

# Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility: Context Update

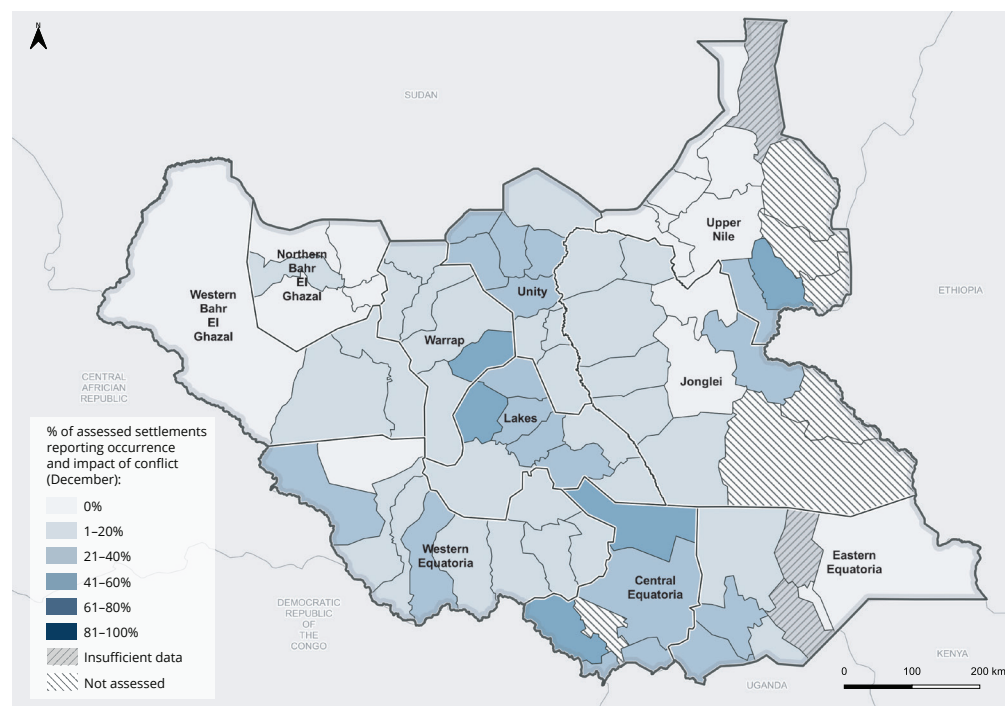
OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2020

1. Context Update
2. Future Conflict
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## Introduction

This factsheet aims to support a conflict-sensitive approach to decision-making by aid actors and policy makers in South Sudan through an improved understanding of South Sudan's context, conflict dynamics and how aid actors could interact with the context. The analysis by the **Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility (CSRF)** is based on quantitative data reported by key informants (KI) at the settlement-level collected by **REACH**, qualitative data from focus group discussions conducted by REACH and additional qualitative sources.<sup>1</sup> All percentages presented in the factsheet, unless otherwise specified, represent the proportion of **assessed settlements** that gave a specific response to a question. Quantitative data is only provided for counties in which at least 5 percent of settlements have been assessed. All findings presented in this factsheet are **indicative**, rather than **representative**, of the situation in assessed South Sudanese settlements at the time of data collection (unless specified otherwise). For more information on the methodology and limitations, please refer to page 5. Please refer to **CSRF and WFP Guidance Framework** for terminology used for the analysis of organised violence in South Sudan.

## Occurrence and impact of conflict: December 2020



For a more general contextual overview of all counties, please refer to the **County Profiles** on the CSRF website. The CSRF hosts an interactive map of South Sudan designed to help aid workers familiarise themselves with the context. This map includes an overlay of different administrative boundaries. This is set by default to show the 78 counties that make up South Sudan, but can also be changed to show various other configurations of state boundaries. Each county can be clicked to display further information on demographics, livelihoods, infrastructure, conflict dynamics and accessibility.

