



IOM DTM enumerators mapping a water facility ©

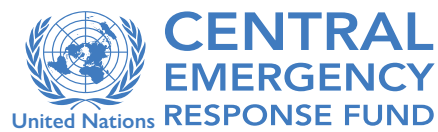
## VILLAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEY (VAS) AWEIL SOUTH COUNTY

Data collected from 26 March to 30 April 2021

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## ACRONYMS

FAO:	Food and Agricultural Organization
GPS:	Global Positioning System
IDP:	Internally Displaced Person
IOM:	International Organization for Migration
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organizations
UN:	United Nations
PHCU:	Primary Health Care Units
R-ARCSS:	Revitalized Peace Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan
RRC:	Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
SSP:	South Sudanese Pounds
UXOs:	Unexploded Ordinances
VAS:	Village Assessment Survey
WHO:	World Health Organization
WASH:	Water Sanitation and Hygiene

## BACKGROUND AND AIMS

Almost 12 years after independence and 5 years after the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), the ceasefire holds in most parts of the country. Overall progress on the implementation of the R-ARCSS has been modest. The deadline for the parties to the agreement to form a transitional government of national unity has been extended twice, most recently until early 2020, following regional mediation efforts aimed at preventing the country from slipping back into conflict.

Continued conflict and instability in the country combined with flooding have resulted in large-scale internal and cross-border displacement. At the same time, limited improvements in some areas have prompted some people to spontaneously return. In addition, the government with the support of some humanitarian agencies - has facilitated returns to certain areas. Due to compounding shocks, both in areas of displacement and return, populations have been forced to keep displacing time and again. At least 90,000 returnees from abroad remained displaced within the country, unable to reach their homes. In 2022, there were 2,257,672 IDPs in the country (7 per cent of whom were previously displaced from abroad), as compared to 2,229,657 IDPs in 2021. An additional 2.3 million South Sudanese remain refugees hosted in neighbouring countries.

To support the formulation of evidence-based transition and recovery programming, IOM's DTM unit has carried out the Village Assessment Surveys (VAS). The survey aims to assess infrastructure and multi-sector service delivery at community level. More specifically it focuses on:

- a) Mapping availability of basic needs, services, infrastructure to identify priority areas for intervention within Aweil South county
- b) Identifying gaps in capacities of local services to accommodate demand including status of infrastructure and availability of trained personnel.
- c) Establishing an understanding of key service providers such as local government, NGO/UN and communities themselves
- d) Provide the wider humanitarian community with a concise overview of the current situation in Aweil South county.

## METHODOLOGY

The Village Assessment Survey methodology comprises four complementary and integrated questionnaires: the Boma Questionnaire, the Health Technical Questionnaire, the Education Technical Questionnaire and the Facility Infrastructure and Service Mapping tool. A mixed methods approach of boma representatives interviews combined with focus group discussions and direct observations was utilized to collect and triangulate data throughout the data collection process.

**The Boma/ Area Mapping Survey Questionnaire:** is completed through focus group discussion with the boma chief/administrators, representatives at the boma level and representatives of returnees and youth groups. The questionnaire contains a general section, which covers village demographics and infrastructure in the boma, livelihood strategies, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, basic education and protection issues.

**The Education Technical Questionnaire:** is applied at each education facility with the facility personnel (e.g. a teacher or the head teacher). The school authority responds to more technical questions such as on enrollment and school dropout figures by gender and numbers of trained and untrained teachers and conditions of school infrastructure.

**The Health Technical Questionnaire:** is filled at health facilities with the key personnel such as doctors or nurses. The information collected includes statistics of trained medical personnel, patient's attendance by gender and age group per year, health services provided, geographical coverage, and data on previous epidemics.

**The Facility Infrastructure and Service Mapping tool:** builds upon DTM's previously established VAS methodology. This tool has been developed to map settlements, livelihood areas and facilities. Satellite imagery in combination with paper maps and map tiles on smartphone are used to map points and polygons of key services such as education facilities, health facilities, water points, religious buildings, transport facilities, administrative facilities and markets.

In efforts to build the capacity of national and locally based actors, IOM conducted the VAS in close collaboration with the RRC. IOM conducted a thorough four-day training for enumerators recruited by IOM. The first three days focused on effective data collection techniques and methods, an in-depth review of the questionnaires and technical training on GPS devices. On the fourth day, enumerators applied the theory learnt using the questionnaires and technical training on GPS devices by simulating a field exercise.

Following the successful completion of the training, the data collection teams were deployed with two RRC focal points to assist in mobilisation and coordination with Boma and Payam leaders throughout the area to be assessed. Data collection started on 26 March and ended on 30 April 2021.

