

NRC’s operations in South Sudan

Humanitarian overview

Conflict and flooding continue to be significant drivers of displacement in South Sudan. The country is also contending with steep cuts to the foreign humanitarian aid it receives each year. Nearly two-thirds of its 12 million people face crisis levels of hunger or worse. Acute food insecurity is expected to worsen as more people are at risk of famine in some areas, driven by multiple crises and shocks including displacement, disease outbreaks and high cost of living.

Approximately 2 million people remain internally displaced within South Sudan. And since the conflict erupted in Sudan in 2023, over 1.2 million people have arrived in South Sudan seeking safety. Hundreds are still crossing the border each day, many of whom are highly vulnerable and arriving in critically underdeveloped areas.

This year, South Sudan has been swept into a new cycle of severe flooding, just as renewed conflict threatens a fragile peace, leaving communities facing new displacements, disrupted livelihoods, and increased food insecurity and malnutrition risks. If the flooding continues, about 400,000 people could be displaced by the end of 2025, exceeding the levels seen last year.



Photo: Sultan Mahmood/NRC

Our core activities



Education



Information, counselling
and legal assistance (ICLA)



Protection
from violence



Shelter
and settlements



Water, sanitation
and hygiene (WASH)

NRC in South Sudan

Established	2004
International staff	20
National staff	268

Our areas of operation

- Renk (Upper Nile State)
- Northern Bahr el Ghazal State)
- Warrap State
- Western Bahr el Ghazal State
- Jonglei State
- Unity State
- Central Equatoria State



Our activities in detail

Through our mobile emergency response capacity, we provide lifesaving multi-sectoral assistance to crisis-affected populations in hard-to-reach areas across South Sudan. In areas where we have established operations, we ensure that displacement-affected people are safe, can exercise their rights, access quality services and protection, and secure durable solutions.

To that end, we contribute to the safe and stable environment needed to allow for return and reintegration or integration of displaced communities. We do this through advocacy, coordination, and collaboration, as well as integrated and multi-sectoral long-term interventions. Through these efforts, we do not work alone. We collaborate with communities, local partners and authorities and coordinate with other humanitarian organisations to deliver essential services. Access constraints, like bureaucratic impediments and insecurity, continue to heavily affect the overall humanitarian operation and the ability to reach people in need.



115,961 people reached in 2024 ▼

Education

Our education programme supports displacement-affected children and youth with access to quality, safe and inclusive learning opportunities relevant to their psychosocial, emotional, and cognitive development and needs. Gender sensitivity, equity, and inclusion are key considerations guiding NRC's programming. We provide:

- rapid education response in the first phase of an emergency because education is lifesaving and strengthens recovery and resilience and is prioritised by communities we work with
- ongoing support to schools and learners to ensure retention and progression through the formal education system, given the high number of out-of-school children in South Sudan
- supporting retention by creating inclusive and welcoming learning environments
- providing teaching and learning materials, dignity kits and recreational activities for learners
- offering support to teachers, constructing and furnishing accessible classrooms, and ensuring availability of clean water, latrines and handwashing stations in schools.
- non-formal and flexible education to support children and youth who missed education due to conflict and displacement, helping them to catch up with their peers and transition into the formal education system and or livelihood pathways

- youth wellbeing through skills building: functional literacy/numeracy, vocational training, entrepreneurship, business management, community engagement, life skills education, and linking to income earning opportunities



53,097 people reached in 2024 ▼

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

NRC's specialised legal protection programme enhances displaced-affected communities' ability to claim and enjoy their rights and access available legal remedies in proportion to need and according to Do No Harm principles, particularly on Housing, Land and Property (HLP), legal identity including civil documentation, legal stay and Employment Law and Procedures (ELP).

- HLP activities contribute to improved security of tenure, particularly for women, prevent unlawful eviction, support the amicable resolution of HLP disputes through collaborative dispute resolution methods and work towards the realisation of durable solutions by supporting returnees as well as internally displaced persons to obtain accurate information and take steps to secure their HLP assets in the areas of return.
- Through the LCD, obtaining nationality certificates and birth notifications and age assessments, communities have increased access to services such as education, health, and employment/livelihood opportunities.
- Interventions on Legal Stay support displaced or conflict-affected individuals in navigating obstacles related to legal and administrative processes for securing legal status. This includes assistance with refugee status determination, legal residency, and other immigration protection mechanisms.
- Through the ELP response, access to employment and/or the labour market is supported through facilitating access to work and supporting business registration/formalisation.



