

# Brief on Violence Affecting Civilians

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Between April and June 2025, the UNMISS Human Rights Division (HRD) documented 334 incidents of conflict-related violence affecting 1,518 civilians, including 635 killed, 676 injured, 133 abducted, and 74 subjected to conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).
- ❖ Compared to the previous quarter (January to March 2025), this represents a seven percent increase in the number of incidents (from 312 to 334) and a six percent decrease in the number of victims (from 1,607 to 1,518) documented. Notably, the number of civilians killed, injured, and abducted decreased by 14 percent (from 739 to 635), one percent (from 679 to 676), and 11 percent (from 149 to 133) respectively, whereas the number of victims of CRSV increased by 85 percent (from 40 to 74).
- ❖ Compared to the same quarter in 2024, this represents a five percent increase in the number of violent incidents (from 317 to 334), and a 43 percent increase in the number of victims (from 1,062 to 1,518). Notably, compared to the same quarter in 2024, killings increased by 44 percent (from 442 to 635), injuries increased by 128 percent (from 297 to 676), abductions decreased by 32 percent (from 197 to 133), and documented victims of CRSV decreased by 41 percent (from 126 to 74).
- ❖ The majority of victims were attributed to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups (68 percent or 1,036 individuals), followed by the conventional parties to the conflict and other armed groups (29 percent or 438 individuals), and unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements (three percent or 44 individuals). Concerningly, the number of victims attributable to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups increased by 127 percent (from 193 to 438) compared to the previous quarter and increased by 204 percent compared to the same quarter in 2024 (from 144 to 438).

## CONTEXT

This brief presents an overview of trends in conflict-related violence affecting civilians in South Sudan during the second quarter of 2025 (April to June). It focuses on four major forms of individual harm: killing, injury, abduction, and conflict related sexual violence.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the brief examines the conflict dynamics that have fueled violence affecting civilians and undermined the human rights situation within the broader context of the political and security crisis that emerged in South Sudan in early 2025.

The UNMISS HRD developed an incident-based tracking mechanism to document conflict-related human rights violations and abuses. This data is disaggregated by sex and age of victims. The information contained in this brief

is based on victim and eyewitness accounts, as well as reports from secondary sources identified during field missions conducted by UNMISS HRD. All reported incidents, particularly of intra/inter-communal violence, were deconflicted with incidents documented by the UNMISS Civil Affairs Division. Further, all reported incidents of CRSV were corroborated in consultation with the UNMISS Women's Protection Advisory Unit.

The data presented in this brief is non-exhaustive and likely underrepresents the scale of harm affecting civilians. UNMISS HRD investigations were constrained by limited resources, access denials, inaccessibility to certain areas due to flooding or poor road conditions, fear of reprisals among victims and witnesses, and

<sup>1</sup> Beyond the scope of violence described in this brief, UNMISS HRD continued to document other grave human rights violations and abuses, including extra-judicial executions; arbitrary arrests and prolonged detention; ill-treatment; and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment perpetrated by the Government security forces and other armed groups.

underreporting of sexual violence due to social stigma. These challenges were compounded by the recent political and security developments, which significantly restricted access to hotspot areas and further exacerbated underreporting of cases. Notably, UNMISS HRD was unable to access areas affected by reported aerial bombardments since the resurgence of hostilities between the South Sudan People's Defense Forces (SSPDF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO) in early 2025. Accordingly, the number of documented cases may likely be underreported, and the trends outlined in this report must be interpreted in this context.

UNMISS HRD issued this quarterly brief as an advocacy tool to raise awareness regarding the impact of conflict-

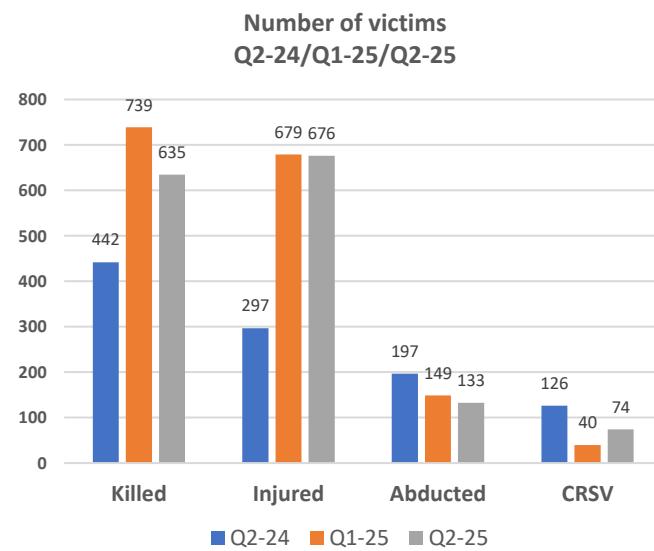
related violence on the civilian population; to urge all stakeholders to take action to end violence against civilians; and to promote the human rights of the South Sudanese people, including their rights to life, liberty, and security of the person.

UNMISS calls on all parties to the armed conflict to comply at all times with international humanitarian law, including the principles of distinction, proportionality, precaution, and military necessity. Further, UNMISS reminds the Government of South Sudan of its obligation under international human rights law to take adequate measures to protect civilians, investigate alleged violations, and hold perpetrators accountable in accordance with fair trial guarantees.

