanyangachor, Lotimor, Kuron, Boma, Kassengor and Jie Lopet area and Mogos. Areas of concerns were education, livelihood and food security, health, WASH, protection and economic activities including security of the areas.

Objectives of the mission

- Assessing the region before the rainy season starting in order to understand the needs of the populations in the areas;
- accessing general information about people living in the area (the remoteness of the area and complete absence of government institutions imply a lack of data);
- assessing the accessibility of the region. The lack of infrastructure is in fact the main cause of isolation especially during rainy season where all the roads become inaccessible;
- understanding the humanitarian coverage and access to services by the local populations.
Insights on the locations visited

Napwotasigiria

Napwotasigiria is the first main village on the way to Nanyangachor. It is part of Kauto county. The village has a permanent school and a church built by the missionaries and the DoT. It is located in a low-land at the beginning of the mountain chain running up to Lotimor, at the Ethiopian border. Communities of Napwotasigiria are generally of Toposa origin.

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- The school is closed since 2014 due to lack of food and teachers. It was opened by missionaries but it closed once they left. It was running up to P4. Majority of teachers were coming from Kenya and Uganda and were supported by the church.
- The school has a permanent structure with 3 classes and a teacher quarter. There is a borehole and a fence. There is one block of three stances latrine.
- According to the people interviewed (local chiefs and staff of the clinic) the community is willing to reopen the school but they have no means. Main priorities should be food distribution and payment of teachers. In Napwotasigiria there are some educated people (around 15) who attended school or completed S4 and they came back to the village. These youth, if motivated, are ready to volunteer in the school.
- At the moment the facility is used as a clinic for the village and it is supported by ARC with drugs and local staff support.
- Save the Children International has been supporting the clinic paying a medical doctor but the project is about to finish and the clinic is actually without any specialized staff. Main diseases reported in the clinic are: malaria, diarrhea and typhoid. Main challenges the clinic is facing: drugs are often taken with delay, especially during rainy season; lack of proper doctor.
- The village has no market but people sell their goods at the market in Nachodokopele junction, around 20 km far from the village.
- The main source of income comes from the sale of goats (a medium size could cost around 5000 ssp). Communities depend on production of three month’s sorghum during rainy season coming between April and October every year and pausing until December. The harvest is not enough to be sold in the market. The land is generally fertile, but a bit rocky close to the mountains, like in the side of Ikotos.
- One of the main priorities should be water. During dry season, seasonal rivers become dry and the only access to water is through boreholes. The community has around 4 boreholes but 2 of them are spoiled. There are no water management committees established and the spare-parts for reparation have to come from Kapoeta, while experts on water sources management are available only in Narus.

- In terms of GBV the area remains man dominated: women carry the bigger domestic roles and girls used as source of wealth through marriage while men play a role of protection of the community. Women are the ones taking care of cultivation, building houses, cooking food, taking care of the children, fetching water and collecting fire woods.

Fig. 1: School Clinic in Napwotasi (Napwotasiga)ria

Fig. 2 Children playing at the borehole
Nanyangachor is the main village in Kauto county in a very fertile valley surrounded by mountains. Kauto is a new established county but its institutions are almost inexistent and it is very hard to get any information. During the visit the commissioner was in Narus. At the moment, coordination at county level is still carried out in Narus.

- The school - Good Shepherd PS - was constructed by missionaries in 1995 but started operating fully in 1997. It used to run from pre-unit to P.8 but pupils currently in school are from pre-unit to P.4. On the day of the visit it had a population of 20 girls and 81 boys however, the registration shows there is a total of 170 pupils for the first term of 2019.
- They have 2 male and 01 female government paid teachers; the 3 other males are volunteer teachers for a total of 6 teachers. Only the head teacher is trained.
- IMPACT: 01 female and 01 male teacher received Aug to Oct 2018 round 05 payment in Feb 2019.
- The school has a school garden but no farming tools and seeds. However, the land is said to produce good yield of cowpeas.
- There are 02 blocks of pit latrine each with 02 stances for teachers while pupils have 02 blocks with three stances each.
- The school is receiving food from WFP through Andrea Food South Sudan. The is a permanent store and kitchen;
- The school has 8 permanent classes, the head teacher office and a teacher quarter.
- Children are not paying school fees. In the last two years the contribution was 20ssp per term. The school has text books and enough teaching and scholastic materials, provided by UNICEF.
- Main challenges: 
  - Furniture is not enough to cover the children enrolled;
  - The chain-link fence is spoiled;
  - The number of teachers is small. The volunteers are not motivated and they rarely come to school.

Before the crisis most of the teachers were from Kenya and Uganda but they left in 2014. Even the majority of the students moved to Kuron.
- There is a very big river next to the school but when is full children coming from the mountains cannot cross it.
- There has been no community-based PTA training given to school; last training was held in Narus in third term of 2018.
- There is a number of boreholes located in the communities settled down in the plateau while bigger communities in the plateaus do not have any water sources and so they are forced to come down and face water from there.
- **Lack of basic hygiene supplies (like soap) and poor hygiene practices.**

- There is one health facility in the community being supported by ARC through County Health Department of Kapoeta East based in Losolia County.