During the October–December 2020 period there has been an increase in humanitarian needs and displacement driven by flooding and localized and sub-national violence, as well as increased levels of food insecurity. Described as the **worst case of flooding in 60 years**, flooding from July–September continued in October, with the Nile, Pibor, Sobat, Lol and other rivers into eastern and central parts of South Sudan all overflowing their banks. This contributed to large-scale displacement of people and cattle as well as damaged livelihoods and property, with OCHA estimating 1,042,000 people being affected by floods in eight out of ten states and one administrative area by December 2020.<sup>2</sup>

From October–December 2020, Lakes, Warrap, Jonglei, Upper Nile and Central Equatoria States have all been affected by violence. Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) remain an area of concern. Although data collection was not possible in GPAA, the area was affected by significant levels of **sub-national violence and flooding** in 2020, and, by late 2020, an estimated over 60,000 individuals were displaced in Pibor, and high levels of violence causing food insecurity, leading to an IPC “Famine Likely” classification for western Pibor in December 2020.<sup>3</sup> In neighbouring Akobo, there was a significant increase in reported incidences of violence compared to July–September 2020, including cattle raids and revenge attacks between Murle and Lou Nuer in November and December 2020.<sup>4</sup> This trend should be monitored carefully in case it escalates into the widespread sub-national violence seen in **Jonglei and GPAA** in 2020.

Warrap and Lakes States continued to be significantly impacted by violence. In Tonj North and East, the impact of poor crop cultivation and significant episodes of violence in August 2020, including the theft of crops, arson and insecurity, were felt, and continued grassroots violence and cattle migration from October–December 2020 **displaced about 18,000 people** in October alone, impeded access to health facilities and resulted in revenge killings.<sup>5</sup> In Rumbek Centre, Rumbek North, Rumbek East and Cueibet counties, violence between community groups included cattle raids, revenge attacks and sexual violence.

In Central Equatoria, despite the **signature of a ceasefire** between the Government of South Sudan and Opposition Movement Alliance/NAS in October 2020, key informants in southern areas of the state reported a high level of violence that worsened towards the end of the year, particularly around Juba, Terekeka and Yei. Levels of violence in CES have varied from October–December 2020, with informants reporting incidences of national, subnational, localised and grassroots violence in equal measure. In Lainya, Juba and Terekeka, localised violence and cattle raiding among Mundari sections escalated, leading to the **displacement of over 11,000 IDPs** from Terekeka to Juba alone.

Clashes between armed groups in Maban in December 2020 led to widespread displacement of local communities to refugee camps near Bunj Town and could deepen **inter-communal tensions** in the area.

This **composite indicator** measures the occurrence and impact of reported conflict in assessed settlements in the month prior to data collection. It represents the percentage of assessed settlements where KIs reported the occurrence and impact of conflict in response to the following indicators, with each indicator carrying the same weight:

- Incidence of conflict resulting in civilian death
- Conflict-related events cited as a main protection concern<sup>6</sup>
- Incidence of shelter damage due to conflict
- Conflict as a reason for large-scale displacement

<sup>1</sup> In December 2020, REACH conducted four Focus Group Discussions for this Factsheet with participants from Juba, Magwi and Kajo-Keji counties.

<sup>2</sup> UNOCHA South Sudan: *Flooding Situation Report*, Inter-Cluster Coordination Group, December 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Review: Conclusions and Recommendations for Pibor County – South Sudan – IPC Analysis (November 2020).

<sup>4</sup> As per reported data from an NGO in South Sudan that focuses on independently collecting and analysing security incident data for humanitarian.

<sup>5</sup> USAID: South Sudan – Complex Emergency (4 December, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Reported protection concerns that are considered to be conflict-related: killing/injury by same tribe, killing/injury by other tribe, abduction, forced recruitment, cattle raid, harassment to disclose information, violence between neighbours.

