

SOUTH SUDAN

STATE OF (DIS)GRACE

by Sergio Ramazzotti



Bentiu (Unity State), a woman in front of her village partly submerged by the heavy floods which affected most of the country between 2020 and 2021. The water has remained ever since.





FLOODS, WAR AND FAMINE EXTINGUISH HOPES IN THE WORLD'S YOUNGEST COUNTRY

South Sudan is the world's youngest country, and an emblem of failure. In July 2022, when celebrations were held to mark the 11th anniversary of independence from neighboring Sudan, there was little to celebrate. Since 2013, the country has been torn apart by a civil war between ethnic groups that has left more than 400,000 people dead and hundreds of thousands displaced. The state administration has failed to consolidate national unity, but neither has it succeeded in building basic infrastructure. Over the past two years, much of the country

has been hit by giant floods that have submerged fields, compromised crops and dealt the death blow to the population. And the situation has, if possible, been further aggravated by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the blockade of grain exports: UN agencies have seen their budgets reduced by almost half and in many cases have had to stop sending food and humanitarian aid. After two years, the water flooding South Sudan has not receded, and no one can explain why. And the country, in which war continues to rage, is increasingly dependent on foreign aid.



Bentiu (Unity State), kids recover the last cereal grains on a boat on which food brought by the UN's World Food Programme was ferried from the nearest port.



Bentiu (Unity State), people queue up for water at a community well.



A flooded hut in a village in Upper Nile State.



Bentiu (Unity State), food brought by the UN's World Food Programme is unloaded from a boat on which it was ferried from the nearest port.

Guit (Unity State), kids in the middle of the fields submerged by the heavy floods which affected most of the country between 2020 and 2021. The water has remained ever since.





Mathiang (Upper Nile State), a kid has his arm measured in the nutrition center run by WFP and Unicef.



Guit (Unity State), a woman in front of the fields submerged by the heavy floods which affected most of the country between 2020 and 2021. The water has remained ever since.

Bentiu (Unity State), people walk on a dike beside the fields submerged by the heavy floods which affected most of the country between 2020 and 2021. The water has remained ever since.





Tong (Unity State). A woman, exhausted by fatigue and malnourishment, has lost consciousness while working along with her fellow villagers on a field.



Tong (Unity State) was among the villages more severely affected by heavy floods between 2020 and 2021. The water has remained ever since. Villagers take turns to try and lower the water level by throwing it over a makeshift dike they have built with mud and earth-filled bags.



Mathiang (Upper Nile State). Acting government commissioner for Longechuk County, Doboul Duop Bichiok, in his office.

A photograph showing a woman in traditional attire walking along a dirt embankment. She is wearing a green headwrap and a patterned shawl. The ground is muddy and water-filled. In the background, several traditional huts with thatched roofs are partially submerged in floodwaters. Bare trees stand in the water. The sky is cloudy.

Bentiu (Unity State), a woman walks on a dike beside a village partly submerged by the heavy floods which affected most of the country between 2020 and 2021. The water has remained ever since.



Manga, a port on the White Nile in Unity State, has been heavily affected by frequent oil spills from a nearby pipeline, coupled with the heavy floods which hit the country between 2020 and 2021. The combination of these factors has provoked significant environmental damage.



Bentiu (Unity State). The POC (protection of civilians) camp has been home to almost 140,000 internally displaced persons short after the beginning of the civil war in 2013.



Bentiu (Unity State), people along a dike built by the fields submerged by the floods which affected most of the country between 2020 and 2021. The water has remained ever since.



Kuernyang, a WFP helicopter with food aid has landed in this village heavily affected by the floods. The food is being offloaded by the villagers.

Bentiu (Unity State), two men on the street.





Bentiu (Unity State). After being ferried on a boat from the nearest port, food brought by the UN's World Food Programme is loaded on a truck for distribution.



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Bentiu (Unity State), people on a dike by the fields submerged by the heavy floods which affected most of the country between 2020 and 2021. The water has remained ever since.





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Juba, a grounded passenger ferry in
the middle of the Nile.