- Communities depend on crop production (three times a year) and some animals rearing. Crops produced are maize, vegetable, sorghum, soya beans and so ford.
- ACROSS is providing seeds and agricultural tools.

- Men dominate all affairs and women are responsible of domestic duties while girls are sources of wealth as opposed to education right. Women’s role in the society is basically reduced to child nursing and nurturing.

- Cattle raiding with neighbors, including the Turkana people southern from them, in Kenya, is endemic. People conduct peace meetings periodically in order to find a way to prevent further raids.
Lotimor

The Nyangatom live in the dry semi-desert land of South-west Ethiopia and South Sudan where their lives revolve around their herds of zebu cattle and raising crops (sorghum, maize and tobacco). They face serious competition for accessing scarce water and grazing resources.

The Nyangatom and the Toposa, facing hostility from many of their neighbors, consider each other close allies. They are Toposa speakers and it is not uncommon to see Nyangatom families with their livestock living in Toposa villages. When a large animal (like a goat or a cow) is killed they use to offer a hindquarter to the members of the other tribe.

The area is located in the middle of hills and plateaus of 71 kilometers climbing plateaus (80 kilometers when using the lower road when measured from Nanyangacor). Both journeys imply four and a half hours driving.

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- The school was built in 1999 by the DoT with the help of Irishaid but has been closed in the last 4 years after the DoT left due to hunger and lack of teachers. The school runs from pre-unit to P.2 and carries a total population of 99 pupils.
- **There are 4 male volunteer teachers, none of them trained.** The head-teacher of the school is a P2 drop-out. A good number of young boys (4) of the area are volunteering to keep the school moving.
- **The school is not receiving food from WFP, probably due to the remoteness of the location.** Even IMPACT and GESS are not paid in the school.
- The school has a permanent building with 4 classrooms and teachers’ room. There is a three-stances latrine. The school have neither kitchen nor store in case of FFE program.
- **There is need to start literacy classes and provide the school with learning and teaching materials.** The PTAs and the community are not well informed of their roles in elevating the school even through use of local materials available.
- There are two functional boreholes in the area but water is not enough for the communities leaving far.
- **There is a health facility supported by ARC but often closed.** It is the only facility since the one of Nanyangachor in a range of 100km. Basically **health coverage of the area is inexistent.**
- People in the area, especially in the plateau, use to cultivate sorghum. Tools and seeds are brought from Ethiopia by local cattle keepers that use to cross the borders with their animals.
- **The humanitarian coverage in the area is inexistent.** The only one working in the area, with a compound settled in the high-lands, is Carter Center, working on guinea-warm and trachoma. Their project is ending at the end of 2019.
- **The main challenge remains accessibility.** The area is one the most remote place of former Eastern Equatoria and it is permanently inaccessible during rainy season because the access roads created by the communities are muddy and run either across hills or in between hills. **The only vehicle that can access the area is a 4-wheel Unimog truck.** There is an airstrip but it can work only during dry season due to the lack of maintenance.
Fig. 9: AVSI staff and the County Education Director of Kapoeta East county, during a meeting with volunteers teacher in Lotimor PS;

Fig. 10: A particular of the blackboard in P1.
Fig. 11: A student in Lotimor PS

Fig. 12: AVSI distributed UNICEF scholastic materials to the Head teacher of Lotimor PS to motive the school to propery function. Materials distributed: 84 exercise books, 1 teachers’ kit, one bundle of wall charts and 1 blackboard ruler.
Kuron St. Thomas Primary School

The school lies along the plateau of Kuron bordering Jie area to the South, Boma of Murle to the West and Toposha community to the East. It is accessible by the Kachipo community of South Sudan settled on the hills North of Kuron Peace village. This makes St. Thomas Primary School strategically located into the heart of a very remote far north part of Kapoeta State.

- The school is the only modern primary school in the area which has seen for over ten years a number of young boys and girls of this state graduate through into the secondary and university elsewhere. The school is a church-owned one under the direct administration of Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron (HTPV).
- The current enrolment of the school stands at 428 pupils 97 of which are female while 331 are male learners (drawn from Toposha, Jie, Kuron, Boma and Kachipo areas): a big breakthrough in the modernization struggle amidst the cultural rigidity of the surrounding communities where girls are merely seen as a source of wealth and boys are herders of cattle and raiders. Accordingly, the school has seen a big increase year by year out from the inception.
- The school is being manned by 9 trained teachers and 01 volunteer teacher, with a total of 10 dedicated teachers out of which there are 03 female teachers. Every pupil is supposed to pay 1,000 SSP (One thousand South Sudanese Pounds Only) for boarders while day scholars pay 500 SSP (Five Hundred South Sudanese Pounds Only).

- The school has a playground lackin of goal posts and there is a teachers’ quarter.