A total of 13 enumerators were deployed for data collection activities in Aweil South county. The results are based on findings from focus group discussions in 22 bomas, and key informant interviews and direct observation from 54 educational facilities and 11 health facilities. For mapping purposes, the team visited six educational facilities (5 primary schools and 1 vocational institution) that were non functional at the time of assessment.

**AWEIL SOUTH COUNTY CONTEXT**

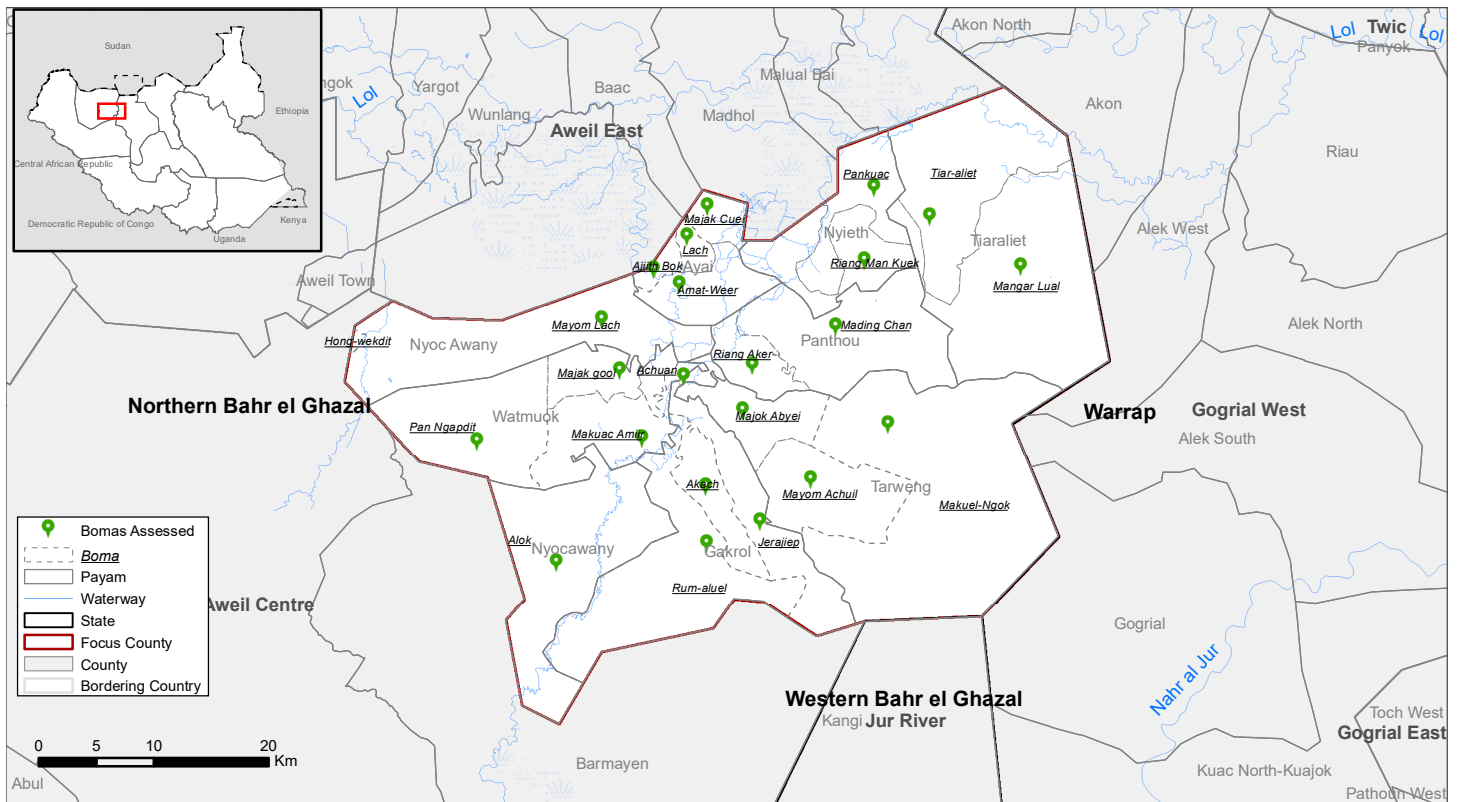
Aweil South County is located in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State with the county capital in Nyocawany Payam. It borders Aweil Centre County to the west and Aweil East to the north. It also borders Warrap State (Gogrial West County) to the east and Western Bahr el Ghazal State (Jur River County) to the south. With an area of 1,786.95km<sup>2</sup> (11, 792.83 sq. miles) and population of 73,806 (2008 census), Aweil South County is the smallest of the five counties of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State. The other five counties of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State are: Aweil North, Aweil East, Aweil West, and Aweil Central with an area of 11,177.40 and population of 41,827.

