

Brief on Violence Affecting Civilians

HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Between April and June 2026, UNMISS Human Rights Division (HRD) documented 142 incidents of conflict-related violence affecting 872 civilians (723 men, 77 women, 41 boys, and 31 girls): 375 killed, 337 injured, 121 abducted, and 39 subjected to conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).¹
- ❖ Perpetration of violations and abuses of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) persisted. Community-based militias and/or civil defense groups were accountable for 64 percent of the total number of victims (563 individuals), while the conventional parties to the armed conflict and/or other armed groups 29 percent (251 individuals), and unidentified and/or opportunistic armed elements the remaining seven percent (58 individuals).
- ❖ Compared with the previous quarter (January – March 2026), the total number of documented incidents and number of victims decreased by 31 percent (from 206 to 142) and 37 percent (from 1,388 to 872), respectively. The number of civilians killed decreased by 51 percent (from 767 to 375) and injured by 26 percent (from 457 to 337). Abductions increased by 30 percent (from 93 to 121) and the number of victims subjected to CRSV decreased by 45 percent (from 71 to 39).
- ❖ Compared with the same quarter in 2025, the number of documented incidents decreased by 57 percent (from 334 to 142) and the number of victims decreased by 43 percent (from 1,518 to 872). The number of civilians killed decreased by 41 percent (from 635 to 375), injured by 50 percent (from 676 to 337), abducted by nine percent (from 133 to 121), and those subjected to CRSV by 47 percent (from 74 to 39).
- ❖ The data presented in this report does not provide a holistic assessment of the human rights situation in South Sudan. Monitoring and reporting activities were affected by reduced footprint and resource constraints caused by the implementation of the UNMISS contingency plan, which resulted in a reduced presence in Eastern Equatoria and Northern Bahr el Ghazal States, as well as the absence of civilian capacity at the Force-only bases in Warrap and Lakes States. Therefore, the decline in the number of documented incidents and victims should not necessarily be interpreted as an improvement in the security and/or human rights situation of the country. Rather, it may reflect limitations in monitoring and reporting capacity during the reporting period.

CONTEXT

During the second quarter of 2026 (April–June), the security and human rights situation in South Sudan was characterized by continued armed violence at the subnational level with serious implications for the protection of civilians. At the political level, a growing trend of unilateralism in decision-making processes persisted amid discussions to end the transitional period by securing consensus through an intra-party dialogue.

Meanwhile, tensions and armed conflict between the South Sudan People's Defense Forces (SSPDF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-in Opposition (SPLA-IO) persisted across the country, exacerbating protection of civilian concerns.

A persistent climate of impunity, coupled with limited accountability for perpetrators, remained a key factor

¹ Of the 142 incidents documented during the reporting period, 27 occurred prior to the second quarter of 2026 but were recorded and verified during the reporting period.

enabling violations and abuses. No developments were observed regarding concrete actions by the State to investigate, prosecute, or otherwise hold perpetrators accountable in the documented cases. Throughout the reporting period, violence was driven by various armed actors, including the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, as well as opportunistic and/or unidentified armed elements. The weapons proliferation, the mobilization and continued instrumentalization of local armed groups, intercommunal tensions, and unresolved political grievances continued to fuel cycles of violence. These dynamics resulted in loss of life, mass displacement, and ² including abductions and killings, particularly in parts of Jonglei and southern Central Equatoria States. These challenges were compounded by access restrictions in conflict-affected areas and extortion during the delivery of food assistance.

This brief examines the impact of armed violence in South Sudan and provides an overview of the multifaceted trends and patterns observed between April and June 2026. It focuses on the four major forms of individual harm most experienced by victims during armed conflict: killing, injury, abduction, and sexual violence. Consistent with the previous quarter, the brief analyses the conflict dynamics in South Sudan that continued to drive violence affecting civilians, thereby further undermining the human rights situation within the broader political and security crisis.

The information contained in this brief was obtained from victim and eyewitness accounts as well as from secondary sources such as service providers, community leaders and local authorities identified during field missions conducted by the UNMISS HRD. Unless otherwise specified, all information presented herein has been verified through independent and credible sources. All

the destruction of civilian property, undermining community resilience and worsening an already precarious human rights situation.