Needs to consider:
- Renovation of the dormitory and some classrooms. The enrolment is increasing and the capacity of the dormitories is not enough to host new students;
- The school seriously lacks furniture like desk for children to sit on while learning, being a boarding school, they lack also beds for children;
- Lack of teaching materials is reported (manila cards, indoor games and toys for the nursery section);
- There are no hand washing facilities at all in the school nor in the toilet and dining rooms.
- The school doesn’t have any school garden but accordingly there is the possibility of creating one.
- There is need for a dining room. Children are eating under a local shelter made with iron sheets.

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- The school has a store and a kitchen. The World Food Program continues to support the school with food for education (FFE) through an indigenous NGO called Andrea Food for South Sudan (AFFS) which is delivered periodically.
- The school has only one block of pit latrine with four stances for girls, one block of 06 stances for boys and one block of 08 stances latrines for teachers which are shared with pupils.
- Accordingly, the school last received IMPACT cash payment for Aug, Sept and Oct 2018 in the month of Feb 2019.
- At the moment there is one borehole the school is sharing with communities, but other five broken boreholes are being worked on.
Paride Taban was the first bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Torit from 1983 until 2004. Since his retirement from the diocese he has been leading an effort to make peace real in South Sudan by setting up the Kuron Peace Village in 2005. Bishop Paride has received numerous awards including the Sergio Vieira de Mello Peace Prize awarded by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in 2013 for his work at the Holy Trinity Peace Village in Kuron. In December 2016 Taban was appointed by the President Salva Kiir Mayardit as a co-chair of the steering committee of National Dialogue. In May 2018, Taban received the Four Freedoms Award, freedom of Worship medal.

Visit purposes

- understanding the background of Kuron Peace village and of the village as a whole;
- getting a picture of the communities in the area in terms of: tribes, languages and social lives;
- understanding the economic and livelihood activities of communities and their coping mechanisms;
- understanding the status of education and access to education in the area;
- assessing the number of health facilities in the area and accessibility to medical help;
- understanding tribes relations with the surrounding communities;
- assessing the number of development partners in the area and projects run;
- assessing particular challenges especially in terms of implementation.

How was Kuron identified and why have you started working here?

Kuron was identified in April 1999 during a pastoral visit. It was decided then to implement a pilot agricultural demonstration in the surroundings and see if it could improve community diets; the other decision was to bring people closer to possible social services. The choise of Kuron was due to two aspects and confirmed by one episode: first, the continuous death of mothers during child birth, second: infant mortality. Then there was a man who had spent almost 30 herds of cows to fortune tellers to cure him from loosing splinter muscles leaving him unable to control urine. When the man visited the health facility we had just settled; he recovered in less than five minutes for a sickness that had taken him nearly twenty years.
How have you succeeded in cooperating with Toposa communities?

Toposha people are very cooperative and once they trust you, they hardly turn their back to you. They can easily piss off if you temper with their girls/women and cows. The road linking Kuron and Narus through Lolim junction was realised by Toposa communities. They constructed the road through food for work (FFW) which in money terms cost 800,000 USD only (Eight hundred thousand United State Dollars only); but up to now the road work is not complete.

What are you doing in Kuron Centre?

First of all there is a youth center and a vocational training school; in the youth centers we planted 4000 tick trees. Furthermore we have a fully functional airstrip in Kuron constructed by communities and the best primary and nursery school that competes with many in the Republic of South Sudan but I am not thinking about stopping. My motto is “I will retire in the grave”. Now communities have taken up small scale farming which has diversified their feeding patterns. Before people just depended on blood and milk from cows. We have already witnessed communities supplying the center with fresh maize, chicken, fresh green vegetables, sukuma and bananas.

In terms of literacy rate, communities have embraced learning so seriously that today Kuron claims about 25% literacy with children enrolling in school from 3 up to 20 years of age. Already introduced with construction is a technical school which trains them in BCP, CJ, Metal Fabrication and tailoring. The products from the technical school have immediate market with Kuron Peace village but also they have a monthly auctioning of their products which attracts markets from Boma state and within.

What about health services?
Kuron has only one PHCC which is supported by the County Health Department with the help of ARC and one PHCU located one hour away in a place called Namurpus towards Narus. The communities in between have to track the distance to reach health services.

How is the relation between communities?
In order to ensure peaceful co-existence, Kuron Peace Village has fix monthly community dialogue where communities are engaged in discussing challenges related to their wellbeing and facilitated by Kuron Peace Village. This has several times helped them to solve disputes in their own local ways earlier enough. Accordingly, their only problem is one or two Murle coming around and stealing children for unknown reasons.
Which are the organizations based in the area?

The only CBO is Kuron Peace Village based there since 2005; it runs programs of education with the support of Stromme foundation (in terms of paying teachers’ salaries in the primary, nursery and technical school) and of WFP with food for education. We were supported by UNICEF but due to fund mismanagement, they have stop it until the staff account for the money. A conflict management project is being sponsored by PAX; a livelihood project is supported by private donors in Europe; a health project is being supported by the County health department through ARC and an infrastructure project was supported by EU (roads and airstrip) between 2015-2016.