The main marram road (A43) which joins Aweil town (Northern Bahr el Ghazal’s capital) with Wau town (capital of Western Bahr el Ghazal state) is accessible by secondary roads which run from western and north western Aweil South County all year round, connecting Tiaraliet, Panthou, Wuncu and Malek-Alel villages to Aweil town (westwards) with Akun village Warrap State, near the border, far northwest. Another east running road connects Malek-Alel with Gogrial in Gogrial West County, Warrap State.

The county falls in the western flood plains. The main river draining the Aweil South County from south to north is River Pongo which enters the Bahr el Ghazal river. The other major river is River Lol. There are grasslands, swampy areas with papyrus reeds and forests.

The inhabitants of Aweil South County are farmers, livestock herders and fishers. The local ethnic groups inhabiting the bomas are Dinkas followed by Luo and Nuer. The main language spoken is Dinka or Jieng, Luo, Arabic and Nuer.

Map 1: Aweil South County Reference Map



Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purpose only. The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

**DISPLACEMENT DYNAMICS**

Inter-communal violence has been a major driver of displacement in Aweil South County and other parts of South Sudan. Competition over resources, such as land and water, has fueled conflicts between different ethnic groups, leading to displacement of thousands of people. Drought and food insecurity have also contributed to displacement in Aweil South County. The region is part of the dryland belt of South Sudan, which is prone to drought and erratic rainfall. In recent years, droughts and floods have damaged crops and livestock, leading to food shortages and hunger. This has led to displacement as people move in search of food and water. Political instability and violence at the national level have also contributed to displacement in Aweil South County.

The ongoing conflict between the government and various opposition groups has created a volatile security situation, with frequent clashes between armed groups. This has led to displacement as people flee violence and seek safety in other areas.

In response to these displacement dynamics, the South Sudanese government, with support from the international community, has implemented various programs aimed at addressing the root causes of displacement and supporting the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. These programs include efforts to improve security, increase access to basic services, and support economic development. However, progress has been slow, and many IDPs and refugees remain in displacement, facing ongoing challenges to their safety and well-being.

As stated by the IOM DTM Mobility Tracking Round 12 in 2021, most of the IDPs are hosted in Nyieth (1,535 individuals), Ayai (1,427 individuals), Panthou (1,382 individuals), and Gakrol (1,123 individuals) Payams with their county of habitual residence being within same county of Aweil South. Nyoc Awany, Tiaraliet, Watmuok, and Tarweng Payams all had less than one thousand IDPs individuals residing in them.

Nyoc Awany (3,403 individuals), and Watmuok (2,248 individuals) has seen the highest increase of returnees among the Payams in Aweil South, this might indicate the area to be considered relatively safe by surrounding populations which could explain why it became the destination of choice for some of these newcomers (in combination with other factors just as geographical proximity). Further on, baseline DTM data confirms that all of the returnees were previously displaced only within South Sudan (mainly from Central Equatorial and Warrap state).

## SURVEY FINDINGS FROM THE THEMATIC AREAS

### HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY

The most common form of land ownership in Aweil South county was found to be “community-granted tenure or ownership” in 12 bomas and ancestral land in eight bomas. A vast majority of the assessed bomas (19 out of 22 bomas) indicated they are not aware of any land allocation that has taken place in the area. Of those that said they were aware of land allocation, two out of three assessed bomas reported they feel the allocation was conducted fairly, openly and equitably.

Fewer instances of bomas were reported where people are occupying houses without paying rent (6 out of 22). Half of those bomas assessed (3 out of 6 bomas) reported that the authority will allocate the current occupant another house or land while the other half believe the current occupant will leave peacefully and find another place to live. All of the assessed bomas with HLP issues (7 bomas) reported that the issues are usually settled by the community chief/ traditional leadership. Among the 22 bomas assessed, Pan Ngapdit and Mayom Achuil boma representatives reported that there are mines or unexploded ordinances (UXOs) in their area, while demining activities are going on in Mayom Achuil boma. It was reported that no demining activity is currently taking place in Pan Ngapdit boma.

