

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 • FEBRUARY • 2023



WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the CORE Group Partners Project (CGPP) monthly newsletter — a new series of regular communications about what is happening in the project every month. This is meant to deliver high-level overviews of CGPP South Sudan including stories from those impacted, highlights of our amazing volunteers and partners, and updates on our activities and efforts in polio eradication, COVID-19 outbreak response, immunization system strengthening of vaccine-preventable diseases and Ebolavirus Disease (EVD) Preparedness. If you want to know more, our quarterly report can be requested. If you have other questions, please reach out to us through email anytime (see the last page for details). Future newsletters will not include this intro, but we wanted to be clear upfront of what to expect from our newsletter.

NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

I am personally grateful for the support provided through USAID and the staff for their hard work and sacrifices to realize the goals of this project in South Sudan. I am excited to share with you that this newsletter is going to be monthly as we take you through the hard work done through the project to serve the marginalized communities in the hard-to-reach locations in South Sudan. Thank you for joining us on the journey!

Anthony Kisanga

Anthony Kisanga
CGPP Secretariat Director, South Sudan

HIDDEN HERO: THE TIRELESS COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER

By Jemima Tumul



Lino creates awareness in his community about vaccine preventable diseases such as polio, measles, and yellow fever

IT IS NOON and Lino Lolepiet has been walking for two hours in the sweltering South Sudanese sun to get to his next appointment. "It is challenging work, but I am more than happy to do it," explains a tired but enthusiastic Lino, a 40-year-old father of 12. He is one of the 457 home health promoter working with World Vision in the 24 counties in Greater Equatoria States with CGPP, based in Kapoeta South County of Eastern Equatoria. Lino, who started in July 2020, was selected by his community and seconded by the county health department to work for the Organization for Peoples Empowerment and Needs, World Vision's implementing partner for Eastern Equatoria State. He works where he lives, in Namojongoronyit village. "I received training in disease surveillance – this involves searching, detecting, and reporting of suspected cases of polio, measles, yellow fever, Ebola virus disease, adverse events following immunization, and COVID-19," he says. During training, he learnt the channels of reporting in referral pathways, awareness creation mobilization during campaigns about COVID-19 vaccinations, and routine immunizations to protect and save the lives of children and people in his community.

Most of Lino's neighbors are illiterate and do not know the common diseases afflicting them. This situation motivates him to serve.

"Many children used to die in the community because mothers trusted the herbalists and traditional doctors more than the medicines from the health facilities but this has changed now."

Lino says, "We had a mother who lost two of her children in the span of two days due to measles. This experience forced me to become an advocate in the community. It's after this tragedy that mothers started confiding and revealing to me that some of their children could have died from this preventable disease because they chose to take them to the herbalists and not the hospitals."

The project gave Lino a bicycle to facilitate his transport to the communities and homes during his house-to-house visits and other activities. Still, the thorns that puncture the tires of his bicycle and the bad roads that are often inaccessible due to heavy rains challenge his work. But Lino's passion surpasses the numerous challenges he faces. "When my bicycle is broken, I still do my work, sometimes walking for hours to have a review meeting with 10 community key informants I supervise," he shares. During one of his visits to supervise a community key informant within Namojongoronyit, heavy rain hindered his journey back to his family. He decided to seek refuge in the chief's home due to fear of wild animals in the bush. Apart from illiteracy, his village has limited access to clean water. The community fetches water in the night or early morning from the Singaita River during the dry season.

"I talk about the importance of clean water and sanitation practices. At the same time, I also provide information to people about immunization and how it helps prevent sickness," he says.

The trust between the mothers and Lino is evident, as he has saved the lives of many children from polio, measles, yellow fever, and other diseases through his work. He continues to advocate for the immunization of children from vaccine-preventable diseases to ensure a healthier future for mothers and children.



Community members in Rajaf payam in Juba County line up to get vaccinated against COVID-19

CGPP LAUNCHES NATIONAL COVID-19 VACCINATION CAMPAIGN IN CENTRAL EQUATORIA STATE

By Simon Deng, *Dawn Newspaper*

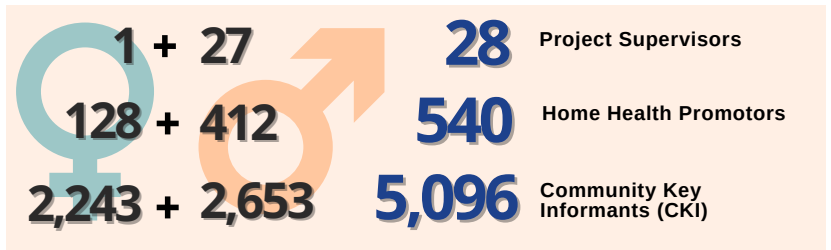
CGPP in collaboration with the Central Equatoria State Ministry of Health launches the first round of National COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Juba County. Director for Primary Health Care in Central Equatoria State James Wani said during the launch that a total of **814,944** out of 1.8 million people in the State are expected to receive COVID-19 jabs. According to Dr. Wani 235,765 people were fully vaccinated since 2021.

