

## WFP Statement

25 May 2021

### WFP CONDEMNS LOOTING OF FOOD ASSISTANCE IN GREATER JONGLEI, SOUTH SUDAN

**JUBA** – The World Food Programme (WFP) condemns looting of its food assistance and destruction of humanitarian storage units in South Sudan’s Greater Pibor Administrative Area in Greater Jonglei. Violence between armed groups flared up in May, displacing thousands of people and jeopardizing the ability of humanitarian agencies to support communities on the brink of famine.

Some 550 metric tons of food, enough to feed 33,000 food insecure people for one month, were looted or destroyed in Gumuruk in Greater Jonglei in the first two weeks of May during the latest bout of violence. The food included cereals, pulses, cooking oil and nutrition supplements for the treatment and prevention of malnutrition in children and women.

In May, increased attacks between local groups have displaced nearly 9,000 people from Gumuruk and Lekuangle to Pibor town.

“WFP is outraged by the senseless violence and theft of its food assistance in Gumuruk, where people are on the brink of starvation and need every bit of assistance they can get to survive. The food stolen was intended for the poorest and hungriest families who have lost loved ones, livestock and other assets because of unspeakable acts of violence and unprecedented flooding that swallowed up their homes and lands,” said Matthew Hollingworth, WFP Representative and Country Director in South Sudan.

Conflict has ravaged Greater Jonglei for years, leading to mass displacement and the loss of both lives and assets, exacerbating the overall humanitarian situation. While 7.24 million people across South Sudan are food insecure, nearly 50 percent of them are in Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states.

WFP calls on all parties and groups in South Sudan to respect the neutrality of humanitarian workers and installations. WFP together with other humanitarian agencies are working to help lessen the suffering of the people of South Sudan in Jonglei and across the country. Such attacks make our work increasingly challenging.

The scale and severity of acute food insecurity in South Sudan will continue to rise as July and August are the peak of the lean season, when families have depleted most of their harvest and are highly dependent on food assistance. Regardless of the looting, WFP will continue to provide urgently needed food assistance to thousands of vulnerable people in the area. Last year, WFP reached 5.2 million people across the country with food and nutrition assistance.

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The United Nations World Food Programme is the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. We are the world’s largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.

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