Chart 1: Showing number of bomas reporting housing, land and property issues

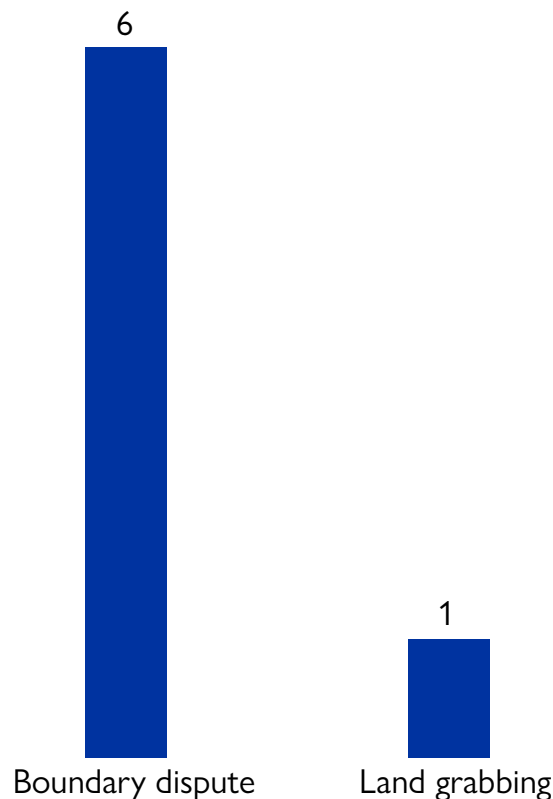


Chart 2: Showing number of bomas that reported remnants of unexploded ordinances

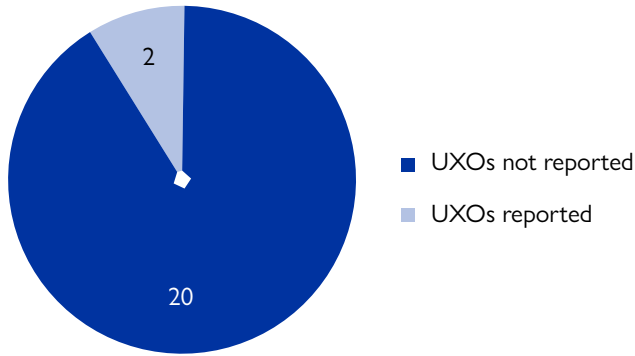
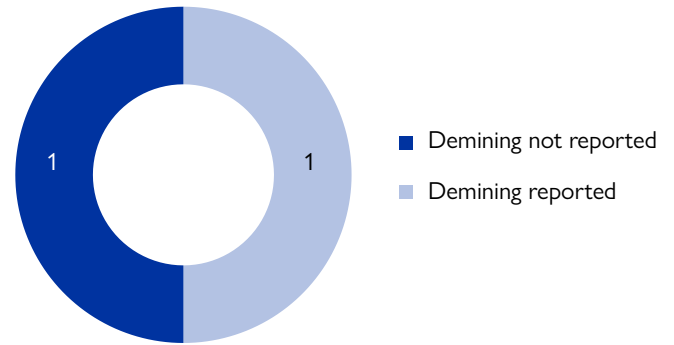


Chart 3: Showing number of bomas that reported demining unexploded ordinances



**SHELTER/NON-FOOD ITEMS**

The majority of bomas (21 out of 22 bomas) state that the most common inhabited shelter type is a tukul (mud walls with thatched roofing), with 13 bomas reporting that most houses have minor damages but can still be inhabited and in 9 bomas, most houses are in good condition. Other shelter types in Aweil South include brick walls with thatched roofing (12 bomas) and mud walls with iron sheets roofing (9 bomas). All boma representatives reported that shelter materials from surrounding forests are used as source of construction materials for constructing and repairing houses.of houses.

**FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOOD**

In all assessed bomas (22), food scarcity is prevalent, with eight bomas reporting it is prevalent during dry season and seven bomas reporting it remains an issue all year round and rainy season. The main coping mechanism employed in the area is relying on forest fruits and vegetables (16 out of 22 bomas), followed by support from extended family (3 bomas), selling or slaughtering cattle (2 bomas) and food aid (1 boma). The most common source of livelihood is farming (22 bomas) with maize, sorghum and groundnuts being the main crops cultivated and the second most common livelihood is fishing (13 bomas), daily labourers (5 bomas), herders (3 bomas) and traders (1 boma). Among the 22 bomas assessed, 17 bomas that practice farming reported that they are unable to sell their crops for a profit at the market. The remaining five bomas are only able to do so sometimes or rarely. In all bomas, farmers rely on rainwater for cultivation and get their seeds for planting from the previous harvest. Crops also suffer most commonly from natural disasters (15 out of 22 bomas), crop disease (5 out of 22 bomas) and other crop damage (2 out of 22 bomas). Less than half of the accessed bomas (10 out of 22 bomas) indicated that there is no support available to farmers. The UN/FAO/NGOs were said to provide farmers with support in Makuac Amiir, Pan Ngapdit, Pankuac, and Mading Chan bomas.