CGPP Director Anthony Kisanga said that they were advised by the Ministry of Health to have a standard, streamlined national vaccination campaign in the entire country instead of the facility-based vaccination. World Vision will be overseeing COVID-19 vaccination for greater Equatoria region. During the launching in Rejaf payam Mr. Celestino Oryem the Health Director for Juba County said that wide coverage for COVID-19 vaccination will provide herd immunity. "For our people who have received the first and second dose of AstraZeneca, you need to have a booster dose with Johnson & Johnson. We need everybody to have the vaccine so that you are fully immunized."



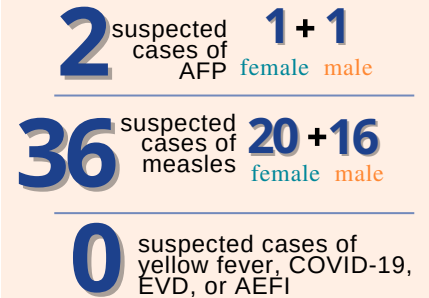
An AFP case investigation by CGPP supervisor in Nimule, Maqwi County

POLIO ERADICATION EFFORTS



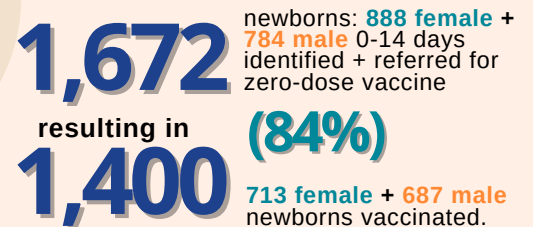
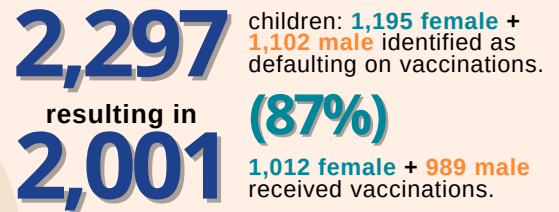
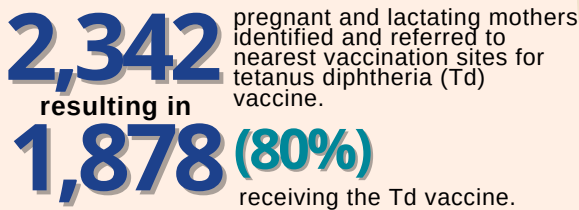
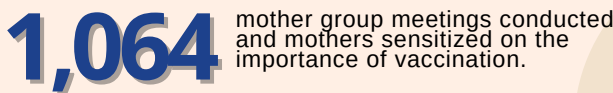
Support to integrated community-based surveillance (CBS) for acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) & other infectious diseases/events such as Measles, Yellow fever, Ebola virus disease (EVD), COVID-19, & Adverse effects following immunization (AEFI)

ACHIEVEMENTS IN CBS



CGPP supported strengthening immunization systems to achieve polio eradication in South Sudan through the following strategies;

- Mother group meetings for immunization demand generation.
- Tracing and tracking of immunization defaulters and unvaccinated newborns.
- Referrals of defaulters, newborns and pregnant mothers to the nearest vaccination sites.
- Support quarterly periodic intensification of routine immunization outreach sessions.



COVID-19 OUTBREAK RESPONSE

World Vision received funding from UNICEF, the World Vision-led CGPP and its partners SPEDP and OPEN implemented a National Covid-19 Vaccination Campaign (NCVC) in 25 counties in the States of Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria and Western Equatoria, and Upper Nile with the following activities implemented.

- Trained **147** payam supervisors, **2,440** vaccinators and **1,220** social mobilizers.
- Conducted **220** advocacy meetings with religious leaders, local chiefs, youth leaders, government officials,
- Conducted **89** focus group discussions.
- Launched the NCVC campaign in 13 counties out of the 25 counties namely Mundri West, Mundri East, Magwi, Lapon, Ikotos, Budi, Kapoeta East, Ibba, Maridi, Yambio, Nzara, Ezo and Tambura

RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (RCCE)

CGPP implemented RCCE mainly through house-to-house visits and visits to social places such as markets, water points, churches/mosques, funerals, parties, cattle camps and sports grounds etc. During these sessions, community members aged 15 years and older are given awareness on various infectious diseases.



SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISION



USAID mission monitoring visit to Yambio, Western Equatoria State

CGPP and its partners conducted monthly supervision to the project field sites to address any identify gap, challenges, use identified lessons learned and best practices to improve the quality of project implementation.

During the month of January, CGPP provided supportive supervision to:

- **15 project supervisors (1 female | 14 male) out of the 28** in the counties of Ezo, Ibba, Maridi, Mundri East, Mundri West, Tambura and Yambio in Western Equatoria State; Juba, Morobo and Yei in Central Equatoria State, and Budi, Ikwotos, Magwi, Kapoeta East and Torit in Eastern Equatoria State.
- **273 home health promoters (72 female | 201 male)** were supervised by project supervisors across the 24 counties.
- **2,539 community key informants (1,395 female | 1,144 male)** received mentorship visits.