## GENERAL TRENDS

During the second quarter of 2025, the deteriorating political and security situation continued to severely undermine the protection of civilians across South Sudan. Consistent with the preceding quarter, the human rights situation was undermined by several factors, including i) persistent inter/intra-communal violence involving community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, ii) hostilities between the parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, including the alleged involvement of the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF), iii) political tensions between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Government (SPLM-IG) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-in-Opposition (SPLM/A-IO), iv) ethnic polarization, and v) the spillover effects of the Sudan conflict on the humanitarian, economic, and security situation.

In this context, UNMISS HRD documented widespread violations and abuses of human rights, and violations of international humanitarian law. Between April and June 2025, UNMISS HRD documented 334 incidents of violence affecting 1,518 civilians, including 198 women, and 155 children (93 boys and 62 girls).<sup>2</sup> Compared to the previous quarter, this represents a seven percent increase in the number of conflict-related violent incidents (from 312 to 334), and a six percent decrease in the total number of victims (from 1,607 to 1,518). Similarly, compared to the same quarter in 2024, this represents a five percent increase in the total number of violent incidents (from 317 to 334), and a 43 percent increase in the number of victims (from 1,062 to 1,518).



As illustrated by the above chart, compared to the previous quarter, the number of civilians killed, injured and abducted decreased by 14 percent (from 739 to 635), one percent (from 679 to 676), and 11 percent (from 149 to 133), respectively. However, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that the number of victims may be underreported due to the challenges faced in accessing hotspot locations. Concerningly, compared to the previous quarter, the number of victims of conflict-related sexual violence increased significantly by 85 percent (from 40 to 74). This increase was driven primarily by the resurgence of sexual violence in Unity State in the context of inter-communal violence between armed elements from the Dinka Alor and Bul Nuer communities in Abiemnom County, Ruweng

<sup>2</sup> Of the 334 incidents documented during the reporting period, 23 occurred prior to the second quarter of 2025 but were recorded and verified during the reporting period.

Administrative Area (RAA), with the alleged participation and support of the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO.

Relatedly, compared to the same period in 2024, the number of killings increased by 44 percent (from 442 to 635) and injuries by 128 percent (from 297 to 676), whereas the number of victims of abduction increased by 32 percent (from 197 to 133). Conversely, the number of victims of CRSV decreased by 41 percent (from 126 to 74).

During the reporting period, the primary drivers of conflict-related violence affecting civilians were i) persistent intra/inter-communal violence by community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, predominantly in Warrap followed by Jonglei State; ii) increased attacks on civilians by the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, primarily in Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Unity, and Western Equatoria States; and ii) sporadic attacks on civilians by unidentified and/or other opportunistic armed elements.

#### ***Violence by Community-based Militias and/or Civil Defense Groups***

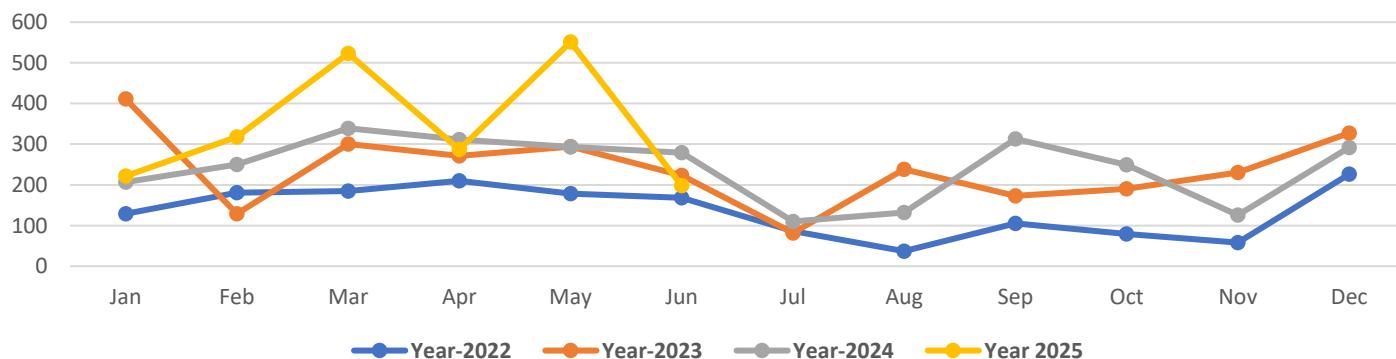
Consistent with the previous quarter, inter/intra-communal violence by community-based militias and/or civil defense groups remained the primary form of violence affecting civilians, accounting for 61 percent of violent incidents and 68 percent of victims (or 1,036 individuals) documented nationwide. This represents a six percent decrease in the number of incidents and a three percent decrease in the number of victims compared to the previous quarter. Persistent inter/intra-communal violence involving these groups was driven by several factors, including unresolved grievances and cyclical revenge attacks, territorial disputes, cattle-raiding, access to natural resources and grazing land, and the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light

weapons (SALW). Continued violence involving these groups exacerbated the already dire human rights and humanitarian situation in South Sudan, resulting in the displacement of civilians and the disruption of economic livelihood activities of communities, thereby undermining the rights to freedom of movement, adequate food and housing, in addition to the right to life and security.

