

# Brief on Violence Affecting Civilians

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Between July and September 2025, UNMISS Human Rights Division (HRD) documented 295 incidents of conflict-related violence affecting 1,153 civilians: 519 killed, 396 injured, 159 abducted, and 79 subjected to conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).
- ❖ Compared to the previous quarter (April to June 2025), this represents a 12 percent decrease in the number of incidents (from 334 to 295) and a 24 percent decrease in the number of victims (from 1,518 to 1,153) documented. Notably, the number of civilians killed and injured decreased by 18 percent (from 635 to 519), and 41 percent (from 676 to 396) respectively, whereas the number of abductions and CRSV increased by 20 percent (from 133 to 159) and seven percent (from 74 to 79), respectively.
- ❖ Compared to the same quarter in 2024, this represents a 43 percent increase in the number of violent incidents (from 206 to 295), and a 46 percent increase in the number of victims (from 792 to 1,153). Concerningly, the number of civilians killed increased by 74 percent (from 299 to 519), and those injured and subjected to CRSV increased by 28 percent (from 310 to 396) and 147 percent (from 32 to 79) respectively, while the number of abductions increased by five percent (from 151 to 159).
- ❖ Seventy-two percent of the victims were attributed to community-based militias and/or civil-defense groups, while 21 percent were attributed to the parties to conflict and other armed groups. The remaining seven percent were attributed to unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements.

## CONTEXT

This brief presents an overview of trends in conflict-related violence affecting civilians in South Sudan during the third quarter of 2025 (July to September) and focuses on four major forms of individual harm: killing, injury, abduction, and conflict related sexual violence.<sup>1</sup> The brief examines the conflict dynamics that have fueled violence affecting civilians and undermined the human rights situation within the broader context of the political and security crisis that resurfaced in South Sudan since early 2025.

UNMISS HRD developed an incident-based tracking mechanism to document conflict-related human rights violations and abuses. This data is disaggregated by sex and age of victims. The information contained in this brief is based on victim and eyewitness accounts, as well as reports from secondary sources identified during field

missions conducted by UNMISS HRD. All reported incidents, particularly of intra/inter-communal violence, were deconflicted with incidents documented by UNMISS Civil Affairs Division. Further, all reported incidents of CRSV were corroborated in consultation with UNMISS Women's Protection Advisory Unit.

The data presented in this brief is non-exhaustive and likely underrepresents the scale of harm affecting civilians. UNMISS HRD investigations were constrained by limited resources, access denials, inaccessibility to certain areas due to flooding or poor road conditions, fear of reprisals among victims and witnesses, and underreporting of sexual violence due to social stigma. These challenges were compounded by the recent political and security developments, which significantly restricted access to hotspot areas and further exacerbated

<sup>1</sup> Beyond the scope of violence described in this brief, UNMISS HRD continued to document other grave human rights violations and abuses, including extra-judicial executions; arbitrary arrests and prolonged detention; ill-treatment; and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment perpetrated by the Government security forces and other armed groups.

underreporting of human rights violations and abuses. Notably, UNMISS HRD was unable to access areas affected by reported aerial bombardments since the resurgence of hostilities between the South Sudan People’s Defense Forces (SSPDF) and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO) in early 2025. Accordingly, the number of documented cases may likely be underreported, and the trends outlined in this report must be interpreted in this context.

UNMISS HRD issued this quarterly brief as an advocacy tool to raise awareness regarding the impact of conflict-related violence on the civilian population; to urge all stakeholders to take action to end violence against

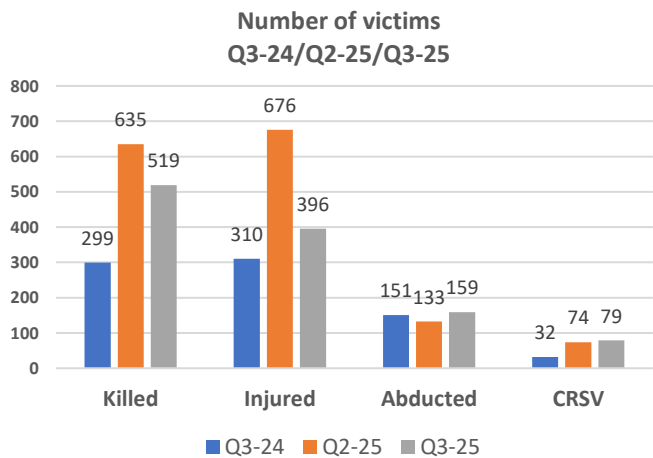
civilians; and to promote the human rights of the South Sudanese people, including their rights to life, liberty, and security of the person.