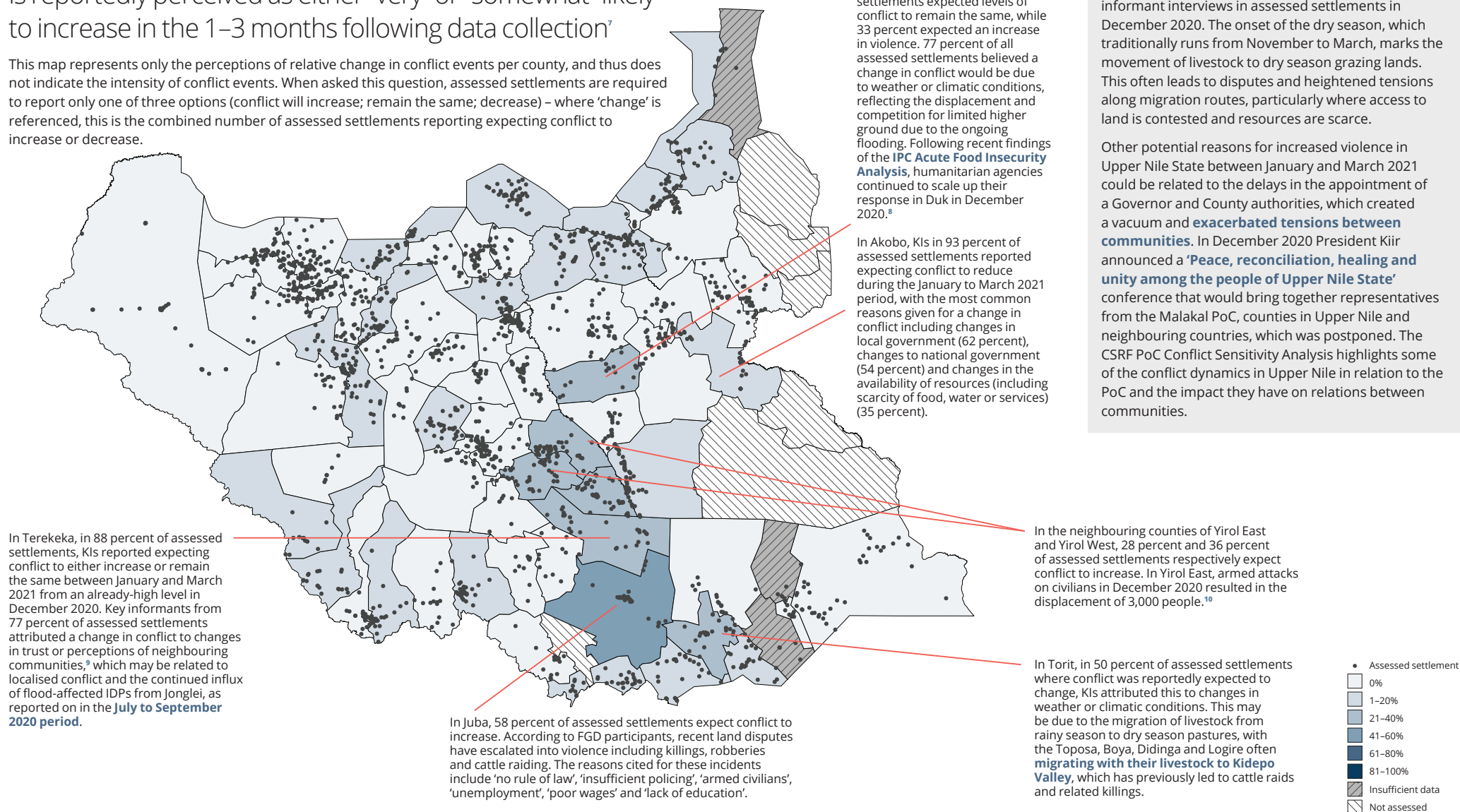
# Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility: Future Conflict

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Proportion of REACH assessed settlements where conflict is reportedly perceived as either “very” or “somewhat” likely to increase in the 1–3 months following data collection<sup>7</sup>

This map represents only the perceptions of relative change in conflict events per county, and thus does not indicate the intensity of conflict events. When asked this question, assessed settlements are required to report only one of three options (conflict will increase; remain the same; decrease) – where ‘change’ is referenced, this is the combined number of assessed settlements reporting expecting conflict to increase or decrease.