Then there is the Carter Centre whose programs are on guinea worm and now moving towards trachoma. Their programs are so specific that they hardly directly address universal humanitarian needs in the area.

Which kind of approaches does the Kuron Peace Village use in mobilizing and organizing Communities?

The approaches are several. First of all mobilizing communities during the demonstration period, food for work, non-food items, tobacco, tyre shoes, Masai bed sheets, mosquito nets and blankets was used to gather people. These items played a big role in ensuring communities that there was someone who cared of them and it also revealed them that their area could be transformed with such support.

The peace center carries out then regular outreach program where a forum is created by the Kuron Peace Village and communities can discuss their issues and come up with suggested solutions. In this way children are taken under the guidance of the staff of Kuron Peace Village to go and talk to their people on the values and importance of education taking themselves as living examples. This outreach program has become so popular that communities are directly involved in project on monthly basis and mitigation to the mentioned challenges is adopted from their suggested solutions.

Communities are also engaged directly through church programs taking the forms of counseling, giving hope to the hopeless and castigating fears of the unknown lingering in one’s mind.

There is a fixed monthly community meeting program where youths, women, children, elderly and chief have their separate forum to discuss communities’ issues at different levels and a general one where everybody is given chance to air his/her views. This again is a very participatory approach and very popular because these almost abandoned communities became fully initiators of their programs and custodians of their suggested solutions.

Another approach is the kral to kral night mobilization: most parents and older people around Kuron were interested in learning; however, their daily busy schedules badly affected their desires. In order to address this, HTPV adopted night instruction from kraal to kraal. At night everybody is settled in an area with their animals and they are willing to learn up to 03:00 am because then nothing interferes learning needs.

According to you which are the main challenges here?

Villages around Kuron Peace village still practice early forced marriage which continuously affect girls education in the area (though the rate has reduced). Furthermore, the condition of women is still challenging. They are the ones taking care of most of the work in the family. They have to cultivate, look for fire wood, taking care of the children, fetching water and building. GBV sensitization is needed here.

Another challenge is realizing a sustainable and peaceful coexistence among communities in the area: Toposa, Murle, Jie, Kachipo and Nyangatom.
The main threat to peace is the interference of Murle in Toposa land to organize cattle raiding and abducting children. The Peace Village is working on peace sensitization, trying to welcome children from different communities in the school, in order to enlighten them on living together in a peaceful manner. Due to the fact that some Murle children have started to enroll in the school, the number of abductions reduced drastically in the last year. In 2018 only one case was registered in the northern part of Kuron. According to the teachers of the school, Murle have now stopped to abduct children, because they fear repercussions to their children attending the school in Kuron.

There are also reported difficulties of language barriers affecting the mobilization of communities. The turn up of communities in the area is always higher when they are being mobilized in their own language and with friendly approaches. A number of the staff of Kuron Peace Village lacks some of these basic skills of mobilization and language of the area. Lastly, employment opportunities offered by Carter Centre in the area are extravagant; they target young boys and girls who could have completed P.8 and or secondary level but when their contract end they become desperate for money and yet no such extravagant opportunity comes their way and for the fact that Kuron Peace Village may not have the capacity to absorb them in a gainful job. **The danger is these young unemployed may one day turn out to use violence to get money.**

**What are priority needs in the area?**

**First a secondary school:** there is no secondary school around except those in Narus which is 8 to 9 hours drive. This is a big challenge especially for parents who cannot afford taking their children to secondary schools far away. According to Bishop, Kuron is a remote village and students have a proper environment to study with no distraction. Finally, the school will also help students in Boma state, where there is no secondary school (the only one is in Pibor and it is not properly functioning); then **road access to and from Kuron:** the road has been rehabilitated up to Nachodokopele, around 40km from Kuron. The wish is to complete the road by the end of the year in order to improve the accessibility in these remote areas of Kapoeta East. Another priority is to have exemplary role models especially women to encourage girls’ education. **To sensitize communities** showing the benefits of educating girls is also a priority need. For example, a girl that is educated can get a well-paid job and use the money to buy cows for her family.

**WASH activities like boreholes reparation** are also a priority. An idea **may be to install some windmills that can pump water.** In fact, if there could be more water during dry season, grass would start to germinate. If there would be grass, cattle keepers would not need to move to further distances with their animals and this will have implication in reducing conflicts among pastoralists and cattle raids. It is important also to identify new missionaries that can be based in Lotimor, Nanyangachor, Napwotasigiria, Namuropus so that all the closed facilities (like schools, clinics and churches) can start to operate. If the DoT will manage to get these missionaries, operations in the area would become easier.
What are possibilities and basis to set an intervention here?