Warrap State experienced the highest number of victims attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, accounting for 44 percent of victims nationwide and 99 percent of victims within the State. Specifically, during the reporting period, violence attributable to these groups resulted in a total of 668 civilian casualties (330 killed and 338 injured) in Warrap State, including 59 women and 19 children (three boys and 16 girls). Despite UNMISS' continued engagements with State and County authorities as well as community leaders to promote peaceful coexistence, widespread intra-communal violence between armed elements from Dinka sub-groups remained the primary driver of civilian casualties within the state, accounting for 81 percent of documented victims (or 545 individuals). Further, UNMISS HRD documented cross-border attacks on communities in Warrap State by armed elements from Lakes, Unity and Western Bahr el Ghazal States, which collectively accounted for 18 percent of civilian casualties (or 123 individuals) in Warrap State.

The majority of incidents of inter/intra-communal violence in Warrap State were documented in Tonj North County, whilst most victims were recorded in Tonj East County. The highest number of civilian casualties attributed to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups was recorded in May, with 450 out of 688 victims. The majority of these civilian casualties were driven by inter/intra-communal violence between the Dinka Luanyjang and Dinka Jaluau communities in Tonj

**Trend of violence affecting civilians by Community-based militias and/or civil defense groups from January 2022 to June 2025**



East County. In June, in response to the escalating incidents of inter/intra communal violence in Warrap State, the SSPDF allegedly conducted aerial bombardments in parts of Tonj North and Gogrial East counties targeting armed elements from the Bul Nuer community in Unity State, resulting in the injury of three civilians.

Consistent with the previous quarter, Jonglei State recorded the second highest number of civilian victims attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups (132 individuals), driven primarily by persistent small-scale attacks and roadside ambushes by alleged Murle armed elements from the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) in Jonglei State on communities in Akobo, Ayod, Bor South, Duk, Nyirol, Pochalla North and Uror counties. During the reporting period, 89 percent of violent incidents and 56 percent of victims within Jonglei State were attributed to Murle armed elements, including 28 civilians killed, 28 injured, 14 abducted, and four subjected to sexual violence. Further, these Murle armed elements from GPAA allegedly conducted cross-border attacks on communities in Kapoeta East and Lafon counties, Eastern Equatoria State and Juba County, Central Equatoria State, resulting in killings, injuries, and abductions. Relatedly, UNMISS HRD documented retaliatory attacks by Dinka Bor and Lou Nuer armed elements from Bor and Likuangole Counties on the Murle community in Gumuruk County, GPAA, resulting in a total of 26 civilians killed, nine injured, 22 abducted, and one subjected to CRSV.

Likewise, Lakes State recorded the third highest number of civilian victims attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups in the context of inter/intra-communal violence, resulting in 120 civilian casualties, including 51 killed, 67 injured and two abducted. Despite the peace agreement and joint communique signed between Unity State (Panyijar County) and Lakes State (Yirol East, Yirol West, Rumbek East, Rumbek Center, Rumbek North) in September 2024, cross-border attacks by armed Nuer elements from Panyijar County, Unity State on communities in Rumbek Centre, Rumbek North, and Yirol East counties were the primary driver of civilian casualties, accounting for 53 percent of incidents and 53 percent of victims. Relatedly, in June, armed elements from the Dinka Ciec community attacked a maritime vessel ferrying Nuer Nyoung civilians (en route from Panyijar County to Juba) in Yirol East County, resulting in four civilians killed (including three girls), one injured, and two abducted. Further, UNMISS HRD continued to document recurring incidents of intra-communal violence amongst Dinka sub-sections (i.e. Dinka Agaar, Amoul, Ajek Akook, Gok,

Kongor, Pagok, Tieck and Waat) in Cueibet and Rumbek Centre counties, resulting in a total of 18 civilians killed and 32 injured.

Further, in Unity State, inter/intra-communal violence was driven by cyclical cattle-raiding attacks between Bul and Nyoung Nuer armed elements from Mayom and Panyijar counties, and Dinka Alor and Dinka Ngok armed elements from Abiemnom and Awourpiny Counties, in RAA; as well as intra-communal violence between various Nuer sub-groups in Mayom, Koch, and Panyijar Counties. For instance, in April, four civilians were killed and six others injured in crossfire during an attack by Bul Nuer armed elements from Mayom County on the Dinka Alor and Dinka Ngok communities in Abiemnom County, RAA. The Bul Nuer armed elements were reportedly attempting to retrieve over a thousand heads of cattle previously raided by armed elements from the Dinka Alor and Dinka Ngok communities. Separately, on 3 and 4 June, intra-communal violence involving Bul Nuer sub-clans in Mayom County resulted in a total of 11 civilians killed and eight injured. Inter/intra-communal violence in Unity State was exacerbated by the porous border and increased reports of the proliferation of SALW allegedly facilitated by foreign armed elements.

Furthermore, in Eastern Equatoria State, inter-communal violence related to cattle-raiding, access to grazing lands, and retaliatory attacks between civil-defense groups from the Buya, Didinga, Dongotono, Imatong, Jie, Lango, Logir, Lopit, Lotuko, Pari, and Toposa communities continued. Cumulatively, between April and June, UNMISS HRD documented 29 incidents perpetrated by these armed actors resulting in 51 civilian casualties (31 killed and 17 injured) and three subjected to abduction. The highest number of violent incidents, as well as the highest number of victims, were documented in April (13 incidents affecting 23 victims). Further, UNMISS HRD documented small-scale cross-border attacks by Murle armed elements from GPAA on the Toposa and Pari communities in Kapoeta East and Lafon counties, resulting in one woman killed, one man injured, and three girls abducted .