This page examines perceptions of conflict trends between January and March 2021, as based on key informant interviews in assessed settlements in December 2020. The onset of the dry season, which traditionally runs from November to March, marks the movement of livestock to dry season grazing lands. This often leads to disputes and heightened tensions along migration routes, particularly where access to land is contested and resources are scarce.

Other potential reasons for increased violence in Upper Nile State between January and March 2021 could be related to the delays in the appointment of a Governor and County authorities, which created a vacuum and **exacerbated tensions between communities**. In December 2020 President Kiir announced a **‘Peace, reconciliation, healing and unity among the people of Upper Nile State’** conference that would bring together representatives from the Malakal PoC, counties in Upper Nile and neighbouring countries, which was postponed. The CSRF PoC Conflict Sensitivity Analysis highlights some of the conflict dynamics in Upper Nile in relation to the PoC and the impact they have on relations between communities.

<sup>7</sup> Covering period January–March 2021.

<sup>8</sup> UNOCHA South Sudan, *Flash Update on the humanitarian response scale-up*, December 2020.

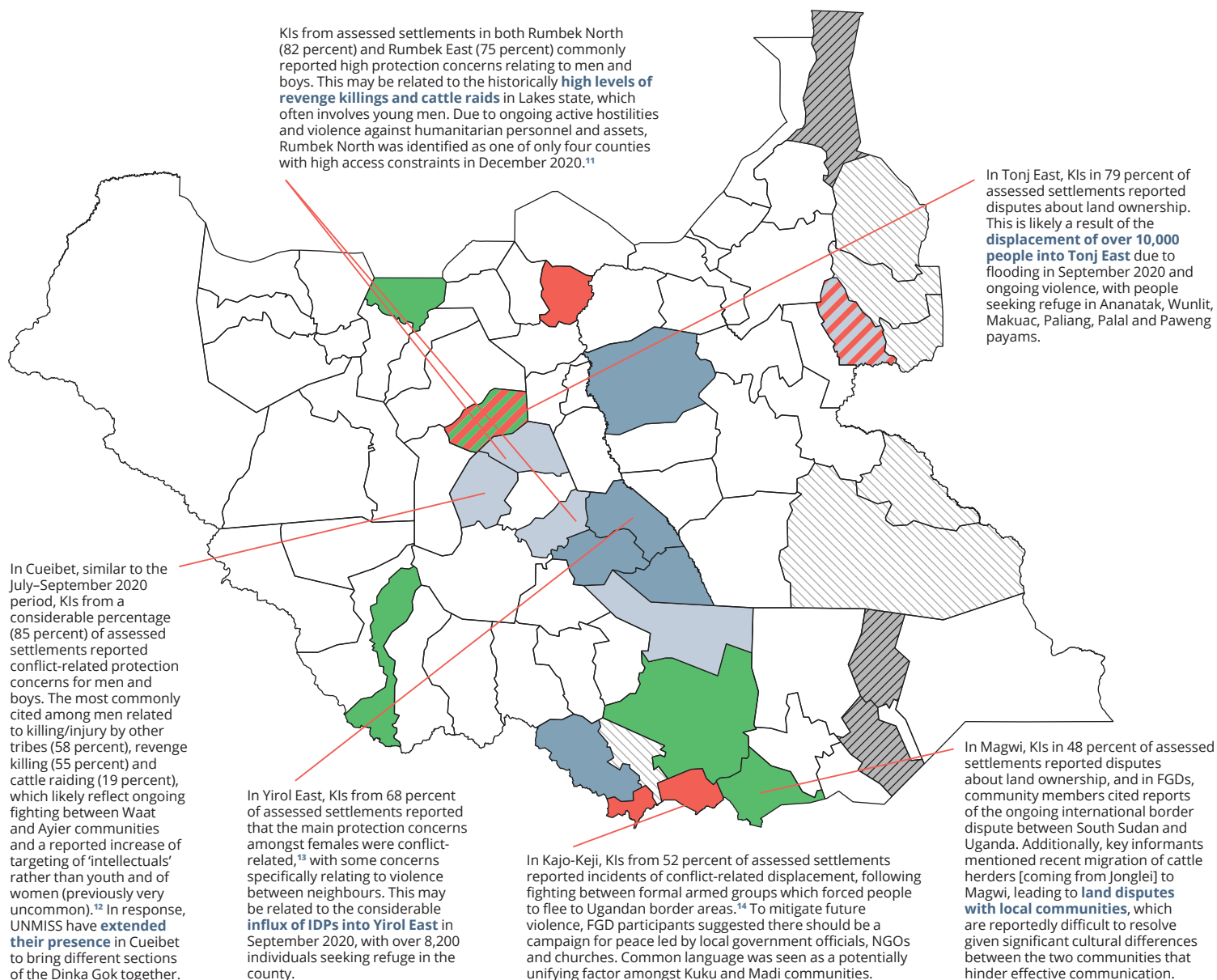
<sup>9</sup> REACH’s definition of ‘neighbouring communities’ relates to different communities living within one settlement, however the phrase ‘neighbouring communities’ is used to ensure accessibility in many different languages to reach different respondents across South Sudan. For this reason, it is at the discretion of the KI to decide what constitutes a ‘neighbouring community’ for him/her.

