

Amid spreading cholera outbreak, UN migration agency aids South Sudanese

10 May 2017 – United Nations humanitarian workers are responding to a growing cholera outbreak in Ayod, the Greater Upper Nile region of South Sudan, one of multiple counties throughout the country where the disease has spread since June 2016.

The UN International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) said it deployed a rapid response team to Jonglei late last month, to support local health partners and try to contain the outbreak.

Conditions are [extremely difficult](#) for families in Jiech, said Carol Kipsang, an IOM health officer and nurse, referring to a town in Ayad County. More than 230 people are affected there.

We met one mother who was caring for her new born and her sister's child, after her sister died from cholera two weeks ago in her community. The young mother walked one hour to the IOM clinic to receive treatment for the children and seek nutritional support for her malnourished daughter.

The UN agency launched its response after 140 suspected cases of cholera were reported in Ayod during the first weeks of April, threatening the population of some 175,000 people.

Access to Ayod is difficult during the rainy season, and its proximity to the Nile River increases its vulnerability to outbreaks of water-borne diseases such as cholera, IOM said, noting also the ongoing crisis in Jonglei and the lack of health workers and medical supplies.

The majority of suspected cholera cases in Ayod come from communities living in cattle camps along the river.

Since the cholera outbreak was declared in June 2016, more than 7,200 cases of cholera have been reported, including 229 deaths, according to the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) and the South Sudan Ministry of Health.

The disease is also reportedly spreading through swamp water, with millions of people displaced and moving through the swamps to avoid fighters.

WHO has provided response kits, medication and equipment for oral rehydration points and cholera treatment units.