



SOUTH SUDAN

FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS CLUSTER

Strengthening Humanitarian Response

Rapid Assessment Report

Alali Payam, Akobo East, Jonglei State

8th November 2021

1. Overview and Background

Alali Payam (GPS, N 07 44 6.12, E 033 16 57.29, Alt. 407.3m) is located South East of Akobo County, Jonglei State. It consists of five Bomas (Baba, Wibura, Gem, Wau and Dilok). The Payam is inhabited by Anyuak community of Akobo East. The population of Alali payam as per 2008 Sudan population census before separation of South Sudan from Sudan was 11,000 people. However, an initial assessment mission (February 27th, 2021) established that 99.74% of the total population of Alali Payam have crossed to Gambella refugee Camps (Jor, Dima and Panyadu) in Ethiopia during the height of the civil war in 2014-15, with only 0.26% (approximately 700 individuals) remain in Baba Payam. The economic occupation of the population in Alali is farming, small scale pastoralism, and fishing. Alali is a rural settlement which is composed of rural structures including hats, grass thatch houses and other forms of temporary structures.

In July 2021, an Inter-Agency Response and Returnees Fact Finding Mission found that “Alali Payam is currently inhabited by 102 individuals, of which the majority are men and only 13 women and 5 children” and that there was a lack of basic services contributing to the acute needs of the community. Based on multiple requests from local authorities in Jonglei State citing a dire food insecurity situation in the community and significant flood related damages, a follow up mission was organized and conducted on Monday, 8 November 2021 due to respond to the reported food and nutrition needs in the community.

2. Mission Objectives

A one-day rapid mission was conducted on the 8th of November by the team composed of: WFP Emergency Unit, WFP Research, Analysis and Monitoring Unit, Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, and FAO.

The main objectives of the mission were to deliver of food and livelihoods assistance as per July 2021 Inter-Agency Response and Returnees Fact Finding Mission report recommendation and assessing the stability of food access of the community by documenting their current food sources and evaluating the reported flood damages.

Due to the unforeseen weather conditions in the morning, the departure from Juba was significantly delayed and therefore the time on the ground was limited to just beyond 2 hours.



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3. General Findings

a) Population

The population present at the time of the visit was small (46 individuals) and consisted primarily of relatively old and young individuals. No school age children and only two children under five were seen. The rest of the population was reported to be in Ethiopia, except for a few individuals who were reportedly watching sheep/goats outside the village.

The local police presence mentioned in the July 2021 Inter-Agency Response and Returnees Fact Finding Mission report – “reportedly 20 policemen are deployed in Alali” are national police originally assigned to Akobo, but who fled in 2013 and have chosen to remain in Alali due to security concerns.

b) Food Security and Livelihoods



Harvested maize fields, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)

There is no acute food crisis evident. The main maize harvest is ongoing, beginning with the close-in fields where stalks with unharvested ears have been gathered into shocks for drying. The ears are generally full and with well-developed kernels which have now dried enough for storage. The more distant fields were close enough to be visible but were not visited due to very limited time on the ground. They have not yet been harvested but appeared to be in a similar condition (height, fullness of foliage) to the fields nearer to the village.



One-week old sorghum field, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)

Sorghum near the village has been harvested and coppiced for a second harvest. Harvested maize fields have been re-planted with sorghum, with the recession harvest expected in about two months.

In and around the village there are a number of small gardens with plantings of squash/pumpkins, sweet potatoes, beans and maize, all of which appeared to be in good condition. There are also plenty of wild growing fruits and vegetables, such as papaya (*Carica papaya*),



Calabash (*Lagenaria siceraria*) or castor oil plant (*Ricinus communis*).

Several chickens were present moving around the village. The community also mentioned having small ruminants – goats and sheep – however they were taken outside of the village for grazing at the time of the visit, hence the assessment team did not see them.



Calabash (*Lagenaria siceraria*), Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)

The community also cultivates significant amount of cash crops - tobacco and cannabis (*bangi*) throughout the village.

Overall, the food from the current and upcoming harvests should be adequate to meet current needs for several months at least.



Cannabis plants, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)



c) Other sectors

The community has access to three boreholes that were recently repaired / rehabilitated by PAH, following July 2021 Inter-Agency Response and Returnees Fact Finding Mission.

There is currently no school operational in the area, and therefore families with school age children have relocated to Ethiopia to access education. Only 5 children were present in Alali during the mission.

There is a no health service provision in Alali and no medical staff present. The closest doctors / clinic is in Akobo. Akobo town is accessible by land during the dry season (6-8 hours walk) and by river during the rainy season. However, the community leaders reported being unable to access Akobo town due to the grievances with the SPLA-IO, who were responsible for attacks in the area during the civil war that led to the population's displacement.

No significant flood damages were observed, neither to shelters, nor to the crops assessed. Furthermore, analysis of the UNOSAT maps illustrating cumulative satellite-detected water using VIIRS in South Sudan (see section 6) does not show any abnormal flooding instances in the area.