"Raising awareness about the importance of immunization and proper management of preventable diseases helps to ensure a healthier future for mothers and children in remote counties in South Sudan, thanks to community health workers like Lino who are bent on serving his community despite the numerous challenges they face."

Achievements in the Ebolavirus disease readiness activities:

- **Conducted** a joint monitoring visit to Yambio, Maridi, Yei and Morobo counties involving Ministry of Health, Public Health Emergency Operation Center, International Center for AIDS and Treatment Program (ICAP), World Health Organization (WHO), State Ministry of Health (SMOH), County Health Department (CHD), WVI-CGPP, and South Sudan Public Health Institute from January 23-31, 2023, to assess implementation of EVD readiness activities in the counties and identify and fix implementation gaps.
- **Conducted** a refresher training from January 19-20 on EVD in Yambio and Nzara, attended by 70 home health promoters (29 female | 41 male)
- **Screened** 39,284 travelers (16,364 female | 22,920 male) across the 10 point of entry sites for fever as an important sign of EVD.
- **Conducted** a radio talk show on Hope FM in Kajo-Keji County on January 9, 2023, to create awareness on EVD and reached an estimated catchment population of 52,529. Listeners to the radio talk show showed interest in knowing isolation plans for suspected cases, treatment options, availability of Ebola vaccines, and testing sites in the country and case definition for EVD. There was also demand for feedback on samples collected from suspects in the county.

EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE READINESS ACTIVITIES



Joint assessment mission to Morobo County

Following the EVD outbreak in Uganda in September 20, 2022, CGPP in collaboration with the national incident management system of the Ministry of Health instituted an EVD readiness activities. The readiness activities were implemented in 11 high risk counties of South Sudan namely, Yei, Morobo, Kajo-Keji, and Juba in Central Equatoria State, Magwi and Torit in Eastern Equatoria State and Maridi, Yambio, Nzara, Ezo and Ibba in Western Equatoria State in collaboration with the Ministry of Health.

The activities included point of entry screening, RCCE, community-based surveillance and coordination guided by national Ebola virus disease preparedness, readiness and response plan September 2022 through August 2023.

UPCOMING PLANNED ACTIVITIES


- Finalize first round of the COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign in 23 counties of Eastern, Western, Central Equatoria States including Renk & Melut in Upper Nile.
- Start preparation for the second round of the National COVID-19 vaccination campaign.
- Conduct monthly partners review meeting for February 2023.
- Finalize preparation for cross-border collaboration meeting between Kenya and South Sudan on a One Health approach.

OUR PRESENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN


Western Equatoria

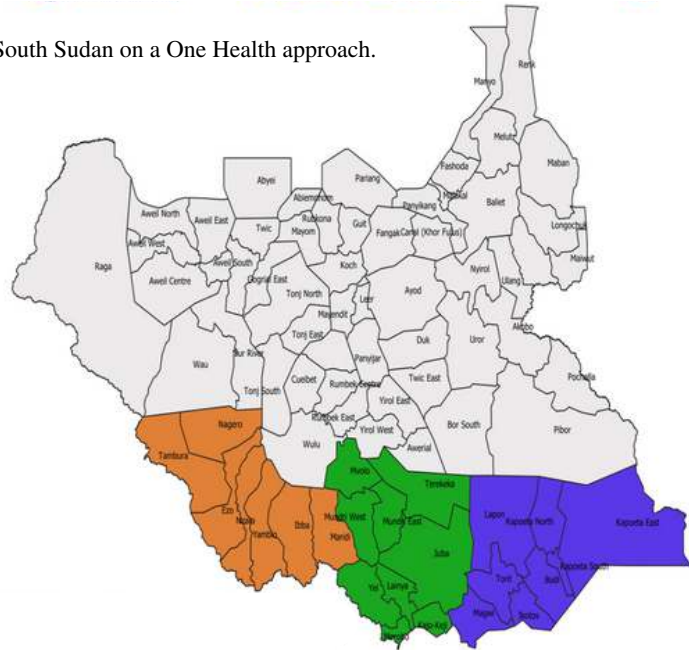
 World Vision South Sudan

Central Equatoria

 Support for Peace & Education Development Program (SPEDP)

Eastern Equatoria

 Organization for Peoples Empowerment & Needs (OPEN)



ABOUT CGPP SOUTH SUDAN

CORE Group Partners Project is funded by USAID. CGPP South Sudan is advancing community health through the establishment of a robust integrated community-based surveillance (CBS) to timely detect and report suspected cases of acute flaccid paralysis for polio, measles, COVID-19, Ebola virus disease, yellow fever, and adverse events following immunization. The CGPP CBS network comprises of 28 project supervisors at the county level, 540 home health promoters at the boma level, and 5,096 community key informants at the village level. CGPP implements its activities in the 24 counties of Eastern, Central and Western Equatoria States. Our interventions focus on:

- Integrated community-based surveillance on acute flaccid paralysis, measles, yellow fever, COVID-19, EVD and Adverse Events Following Immunization,
- Polio supplementary immunization campaigns.
- Immunization systems strengthening.
- COVID-19 outbreak response.
- Ebolavirus disease readiness.

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