

Talking Points

The Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

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Overall situation in South Sudan

- Conflict broke out in 2013. Renewed conflict since July 2016
- About 3.2 million people have been displaced
- 7.5 million people are in need of assistance in 2017
- An economic crisis is forcing families into poverty
- Children are facing many risks in South Sudan: malnutrition, diseases, violence, abduction and recruitment into armed groups.

The situation in regards to child rights

- Recruitment of children: More than 17,000 children remain associated with armed groups and recruitment continues.
- Children have been killed, injured and abducted by both sides to the conflict.
- The UN has documented over 2,800 reports of grave violations committed against children throughout the country.
- 1,800 children have been killed and sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war.
- Since the beginning of the crisis, more than 14,628 unaccompanied, separated, and missing children have been registered.
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) has been greatly intensified by the current crisis, and is being perpetrated by all parties to the conflict.

- Children are fatigued from nearly three years of conflict and violations of their rights. In 2016, UNICEF and partners reached nearly 311,462 children with dedicated psychosocial support.

What does UNICEF do?

- UNICEF calls on all parties to adhere to international human rights and humanitarian law.
- In 2017, UNICEF's goal is to reach 3.3 million people, out of which 2.4 million are children.

Examples of UNICEF work in connection to child rights:

- With UNICEF support, over 1,900 children have been released from armed groups and are in the process of being reintegrated into society.
- Over the past two years, UNICEF and partners have reunited 4,563 children with their families.
- UNICEF trains teachers and social workers so they are able to provide children with psychosocial support if and when needed.
- To prevent Gender Based Violence and support victims/survivors, UNICEF through its partners trains doctors, health workers, social workers and state authorities so they can respond to the needs of survivors.
- UNICEF trains teachers, refurbishes schools and provides temporary learning spaces where schools have been destroyed.

Challenges

Access: Due to armed conflict, UNICEF and partners have problems accessing the population in need. To respond to this challenge UNICEF in cooperation with WFP carries out Rapid Response Mechanisms (RRM) missions.

Transport: Many roads are inaccessible due to insecurity or flooding during rainy season. Supplies often have to be airlifted. UNICEF tries to minimise costs by pre-positioning supplies.

Severe funding constraints: Especially child protection programmes suffer from severe funding gaps.