

Highlights

- An estimated 25,000 people have been displaced from Kodok, Tonga and surrounding villages.
- Displaced people are in urgent need of clean water and other life-saving assistance.
- Protection of civilians is a paramount concern.
- 32 aid workers had to relocate from Kodok and Aburoc due to insecurity.

Upper Nile: Situation on the West Bank

Thousands of civilians have reportedly been displaced from Tonga and surrounding villages in Panyikang County, and Kodok and villages to its south in Fashoda County, in Upper Nile following fighting in the two locations.

Around 25,000 people are reportedly fleeing renewed fighting and the government offensive on the West Bank of the River Nile, with most of those displaced initially heading to Aburoc. It is expected that the number of people in need in Aburoc and surrounding areas may rise to around 50,000. This includes some 35,000 internally displaced people (IDP), comprised of new arrivals in recent days and those displaced during the offensive on Wau Shilluk and surrounding areas in late January and early February. There are reports of an unconfirmed number of civilians fleeing to Sudan.

People fleeing Tonga and nearby villages to Aburoc are undertaking long and treacherous journeys — some travelling eight days by foot without access to water and food. A small number of people from Tonga have also arrived to the Protection of Civilians (PoC) site in Malakal.

Humanitarians are concerned regarding the rising needs of the population in and around Aburoc, who lack protection, food, access to clean water, shelter and basic household items. There is an urgent need for clean water to be trucked to areas with large populations of displaced civilians, as existing water sources in the area are inadequate and contaminated.

Thirty-two humanitarian staff were relocated on 24 April from Kodok and Aburoc to Juba due to security concerns. Humanitarians are negotiating with all parties to the conflict and are exploring response options to the needs of the displaced population, including to ensure the safe movement of water trucks to and from locations where IDPs are seeking refuge. Humanitarian actors call on all parties to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect civilians, and ensure distinction and proportionality in their actions. Humanitarians also call for the parties to respect humanitarian personnel and assets.

