

Humanitarian Multi-sectoral Emergency Response Project Newsletter



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About the Project

The USAID-funded Humanitarian Multi-Sectoral Emergency Response project, led by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), began on May 1, 2023, and runs through December 31, 2024. This initiative focuses on addressing pressing humanitarian challenges in South Sudan, particularly in conflict- and flood-affected areas of Upper Nile and Unity States.

The project responded to complex issues such as communal violence, repeated displacement due to flooding, and the vulnerabilities of at-risk populations. Through targeted interventions, it aims to reduce protection risks and provide essential support to those in need.

Operating in Upper Nile and Unity State, as well as deploying DRC's Mobile Response Teams to hard-to-reach locations, the project delivers integrated assistance across multiple DRC sectors. These include Protection, Economic Recovery, Shelter and Settlement, and Camp Coordination and Camp Management. By coordinating efforts across these areas, the project ensures that displaced communities, returnees, and host populations receive essential services, supporting both immediate needs and long-term recovery.



At the Women and Girls Friendly Space in Bentiu, women gather to craft reusable sanitary towels, fostering self-sufficiency and promoting menstrual health in their community.

Project Impact Data

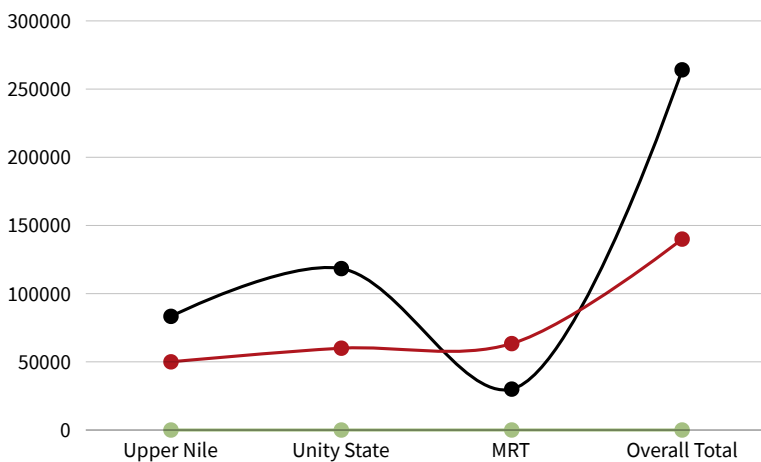
This data reflects the positive changes and measurable improvements within the communities we serve. From increased access to essential services and enhanced livelihoods to strengthened community resilience, these figures provide a clear picture of how our initiatives are making a lasting difference. Through collaboration, support, and targeted interventions, we are empowering individuals and transforming lives, and this data highlights the depth and breadth of that impact.

Project Target

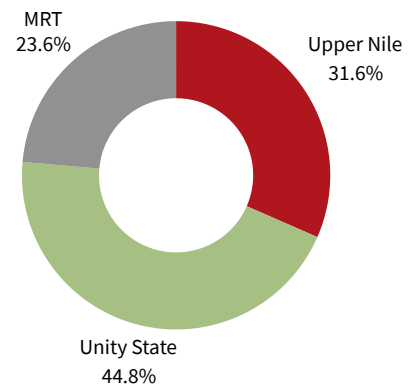
Upper Nile
50,000

Unity State
60,000

MRT
30,000

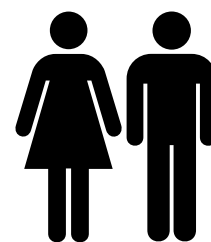


Project Reach



General Project Objective

The project aimed at mitigating protection risks such as Gender-based violence, Psychological and emotional abuse or inflicted distress, child or forced marriage faced by displacement-affected communities in South Sudan, enabling them to live safely and with dignity.



Project Sectors



Protection



Economic Recovery



Shelter & Settlements



Camp Coordination & Camp Management

Project Stories of Impact

Local Production of Sanitary Towels in Bentiu

In Bentiu, the Danish Refugee Council, supported by USAID, is addressing menstrual health and economic challenges for displaced women through the local production of reusable sanitary towels. Based at the Women and Girls Friendly Center, the initiative trains 60 women to produce affordable hygiene products for the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps.

This project not only improves access to hygiene products but also equips participants with skills to earn an income in a challenging environment. The availability of reusable pads is helping to enhance both health and economic outcomes for women in Bentiu.



At the Women and Girls Friendly Space in Bentiu, women gather to craft reusable sanitary towels, fostering self-sufficiency and promoting menstrual health in their community.

Fostering Financial Independence and Community Growth

In 2023, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), with support from USAID, launched Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) in Kodok and Malakal to support displaced persons and host communities. As part of the Humanitarian Emergency Multi-sectoral Response project, five VSLAs were formed, benefiting 100 small business owners.

Participants, like Abuk, a single mother from Malakal, receive business management training and financial grants. Through weekly savings, members contribute to a communal fund that provides loans for emergencies.