UNMISS continues to call on all parties to the armed conflict to comply at all times with international humanitarian law, including the principles of distinction, proportionality, precaution, and military necessity. Further, UNMISS reminds the Government of South Sudan of its obligation under international human rights law to take adequate measures to protect civilians, investigate alleged violations, and hold perpetrators accountable in accordance with fair trial guarantees.

## GENERAL TRENDS

During the third quarter of 2025, the deteriorating political and security situation continued to undermine the protection of civilians across South Sudan. Consistent with the preceding quarter, the human rights situation was undermined by several factors, including i) persistent inter/intra-communal violence involving community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, ii) hostilities between the parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, including the allegation of the persisting involvement of foreign armed forces, iii) political tensions between the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-in-Government (SPLM-IG) and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army-in-Opposition (SPLM/A-IO), and iv) ethnic polarization.

In this context, UNMISS HRD continued to document widespread conflict-related violations and abuses of human rights, and violations of international humanitarian law. Between July and September 2025, UNMISS HRD documented 295 incidents involving 1,153 civilian victims, including 166 women, and 93 children (46 boys and 47 girls) who were subjected to one of the four major forms of harm (519 killed, 396 injured, 159 abducted, and 79 subjected to sexual violence).<sup>2</sup> Compared to the previous quarter, this represents a 12 percent decrease in the number of conflict-related violent incidents (from 334 to 295), and a 24 percent decrease in the total number of victims (from 1,518 to 1,153). Similarly, compared to the same quarter in 2024, this represents a 43 percent increase in the total number of violent incidents (from 206 to 295), and a 46 percent increase in the number of victims (from 792 to 1,153).



As illustrated in the chart, compared to the previous quarter, the number of civilians killed and injured decreased by 18 percent (from 635 to 519) and 41 percent (from 676 to 396) respectively, while abduction and CRSV increased by 20 percent (from 133 to 159) and seven percent (from 74 to 79), respectively. However, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that the number of victims may be underreported due to the challenges faced in accessing hotspot locations.

Relatedly, compared to the same period in 2024, the number of killings increased by 74 percent (from 299 to 519) and injuries by 28 percent (from 310 to 396), whereas the number of victims of abduction increased by five percent (from 151 to 159) while the number of victims of CRSV increased by 147 percent (from 32 to 79).

<sup>2</sup> Of the 294 incidents documented during the reporting period, 24 occurred prior to the third quarter of 2025 but were recorded and verified during the reporting period.

During the reporting period, the primary drivers of conflict-related violence affecting civilians were i) persistent intra/inter-communal violence by community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, predominantly in Warrap State, followed by Lakes and Eastern Equatoria States; ii) persistent attacks affecting civilians by the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, primarily in Central Equatoria, followed by Unity and Western Equatoria States; and iii) sporadic attacks on civilians by unidentified and/or other opportunistic armed elements, particularly in Western Equatoria, Unity, and Central Equatoria States.

