

Article Overview

South Sudan faces a severe protection crisis, with civilians at high risk from conflict, displacement, gender-based violence, and climate-related shocks, while UNMISS and humanitarian actors work to safeguard vulnerable populations.

Current Protection Context

South Sudan is experiencing escalating violence, political deadlock, and humanitarian constraints, severely affecting civilians across multiple states, including Upper Nile, Jonglei, Unity, and the Equatorias . Renewed clashes between government forces and opposition groups, intercommunal violence, and spillover from Sudan have displaced millions, with over 10 million people projected to require humanitarian assistance in 2026 . Women, children, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups face heightened risks of sexual and gender-based violence, forced recruitment, exploitation, and family separation .

Humanitarian and Legal Frameworks

The South Sudan Protection Cluster coordinates protection efforts, focusing on internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, children, women, older persons, and minority groups . The country has ratified several regional and international treaties, including the Global Compact for Migration, but gaps remain in domestic legislation to protect civilians and address migration and displacement issues . Humanitarian access is often impeded by insecurity, attacks on aid workers, and limited infrastructure, complicating the delivery of essential services such as healthcare, education, and clean water .

Role of UNMISS and Peacekeeping

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) deploys around 12,000 peacekeepers to protect civilians, facilitate humanitarian aid, monitor human rights, and support the peace process . UNMISS patrols and temporary operating bases aim to deter violence, safeguard displaced populations, and maintain conditions for humanitarian operations . However, funding cuts and operational constraints have reduced patrols and monitoring capacity, leaving some areas more vulnerable . India remains a significant contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, including in South Sudan .

Key Protection Challenges

- o Conflict-related violence: Extrajudicial killings, abductions, sexual violence, and attacks on civilian infrastructure remain widespread .
- o Displacement: Over 456,000 individuals were newly uprooted in early 2025, with continued displacement due to intercommunal clashes and Sudanese refugees entering South Sudan .

South Sudan Protection

- o Child protection: Recruitment of children into armed groups persists, though some progress has been made, such as the release of children from military ranks in Yambio .
- o Gender-based violence: Women and girls face increased exposure to sexual violence, forced marriage, and exploitation, particularly in displacement settings .
- o Climate shocks: Floods and droughts exacerbate food insecurity, destroy livelihoods, and intensify competition over resources, fueling further conflict .
- o Health crises: Cholera, malaria, hepatitis E, and mpox outbreaks strain the fragile health system, with limited access to care for displaced populations .

International Recommendations

UN experts and the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan emphasize the urgent need to protect civilians, uphold the Revitalized Peace Agreement, and ensure humanitarian access . Immediate actions include cessation of hostilities, release of political detainees, protection of displaced populations, and adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law. Regional and international actors, including the African Union and IGAD, are urged to support de-escalation and strengthen protection mechanisms .

Conclusion

South Sudan's protection environment remains highly fragile, with civilians facing compounded risks from conflict, displacement, climate shocks, and systemic human rights violations. Effective protection requires coordinated efforts by UNMISS, humanitarian actors, and the government, alongside sustained international support to safeguard vulnerable populations and uphold the peace process .

South Sudan is one of the most complex and protracted protection crises in the world, with large-scale conflict and inter

Under Resolution 2820 (2026), the United Nations Mission in South Sudan is mandated by the Security Council to

Situation Report in English on South Sudan about Protection and Human Rights; published on 28 Oct 2024 by

GENEVA - UN experts* today warned that South Sudan is turning into a catastrophic human rights and humanitarian

Out of 11.29 million people of South Sudan (IDPs, Returnees, Residents) affected by natural hazards, conflict, and

Background Since South Sudan's independence, the HCT has had two protection strategies in place (2015 and

2020).

Escalating violence, political stalemate and humanitarian constraints are pushing South Sudan's civilians to the brink

Sudan Situation The Protection Cluster in South Sudan and UNHCR jointly present this Protection Analysis Update (PAU) spanning

JUBA/GENEVA - The UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan has sounded the alarm over the country's

Situation Report in English on South Sudan about Protection and Human Rights; published on 3 Jul 2024 by Protection

People fleeing Sudan face extreme protection risks along treacherous routes to South Sudan, with many - especially

The humanitarian situation in South Sudan is worsening, driven by the cumulative and compounding effects of years

Protection Risks and Needs in South Sudan Out of 11.29 million shocks (floods, famine, influx, poverty, displacement)

News and Press Release in English on South Sudan about Health and Protection and

Summary of needs: In 2025, South Sudan will continue to experience a protracted child protection crisis, particularly

The South Sudan Protection Cluster Strategy forms the basis of the Cluster's coordinated response while providing

Web: <https://in-au.co.za>