For Abuk, the VSLA enabled her to expand her business and support her family, fostering financial independence and community growth in conflict-affected areas.



Abuk manages her stall with dedication, attentively serving her customers and overseeing her business with confidence.

Empowering Girls Through the GirlShine Program in Bentiu

Launched in 2021 at the Women and Girls Friendly Space in Bentiu, the GirlShine program empowers adolescent girls by providing life skills and practical training. Over 250 girls have participated, gaining knowledge about their rights, including the risks of early marriage and the importance of gender equality. The program also equips them with income-generating skills such as beading, hairdressing, and kneading, promoting financial independence.

GirlShine creates a safe space for social interaction and offers essential hygiene support, including sanitary pads, enabling girls to continue their education. Girls like Amina now confidently advocate for their futures, choosing education over harmful practices like early marriage.



Members of the Girl Shine program in Bentiu come together, creating a supportive space for learning, personal growth, and empowerment.

Strengthening Community Leadership in Bentiu



Community leaders convene during a meeting, actively discussing strategies and solutions to address the challenges facing their community.

In Bentiu's displacement sites, thousands affected by conflict and disasters live in complex communities with distinct governance structures. Recognizing the value of local leadership in delivering efficient and equitable humanitarian aid, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), supported by USAID, focuses on empowering community leaders in camp coordination and management. Through capacity-building sessions, DRC equips leaders with skills in leadership, conflict sensitivity, and protection, enabling them to manage resources, resolve disputes, and advocate for their communities.

During the 2024 floods, trained leaders played a key role in ensuring safety by coordinating with agencies and mobilizing the community. DRC also established seven community centers, offering safe spaces for coordination, social activities, and critical information. By strengthening leadership and building infrastructure, DRC fosters a sustainable, community-led humanitarian response.

The Transformative Power of Small Business Grants

In Fashoda County, South Sudan, Daniel Pajwan, a retail trader now, faced significant challenges in providing for his family. Limited capital kept his business small, with income that was often insufficient to meet basic needs. However, a small business grant from the USAID-funded Humanitarian Response project implemented by DRC provided Daniel with the opportunity to turn his situation around.

With the grant, Daniel made strategic investments in his business. He started by setting up a small kiosk and later expanded into an assorted business shop, offering a wider range of products and attracting more customers. This diversification allowed him to stabilize his income, despite the economic challenges in South Sudan. Additionally, Daniel joined a savings group, which provided him with financial security and community support.

The impact of these changes was profound. Daniel's increased income allowed him to improve his family's living conditions, ensure his children could attend school, and plan for the future. His success also resonated with others in his community, particularly those displaced by conflict, demonstrating that with the right resources and support, significant progress is possible enabling individuals to achieve economic stability. With such support, when paired with strategic planning, can lead to meaningful and sustainable improvements in both personal and community well-being.



Daniel pose for a photo in his shop, a symbol of his hard work and entrepreneurial spirit. With dedication and resilience, he has built a thriving business that supports his family and serves his community.

Transforming Hai Bilpam through Grassroots Leadership

In Kodok's Hai Bilpam area, frequent theft, domestic violence, and assaults once plagued the community. Lacking support and effective management structures, things began to change when 42-year-old Elizabeth Ayang, a single mother of seven, joined the Community-Based Protection Networks (CBPN). Her leadership quickly earned her the role of chairperson.

Trained in protection mainstreaming, monitoring, and case referrals, Elizabeth tackled pressing issues such as domestic violence and access to health services. In 2023, with resources like torches, phones, raincoats, and gumboots provided by the Danish Refugee Council and funded by USAID, she expanded her efforts to ensure more people received essential services.

Elizabeth's leadership has significantly reduced protection risks in Hai Bilpam, transforming it into a safer community. Her dedication and grassroots efforts showcase the power of community-led protection initiatives in creating lasting change.



Elizabeth, a member of the Community-Based Protection Network, engages in discussion with a DRC staff member.

Strengthening Community Ownership and Resilience



Community members actively participate in a Cash-for-Work program, earning an income while contributing to essential community projects.

In April 2024, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), through the USAID-funded Emergency Multi-Sectoral Humanitarian Response in South Sudan project, launched a week-long cash-for-work program in Kodok, Upper Nile State. This initiative involved 51 community members, including local leader Mr. John, to improve public spaces and create a healthier living environment. The program provided immediate financial relief, with each participant earning 39,500 South Sudanese Pounds for their contributions, while fostering long-term resilience.

The initiative tackled local challenges like poor sanitation and resource constraints, engaging community members in tasks such as waste removal and grass clearing. Beyond the financial support, the program promoted community ownership by empowering participants to lead these efforts. This initiative not only improved living conditions but also strengthened the community's ability to sustain these efforts independently in the future, showcasing the transformative potential of cash-based interventions.



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