**Violence by Community-based Militias and/or Civil Defense Groups**

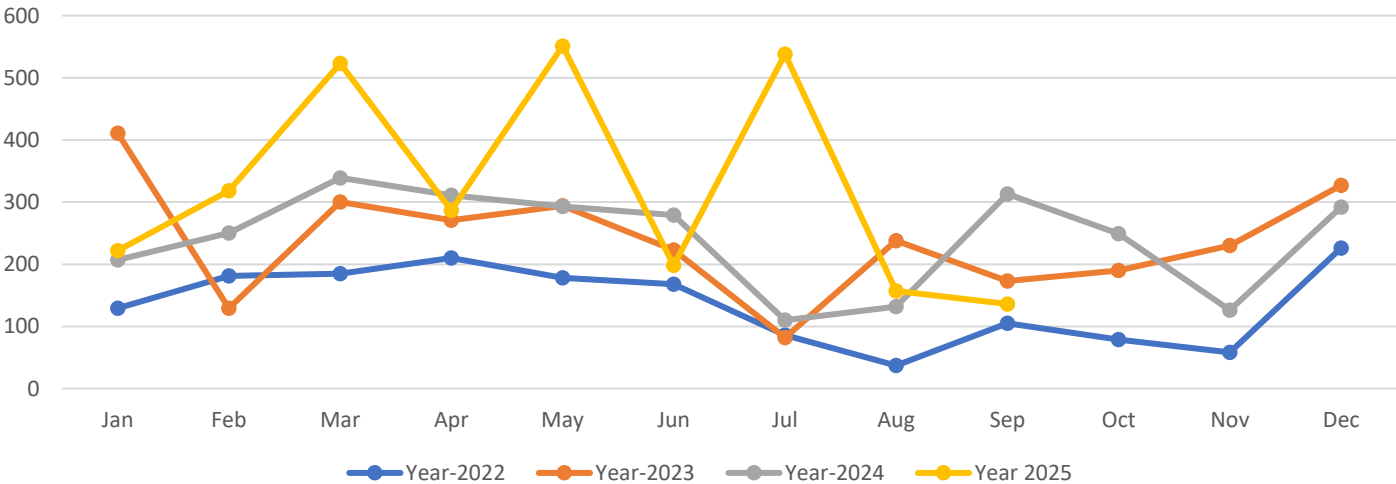
As in the previous quarter, entrenched patterns of violence in South Sudan by community-based militias and/or civil defense groups were responsible for 59 percent of violent incidents (174 out of 295) and 72 percent of victims (or 831 individuals) documented nationwide. This represents a 14 percent decrease in the number of incidents (from 203 to 174) and a 19 percent decrease in the number of victims (from 1,036 to 831) compared to the previous quarter. Driven by multiple factors such as unresolved grievances and cyclical revenge attacks linked to cattle raiding; territorial disputes related to access to natural resources and grazing land; and the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) due to porous borders, violence involving these groups continue to have devastating consequences on the local population, exacerbating the country’s already dire human rights and humanitarian situation. Its militarized character and involvement of conventional parties to the armed conflict further resulted in the displacement of civilians and disruption of their economic livelihood activities, thereby undermining their rights to freedom of

movement, adequate food and housing, in addition to the right to life and security.

Consistently, Warrap State experienced the highest number of victims attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, accounting for 62 percent of victims nationwide and 98 percent of victims within the State despite initial reduction of incidents following the announcement of ‘state of emergency’ in early June 2025. The continued fragmentation among Dinka sub-groups and the weak State presence, including absence of justice chain actors in remote areas, have contributed to the persisting communal violence. Specifically, during the reporting period, violence attributable to these groups resulted in a total of 509 civilian casualties (313 killed and 196 injured) in Warrap State, including 55 women and 10 children (seven boys and three girls). Within the State, widespread communal violence between armed elements from Dinka sub-groups remained the primary driver of civilian casualties, accounting for 91 percent of documented victims (or 471 individuals). Further, UNMISS HRD continued to document cross-border attacks and counterattacks involving armed Bul Nuer elements from Unity State, which collectively accounted for three percent of civilian casualties (or 14 individuals) within the State. Notably, cross-border violence involving armed Dinka elements from Lakes and Western Bhar el Ghazal States had decreased during the reporting quarter.

As in the previous quarter, Tonj North County recorded the highest number of incidents, while Tonj East County documented the highest number of victims with the majority recorded in Paweng *Payam* accounting for 164 individuals out of 367 victims. In response to the escalating incidents of inter-/intra-communal violence in Warrap State, the SSPDF allegedly conducted aerial

**Trends in violence affecting civilians by Community-based militias and/or civil defense groups**



bombardments in parts of Tonj East County targeting parts of Makuach, Ngabagok, and Paweng *Payams*, resulting in displacement of civilians and destruction of their properties.