There is a ready-to-use-structure in Namurpus that can be used by any partner which is ready to go there. Livelihood and food security can succeed well in the area since these communities right from Namurpus to far end Kuron are settled amidst mountains. Communities are already aware of the values of education; what they need now is more schools to cover the area and motivated teachers. There are two schools in Namoropus that shut-down when the missionaries left. A possible intervention is to create night schools for these pastoralist communities: during the day people/children are busy with their cattle, but they can be easily be attracted for literacy classes in the evening. Elders need alternative learning program and more technical institutions to widen their livelihood; those with minimal education levels need opportunities of self-sustainability through entrepreneurship program that keep them busy and allow them to get chances of advancing their education. Conflict management programs aiming at transforming communities into conflict managers are overdue. More support to the communities is needed also in order to be present in villages hidden in the mountains hence reducing all these petty criminal activities. It is important to resort to involving communities with food for work activities, especially in these areas with high level of hunger and food insecurity.

Which are the approaches you would recommend in educations programs?

Two different kind of approaches, considered the complete absence of schools in the area. One is targeting directly the schools, providing scholastic and teaching materials, motivating the teachers, rehabilitating/improving school facilities. The other is targeting communities to have an impact on schools: community mobilization and sensitization, alternative educations for elders and chiefs.
Jebel Boma

Lying amidst the hills demarcating Ethiopia from South Sudan, Jebel Boma is a rich land inhabited by the Murle and Ngalaam who settled at upper Boma Hills, a lead way to Kachipo community settlement in Meun. The community of Jebel Boma reportedly farm two times a year because of the good land however yield depends on the rain each year. The most common crops produced are maize, sorghum, cassava though the land type supports all types of crop. Local materials that can be sourced locally include gravels, sand, timber and grass among others.

There are eight schools in the area (Gugu face learning centre in Upper Boma, Nyak PS, Boma Itti PS, Nauyapru PS, Boma ALP, Nyaalong Ngoro PS, Kor Ardeb PS and Mewun PS), but only four appear be functioning. All the education programs are being supported by UNICEF through ACROSS (ALP), PLAN International (GFD and ECD), SEE Partner (Upper Boma) and Mewun (Kachipo) Main challenges in Education:

- Lack of teachers; the once there are volunteers; In the whole county there are no trained teachers and there is only one female teacher;
- There is no secondary school in Boma; there is one in Pibor but it is not properly functioning. There are no boarding schools and no nursery schools, only ACROSS is trying to establish an ECD center;
- Most of the schools have no facilities. Except Boma Itti PS (in the center of Boma) all the other schools are under trees;
- All the schools in Boma are not supported by WFP and the community has not the capacity to provide food;
- There are many payams with no schools at all, for example Kassengor;
- There is no VTC and in case of any construction work all the supplies and workers have to be brought from abroad; GESS and IMPACT are not available. There was an assessment for IMPACT in 2018, but the project did not start;
- There is no bi-law to protect girls education. There is a very high drop out of ladies after P2, almost three times the drop-out of boys.
- 
  The area is not safe due to tensions among the three populations (Murle, Jie and Kachipo). This prevent children from walking long distances to reach the schools;
- Schools in Kachipo land (plateau) are very remote and difficult to be assessed due to insecurity and lack of roads;
- Many children are under social reinsertion project, after being part of the Yau Yau rebellion in 2013.
- They lack role models especially female role models to encourage girl child education.

RRC’s Report:

- A number of returnees from Ethiopia (63 HH and 315 individuals) are coming back to the County after escaping the 2013-2016 civil unrest in the Country and Yau Yau fighting. The return route is through Raat border. The majority of the population is in Gima refugee camp.

Partners available:

- Agriculture/food security and WASH sectors are not covered by any NGO;
- ACROSS deals with education in primary school, Alternative Learning Program, ECD, education in emergency through incentives and trainings for teachers, scholastic materials and conflict management education.
- Plan International provides GFD to 4 Payams of about 12-15 bomas; it implements nutrition programs like BFP and lactating mothers; it started ECD in MURWUO payam, fully supporting ECD program in all the County;

Fig. 21: Deputy County Education Dir. in Boma
- VSF SWISS is in charge of FSL supported by FAO giving fishing kits and seeds, emergency livestock program and child protection supported by UNICEF. It deals with economic reintegration project through training of former child soldiers, parents/guardians, livestock management and giving out chicken stocks. They also trained community animal health workers as vaccinators for sustainability.
- Wild Life Conservation monitors wild animal movement and manage poaching in the park.
- Live Well is managing health facilities after IMA pulled out including administering treatment but they lack laboratory and x-ray equipment which force them always to refer serious cases to Juba through ICRC. It reported common sickness being malaria during rainy season, respiratory tract infection and diarrhea. It is not running HIV/AIDS awareness, testing and counseling because the area is volatile to such news with so many guns at hands (HIV/AIDS needs a program of its own). They are planning to run on the job trainings for traditional birth attendance (TBA) but still faces challenge.
- ICRC is supporting emergency response in terms of wounded gun shot, child protection and giving out non food items.
- Real Medical Friends (RMF) is taking charge of nutrition monitoring in the County.
- Carter Centre is winding up guinea worm epidemic and partly trachoma.
- SEE Partner is in charge of education in Upper Boma.
- UNHCR is purely dealing with returnee monitoring, tracking the return of refugees from Raat border entry.
- APD is in charge of GBV program in the area.