Chart 4: Showing main income generating activities in the bomas

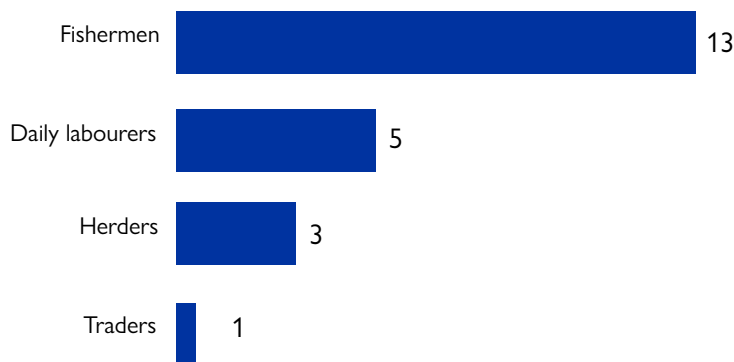


Chart 5: Showing number of bomas reporting the most needed farm inputs for the production of food crops

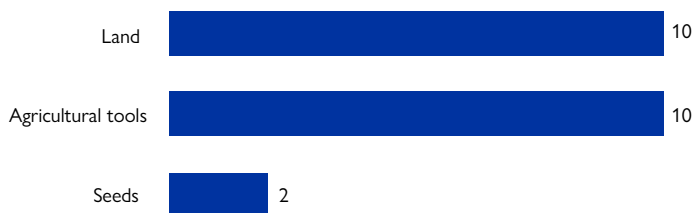
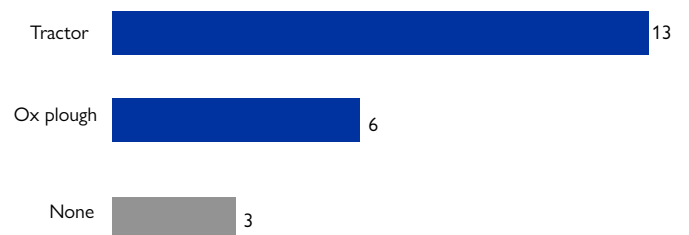


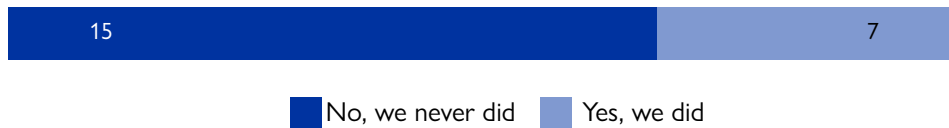
Chart 6: Showing number of bomas reporting the most needed technology for the production of food crops



The vast majority of the assessed bomas have livestock (20 out of 22 bomas). Less than half of these bomas (7 out of 20 bomas) have livestock markets. In some cases (13 out of 20 bomas) livestock owners are able to sell their products, however in most of those cases livestock herders (12 out of 13 bomas), sales are only made sometimes. Livestock herders are most frequently affected by grazing land, livestock diseases and conflict. Veterinary services are available in over half bomas with livestock (6 out of 9 bomas). Other services include slaughterhouses, cross breeding, export markets, and whole sale traders. None of the assessed bomas have credit facilities or cooperatives present. UN/NGOs and Ministry of Agriculture are the most common sources of livestock support while none of the bomas are supported by private businesses or the diaspora. Among the 22 bomas assessed, 17 reported that they engage in fishing. In a good proportion of these bomas (14 out of 17 bomas), fishermen sell their catch but in most cases they are not always able to sell their produce at a profit. Lack of equipment, lack of storage facilities, and inadequate market facilities are some of the challenges affecting fishermen.

Only in one out of nine bomas, markets are present within the same boma which takes less than an hour to access while in 13 bomas there are no major markets. Most bomas (8 out of 9 bomas) without markets within the same boma require considerable travel time to be able to access major markets in another boma with five boma representatives reporting it takes between 2 to 3 hours (Mayom Lach, Ajiith Bok , Riang Man Kuek, Mangar Lual , and Rum-aluel boma). The remaining three bomas access major markets either in less than one hour (Riang Aker boma), or four to six hours (Majak Cuei boma), or more than six hours (Achuan boma). All major markets are reached only by foot. Among the 22 bomas assessed, 21 reported that they have experienced major livelihood shocks in the past two years mainly due to floods (8 bomas), while drought interrupted the livelihood of six bomas, livestock diseases in four bomas, conflict, human epidemic and pests in one boma. In most cases, people rely on selling their livestock, humanitarian assistance, and migrate to other areas to cope with these shocks.