<sup>10</sup> UNOCHA South Sudan, *Humanitarian Snapshot*, December 2020.

# Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility: Specific types of Conflict

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## Perceptions of safety

### Proportion of assessed settlements reporting that most people in the community felt unsafe most of the time.

Hotspot counties, in which key informants in the majority of assessed settlements reported that most people feel unsafe most of the time, are clustered in three states: Lakes (Rumbek Centre, Rumbek East and Cueibet counties), Western Bahr el Ghazal (Jur River county) and Warrap (Tonj East county). Cueibet, Jur River and Rumbek Centre were also identified in the **July–September 2020 CSRF Context Update**. The reports of a lack of feeling of safety reflect continuing violence in Lakes, which has resulted in access constraints in Rumbek North and Cueibet, as well as Jur River in Western Bahr el Ghazal, due to the presence of armed groups, checkpoints and bureaucratic impediments.<sup>15</sup> It has not been possible to collect sufficient data in all areas of the country, such as Greater Pibor Administrative Area and parts of Upper Nile bordering Sudan and Ethiopia, which should be taken into account when interpreting these findings and the list below. (Parenthesis) indicates number of assessed settlements within each county.

### Top 5 counties with the highest proportion of assessed settlements where KIs reported that most people did NOT feel safe most of the time

Rumbek Centre (32)	100 percent
Rumbek East (38)	100 percent
Tonj East (24)	100 percent
Cueibet (31)	97 percent
Jur River (47)	96 percent

### Top 5 counties

- Conflict-related displacement
  - Disputes about land ownership
  - Conflict-related protection concerns for women and girls
  - Conflict-related protection concerns for men and boys
  - Insufficient data
  - Not assessed
- Assessed counties not among the top 5 counties on the aforementioned indicators

<sup>11</sup> UNOCHA, South Sudan Humanitarian Access Severity Overview, January–December 2020.

<sup>12</sup> According to two REACH FGDs conducted in Cueibet in September–October 2020.

<sup>13</sup> Reported protection concerns that are considered to be conflict-related: killing/injury by same tribe, killing/injury by other tribe, abduction, forced recruitment, cattle raid, harassment to disclose information, violence between neighbours.

<sup>14</sup> UNOCHA, South Sudan Humanitarian Snapshot, December 2020.

<sup>15</sup> UNOCHA, Humanitarian Access Severity Overview, January–December 2020.



# Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility: Sector-Specific Considerations

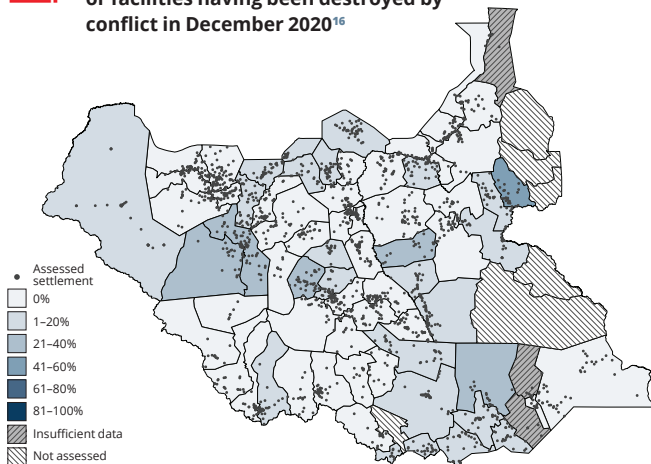
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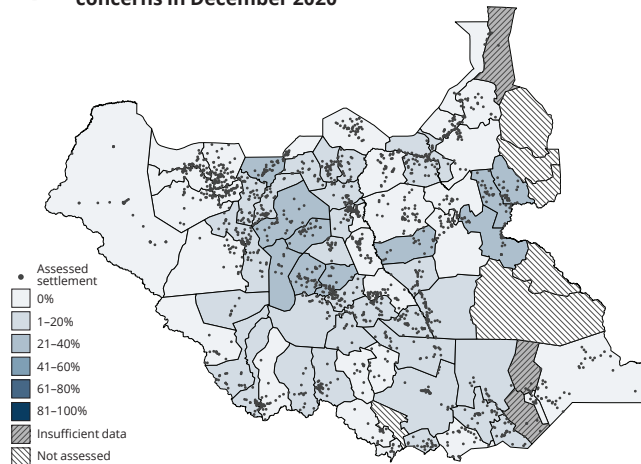
## Impact on access to resources and services



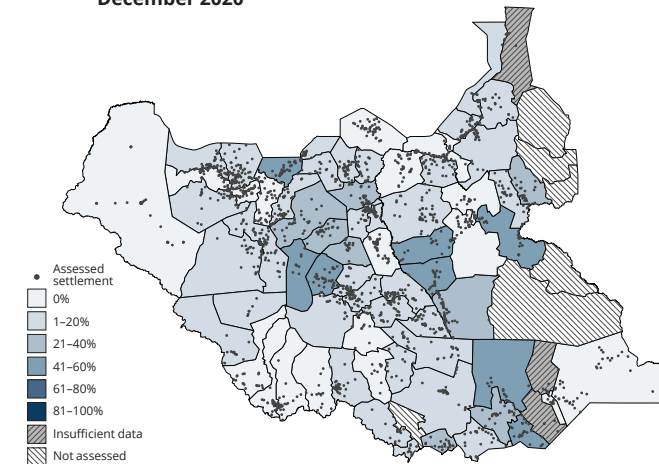
Proportion of assessed settlements where KIs reported a lack of access to health services due to security concerns or facilities having been destroyed by conflict in December 2020<sup>16</sup>



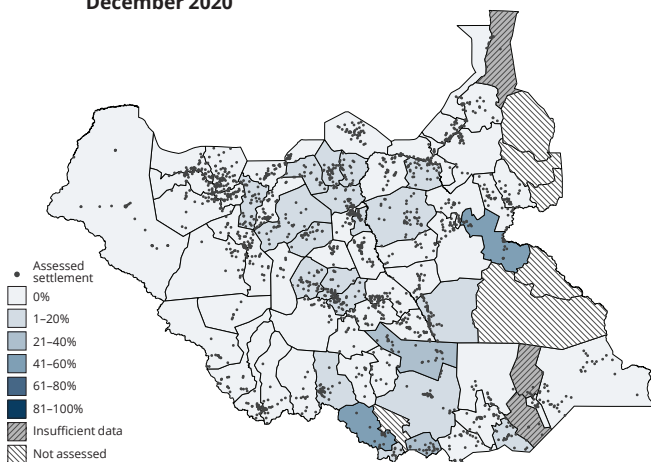
Proportion of assessed settlements where KIs reported a lack of access to a preferred waterpoint due to safety concerns in December 2020