Two main priorities in Boma: WASH and Peace promotion

- Water sources are very scarce and inadequate for the large population living in the area with the risk of increasing conflicts; most of the times there are long lines at the boreholes, creating tensions among people. People and cattle draw water from the same source. Two payams: Larabal and Kassengor have no borehole at all.
- There are no partners working in Wash. PAH implemented a 6-months emergency project but then they left. There is lack of hygiene supplies; open-defecation is a very common practice.
- Jie area is completely dry. Many NGOs tried to survey water, failing. The area was affected by cholera in 2017.

Peace promotion/Kachipo alert:

- Three main communities live in the area: Jie, Murle and Kachipo. Kachipo are generally settled in the plateau, Jie populates the semi-arid desert at the border between EES and Jonglei and the Murles live within Boma and in the northern part towards Pibor.

- The three communities are hostile among themselves. The main problems are among the Kachipo and the Murle. In December 2018 a Kachipo youth leader was killed by a Murle. After a few days an important Murle representative of the army was killed close to the airport as a revenge from the Kachipo. The situation has worsened with continuous revenge killings and targeted murders. The situation has serious implications in movement and access to basic services. Considered that all the main services are in the low-land, especially in Boma center, Kachipos are cut from any kind of service. They cannot access the hospital, the market and during our assessment they were prevented to access the general food and seeds distribution carried out by the ICRC.
- Even schools in the mountains are all closed, except for one supported by a Kenyan NGO. Teachers are Murle and they fear to move in the area and to be killed.
- Murle and Kachipo live completely divided and they are not finding a solution to this insecurity. According to the Commissioner of Boma, several attempts have been carried out to involve the Kachipo leaders in peace talks, but they have always refused.

Currently the majority of people in Boma are moving with guns, a situation overlapping with the trauma of the rebellion that affected the town in 2013, during the Murle revolt lead by Yau Yau against the government. At that time, many child soldiers were recruited by the armed forces and most of them are still facing serious problems of social reintegration.
- AVSI team tried to inquire about volunteers available to escort the team to the Kachipo. All the people we asked refused, reporting to fear for their lives.
- Relations between Murle and Jie are not always stable. Communities use to be involved in clashes related to cattle raiding.
Boma Itti Government school: N 06 11’ 1.66”, E034 23’ 41.96” Altitude: 617.2 meters:

Boma Itti is a government school supported by UNICEF through ACROSS. The school has a poor built permanent structure with the ceiling touching the head of a teacher; the floor is so raised with raised steps that a disabled child finds it difficult to access. The school runs from P1 to P6 and there is no nursery section except the ECD program which is managed by ACROSS.

- There are 156 pupils in the school of which 85 are males and 71 female learners.
- There are 11 volunteer teachers out of which 1 is a female. UNICEF supports 10 of the 11 volunteer teachers with monthly incentives of 6,000 SSP (Six thousand South Sudanese Pounds Only) opposed to 5,000 SSP (five thousand South Sudanese pounds only) for last year 2018. The school has 01 block of stances for boys and girls while teachers have one block of two stances but with a blown-up roof.
- There is one functional borehole in the school which seldom works and if pumped continuously loses water. The school has two big 500L water tank uninstalled and one 100L movable water tanks all provided by ACROSS. There is one hand washing facility provided for them by ACROSS.
- There is a store but no kitchen;

- There is no school garden but no fence and no football ground;

**Priority Needs:**
- Classroom blocks renovation and provision of furniture for classes and teacher’s offices like desks, chairs, tables and bookshelves.
- Food for education program and kitchen utensils.
- A kitchen;
- More incentives to boost volunteering of youths into reopening other closed schools in the area.
Jie Lopet

Jie Lopet is flat desertic land 44 km north of Mogos and 125 kms from Jebel Boma County. It is located between Kassengor and Mogos. The area is inhabited by the Jie community, neighbors of the culturally and linguistically very closely related Nyangatom and Toposa (living southern from them) and of the Murle in the north who are not so closely related. Since at least one century up to now, the core of the Jie habitat is in the surroundings of the Kassengor Hills, on the border between the Kapoeta and Jonglei Districts (East Equatoria Province, South Sudan). Data on the Jie population are scant and even more contradictory. The WHO advances a total population of 52.000 (2014) but that is definitely an overestimation. The actual population could be around 20.000/25.000 individuals.

Main challenges:

The main priority is the **provision of water and other WASH interventions**. The area is semi-desertic and there are no boreholes. The community has one man-made dam to which water is canalized. The area therefore lies in a land with low water table which has defeated many ngos’ effort to drill water. The same water point is being shared both for human bathing, drinking and animals. At the moment the dam is slowly drying out and in case that happens before rain comes, the community may be forced to move many kilometers away. The alternative point to get water could only be Riwoto (more than 100km far) because they are in bad relations with Mogos community. The Kassengor, their immediate neighbors, do not have any water source and have to track almost 50 kilometers to share this dam water with them. Water has been the cause of intra-clan conflicts.
- **Jie community does not have any school in none of their villages.** Children are forced to move to Kapoeta or Narus to access education. According to the Boma chief of Lopet, there are around 10 people in the community that are educated and that could be ready to teach if properly supported with scholastic materials and some incentives. Furthermore, there is need to build a fixed school in the village so that the community can control the teachers and the students. The idea of a mobile school could not be feasible during the dry season, because of the lack of water and the danger of clashes with the neighboring communities.