Chart 7: Showing number of bomas that engage in seasonal migration



## HEALTH

Health care facilities are present in 11 out of 22 bomas, with 6 bomas reporting it takes less than an hour to access a health facility and 2 bomas reported it takes up to 30 minutes. While in Achuan, Alok and Jerajiep bomas, health facilities are accessed within two to three hours by foot. However, nine of these bomas were unsatisfied with their facility, mostly due to a lack of medicine. Using the health technical questionnaire, all of the health facilities reported were found to be operational and in a permanent building with eight of the facilities being supported by the government and three being supported by NGOs. All boma representatives reported majority of the people in the boma visit the health facility when they are sick.

Among the 11 operational facilities that were further assessed with the technical questionnaire, 5 indicated that the most helpful way the facility could be assisted to cope better through the provision of training, while 3 facilities indicated public awareness. Further recommendations included the provision of fridges for storing vaccines (2 facilities) and communication (1 facility). Immunization services are carried out in many facilities (8 out of 11 bomas), and are supported by WHO (6 facilities) and NGOs (5 facilities). Most boma representatives (21 out of 22 bomas) reported that immunization campaigns have been conducted in their respective bomas where 18 bomas indicate this happened in the last 6 months. Clinical waste is usually put in an open garbage pit (6 facilities) and also burnt in an incinerator/designated area (5 facilities). In some facilities such as Makuei Alel PHCU, waste are buried in the ground while in Majak Akoon waste are burnt in an open area.

All visited facilities have out-patient services and health education is offered in about half of the facilities (6 out of 11 facilities). In less than half of the facilities, in-patient services, psycho-social support centers, feeding centers and laboratories are present. Maternity wards are reported in only 2 out of the 11 facilities. Only 1 out of 11 facilities reported a total of 12 medical staff are not trained.

Chart 8: Showing number of health facilities reporting their main supporter

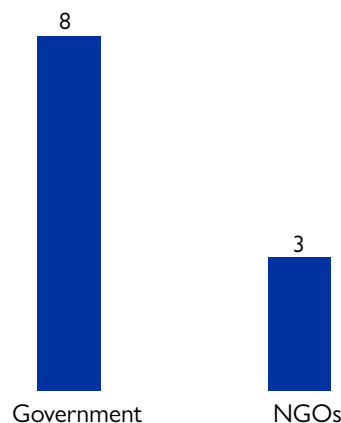
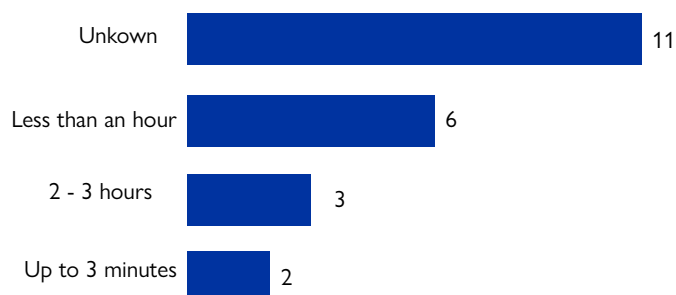




Table 1: Showing type and status of health facilities in the bomas

Type of health facilities	Status of health facilities	Total
Hospital	Operational	3
	Non-operational	1
Primary Health Care Centre	Operational	21
	Non-operational	5
Primary Health Care Unit	Operational	3
	Non-operational	-
Grand total		33

Chart 9: Showing distance to the nearest health facilities from the bomas

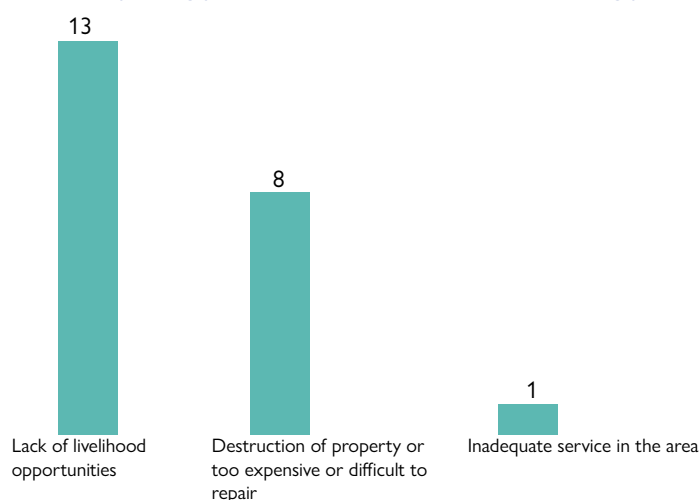


## PROTECTION

Aweil South County from 2019 to 2021 has had a relatively peaceful political atmosphere. Boma representatives neither reported violence from or between armed groups nor did they experience armed conflict in the past two years, although two bomas experienced local conflict. Results are only indicative of challenges faced by women. Domestic violence was not cited by any of the respondents, while violence against women was reported in three out of 22 bomas with survivors usually having to flee the location (2 bomas) or reporting to the traditional court (1 boma). Women reported feeling insecure when they are in the farm or out to earn a living but the main reason for that is wild animals.

