



World Health Organization  
South Sudan

# VOICES

from the field

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## Damages on Fangak hospital impact access to healthcare for surrounding communities

By Hassan DAKAT, Dr George WORRI, Michael MATHOT

### “The Sky Turned to Fire”

Nhial Kueth, a 34-year-old mother of four, was tending to her malnourished son at the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Old Fangak Hospital when the first explosion shook the ground. “Smoke filled the air, and people began screaming. We ran, but where could we go? The river is flooded, the roads are underwater. The hospital was our only hope,” she said, her voice loaded with emotions.

On May 3, 2025, severe damage to a vital healthcare facility in Old Fangak disrupted critical services for over 120,000 people annually in a county already grappling with recurring flooding, food insecurity, and instability. The incident resulted in deaths and casualties, further straining access to medical care in an area with longstanding humanitarian needs.

### A Lifeline reduced to rubble

The hospital, one of the only functional health facility in Northern Jonglei State, was a beacon of hope for communities cut off by seasonal floods. It provided critical services:



- Maternal and pediatric care for **25,000** women and children annually.



- Emergency malnutrition treatment in a county where **40%** of children are acutely malnourished.



Old Fangak Hospital on fire after the attack on 3 May 2025



Rubbles of Old Fangak Hospital after attacks which took place on 3 May 2025



- Trauma care for survivors of intercommunal violence and flooding-related injuries.

Now, its charred remains lie in ruins. A health worker who narrowly escaped the attack, described the scene. **“The hospital emergency unit and pharmacy store are gone. We lost vital supplies—antibiotics, anesthetics and vaccines. This wasn’t just a building; it was a lifeline.”**



IDPs from old Fangak on their way to neighboring Paquir payam

### "We are left with nothing"

Humanitarian partners conducting a rapid spot-check assessment highlight dire challenges:

**Casualties:** There are seven accounted fatalities, and more than 20 civilians were injured in the attack, including women and children.

**Healthcare Collapse:** Pregnant women, trauma patients, and 1,200 children enrolled in malnutrition programs now have nowhere to turn.

Flooding has rendered roads and airstrips impassable; aid groups rely on canoes and risky helicopter landings. No functional surgical facilities remain in a region where violence and accidents are rampant.

**Displacement:** Over 30,000 families fled into flooded marshlands, where they face snakebites, waterborne diseases, and starvation.

Displaced women and children report rising incidents of sexual violence and exploitation in overcrowded camps

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*“My husband was recovering from a gunshot wound when the bombs hit,”*

said Nyaluak, holding her infant daughter in a makeshift camp.

*“I carried him on my back through the water, but he died on the way. Now I have no food, no medicine for my baby. We are left with nothing.”*



Assessment team interviewing the displaced population in Old Fangak

## Calls for Action



1. Better identification and mapping of health facilities in high risk areas



2. Deployment of mobile clinics and rapid response health teams to ensure continuity of care for displaced and isolated populations



3. Strengthening of early warning and disease surveillance systems to detect and respond to outbreaks amid population displacement and disrupted services



4. Enhanced coordination with all partners to restore essential health services and rebuild community trust in affected regions

## Old Fangak Hospital attack in the media:

- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/05/1162941>
- <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/attack-msf-hospital-south-sudan-was-deliberate-un-rights-commission-says-2025-05-06>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/5/3/at-least-seven-killed-in-south-sudan-hospital-bombing-msf>
- <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/05/03/africa/south-sudan-msf-hospital-attack-civil-war-intl-latam>
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cm2536m9r2eo>
- <https://www.msf.org/msf-strongly-condemns-armed-attack-our-healthcare-workers-nasir-county>
- <https://www.rescue.org/press-release/attacks-against-healthcare-workers-south-sudan-straining-already-fragile-healthcare>



***“Every time this happens, people lose access to health services – and sometimes, to hope, Health is the last safety net. If it fails, everything else will also fall.”***

**Dr. Humprey Karamagi, WHO Representative, South Sudan**