- **Third priority should be seeds and animal vaccines distribution.**
Mogos Mixed Primary School:

Mogos is an area adjacent to a stream on the East and flat land West ward with huge desert like stressing towards Korkomuge and Riwoto. The Eastern part however is green and links them to Kor-jip centre along Kapoeta-Narus road.

The school has permanent structures adjacent to the primary health care centre. It has pre-unit and P1 to P4. Pre-unit has a total of 87 boys and 35 girls by the day of this field visit, while primary one to primary four had a total of 69 boys and 57 girls bringing to a total of 92 girls and 156 boys. This was contrary to the general enrolment list which stands at 314 pupils.

- The school has 2 females and 9 male teachers, out of which only one is paid by the government. The rest are not trained and are volunteers. They all get UNICEF incentives of 6,000 SSP per person per month. They are all youths of the area and they can easily be a model; however they need capacity building on lesson planning and child management.

- The school has 8 permanent classes with teachers’ room and head teacher’s office. There are 3 latrines of three stances each for boys, girls and teachers. There is a football ground. There is no fence.

- The school is supported by OPRD with teachers incentives and Andrea Food South Sudan for FFE. The school has a store and a local kitchen.

Challenges:

- No desks for the learners;
- Support staff is not being paid;
- There is no food for education program in the school and no kitchen utensils;
- The school has PTAs who are not trained at all.
Logistics and accessibility

Summary of distances among locations visited:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>KMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kapoeta</td>
<td>Narus</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narus</td>
<td>Nachodkaopele</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nachodkaopele (junction)</td>
<td>Nanyangachor</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanyangachor (Crossing/Climbing mountains)</td>
<td>Lotimor</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotimor</td>
<td>Nanyangachor (Lower route)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanyangachor</td>
<td>Kuron</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuron</td>
<td>Jebel Boma</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jebel Boma</td>
<td>Jie Lopet</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jie Lopet</td>
<td>Mogos</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogos</td>
<td>Kapoeta</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Kilometers</td>
<td></td>
<td>854</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Road: Kapoeta – Narus 118km
Accessibility: The road is accessible during rainy season. The main problem is related to 3 seasonal rivers becoming full with heavy rains and binding vehicles from passing. Two of the three bridges have been destroyed by the rivers.
Safety: Low-risk. The only problem is related to the presence of IO barracks close to Loyoro river, 20km before reaching Narus. Soldiers are staying in a dry land with no access to water and food during dry season. Sometimes they stop private vehicles. It’s advisable to use the road in morning hours up to 3 pm.
Kind of road: Muram (spoiled)
Travel time: Around 2.15 hours

Road: Narus – Nachodkaopele 128km
Accessibility: The road is under rehabilitation. Before it was not accessible during rainy season, especially in the area of Naparalang swamp (2.30h from Narus). The road has been levelled up to Nachodkaopele junction and it is now accessible even in rainy season. Nachodkaopele is the place where the roads divide towards Kuron going north and Nanyangachor going East.
Safety: The road is safe. No incidents have been reported in the last year.
Kind of road: Muram levelled
Travel time: Around 4.30 hours
### Road: Nachodokopele – Nanyangachor 49 km

**Accessibility**
The road is not accessible with a car during rainy season. The road runs along the mountains and there are around 24 streams and rivers that obstacle the practicability from April to November.

**Safety**
Safe

**Kind of road**
The road is a community road. People of the area have slashed and removed trees to allow vehicles to pass, but it remains very narrow and rocky.

**Travel time**
Around 2.30 hours

### Road: Nanyangachor – Lotimor (upper road) 71 km

**Accessibility**
The road is not accessible with car during rainy season. There is need to climb from the lowlands to the plateau on a very narrow, rocky and steep road. There are no villages along the way. On the plateau the land is flat for around 30 km. After the plateau there is need to slop down from the mountain for around 15 km in a very steep and rocky slop. Big stones can be obstacle on the way and they need to be removed to allow the vehicle to pass. Once again on the flat land, there is no road for other 20 km but the place is dry with no trees and obstacles. The driver must know the road or he has to move with someone from the place to identify the way to Lotimor center.

**Safety**
Safe

**Kind of road**
Community road, people of the area have slashed and removed trees to allow vehicles to pass, but it remains very narrow and rocky. Probably one of the worst road of all South Sudan.