The protection environment was further strained by the spillover impact of the Sudan conflict, environmental shocks, disputes over natural resources, and the forced military conscription and militarization of children. Civilians were also subjected to abduction, including during the SSPDF withdrawal operations in Jonglei State, while access restrictions in conflict-affected areas and extortion during the delivery of food assistance further impeded protection efforts. In addition, humanitarian workers faced persistent attacks, incidents of intercommunal violence were deconflicted against incidents documented by the UNMISS Civil Affairs Division. The CRSV cases 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. Investigations by UNMISS HRD were constrained by reduced field presence, access denials, inaccessibility due to weather conditions, fear of reprisals among victims and witnesses, and underreporting of sexual violence due to social stigma.

In accordance with its mandate, UNMISS issued this brief to raise awareness of the impact of armed conflict on civilians and to serve as an advocacy tool aimed at strengthening their protection. The Mission continues to urge all stakeholders to take concrete measures to prevent and end violence, ensure accountability, and uphold the human rights of the people of South Sudan, including their rights to life, physical integrity, dignity, liberty, and security.

GENERAL TRENDS

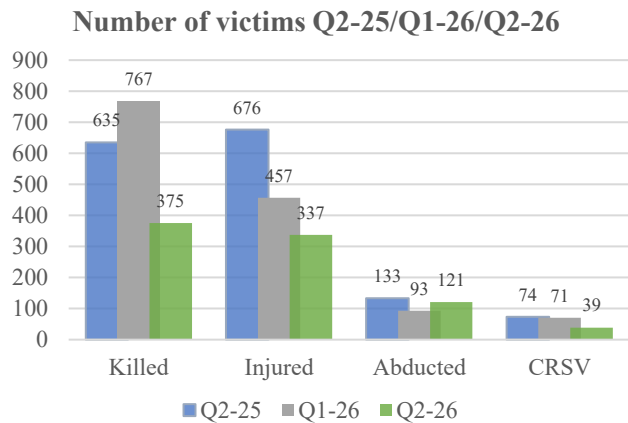
Armed violence and insecurity continued to undermine the protection of civilians across South Sudan. The human rights situation remained volatile, characterized by i) persistent intra-/inter-communal violence involving community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, predominantly in Warrap, Lakes, and Jonglei States; ii) intensified hostilities between the parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, particularly in parts of Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Western Bahr el Ghazal,

Western Equatoria, Upper Nile, and Unity States; iii) escalating political tensions between the SPLM-IG and SPLM-IO, over unilateralism in the appointment of key officials with implications for the power-sharing arrangements and the establishment of parallel governance structures; and, iv) ethnic polarization between Dinka and Nuer, mirroring the tensions between the SPLM-IG and SPLM-IO, particularly in Upper Nile, Unity, and Jonglei States, as well as between Dinka and

² Between April and June 2026, UNMISS HRD documented 12 humanitarian workers humanitarian contractors killed, 11 others injured, and two subjected to abduction. In addition, four were subjected to arbitrary detention.

Equatorian communities in parts of Central Equatoria and Western Equatoria States.

Between April and June 2026, UNMISS HRD documented 142 incidents of conflict-related violence affecting 872 civilians, including 77 women and 72 children (41 boys and 31 girls), who were subjected to one or more of the four major forms of harm (killing, injury, abduction, and sexual violence). This represents a 31 percent decrease in the number of incidents (from 206 to 142) and a 37 percent decrease in the number of victims (from 1,388 to 872) in comparison with the previous quarter (January–March 2026). The number of civilians killed and injured decreased by 51 percent (from 767 to 375) and 26 percent (from 457 to 337), respectively. The number of abducted civilians increased by 30 percent (from 93 to 121) and the number of victims subjected to sexual violence decreased by 45 percent (from 71 to 39).



Compared with the same quarter in 2025, this reflects a 57 percent decrease in the number of incidents (from 334 to 142) and a 43 percent decrease in the number of victims (from 1,518 to 872). The number of civilians killed, injured, abducted and subjected to sexual violence decreased by 41 percent (from 635 to 375), 50 percent (from 676 to 337), nine percent (from 133 to 121), and 47 percent (from 74 to 39), respectively.

