



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SOUTH SUDAN

HEALTH

OVERVIEW

As South Sudan recovers from decades of conflict, the vast majority of the population lacks access to essential health services and to safe water and sanitation. Due to these conditions, the maternal mortality ratio is the highest in the world, and one in every 10 children will die before his or her fifth birthday. Malaria is a major cause of death among the general population, especially children under age 5 and pregnant women. HIV and AIDS, already prevalent in East Africa, has potential to become a serious threat in South Sudan, along with other infectious diseases.

Through the Ministry of Health, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan established the Basic Package of Health and Nutrition Services that identify high-impact interventions to swiftly reduce death and illness rates. USAID implements these interventions by directly providing primary health care targeting women of reproductive age and children under age 5. Services include prevention and treatment for people at risk of, living with, and affected by HIV and AIDS. To guide such service delivery, USAID supports the health system at the central, state and county levels to develop relevant policies, manage resources and use data. USAID also expands access to water supply and sanitation.



USAID support has helped improve polio surveillance and vaccination rates in South Sudan.

IMPROVING REPRODUCTIVE, MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Women and children in South Sudan die from unhealthy pregnancies, unsafe births and preventable diseases, among other causes. USAID chose South Sudan as one of 24 priority countries in a global multi-stakeholder effort—Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths—to promote family planning counseling, modern contraception, antenatal care, and facility-based births. USAID delivers these services in more than 350 primary health facilities and their surrounding communities in Central and Western Equatoria States, while other donors support service delivery in the remaining eight states.

PREVENTING AND CONTROLLING INFECTIOUS DISEASE

- **HIV and AIDS:** According to the 2012 Antenatal Care Clinics Sentinel Surveillance Report, South Sudan has a generalized HIV epidemic with an antenatal prevalence of 2.6 percent. Due to low coverage of antiretroviral treatment, the country is one of the furthest behind globally in achieving epidemic control. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, USAID delivers clinical services for HIV-positive female sex workers and pregnant women as well as social services for HIV-affected orphans and vulnerable children.
- **Tuberculosis (TB):** According to 2013 estimates by the World Health Organization, South Sudan has the highest prevalence of TB in East Africa—286 cases per 100,000 people. As a member of the Stop TB Partnership, USAID provides TB treatment in select health facilities and renovates laboratories for proper diagnosis and drug resistance surveillance.
- **Malaria:** The World Health Organization has declared all of South Sudan a high-risk malaria zone. According to the 2013 Malaria Indicator Survey, 30 percent of children under age 5 tested positive for malaria. Through the President's Malaria Initiative, USAID procures and distributes long-lasting

insecticide-treated nets, rapid diagnostic tests and artemisinin-based combination therapies across the country.

- **Polio:** The conflict in South Sudan has led to large-scale population movements and declining immunization coverage. In 2014, the World Health Organization confirmed two cases of polio, leading to paralysis, from a camp for internally displaced persons in Unity State—the first since 2009. Through the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, USAID supports activities to immunize children and provide surveillance of polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

STRENGTHENING THE HEALTH SYSTEM

- **Workforce:** USAID recruits, trains and manages health workers to deliver clinical services in primary health facilities and promote healthy practices in households and communities.
- **Information System:** USAID guides the operation of the Health Management Information System to monitor the use of health services and Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response System to track trends in and control outbreaks of epidemic-prone diseases.
- **Essential Commodities:** USAID procures, distributes and promotes the rational use of essential medicines, vaccines and other products for all health facilities in South Sudan.
- **Financing:** USAID guides the annual work planning and budgeting exercises that the health system completes at the central, state and county levels.
- **Leadership and Governance:** USAID advises on the development of policies and technical guidelines and monitors the quality of clinical and community service delivery.

INCREASING ACCESS TO WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

According to the 2010 Household Health Survey, 32 percent of people in South Sudan do not have access to safe water supplies, and only 13 percent have access to adequate sanitation facilities. This low rate of service coverage—one of the lowest in the world—increases the risk of waterborne diseases, such as life-threatening diarrhea among children and debilitating infections of Guinea worm (South Sudan hosts 98 percent of the world's cases). Greater population density in cities and towns has led to seasonal cholera outbreaks.

In the spirit of the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2014 and through a partnership with UNICEF, USAID provides boreholes and water points to enhance access to safe water supplies and to support the return, reintegration and resettlement of internally displaced persons. USAID supports local mechanisms to manage these supplies as part of a broader approach to promote community peace-building and stabilization. USAID also mobilizes community members to abandon open defecation in favor of latrine use and other hygienic practices.