Borehole rehabilitated by PAH, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)

4. Activities Undertaken During the Mission



WFP RRM Team conducting GFD distribution, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)

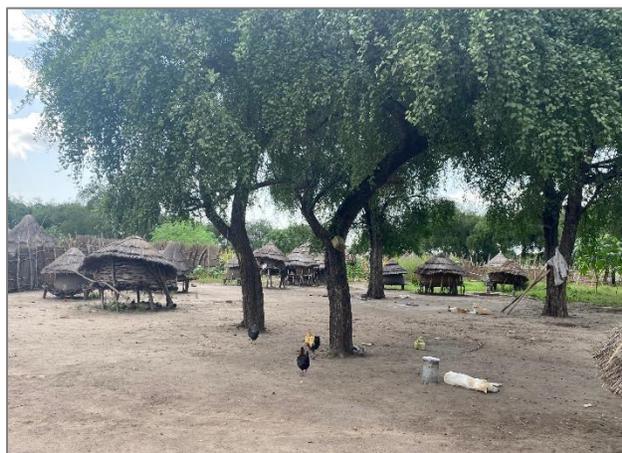


- WFP Rapid Response Team carried out beneficiary registration and distributed GFD ration (sorghum, beans, oil) to 46 individuals (41 households).
- FAO did not distribute the 51 households' caseload of livelihood kits meant for distribution in Alali Payam due to failure of delivery to UNHAS office for air lifting.
- Transect walks with a focus on agricultural production and hygiene conditions.

5. Recommendations

- Peace building and reconciliation activities are highly recommended, as the conflict-dynamic is the main driving factor preventing population from accessing services (nutrition, health etc.) and markets in nearby Akobo town.
- Protection Cluster and GBV sub-cluster to monitor the situation and identify partners for provision of GBV services and in-kind assistance including dignity kits/sanitary items to women in the area is recommended due to previously mentioned constraints in accessing markets.
- Humanitarian actors should explore the reasons and motivations behind the claims of dire food insecurity and the pressure to provide food assistance and other assistance in the area.
- Joint procedures should be developed to guide decision-making and prioritization on humanitarian response requests from authorities, taking food insecurity and nutrition data into account.
- UN agencies (UNHCR, FAO and others) to scale up the return monitoring efforts to inform planning for return tracking and support, including the provision of livelihood-related assistance and supporting access to essential social services.

6. Sources and Photos



Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)



Harvested maize, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)





Transect walk through the village, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)



Inspection of harvested maize, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)



Castor oil plant (*Ricinus communis*), Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)

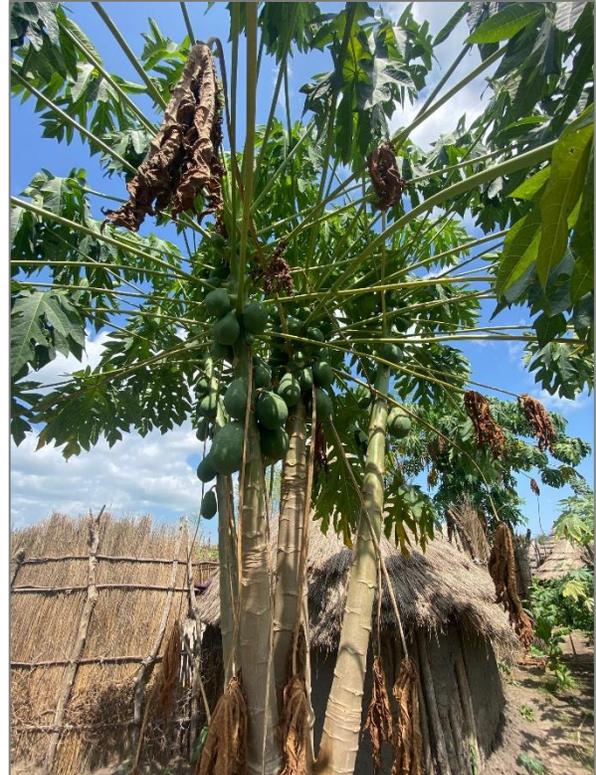


Chickens eating the sorghum panicles scattered on the ground, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)





Flower of a Maize Plant, Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)



Papaya tree (Carica papaya), Alali Payam (November 8, 2021)

Satellite detected water extents between 15 and 19 October 2021 over South Sudan

<https://reliefweb.int/map/south-sudan/satellite-detected-water-extents-between-15-and-19-october-2021-over-south-sudan>

Satellite detected water extents between 20 and 24 October 2021 over South Sudan

<https://reliefweb.int/map/south-sudan/satellite-detected-water-extents-between-20-and-24-october-2021-over-south-sudan>

Satellite detected water extents between 03 and 07 November 2021 over South Sudan

<https://reliefweb.int/map/south-sudan/satellite-detected-water-extents-between-03-and-07-november-2021-over-south-sudan>