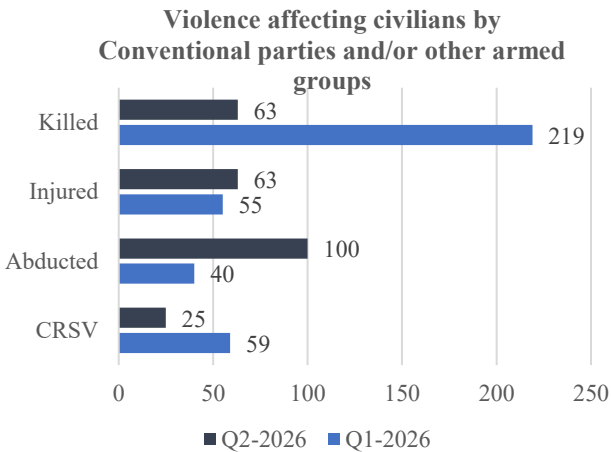
Notwithstanding the decline in the number of incidents and victims compared with both the previous quarter and the same period in 2025, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that the data presented in this brief is not fully comprehensive. The number of incidents and victims were most likely underreported due to reduced footprint, access constraints, population movements resulting from multiple displacements, and insecurity in conflict-affected areas, which limited monitoring and verification activities. The decrease in the number of documented incidents should not necessarily be interpreted as an improvement in the human rights situation. Rather, it may reflect reduced monitoring and reporting capacity particularly following the downsizing

of UNMISS in Eastern Equatoria and Northern Bahr el Ghazal States, and the conversion of the field offices in Warrap and Lakes States into Force-only bases. The trends, patterns, and impact of violence outlined in this brief should therefore be interpreted within this operational context.

Violence by the Conventional Parties to the Conflict and other Armed groups

In the second quarter of 2026, armed hostilities involving the conventional parties to the conflict and other armed groups continued across several parts of the country, predominantly clashes between the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO, with the involvement of their respective allied armed groups/militias as well as attacks by other armed groups. The protection of civilians was adversely impacted by persistent military operations, including ground offensives, counter-insurgency operations, and counterattacks, particularly in parts of Jonglei, Central Equatoria, Unity, Upper Nile, Western Bahr el Ghazal, and Western Equatoria States. As in previous reporting periods, the capacity to determine the exact number of civilian casualties attributable to these actors remained constrained by insecurity and restricted access to affected areas.

During the reporting period, violence attributed to conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups accounted for 42 percent of all documented conflict-related incidents (60 out of 142) and 29 percent of victims (251 individuals). This represents a 33 percent decrease in the number of victims compared with the previous quarter (from 373 to 251), and a 43 percent decrease compared with the same period in 2025 (from 438 to 251).



Central Equatoria State recorded the highest number of victims attributed to conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, accounting for 46 percent of all victims in this category (114 out of 251

individuals). The security situation in the southern parts of the State continued to deteriorate, driven by clashes involving the SSPDF, the SPLA-IO and/or the National Salvation Front (NAS), and disputes over access to and control of natural resources (particularly in mining areas). In addition, incidents of CRSV attributed to SSPDF personnel persisted, particularly in Yei River County. For instance, in May, SSPDF soldiers reportedly gang-raped five women in Kergulu, Yei Town Payam. Whereas the abduction of civilians by the NAS allegedly for forced recruitment continued, with incidents reported in Yei River, Lainya, and Morobo Counties. Between April and June, at least six incidents of abduction affecting 82 civilians were documented, allegedly involving the NAS.

Jonglei State recorded the second-highest number of conflict-related incidents attributed to conventional parties to the conflict and other armed groups, accounting for 22 percent of all victims in this category (54 out of 251 individuals). The human rights environment in the State was characterized by significant command and control challenges, and a volatile and rapidly shifting conflict landscape, with both the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO maneuvering for control of contested territories, mainly in northern areas of Jonglei. It seriously jeopardized the protection of civilians, with women and girls reportedly subjected to sexual violence, including rape and forced marriages. Allegedly, in April, the SSPDF forcefully took civilian women and children with them as they withdrew, from Walgak (Akobo County), Waat (Nyirol County), and Pieri (Uror County), heightening the risk of CRSV and civilian harm, particularly among women and girls. Further, in Pigi County, the SSPDF reportedly shot and killed 14 civilians in Kurwai Town during armed confrontations with the SPLA-IO in April, and 13 civilians (including seven women) in Atar Town Payam in a separate incident. Amidst heightened tensions, allegations persisted around SPLA-IO's mobilization of the Lou Nuer White Army, and the recruitment of children, in northern Jonglei. Overall, UNMISS HRD documented 54 victims in Jonglei State (39 killed, 13 injured, and two subjected to CRSV) attributed to conventional parties to the conflict. Among those victims were three children severely wounded following the accidental detonation of unexploded ordinance in Pathai Town, Uror County.