Lakes State recorded the second highest number of civilian victims attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, driven primarily by communal violence amongst armed Dinka elements, as well as intercommunal violence perpetrated by the Nyuong Nuer armed elements from the bordering Panyijar County in Unity State, resulting in a total of 96 civilian victims, including 40 killed, 50 injured, four abducted, and two CRSV. The highest number of victims was recorded in the month of September with 47 civilians harmed, mainly from the communal clashes amongst Dinka-Agaar sub-sections in Matangai *Payam*, Rumbek County, that reportedly resulted in 33 civilian casualties (16 killed and 17 injured).

Similarly, Eastern Equatoria State continued to experience intra-communal violence related to cattle-raiding, access to grazing lands, and retaliatory attacks between civil-defense groups from the Buya, Didinga, Dongotono, Lango, Logir, Lotuko, and Toposa communities. In addition, incidents involving armed elements from the Jie and Murle communities from Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA), as well as armed elements from the neighboring Gambella region of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Turkana of the Republic of Kenya continued to be documented. Cumulatively, between July and September, UNMISS HRD documented 51 incidents perpetrated by these armed actors resulting in 79 civilian casualties (51 killed and 28 injured) and eight subjected to abduction. The highest number of violent incidents, as well as the highest number of victims, were documented in Budi County (15 incidents affecting 23 victims).

In Jonglei State, incidents of small-scale attacks and roadside ambushes by Murle armed elements have noticeably reduced as compared to the preceding quarter. Whilst UNMISS HRD recorded 25 incidents affecting 74 civilians by Murle armed elements during the previous quarter, in the current quarter eight incidents impacting 19 civilians were documented. However, despite this notable decrease, incidents of communal violence amongst Dinka and Nuer sub-sections within the State continued. Additionally, incidents of small-scale cross-border attacks involving armed Toposa elements from Greater Kapoeta area in Eastern Equatoria State against the Murle community, particularly in Jebel Boma, GPAA, persisted. Overall, during the reporting period, 53 percent of violent incidents and 55 percent of victims were documented

within Jonglei State by this type of actors. Of which, eight civilians were killed, 13 injured, one abducted, and two subjected to sexual violence.

Further, in Unity State, intra-communal violence amongst the Nuer sections and sub-sections (i.e. Chiengmalual, Haak, and Nyuong) persisted, as well as, cross-border attacks involving armed Dinka-Ciec from Yirol East County, Lakes State against Nyuong Nuer in Panyijar County, and Dinka-Twic from Twic County, Warrap State against Bul Nuer in Mayom County. Between July and September, UNMISS HRD documented 10 cross-border incidents involving these actors impacting 22 civilians (seven killed, 11 injured, three abducted, and one subjected to sexual violence), including four women and two children (one boy and one girl). The increased reports of persisting proliferation of SALW, allegedly facilitated by foreign armed elements due to porous borders, was among the factors that exacerbated the inter/intra-communal violence in Unity State.