#### ***Violence by the Conventional Parties to the Armed Conflict and other Armed Groups***

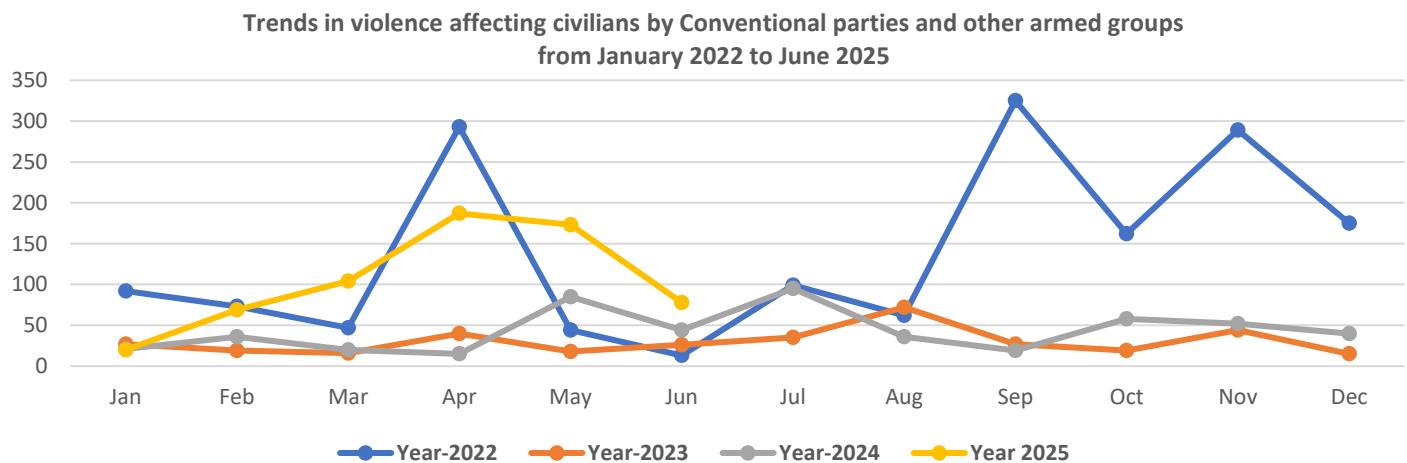
During the second quarter of 2025, the human rights situation in South Sudan deteriorated due to escalating political violence, as well as intensified armed hostilities involving the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, including the alleged involvement of the UPDF. The protection of civilians was severely undermined by widespread armed confrontations

and aerial bombardments in parts of Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile, and Western Equatoria States. Civilian casualties were likely underreported due to the prevailing insecurity in conflict-affected areas and access denials, which limit access of UNMISS HRD to the affected population.

Overall, violence perpetrated by the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups was the second leading cause of harm affecting civilians, accounting for 30 percent of violent incidents and 29 percent of documented victims (or 438 individuals). Concerningly, this represents a significant 127 percent increase in the number of victims attributable to this category of alleged perpetrators compared to the previous quarter (from 193 to 438), and a 204 percent increase compared to the same quarter in 2024 (from 144 to 438). This sharp escalation of violence was driven primarily by the expansion of the localized conflict between the SSPDF and the White Army militia in Nasir County, Upper Nile State, which evolved into a nationwide political tensions.

conducted a series of indiscriminate aerial bombardments on settlements and other civilian-populated areas, resulting in civilian casualties and the forced displacement of the civilian population. Despite the inaccessibility of conflict-affected areas, UNMISS HRD verified one civilian killed and 36 others injured from the conflict. However, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that the actual number of civilian casualties is likely significantly higher, given that hostilities persisted in parts of Upper Nile State (i.e. Jikmir, Nassir, Longochuk, Tonga, and Ulang Counties) at the time of reporting. Notably, between April and June 2025, the SSPDF and allied forces allegedly conducted at least 17 aerial bombardments in Upper Nile State.<sup>3</sup>

During the reporting period, the tension between the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO expanded into Unity State, significantly undermining the protection of civilians as both parties and their respective allied forces engaged in widespread attacks on civilians. Consequently, Unity State was marked by the highest number of victims attributable to the conventional parties to armed conflict



In Upper Nile State, armed hostilities between the SSPDF and the White Army militia, which started in mid-February 2025 in Nassir County, escalated into full-scale military operations involving multiple actors. The SSPDF, allegedly supported by the UPDF, Agwelek forces under the command of General Johnson Olony, and the Abushok and Dinka-Padang militias, engaged in sustained hostilities against the SPLM/A-IO and allied White Army militia. During the reporting period, UNMISS HRD documented the intensification and geographic expansion of the conflict, which spread from Nassir along the Sobat River towards the White Nile Corridor. The SSPDF and its allied forces allegedly