In Unity State, from 24 to 26 May, clashes erupted between the SSPDF and SPLA-IO aligned groups in Guat Payam, Leer County, threatening the security and protection of civilians. Reportedly, SSPDF elements subsequently killed a 17-year-old boy and injured two civilians in Guat Payam, while allegedly looting civilian property.

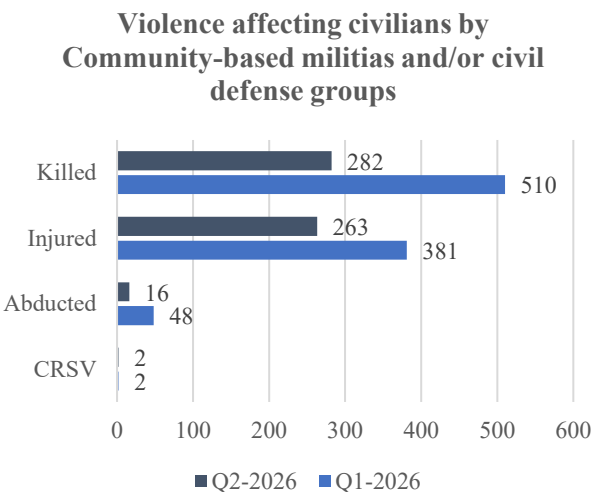
In Western Bahr el Ghazal State, tensions remained high between the SSPDF and SPLA-IO, with escalations of armed violence in Wau and Jur River Counties. On 3 April, the SSPDF reportedly attacked the SPLA-IO headquarters in Baggari Payam, Wau County, resulting in casualties, destruction and looting of a healthcare facility, and civilian displacement. Subsequently, on 8 April, SSPDF attacked Bazia Payam, an SPLA-IO stronghold, burning and looting civilian houses and triggering additional displacement, including among others internally displaced persons who had previously fled Tambura and Nagero Counties in Western Equatoria State due to earlier tensions. Further, the SSPDF military operations, launched in Boro-Medina Payam, Raja County, resulted in 18 civilian injuries and displacement. Overall, UNMISS HRD recorded 28 civilian casualties (five killings and 23 injuries), one abduction, and two CRSV cases in Western Bahr El Ghazal State.

In Western Equatoria State, the protection of civilians was threatened by persistent localized fighting between the SPLA-IO and SSPDF (mainly from the Mobile II Unit) in Yambio County. In early April, there was a renewed fighting between the SPLA-IO forces reportedly under Gen. Alfred Futuyo and the SSPDF Mobile II Unit in Nadiangere Payam (a longstanding SPLM/A-IO stronghold), with the SPLA-IO elements ambushing the SSPDF reinforcements en route to the area. Further, abductions by the suspected SPLA-IO elements for forced recruitment persisted and were documented in Nzara, Ezo, and Mundri East Counties.

Violence by Community-Based Militias and/or Civil-Defense Groups

Armed violence perpetrated by the community-based militias and/or civil defense groups remained a major driver of civilian harm during the reporting period. Violence was driven by multiple factors, including longstanding grievances and communal tensions linked to pastoral conflict, cattle raiding, access to natural resources and grazing land, land disputes and contested territorial boundaries, the illicit acquisition and proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and the cyclic retaliatory attacks to restock the lost cattle. In many cases, the exploitation of these actors by political elites to serve their personal interests was also a key driver and a concern. The allegations that elites from rival communities were supplying weapons to their respective groups suggested that the violence was driven not only by local grievances but also by the elite's political and financial backing. This external support increased the communities' capacity to mobilize and contributed to prolonging the clashes.

During the second quarter of 2026, community-based militias and/or civil defense groups accounted for 41 percent of all documented incidents (58 out of 142) and 64 percent of all civilian victims (563 individuals). Compared with the previous quarter (January–March 2026), this represents a 40 percent decrease in the number of victims (from 941 to 563). Compared with the same quarter in 2025, this reflects a 46 percent decrease (from 1,036 to 563). The primary form of harm perpetrated by community-based militias and/or civil defense groups was killing (50 percent, 282 individuals), followed by injury (47 percent, 263 individuals).



