

UK aid to provide vital food to hundreds of thousands of people living on the edge of famine in South Sudan

Minister for Africa, Andrew Stephenson announced an extra £18 million of UK aid on his first visit in his new role, which will be given to trusted partners to help vulnerable families in desperate need.

There are currently 7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and nearly 2 million people on the brink of famine in South Sudan, where food insecurity is at its worst level in the past 8 years.

Minister Stephenson called on the Government of South Sudan and other parties involved in the conflict to stop obstructing the delivery of aid and step up efforts to help the millions of malnourished children, families and communities get access to vital supplies.

He also called on the Government to accelerate progress on the peace process, including security sector reform, establishing an open dialogue with opposition leader Riek Machar and delivering on the \$100 million they pledged to help achieve peace.

Minister for Africa, Andrew Stephenson said:

South Sudan is a humanitarian catastrophe and vulnerable people face the daily threat of starvation.

I have seen first-hand that UK aid is saving lives and today's step up in support will deliver urgently needed food, water and health services to hundreds of thousands of people.

We call on the Government of South Sudan to immediately lift all humanitarian access restrictions and to commit more resources to provide basic services such as health and education to give people hope for the future.

With just three months until the formation of the transitional government, time is running out. Significant effort and compromise are required to fully implement the peace agreement.

While in South Sudan, Minister Stephenson visited the World Food Programme's warehouse in Juba to see first-hand how UK aid is helping save the lives of people who have fled conflict.

He also visited the Juba Protection of Civilian's camp to learn about the key challenges of displacement in the country, as well as meeting with British soldiers deployed to the UN Peacekeeping mission there.

Notes to Editors

1. No DFID money is given directly to the Government of South Sudan.
2. Last year UK aid reached over 220,000 people with food assistance, over 100,000 children with nutrition support, over 142,000 people with emergency water, hygiene and sanitation, and over 83,000 families with emergency livelihoods kits.
3. The extra support announced will help deliver vital food, medicine and water to those who need it most. DFID will work in partnership with the World Food Programme, UNICEF, International Committee of the Red Cross and other NGOs to deliver this aid.
4. The UK has deployed around 300 troops to provide important engineering and medical assistance to the UN Mission in South Sudan which is supporting the protection of civilians, ensuring appropriate conditions for humanitarian access, monitoring and investigating human rights abuses, and supporting the peace agreement.
5. The £18 million announced today is allocated from DFID's central crisis reserve and is new money that would not have previously been spent in South Sudan.
6. DFID's total UK aid humanitarian support to South Sudan for 2019/20 is projected to be up to £91 million.
7. Today's announcement of UK aid support will help:
 - At least 160,000 people experiencing food insecurity with food assistance and small cash transfers to buy food for their families so desperately in need.
 - Provide 500,000 people with emergency livelihoods support which includes seed kits and fishing tools to help the poorest people continue to earn an income and feed themselves.
 - Support at least 32,000 severely acutely malnourished children with ready to use therapeutic food.
 - Provide health services in the most conflict affected and inaccessible parts of the country.