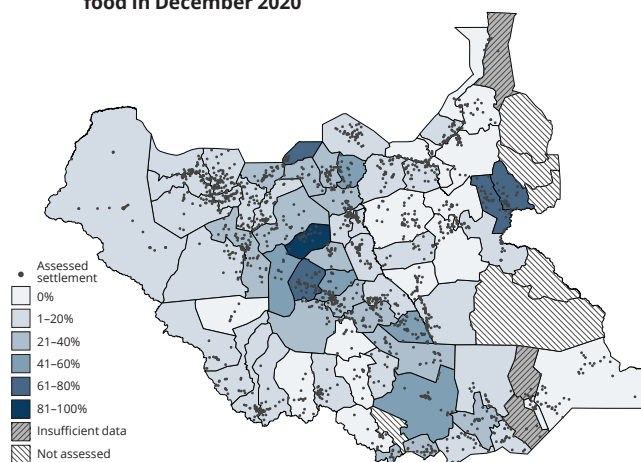
Proportion of assessed settlements where KIs reported a lack of access to markets due to safety concerns in December 2020



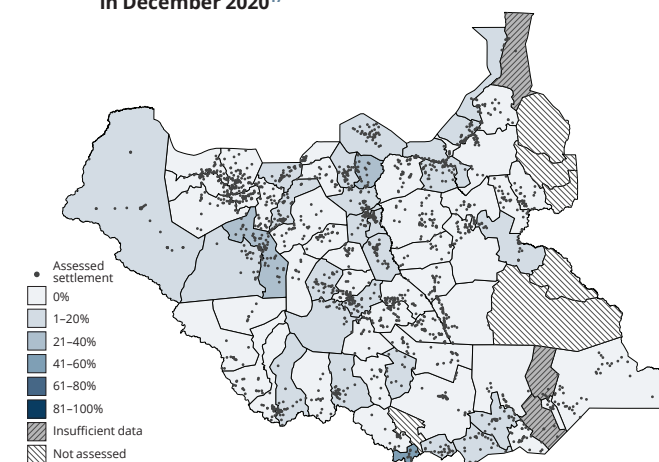
Proportion of assessed settlements where KIs reported conflict had led to shelter damage or destruction in December 2020



Proportion of assessed settlements where KIs reported conflict or looting have had a large impact on access to food in December 2020



Proportion of assessed settlements where KIs reported a lack of access to education due to security concerns in December 2020<sup>17</sup>



<sup>16</sup> Responses included to indicate conflict/security concerns as a barrier to accessing health services: area is too insecure to travel to the health facility, health facility itself is too insecure, and facilities were destroyed by fighting.

<sup>17</sup> Responses included to indicate safety concerns as a barrier to education access: insecurity, facility destruction due to conflict, and teachers fleeing due to conflict.

# Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility: Conflict Sensitivity Considerations

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Proportion of assessed settlements where KIs reported that the presence and programming of humanitarian and development agencies has had a negative impact on relationships between communities over the year prior to data collection<sup>18</sup>

## Top 5 counties with the highest proportion of assessed settlements where a negative impact was reported:<sup>19</sup>

1. Malakal (67%)
2. Wau (54%)
3. Yirol East (33%)
4. Baliet (25%)
5. Lafon (25%)

## 5 counties with 100% of assessed settlements reporting positive impact:

1. Nyirol
2. Abiemnhom
3. Pariang
4. Wulu
5. Nzara

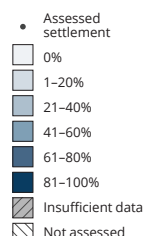
In Malakal, KIs from 67 percent of assessed settlements reported that aid agencies have a negative impact on community relations. In Malakal town, this may be related to perceived inequity of quality and quantity of humanitarian assistance provided to those residing within the Protection of Civilian PoC site (a largely Shilluk population) and those within the town (a predominantly Padang Dinka population). These issues are explored in the CSRF's Conflict Sensitivity Analysis of the PoC transition (March 2020).

While there was insufficient data from Renk from October–December 2020, in October 2020 humanitarian workers were **evacuated from Renk town** after threats and violent attacks from youth following tensions over the hiring practices of aid agencies. Youth from Renk called on aid agencies to prioritize the hiring of staff who come from the area, rather than South Sudanese from other parts of the country.