Traditional authorities are used to settle disputes and conflicts in all bomas whereas judicial courts are present in just 6 out of 22 bomas. In 18 out of 22 bomas assessed, there are police stations and in most bomas, cases are referred to neighboring police stations (17 out of 22 bomas). Cases of theft, local conflict and assaults constitute the largest proportion of complaints brought to the police stations. Given the lack of judicial court access in the majority of areas surveyed, boma or traditional courts play a valuable role in resolving community and legal disputes. Most members of the bomas voiced their opinions through boma meetings (16 bomas), other means (4 bomas), and indirectly through religious leaders (2 bomas). Distance was reported as the main barrier faced when accessing protection services in the boma. Representatives of most bomas reported being concerned about daily crimes (21 bomas reported being “very concerned” and only 1 reported being “somewhat concerned”) whereas more than half of boma representatives mentioned being “very concerned” about other protection or security related issues such as community tensions (17 bomas), and cattle raiding (14 bomas). Unaccompanied children lived more commonly with community support than on their own or with relatives.

Chart 10: Showing number of bomas reporting problems residents face when returning peacefully



## EDUCATION

The education technical findings indicate that one boma (Lach boma) does not have any education facilities, and children are made to attend school in Majak Cuer boma instead. Using the education technical questionnaire, 6 out of the 54 educational facilities are non functional, mainly because the infrastructure is damaged/destroyed (4 facilities), no staff and lack of support (1 facility). Owing to untrained teachers, distance and poor performances, most bomas expressed dissatisfaction with the standard of education provided (17 out of 19 bomas).

Facility mapping found that 37 of the educational facilities are located in temporary or semi permanent setups while 18 of them are in permanent buildings. The schools indicated that the main reasons why children dropped out of school are high school fees (10 schools), lack of school meals (6 schools), early marriage (5 schools), and distance (4 schools) whereas the average registration fee in schools where high school fees was stated as the reason for dropout is 475 South Sudanese Pounds. Boma representatives also reported that the main barriers faced to accessing education services in the boma are distance (9 bomas), lack of resources/school fees (8 bomas), lack of services (4 bomas) and other reasons (1 boma).

Table 2: Showing status of education facilities in the bomas

Type of education facilities	Status of education facilities	Total
Primary school	Operational	46
	Non-operational	5
Secondary school	Operational	2
	Non-operational	-
Vocational institutions	Operational	1
	Non-operational	-
Grand total		54

Chart 11: Showing number of bomas that reported barriers affecting boys from attending school

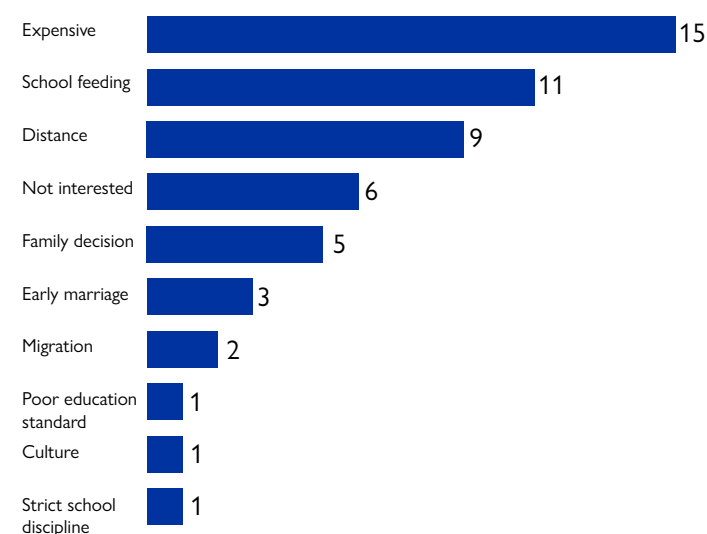
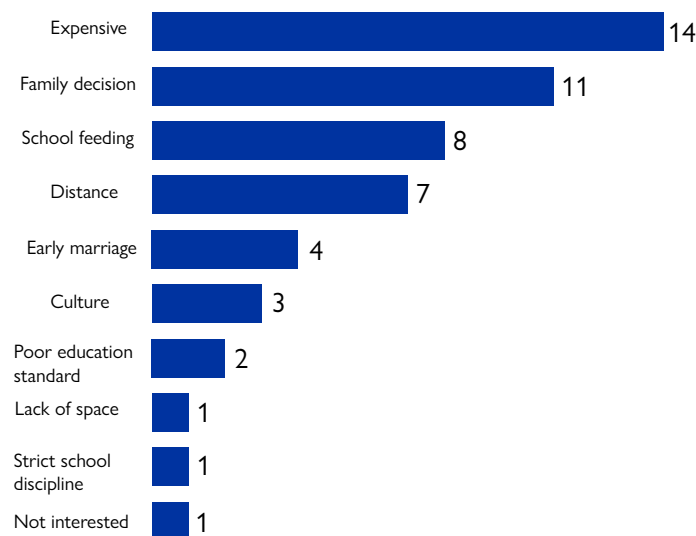