Warrap State recorded the highest number of victims attributed to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, accounting for 46 percent of all such victims nationwide (256 out of 563). The cycle of violence in Warrap was fueled by entrenched intercommunal tensions and exacerbated by a governance vacuum, as the State Governor’s prolonged absence weakened central mechanisms for coordinating security forces, local administrators, and conflict responses, diminishing the deterrent effect of the State of Emergency (that was announced on 5 June 2025 and was extended on 27 January 2026 for a six-month period). The fragile security and justice institutions created an environment for community-based militias and/or civil-defense groups to operate with relative impunity.

In Tonj East County, the cycle of violence between the Dinka Luanyjang and Dinka Jalwau communities was the primary driver of civilian casualties. Since early April, tensions between the two groups steadily escalated, marked by road ambushes, retaliatory killings, and looting of cattle resulting in civilian casualties. A major turning point occurred on 24 April, when Dinka Luanyjang armed elements attacked Ngabagok Payam, a Dinka Akook settlement hosting internally displaced persons from the Jalwau community, killing seven

individuals and injuring five. This catalyzed large-scale Jalwau mobilization and a retaliatory attack on 25 April against the Luanyjang in Makuach and Paliang Payams, resulting in approximately 60 civilians killed and 80 others injured. Luanyjang communities subsequently repositioned their cattle camps closer to Jalwau areas in Wunlit, suggesting a calculated posture in preparation for retaliatory attacks.

In Tonj South and Tonj North counties, communal violence driven by revenge attacks linked to cattle raiding involving various Dinka sub-group armed elements (i.e Dinka-Leer, Thony, Muok, Noi, Yar, and Apuk-Jurwiir, among others) persisted. In June, with additional attacks between the Thony on one side and the Yar, Muok, and Apuk-Jurwiir on the other, resulted in more than 25 casualties and the destruction of civilian properties, including the burning of Mabior-Yar market. Further, cross-border attacks involving Nuer armed elements from Unity State targeting Dinka communities in Gogrial East County persisted, with a major attack documented in May in Palie Payam resulting in 32 civilians killed and 33 injured.

Lakes State recorded the second-highest number of victims attributed to community-based militias (113 individuals). In April, Dinka Waat armed elements attacked Buony cattle camp in Tiap-Tiap Payam, Cueibet County, resulting in 10 civilians killed and 14 injured. Notably, following a dialogue between the Panyar and Waat sections, a peace agreement was reached on 21 April 2026, pursuant to which the Lakes State authorities established a Special Court, presided over by the state judiciary to adjudicate cases arising from the communal clashes. While welcoming this development as a positive step towards accountability, UNMISS HRD notes with concern that the proceedings could result in the imposition of the death penalty. Further, in May, a cross-border clash between armed elements from the Luanyjang community of Tonj East County (Warrap State) and the Pakam community of Rumbek North County (Lakes State) resulted in 15 civilians killed and 18 injured; while in June, intracommunal violence between Dinka Aniin and Dinka Gaak communities in Rumbek Centre County resulted in 10 civilians killed and four injured. Further, cross-border incursions by Nuer armed elements from Panyijar County, Unity State, on communities in Rumbek North and Rumbek Centre Counties reportedly continued.

In Jonglei State, Murle armed elements from the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) continued to carry out attacks against communities in parts of Bor South, Twic East, and Urur Counties. Further, tensions amongst Dinka Bor sub-groups persisted. For instance, in June, Dinka

Hol armed elements from Duk County reportedly attacked civilians in Lith and Ajuong Payams, resulting in 10 civilians killed, two injured, and two abducted, perpetrated within the context of intracommunal violence amongst Dinka Bor sub-groups over disputed land between Twic East and Duk Counties.

In Central Equatoria State, in April, Mundari armed elements from a cattle camp in Kuruki attacked and raided a Dinka Bor cattle camp in Rejaf Payam, Juba County, killing 15 civilians, including five children. Despite de-escalation efforts by the Central Equatoria State Committee on cattle-related conflict, the scale of losses sustained by the Dinka Bor community heightened the risk of a retaliatory attack and potential spillover of violence into neighboring areas. Separately, in May, UNMISS HRD documented an attack in Upper Nile State involving Murle armed elements (from GPAA) against the displaced Lou Nuer civilians in Barach Payam, Ulang County, resulting in 26 civilians killed, and one injured.