In Wau, KIs from 54 percent of assessed settlements reported aid agencies' presence having a negative impact on community relations. According to FGD participants within the former-PoC, information about assistance was insufficient, particularly in relation to delays or suspension of services, suggesting a need for deeper community engagement.<sup>20</sup> Some participants also reported that recent, unexpected reductions in food assistance created tensions within families, and within and between communities.

In Mangalla, on the border of Terekeka and Juba Counties, local communities and aid assessments have noted increased tension both between host communities and IDPs displaced from Jonglei due to flooding, and between the Mundari and partially-displaced Bari communities over competing claims of historical rights to land around Mangalla town. The risks and opportunities for the humanitarian response to positively and negatively affect tensions in Mangalla are outlined in the **CSRF Conflict Sensitivity Analysis** (October 2020).

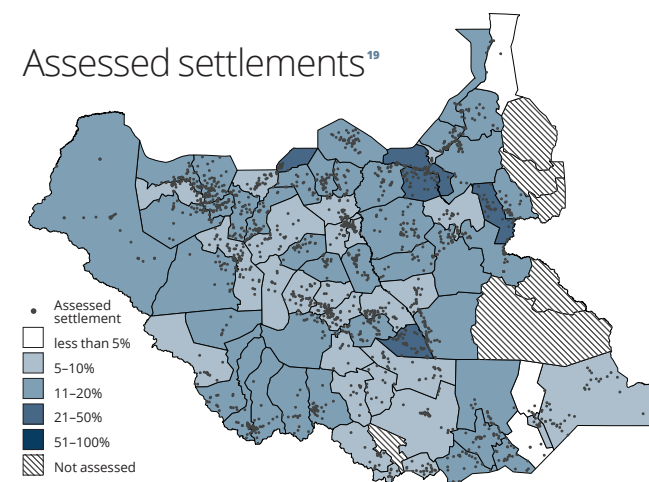
In Magwi, KIs from 91 percent of assessed settlements reported that aid agencies have a positive impact on community relations. FGD participants reported that humanitarian assistance generally does not lead to conflict, however that agencies may consider higher salaries for local staff, local (rather than cross-border) procurement, and improve their consultation with communities to promote more peaceful community relations.



## Methodology

Through the Area of Knowledge (AoK) methodology, REACH remotely monitors needs and access to services across South Sudan. AoK data is collected monthly and through multi-sector interviews with the following typology of key informants: 1) People who recently arrived from hard-to-reach areas, or 2) who have recently been in contact with someone in a hard-to-reach area, or 3) who are located in a hard-to-reach area and were contacted by phone during data collection. Selected KIs are purposively sampled and have knowledge from within the last month about a specific settlement in South Sudan, with data collected at the settlement level. All percentages presented in this factsheet, unless otherwise specified, therefore represent the proportion of settlements assessed with a given response to a question. Due to the KI methodology, it has not been possible to collect data in all areas of the country, and findings are indicative, not representative, of the situation in assessed settlements in South Sudan during the data collection period (October–December 2020). It has not been possible to collect data in all areas of the country, such as GPAA and parts of Upper Nile State and Central Equatoria. Supplemental qualitative information was sourced through secondary data, KIs and FGDs conducted throughout December 2020. If data collection was not possible or was insufficient (illustrated by diagonal grey shading in maps) in counties, this does not imply that conflict events have not recently taken place or that there is no ongoing conflict. The low accessibility of KIs from these areas may sometimes be related to conflict, which can restrict movements of KIs to data collection points.

## Assessed settlements<sup>19</sup>



<sup>18</sup> This data was collected in December 2020, but covers the last year prior to data collection. When asked this question, assessed settlements are only able to provide one response (i.e. very negative; slightly negative; no effect; slightly positive; very positive) – therefore where 100% of assessed settlements reported positive impact, 0% reported 'no effect' or either degree of 'negative' impact.

<sup>19</sup> This is a composite of both reported "slightly negative" and "very negative" (i.e. net negative) impact.

<sup>20</sup> According to eight REACH FGDs conducted in Wau PoC in December 2020.