

**Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. in South Sudan directs relief and mitigation to submerged areas and warns of a climate crisis**

**(Juba, 12 November 2021)** The Humanitarian Coordinator *ad interim* in South Sudan, Arafat Jamal, recently travelled to flood affected areas Jonglei and Unity states. He warns of a climate emergency and calls for further investment in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to prevent future floods, and to help people cope with washed out crops, cattle and homes.

“South Sudan, a landlocked nation, is deluged. More than 780,000 people have been affected since May, largely in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states. Communities have been scrambling to reach shrinking patches of raised land in this largely flat country, leaving behind devastated livelihoods and bringing people and cattle into strained proximity. Yet again, we see already vulnerable people, who may have fled conflict or the 2020 floods, facing ruin,” said Mr. Jamal.

Humanitarian organizations, the Government of South Sudan and UN peacekeepers (UNMISS) are responding to the immediate needs of flood-affected people with emergency response relief, immediate mitigation such as temporary dykes and water pumping, and community-based support. We are working tirelessly to meet the increasing needs by providing food assistance, temporary shelter, water purification tablets, medicine, fishing kits and other vital supplies. Conditions are difficult, with access, insecurity and funding constraints preventing aid from reaching people in a timely manner.

“The people I met in Jonglei and Unity states are doing their utmost to stay dry and survive. However, their resilience is being tested and their safety nets degraded as they deal with one shock after another. Disaster mitigation infrastructure such as dykes need to be built and rehabilitated to complement emergency response efforts and prevent more people from being displaced by the floods now and in the future. Sustained humanitarian, disaster reduction and development assistance and funding are urgently needed,” the Humanitarian Coordinator added.

The Humanitarian Coordinator recently released \$20 million from the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund, with part of the allocation supporting flood response efforts, complementing bilateral funding sources. Earlier this year, work was done in the preparedness and prevention phase to mitigate the impact of floodwaters ahead of time by repairing and maintaining dykes in parts of Jonglei.

The humanitarian response in South Sudan is generously funded by donors, including the US, the EU, the UK and Germany. The people of South Sudan are always the first responders in emergency situations, and the government recently allotted \$10 million for the current floods. “We are deeply grateful to our ‘traditional’ donors, whose constant support keeps people alive. I am also happy to have undertaken recent missions together with the Ambassadors of China, India and Turkey, the South Sudan Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Relief and Rehabilitation Commission. Partnership will help combat the ongoing crisis.”

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

South Sudan is ranked among the five countries in the world most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and the South Sudanese are already dealing with the consequences. Food insecurity is at record levels. The country regularly experiences torrential rains, seasonal flooding and locust infestations. Flooding here is not new, it is clear that they have increased in intensity and frequency, scrambling normal migration and coping patterns, and underscoring just how drastically our climate has changed in recent years.

“The people of South Sudan are on the frontline in the fight against climate change; the casual victims of the rest of the world’s carbon-fueled prosperity. We stand with them, supporting them with relief where needed, mitigation where helpful, and climate adaptation where possible. We need your solidarity now.”

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