Chart 12: Showing number of bomas that reported barriers affecting girls from attending school



## WASH

Among the surveyed 239 water points, 65 (27%) are non-functional. The highest proportion of non-functional water points (8 facilities) were found to be in Alok, Mading Chan, and Mangar Lual bomas (12.3%). The main water sources are borehole (9 bomas) and well water (8 bomas). Among the 22 assessed bomas, 18 highlighted that their water access was insufficient and 14 bomas reported that not all households had access to these water sources. In just two of the bomas, residents have to pay a fee to access water sources while in a significant number of bomas (17 out of 22 bomas) there are reports of conflicts over water sources. In 19 out of the 22 bomas water user committees have been established, while in 14 out of 22 bomas water sources such as boreholes, taps and wells are managed by the communities. In fewer bomas, water sources are managed by the local government (7 bomas) and UN/NGOs (1 boma).

A vast majority of the bomas practice open defecation (21 out of 22 bomas) while only one boma reported using household latrines, with human faeces openly visible in public places in 11 bomas. Among the 22 bomas assessed, hygiene sessions have been carried out in 4 bomas.

Chart 13: Showing number of bomas that reported barriers to accessing water

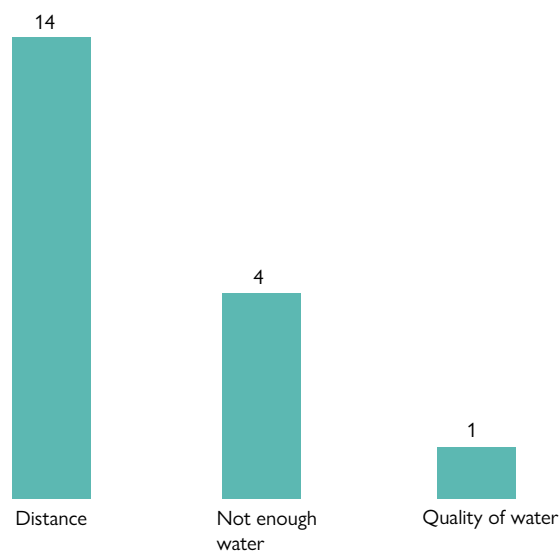


Table 3: Assessed bomas and facilities in Aweil South County

Facility name	Ayai	Gakrol	Nyieth	Nyoawany i	Nyoawany ii	Panthou	Tarweng	Tairaleit	Wathmuok	Grand total
<b>Administrative buildings</b>	3	10	3	2	3	5	3	3	13	45
Operational	3	10	3	2	3	5	3	3	13	45
Non-operational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Education facilities</b>	3	9	2	2	5	7	4	9	14	55
Operational	2	8	2	1	3	7	4	9	13	49
Non-operational	1	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	1	6
<b>Healthcare facilities</b>	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	3	4	12
Operational	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	3	4	12
Non-operational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Market facilities</b>	-	3	1	1	1	1	-	2	4	13
Operational	-	3	1	1	1	1	-	2	4	13
Non-operational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Religious buildings</b>	4	14	3	5	7	13	7	1	13	67
Operational	4	14	3	5	7	13	7	1	13	67
Non-operational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Transport facilities</b>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Operational	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Non-operational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Water point / facility</b>	9	30	9	7	29	37	11	46	61	239
Operational	6	25	8	4	21	27	8	31	44	174
Non-operational	3	5	1	3	8	10	3	15	17	65
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>432</b>



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International Organization for Migration  
Displacement Tracking Matrix  
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