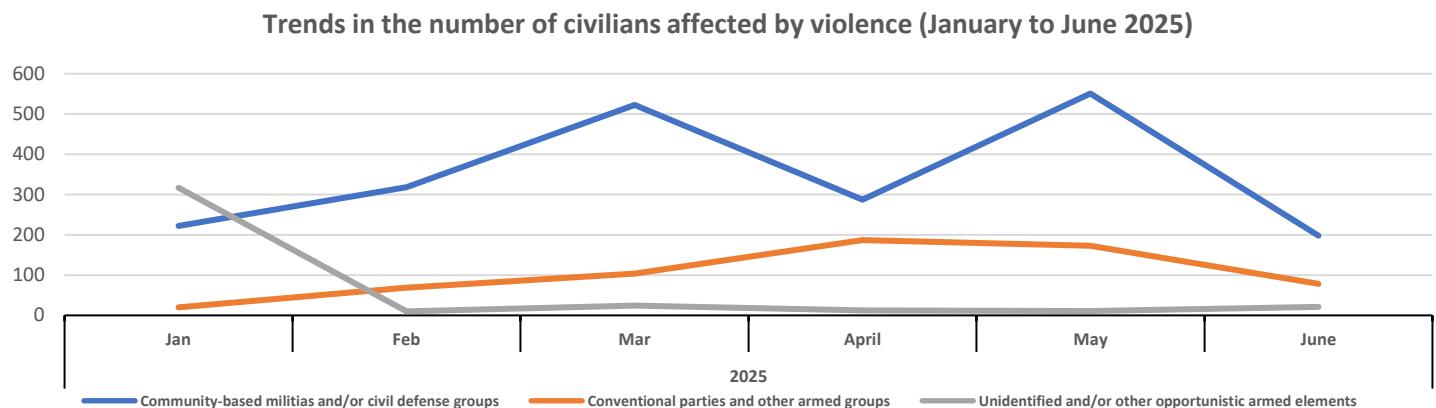
and allied armed groups, accounting for 36 percent of victims attributable to this category of perpetrators nationwide (or 157 individuals), including 72 killed, 60 injured, and 25 subjected to sexual violence. Notably, in April, the SSPDF and allied Dinka armed elements allegedly conducted attacks on the Leek Nuer and Bul Nuer communities in Alieny and Abiemnom Counties, RAA, reportedly resulting in one civilian killed, three injured, and 24 subjected to CRSV. Relatedly, the SPLA-IO and allied militia group allegedly conducted a series of attacks on civilians in Ruom-yar Payam, Abiemnom County, RAA, resulting in 36 civilians killed and 24 injured, including 13 women and seven children. Further,

<sup>3</sup> Since the beginning of conflict in February until the end of June, UNMISS HRD documented 39 aerial bombardments carried out by the SSPDF and allied forces in Upper Nile State.

from May to June, the SSPDF allegedly launched aerial bombardments on Nuer-inhabited areas of Mayom and Panyijar counties (perceived as supporting the SPLM/A-IO) in response to inter-communal violence linked to cattle raiding involving Nuer armed elements from Mayom and Panyijar Counties in Unity State, and Dinka armed elements from Lakes and Warrap States, as well as the RAA. The aerial bombardments resulted in a total of 34 civilians killed and 32 others injured across both counties, including 14 women and 27 children (26 boys and one girl).

Similarly, Jonglei State experienced the second-highest

hostilities between the SSPDF and SPLA-IO in southern areas of the state, mainly in parts of Morobo and Yei River Counties. During the reporting period, the protection of civilians was undermined by multiple alleged SSPDF aerial bombardments in Morobo County targeting SPLA-IO positions, including the cantonment site in Kendila Boma and the SPLA-IO Division 2-B Headquarters in Panyume Payam. The aerial bombardments allegedly destroyed civilian and humanitarian infrastructure, including homes, schools, health care facilities, and the local market, and forcibly displaced an undetermined number of civilians. In response, the SPLA-IO employed 'hit-and-run' tactics, which further exposed civilians to



number of civilian casualties attributable to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and allied armed groups. Within Jonglei State, areas along the White Nile Corridor - particularly Fangak and Pigi Counties - were significantly affected by the spillover of violence from Upper Nile State. Hostilities involved the SSPDF, allegedly the UPDF, Agwelek Forces, and Dinka Padang and Abushok militias opposing the SPLA-IO and allied White Army militia. For instance, in May, the SSPDF and allied forces allegedly conducted indiscriminate and disproportionate aerial bombardments of civilian-populated areas of Old Fangak Town, Fangak County, resulting in 38 civilian casualties (nine killed and 29 others injured), including one woman and one child. Civilian homes and property were destroyed, as well as humanitarian infrastructure, including the partial destruction of the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) medical facility, which provided life-saving services to the local population. Further, approximately 30,000 civilians were reportedly displaced from the region following the aerial bombardments. Armed confrontations continued intermittently across parts of Jonglei State, leading to an additional 40 civilians killed and 60 others injured.

In Central Equatoria State, heightened political tensions between the SPLM-IG and SPLM/A-IO led to renewed

violence and insecurity.

Separately, UNMISS HRD documented nine incidents of abduction affecting 62 civilians, including 17 aid and humanitarian workers, allegedly perpetrated by members of National Salvation Front (NAS) splinter groups across Morobo and Yei River Counties. While NAS previously demonstrated a pattern of abducting civilians - primarily young men - for the purpose of forced conscription, the victims were also subjected to physical assault, extortion and looting. These incidents forced humanitarian actors to suspend their operations in affected areas due to safety concerns. Further, in Juba County, incidents of sexual violence, primarily rape, allegedly perpetrated by SSPDF personnel, continued to be documented. In total, the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups in Central Equatoria State were responsible for 100 documented victims, including seven killed, seven injured, 64 abducted, and 22 subjected to sexual violence.