Violence by Unidentified and/or Opportunistic Armed Elements

Incidents of violence perpetrated by armed elements that do not fall within the aforementioned categories but nonetheless bear characteristics linking them to ongoing conflicts or violence affecting civilians were also documented. During the reporting period, violence attributed to these armed elements accounted for 17 percent of all documented incidents (24 out of 142) and seven percent of civilian victims (58 individuals), including 30 killed, 11 injured, five abducted, and 12 subjected to CRSV.

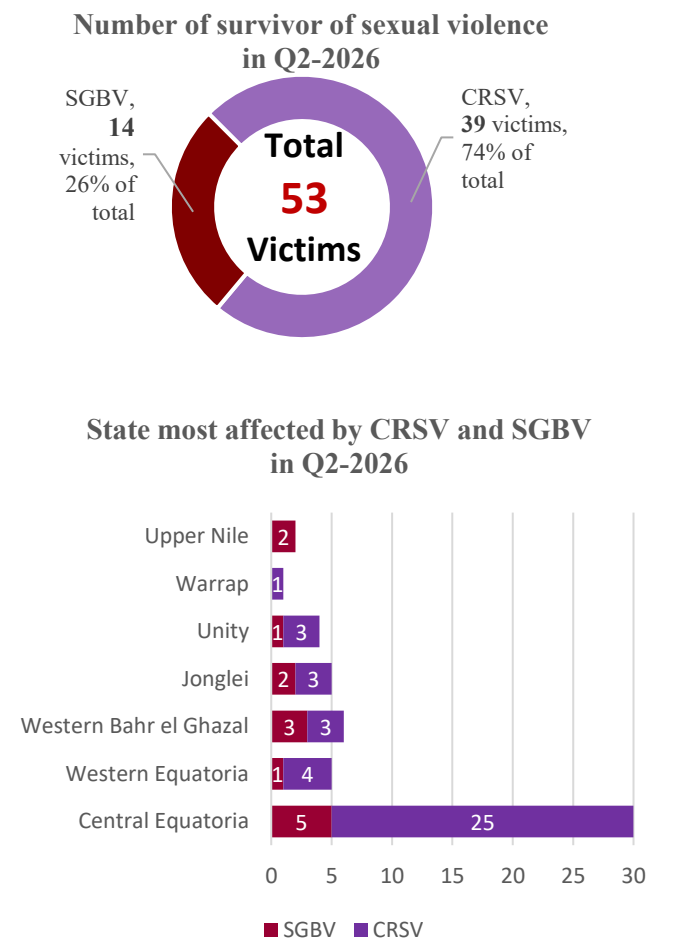
Jonglei State recorded the highest number of victims in this category (32 individuals), driven largely by incidents perpetrated by unidentified armed elements in Pajut Payam, Duk County, wherein five of the civilians killed were humanitarian personnel.

Central Equatoria State recorded the second highest number of victims in this category (12 individuals), driven largely by incidents of CRSV (seven) and abductions (five) in Yei River County, including a series of abductions involving humanitarian workers along the Yei-Kaya Road, where three abduction incidents targeting humanitarian workers occurred within a three-week period. The deteriorating security environment along this corridor raised serious concerns about the safety of humanitarian workers and the ability of humanitarian organizations to operate in the area.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

SGBV in South Sudan remained a serious concern. Despite its overall decrease, victims, particularly women and girls, continued to face risks of violence in the context of heightened insecurity, displacement of civilians, and the broader climate of impunity. Social stigma and the lack of access to formal justice mechanisms, on most occasions, compelled survivors to seek redress through customary bodies, where outcomes were often disadvantageous to them.

During the second quarter of 2026, UNMISS HRD documented 13 incidents of SGBV affecting 14 victims (one woman and 13 girls) across six States (Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Western Bahr el Ghazal, Western Equatoria, Upper Nile, and Unity States). However, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that SGBV is significantly underreported, owing to the constraints and operational challenges outlined in this brief.



In addition to SGBV, UNMISS HRD documented 30 CRSV incidents affecting 39 survivors (23 women, 14 girls, and two men). Central Equatoria State recorded the highest number of survivors, accounting for 64 percent

(25 out of 39), followed by Western Equatoria State (four survivors) and Western Bahr el Ghazal State (three survivors).

UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that incidents of SGBV and CRSV continue to be significantly underreported owing to stigma, fear of retaliation, trauma, and limited access to services and justice mechanisms. Survivors often face barriers to reporting, including social

pressure to seek resolution through customary mechanisms rather than formal judicial processes. The ongoing political conflict and associated displacement, coupled with the presence of armed elements in civilian-populated areas, continues to exacerbate the vulnerability of women and girls to sexual violence.

GEOGRAPHICAL TRENDS

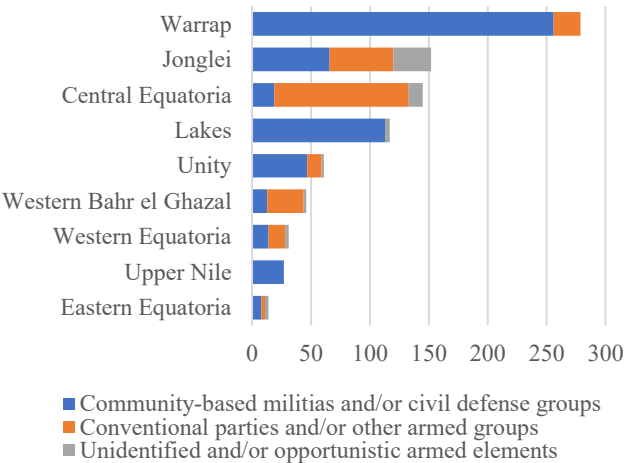
Warrap State recorded the highest number of civilian victims, accounting for 32 percent of all victims nationwide (279 individuals), followed by Jonglei State (17 percent, 152 individuals) and Central Equatoria State (17 percent, 145 individuals). Together, these three states accounted for 66 percent of all documented civilian victims during the reporting period.

Warrap State recorded the highest number of civilians killed (117 individuals) and injured (161 individuals). Central Equatoria State recorded the highest number of CRSV (25 individuals) and abductions (89 individuals).

Unity State recorded 61 victims, with tensions gradually increasing in the southern counties following leadership changes and the establishment of competing governance structures. Upper Nile State recorded 27 victims, with intermittent hostilities involving the SSPDF, SPLA-IO, and White Army elements persisting in Longochuk, Nasir, and Ulang Counties. Western Equatoria State recorded 31

victims, Lakes State recorded 117 victims, Eastern Equatoria State recorded 14 victims, and Western Bahr el Ghazal State recorded 46 victims.

State most affected by violence - Q2 2026



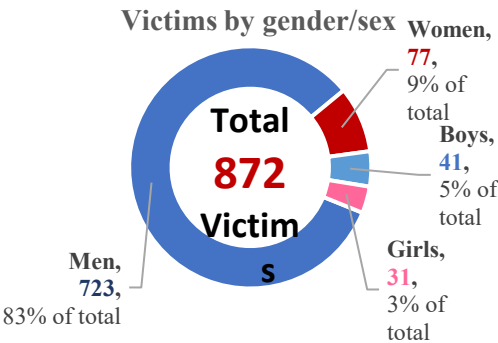
VICTIMS

Findings by UNMISS HRD indicated that men comprised the majority of victims documented, accounting for 83 percent (723 individuals). Women accounted for nine percent (77 individuals), while children represented eight percent (72 individuals, including 41 boys and 31 girls).

Most adult male victims were killed (325 individuals), injured (301 individuals), or abducted (95 individuals), primarily in the context of armed confrontations and violence attributed to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups and conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups. Two male survivors of CRSV were documented during the reporting period, including one incident of sodomy and gang rape by SPLA-IO elements in Yambio County.

Women were primarily subjected to CRSV (23 individuals), followed by killing (25 individuals),

abduction (16 individuals), and injury (13 individuals). These violations were largely attributed to conventional parties to the conflict, other armed groups, and unidentified and/or opportunistic armed elements. Compared with the previous quarter, the number of adult female victims decreased by 64 percent (from 215 to 77).



Children were primarily subjected to killing (25 individuals), followed by injury (23 individuals), abduction (10 individuals), and CRSV (14 girls). Boys were primarily subjected to killing (19 individuals) and injury (17 individuals), whereas girls were subjected to sexual violence as a leading form of harm (14 individuals). Unexploded ordinance posed additional

risks to children, particularly in areas affected by earlier armed confrontations.

UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that CRSV affecting male survivors remains underreported due to stigma and barriers to reporting.

PERPETRATORS

UNMISS HRD identified three main categories of alleged perpetrators involved in conflict-related violence affecting civilians: (i) conventional parties to the conflict and other armed groups; (ii) community-based militias and/or civil defense groups; and (iii) unidentified and/or opportunistic armed elements.

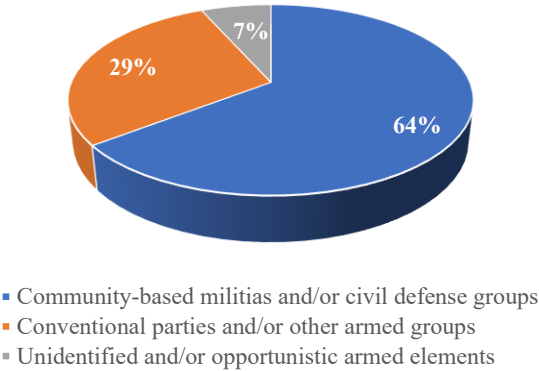
Community-based militias and/or civil defense groups accounted for 64 percent of all civilian victims (563 individuals), followed by conventional parties to the conflict and other armed groups (29 percent, 251 individuals), and unidentified and/or opportunistic armed elements (seven percent, 58 individuals). In terms of the number of incidents, community-based militias and/or civil defense groups accounted for the second-largest proportion (41 percent, 58 out of 142).

Unity, Upper Nile, Western Bahr el Ghazal, and Western Equatoria states. Amongst this category of perpetrators, the highest number of victims were attributed to government security forces, driven primarily by incidents recorded in Jonglei and Central Equatoria states. This concentration largely reflects the intensity of offensive military operations by the SSPDF against the SPLA-IO in Jonglei, and the NAS holdout groups insurgency in Central Equatoria.

Community-based militias and/or civil defense groups were responsible for the highest number of civilian victims (563 individuals), primarily in the context of intercommunal violence. Over the past year, these groups have been co-opted, armed, and used as proxy armed elements by parties to the conflict and by local actors, contributing to the progressive militarization of intercommunal violence. This dynamic has been compounded by the involvement of affluent elites, both at the local level and in Juba, who invest heavily in cattle ownership. In this context, “intercommunal” violence cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader local, regional, and national political and military dynamics.

Unidentified armed elements are primarily associated with opportunistic violence. These actors often have historical links to either conventional parties to the conflict or to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups but have increasingly acquired autonomy from their original sponsors. They now often perpetrate acts of violence against civilians, from their own or rival communities, without clear strategic or military objectives. While attribution remains limited, these actors were responsible for incidents of violence affecting civilians in multiple locations, including incidents of CRSV in Yei River County and the serial abduction of humanitarian workers along the Yei-Kaya Road in Central Equatoria State.

Civilian casualties by type of perpetrators Q2-2026



The conventional parties to the armed conflict and/or other armed groups include government defense and security forces, as well as organized opposition armed groups. UNMISS HRD documented incidents attributed to these actors, including ground operations, targeted killings, abductions for forced recruitment, and incidents of CRSV, particularly in Central Equatoria, Jonglei,

Advocacy Note

UNMISS calls on all parties to the conflict to immediately de-escalate, adhere to the ceasefire, end all hostilities, address issues through an inclusive political process within the peace agreement's framework and comply with their obligations under IHL and IHRL, including the protection of civilians and civilian objects.

UNMISS reiterates the responsibility of the Government of South Sudan to prevent, protect, investigate, and ensure accountability for violations and abuses committed against civilians. This includes taking measures to enhance the safety and security of the population, conducting prompt, independent, and impartial investigations, and ensuring accountability in accordance with the national laws and applicable legal standards.

UNMISS remains concerned by the documented incidents involving armed hostilities, sexual violence, forced recruitment, and violence affecting internally displaced persons and humanitarian personnel.

Such acts may constitute violations of IHL and IHRL, which should be promptly and impartially investigated with a view to holding those responsible to account.

UNMISS further underscores the need to address the continued violence affecting civilians, including killings, abductions, displacement, and sexual violence and reiterates that ending impunity and strengthening the rule of law are central to sustainable peace.