34,783 people reached in 2024 ▼

Protection from violence

Our programmes strengthen community self-protection and assist individuals at heightened risk of violence, harm, coercion and deprivation. We:

- implement community-led protection risk assessments and support communities to develop civilian self-protection plans
- provide individual protection assistance, deliver psychosocial first aid, and facilitate access to essential services and information that support individuals and communities to prevent, mitigate, and respond to protection risks
- contribute to the systematic collection of protection data to analyse trends and inform effective programming and advocacy



166,839 people reached in 2024 ▼

Shelter and settlements

Our shelter staff:

- provide emergency shelter kits and relief items to meet immediate humanitarian needs
- provide communal shelter solutions through transitional or long-term shelter and settlement response
- construct temporary and semi-permanent classrooms



552,516 people reached in 2024 ▼

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Our WASH projects provide displaced-affected people with:

- emergency safe drinking water through water treatment and water production

- provision of adequate and safe access to emergency sanitation and hygiene facilities to meet immediate humanitarian needs
- improve displaced-affected communities' hygiene practices through provision of trainings, hygiene promotion campaigns and sessions, and hygiene kits distribution
- water systems and sanitation facilities at schools and communities, supporting communities with maintenance to ensure sustainability
- safe disposal of human waste and solid waste
- prevention of water- and waste-related diseases through the adoption of safe and hygienic practices

Advocacy and policy

NRC provides contextualised, comprehensive analyses of the context, and projections as well as scenarios to all humanitarian actors, donors, and diplomatic missions in South Sudan to inform the humanitarian response. Through research and advocacy, we influence considerations around durable solutions, needs-based assistance, and implications of returns and refugee flows across the country. Our goal is to enhance service delivery and protection for the displacement-affected population. Advocacy is conducted both publicly, through media engagement and external position papers, and privately, through targeted meetings and briefings with relevant interlocutors.

Cash and markets

Informed by robust analysis of the context, NRC selects the most appropriate response modality. We promote cash and markets-based interventions, and mainstream cash, voucher, and market-based approaches, supported by sound market and protection analysis. Where appropriate to the context, cash transfers are used as the default modality to reduce aid dependency and restore dignity of displacement-affected populations while supporting market systems. In 2024, NRC reached 61,118 people with multi-purpose cash assistance. Such responses are coordinated with the Cash Working Group. In cases of undeveloped markets, as is the case in most parts of the country, NRC incorporates activities in its programmes to support market functionality, e.g. seed fairs.

Durable solutions

Displaced people and the communities hosting them, authorities, local actors and NRC work together towards durable solutions – a future where return, local integration or relocation leads to dignity, independence and lasting change. Durable solutions begin with displacement-affected communities being able to make voluntary and informed decisions about what is best for them. Through Community Action Plans, people identify their own priorities, from education and legal assistance to infrastructure and economic recovery. Guided by these priorities, NRC collaborates with local authorities and other actors to address the most important issues identified, ensuring each step reflects what communities need most.

Emergency response

NRC pools capacities on Emergency Rapid Response Mechanism (ERRM) in South Sudan, through the NRC-led ERRM Consortium and with key stakeholders, for coordinated preparedness and lifesaving integrated support to people affected by sudden-onset disasters including conflict and flooding. This is guided by the ERRM Framework providing standards for the rapidity, efficiency, and effectiveness of first-line responses. NRC's emergency response is integrated with longer-term interventions aimed at self-reliance and durable solutions in areas of return or (re-)settlement.

Humanitarian coordination

Recognised for its proactive leadership in coordination across South Sudan, NRC represents on the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), NGO Forum Steering Committee, and Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG). NRC co-leads the Protection, WASH, and Shelter/NFI clusters and serves as the HLP Area of Responsibility lead within the Protection Cluster. We are also co-coordinating the Durable Solutions Working Group and are actively involved in the Cash Working Group and the Access Working Group. By collaborating with other humanitarian actors, NRC aims to improve operational efficiency, address access challenges and secure additional funding.

Localisation

NRC leverages partnerships and collaboration with the private sector, civil society, and community-based institutions on programme delivery, advocacy and influencing. NRC has ongoing implementation agreements with 11 local partners for interventions in emergency response, education and durable solutions.

Meaningful collaboration with the government, that embeds knowledge and strengthens service delivery systems, is attained at relevant levels. Since 2020, with financial support from Education Cannot Wait (ECW), NRC has seconded staff to the Multi-Year Resilience Programme (MYRP) Secretariat housed within the Ministry of Education.

Our donors

We are grateful for the generous support from our donors:

- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF) managed by OCHA
- European Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)
- Education Cannot Wait (ECW)
- Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- IKEA Foundation
- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
- Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC)

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