In Western Equatoria State, renewed violence between Government security forces - primarily the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO intensified following the removal of the former Governor. The reporting period was marked by a pattern of targeted attacks and armed confrontations between the SSPDF and SPLA-IO, particularly in Maridi, Tambura and Yambio Counties. In this context, UNMISS

HRD documented serious human rights violations, including abductions allegedly carried out by SPLA-IO elements for forced recruitment and mobilization; as well as incidents of sexual violence, including rape and forced marriage, allegedly perpetrated by SSPDF personnel. The escalating violence led to the forced displacement of civilians, further exacerbating the already precarious security situation. Moreover, in Mundri East County, the SSPDF's advance into Kediba Payam was reportedly characterized by harassment and looting of civilian properties, heightening fear and triggering further displacement of civilians. In addition, in both Mundri East and Mundri West Counties, the security and human rights situation further deteriorated due to the alleged involvement of NAS splinter groups. For instance, during an incursion by NAS in May, three individuals from the Mundari community were reportedly injured.

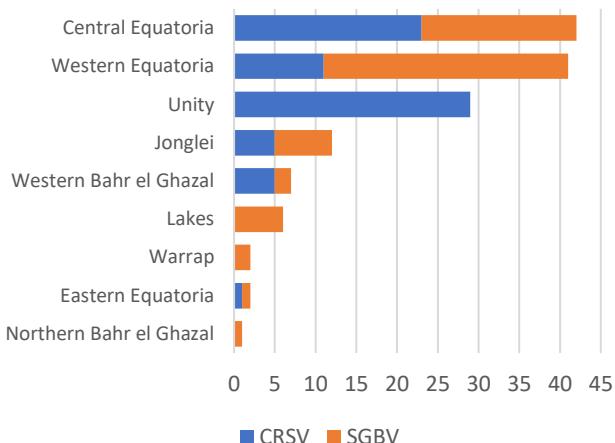
#### ***Violence by Unidentified and/or Opportunistic Armed Elements***

Incidents of violence by armed elements which do not fall within the above-noted categories but bear a link to conflicts or violence affecting civilians based on the modus operandi of the suspected perpetrators, location, and other relevant factors (such as objective of violence, clothing, language, etc.) were also documented. Overall, violence involving these armed elements accounted for three percent (or 44 individuals) of the total civilian victims: 15 killed, 12 injured, nine abducted, and eight subjected to sexual violence. Consistent with the same quarter in 2024, Western Equatoria State recorded the highest number of victims attributed to this category of alleged perpetrators, driven by attacks on civilians by unidentified armed elements in the context of inter-communal tensions between the Azande and Balandia communities in Tambura and Yambio Counties.

#### ***Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)***

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) remained a critical threat to the protection of women and children, particularly girls. During the second quarter of 2025, UNMISS HRD documented 65 incidents of SGBV (excluding CRSV) across South Sudan, which affected a total of 68 victims (20 women and 48 girls). Compared to the previous quarter, this represents a 55 percent increase in SGBV incidents (from 42 to 65), and a 51 percent increase in the number of victims (from 45 to 68). Among the total 68 victims, 68 were attributed to community members or neighbors, 14 percent to unidentified armed elements, 12 percent to family members, four percent to SSPDF, one percent to NSS, and one percent to South Sudan National Police Service (SSNPS).

**State most affected by CRSV and SGBV**



Western Equatoria State experienced the highest rate of SGBV nationwide, with 30 incidents recorded involving 30 victims (26 girls and 4 women). Among these 30 victims, 26 were attributable to community members or neighbors. Emblematic cases of SGBV documented by UNMISS HRD, include i) Lakes State, where a victim was beaten to death by her family members for refusing a forced marriage; ii) Western Equatoria State, where a pregnant woman from the Azande community was gang-raped by a group of unidentified armed elements; and iii) Central Equatoria State, where a girl was gang-raped and physically assaulted by a group of young men with a graphic video circulated on social media.

Further, in addition to incidents of SGBV, UNMISS HRD documented 30 incidents of CRSV affecting 74 victims nationwide (47 women and 27 girls). Compared to the previous quarter, there was no change in the number of documented incidents. Western Equatoria State experienced the highest number of CRSV incidents nationwide (30 percent or nine incidents involving 11 victims), followed by Central Equatoria State (23 percent or seven incidents involving 23 victims), and Unity State (13 percent or four incidents involving 29 victims). Collectively, these three states accounted for 85 percent of CRSV victims nationwide. Compared to the previous quarter, Central Equatoria State experienced the highest percentage increase in the number of documented CRSV incidents (from four to seven incidents) and victims (from four to 23).

Among documented incidents of CRSV, 57 percent were attributed to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, 17 percent to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, and 26 percent to unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements. Consistent with previous reports, women and girls were disproportionately affected by both SGBV and CRSV,

accounting for 100 percent of documented victims (67 women and 75 girls).

UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that incidents of SGBV and CRSV are underreported due to various factors, including social stigma, trauma, fear of retaliation, and limited access to formal justice mechanisms across South Sudan. Further, due to intersectional vulnerabilities, survivors often face social pressure to seek compensation through customary courts or to marry the perpetrator, as opposed to seeking accountability through the criminal justice system.