**Travel time**
4.30 hours
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Lotimor – Nanyangachor (lower road) 80 km</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>The road is not accessible with car during rainy season. It is extremely rocky and uncomfortable for at least the first 30km. There are several deep streams that become full during rainy season. The road is overall flat, but it runs along the mountains and will be seriously affected by rains flows from April to November.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind of road</td>
<td>Community road, people of the area have slashed and removed threes to allow vehicles to pass, but it remains rocky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel time</td>
<td>4.15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road</td>
<td>Nanyangachor – Kuron 93km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility</strong></td>
<td>Challenging. It is the same road going back to Nachodokopele and from there moving 44km North to Kuron. The rehabilitation of the road from the junction to Kuron is not yet completed, resulting challenging to be accessed during rainy season. The worst part is from Namoropus to Kuron for at least 20km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
<td>Safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kind of road</strong></td>
<td>Wheel-print road. It is not a real road but thanks to the continuous movement of vehicles there is a path to follow. The road is very muddy following a river flowing from Namoropus to Kuron. In some spots part of the road is within the bed of the river.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel time</strong></td>
<td>3.45 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Kuron – Boma 82km</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility</strong></td>
<td>Not accessible during rainy season. There are few rivers, but the land is very flat and affected by floods from April to November.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
<td>Low Risk due to possible cattle raiding and clashes between Jie -Toposa - Murle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kind of road</strong></td>
<td>There is no road. Kuron is the last village of EES/Kapoeta East. From there to reach Boma there is need to cross a 70km-desert in a deep savannah environment with wild (and ferocious) animals like lions and leopards. The road is not visible because very few vehicles use to move in this area. The mountains are the only benchmark helping in orientation (they are on the East). There are no villages in the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel time</strong></td>
<td>3.15 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Boma – Jie Lopet 125km</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility</strong></td>
<td>Not accessible during rainy season. The land is very flat and affected by floods from April to November. During dry season the road is smooth and easily accessible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
<td>Low Risk due to possible cattle raiding and clashes between Jie -Toposa - Murle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kind of road</strong></td>
<td>There is a wheel-print road, passing along Boma National Park, the biggest park in Africa. To reach Jie there is need to cross a 1100km-desert in a deep savannah environment with wild (and ferocious) animals like lions and leopards. The road is visible, being the main access to Boma during the dry season. There are no villages in the area exception of Kassengor, isolated and 70km far from Boma and 70km distant to reach Jie Lopet. There is no water between Boma and Mogos for at least 150km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel time</strong></td>
<td>4.30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road</td>
<td>Jie Lopet – Mogos 44km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Not accessible during rainy season. The land is very flat and affected by floods from April to November. During dry season the road is smooth and easily accessible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Low Risk due to possible cattle raiding and clashes between Jie and Toposa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind of road</td>
<td>Tyre-print road. It is not a real road but thanks to the continuous movement of vehicles there is a path to follow. The road could become very muddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel time</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Mogos - Kapoeta around 64 km</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Challenging during rainy season. The land is very flat and affected by floods from April to November.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind of road</td>
<td>Community road. People of the area have slashed and removed threes to allow vehicles to pass. The road can become extremely muddy and slippery with few rain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel time</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Others:

- The area has no network coverage. The only access to internet is provided by Kuron Peace Village.
- Supplies: all the supplies need to be taken from Kapoeta or Torit.
- Lack of bank and money transfer in all the locations assessed.
- Airport: in Boma there is a small air strip not properly functioning when it rains.

Challenges:

- Remoteness of the locations: generally, all the locations assessed are very isolate and almost impossible to access during rainy season. There are no communications and few basic facilities. The only vehicle that can allow an NGO to work in the area is a four-wheel truck like Unimog.
- Lack of government institutions: In both the new created counties of Jie and Kauto, AVSI team was unable to meet any representative of the government. It has been very difficult to access information and data. Furthermore, the presence of armed people in Jie and the lack of security has pushed AVSI team to spend the night in Mogos, leaving only few time for an assessment.
- Insecurity, especially in Boma: the security situation in the area is very alerting. People like Kachipo are not accessing any kind of service like clinics, markets, seeds and tools distribution. Even to access their land is challenging considered that no one in Boma accepted to escort AVSI team for an assessment in Mewun.
- It is impossible to consider Boma as a center for operations. During rainy season the mobility is limited to 10/15 kms around the town. Furthermore, the are no good suppliers or bank. The two deserts that divide former Eastern Equatoria with Jonglei state are another obstacle for the viability.
- Lack of clean water in Jie area: it could be a big challenge during operation if the team was not previously informed. There are no boreholes in the whole area. The only water source is the artificial damn in Lopet.

Achievements:

- All the planned locations have been successfully visited and assessed;
- Thanks to the assessment AVSI team managed to get basic knowledge about priority needs in the area which includes pastoralist education;
- Acknowledgement that basic needs like water and food are priorities in the area was gained. Locations are in fact so remote and isolated that development should start first from guaranteeing access to human primary needs. Water plays a very important role also on the stability of the area: in many cases it is the source of conflict among local communities;
- Acknowledgment that agriculture is largely spread and practiced in the area was gained as well;
- the interview to the Bishop Paride Taban was enlightening and full of interesting suggestions and explanation on how to deal with local communities in the area.