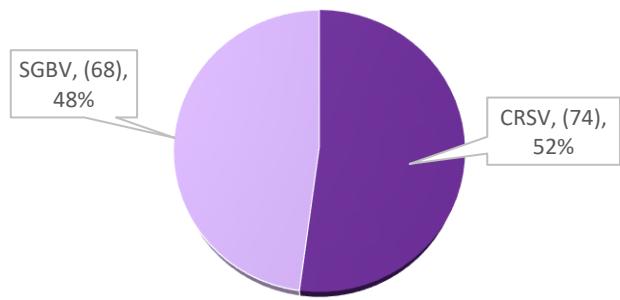
## GEOGRAPHICAL TRENDS

Between April and June 2025, Warrap State experienced the highest level of violence affecting civilians, accounting for 45 percent of the total number of victims nationwide (or 677 individuals), followed by Jonglei State (15 percent or 232 individuals), and Unity State (15 percent or 223 individuals). Notably, Lakes and Unity States experienced 1,156 and 365 percent increases, respectively, in the number of documented victims compared to the previous quarter (from nine to 113 and from 48 to 223).

During the reporting period, intensified hostilities between the SSPDF and allied armed groups on one side, and the SPLA-IO and allied militia group, mainly from the White Army, on the other side, significantly deteriorated the human rights and security situation in parts of Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile States. Civilians in these areas were subjected to severe forms of violence, including indiscriminate aerial bombardments by the SSPDF and allied armed groups, resulting in civilian casualties and large-scale forced displacement. Due to operational constraints and limited access to conflict-affected areas, the number of civilian casualties resulting from aerial bombardments and military offensives between the parties to the armed conflict remains undetermined. Between April and June, UNMISS-HRD was able to verify 73 civilians killed and 128 others injured as result of the above-noted hostilities in parts of Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile States. Except for Central Equatoria State, all aerial bombardments conducted by the SSPDF and allied armed groups targeted areas inhabited by Nuer communities perceived to be supporters of the SPLM/A-IO.

Warrap State experienced the highest number of killings (334 individuals) and injuries (343 individuals), accounting for 52 percent of the total victims of killing and injury nationwide, followed by Unity and Jonglei

Total number of sexual abuse victims

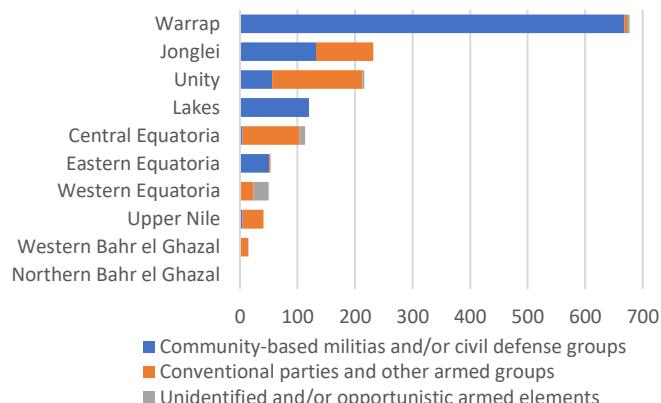


States at 15 percent (or 192 individuals) and 15 percent (or 191 individuals), respectively.

Consistent with the previous quarter, Central Equatoria State experienced the highest number of abductions, accounting for 48 percent of the total victims of across South Sudan (or 64 individuals), followed by Jonglei State at 27 percent (or 36 individuals), whilst Unity State experienced the highest number of documented victims of CRSV, accounting for 39 percent of victims nationwide (or 29 individuals).

Further, while Warrap State experienced the highest number of victims by the community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, Unity State experienced the highest number of civilian casualties by the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups.

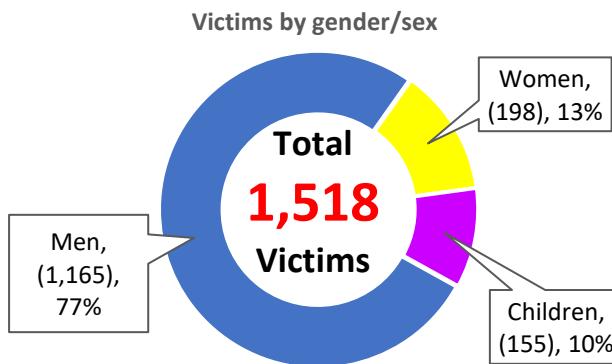
State most affected by violence



## VICTIMS

During the reporting period, UNMISS HRD documented a total of 1,518 civilian victims affected by four major forms of harms in South Sudan, representing a six percent decrease compared to the previous quarter, and a 43 percent increase compared to the same quarter in 2024. During the reporting period, men comprised the majority of victims (77 percent, or 1,165 individuals), followed by women at 13 percent (198 individuals), and children at 10 percent (93 boys and 62 girls).

The primary form of harm perpetrated against men was injury (50 percent), followed by killing (44 percent), and abduction (six percent) – largely as a result of indiscriminate attacks targeting civilians attributable to community-based militias and civil defense groups in the context of inter/intra-communal violence, as well as the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups. In comparison with the previous quarter, the number of male victims decreased by six percent (from 1,241 to 1,165). Further, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that CRSV affecting male survivors is grossly underreported due to social stigma.



The primary form of harm perpetrated against children was killing (40 percent), followed by abduction (26 percent), injury (17 percent), and CRSV (17 percent). Killing was the leading form of harm perpetrated against boys, whereas sexual violence were the leading forms of harm perpetrated against girls. Among child victims, 52 percent were attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, 46 percent to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, and two percent to unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements. The highest number of child victims were documented in Unity State (55 individuals), followed by Jonglei (48 individuals) and Warrap (19 individuals) States. Compared with the previous quarter, there was a nine percent decrease in the number of child victims (from 171 to 155 individuals) of which 59 were girls.

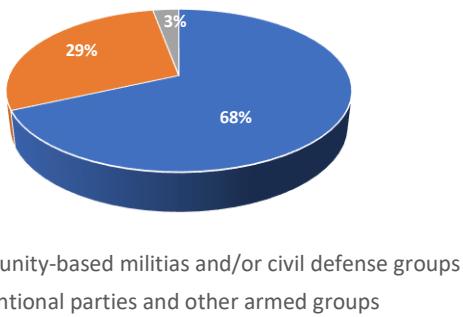
The primary form of harm perpetrated against women was injury (34 percent), followed by killing (29 percent), CRSV (24 percent), and abduction (13 percent). UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that many abducted women and girls were also subjected to sexual violence. Among adult female victims, 51 percent were attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, 45 percent to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups and four percent to unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements. The highest number of adult female victims was documented in Warrap (59 individuals), followed by Central Equatoria (45 individuals) and Unity (44 individuals) States. Compared with the first quarter, the number of adult female victims increased by two percent (from 195 to 198).

## PERPETRATORS

UNMISS HRD identified three major categories of alleged perpetrators involved in conflict-related violence affecting civilians: i) community-based militias and/or civil defense groups; ii) conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups; and iii) unidentified and/or other opportunistic armed elements. During the second quarter of 2025, the majority of victims were attributed to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups (68 percent or 1,036 individuals), followed by the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups (29 percent or 438 individuals),

and unidentified and/or opportunistic armed elements (three percent or 44 individuals).

### Civilian casualties by type of perpetrators



#### **Community-based Militias and/or Civil Defense Groups**

While inter/intra-communal violence is historically common among pastoralist communities in South Sudan, the entrenched patterns of violence among various ethnic groups, tribes, and sub-sections have been exacerbated by the alleged involvement and support of the conventional parties to the armed conflict. Further, political elites at the local and national levels have allegedly contributed to the intensification of violence, including by instigating or participating in the planning of attacks, and by providing financial and logistical support as well as military-grade weapons and ammunition. In this context, inter/intra-communal violence is often linked to the broader political and security dynamics in South Sudan.

Compared to the previous quarter, UNMISS HRD documented a six percent decrease (from 215 to 203) in the number of violent incidents, and a three percent decrease in the number of victims (from 1,063 to 1,036) attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups. Warrap State experienced the highest number of victims attributable to these groups (668 individuals), followed by Jonglei State (132 individuals), and Lakes State (113 individuals). In these three States alone, community-based militias and/or civil defense groups were responsible for a total of 913 victims, representing 60 percent of all victims documented across South Sudan. Among violence attributable to these groups nationwide, the highest number of victims were attributable to armed elements from Dinka sub-groups in Warrap State (52 percent or 538 individuals), followed by Nuer sub-groups from Unity State (15 percent or 158

individuals). The primary form of harm perpetrated by community-based militias and/or civil defense groups was killing (48 percent), followed by injury (48 percent), abduction (three percent), and sexual violence (one percent).

#### ***Conventional Parties to the Armed Conflict and other Armed Groups***

Compared to the previous quarter, UNMISS HRD documented a concerning 60 percent increase (from 63 to 101) in the number of violent incidents, and a 127 percent increase in the number of victims (from 193 to 438 individuals) attributable to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups. Unity State experienced the highest number of victims attributable to this category of perpetrators (157 individuals), followed by Jonglei (100 individuals), and Central Equatoria (100 individuals) States. Among the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, the highest number of victims were attributable to government security forces (63 percent), followed by SPLA-IO and allied militia groups, mainly from the White Army (22 percent), and NAS splinter groups (15 percent). Notably, SSPDF aerial bombardments in parts of Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile States resulted in 73 civilians killed and 125 others injured.<sup>4</sup>

Further, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that the UPDF supported SSPDF operations against the SPLA-IO and allied militia groups, and may have directly participated in hostilities.

#### ***Unidentified and/or other Opportunistic Armed Elements***

Compared to the previous quarter, UNMISS HRD documented a 12 percent decrease (from 34 to 30) in the number of violent incidents, and an 87 percent decrease in the number of victims (from 351 to 44) attributable to unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements. Western Equatoria State experienced the highest number of victims attributable to this category of perpetrators (26 individuals), followed by Central Equatoria (nine individuals), and Warrap (four individuals) States.

<sup>4</sup> UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that the number of civilian casualties is likely underreported. UNMISS HRD's capacity to verify civilian casualties was hindered by limited access to the affected areas due to the security situation.

### Location of Violence Affecting Civilians in South Sudan

April – June 2025