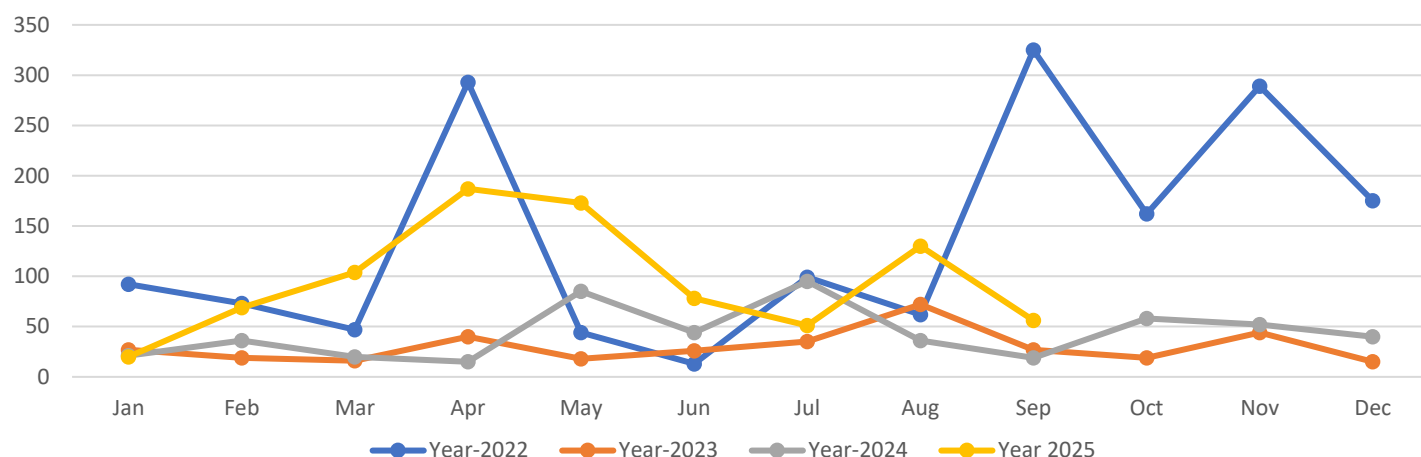
### ***Violence by the Conventional Parties to the Armed Conflict and other Armed Groups***

During the third quarter of 2025, the human rights situation in South Sudan continued to deteriorate due to escalating political tension, as well as persisting armed hostilities involving the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups and alleged continued involvement and support of foreign armed forces. The protection of civilians remained severely undermined by widespread armed confrontations, shelling, aerial bombardments, and airstrikes in parts of Central Equatoria, Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile, Western Bahr el Ghazal, and Western Equatoria States. As in the previous quarter, the number of civilian casualties by this group of perpetrators was underreported due to the prevailing insecurity in conflict-affected areas and restrictions of access, which limit UNMISS HRD's access to the affected population.

Overall, violence perpetrated by the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups was the second leading cause of harm affecting civilians, accounting for 26 percent of violent incidents and 21 percent of documented victims (or 237 individuals), representing a 47 percent decrease in the total number of victims (from 438 to 237) as compared to the previous quarter, and a 58 percent increase compared to the same quarter in 2024 (from 150 to 237).

Concerningly, Central Equatoria State recorded the highest number of incidents (21) and the highest number of victims (101 individuals: five killed, three injured, 85

**Trends in violence affecting civilians by Conventional parties and other armed groups**



abducted, and eight subjected to sexual violence) perpetrated by this category of perpetrators. The civilians continued to experience forced displacement, from the recurring hostilities between the SSPDF and SPLA-IO, following the ground offensive launched by the latter against SSPDF position in Mugwo Payam, Yei River County in July. On one hand, persisting reports of civilian abduction continued to be documented in parts of Juba (Wonduruba *Payam*), Lainya (Kupera and Mukaya *Payam*), Morobo (Kanja, Lojulo and Panyume *Payam*), and Yei River (Lasu, Mugwo, Otego, and Yei Town *Payam*) Counties. Between July and September, UNMISS HRD documented 14 incidents of abduction affecting 85 civilians, including seven women and five boys in these areas. The SPLA-IO accounted to 65 percent of the victims, while the remaining 35 percent were perpetrated by the alleged members of NAS splinter group. Accordingly, while abduction by the SPLA-IO were committed for the purpose of forced labor and extortion, abduction by NAS splinter groups were subjected to ransom and looting. Of the 85 documented victims, seven were working either as humanitarian or aid workers. On the other hand, most of the documented CRSV (seven out of eight victims), in a form of rape and gang-rape, were perpetrated by members of the Government security forces (six by SSPDF and one by SSNPS), whereas the NAS splinter group was responsible for one out of eight victims.

Furthermore, on 28 July, in southern part of Kejo-Keji County, along the Uganda and South Sudan border of Central Equatoria State, following the recurring clashes between members of the SSPDF and alleged foreign armed forces over rooted territorial disputes and commercial interests, increased displacement of

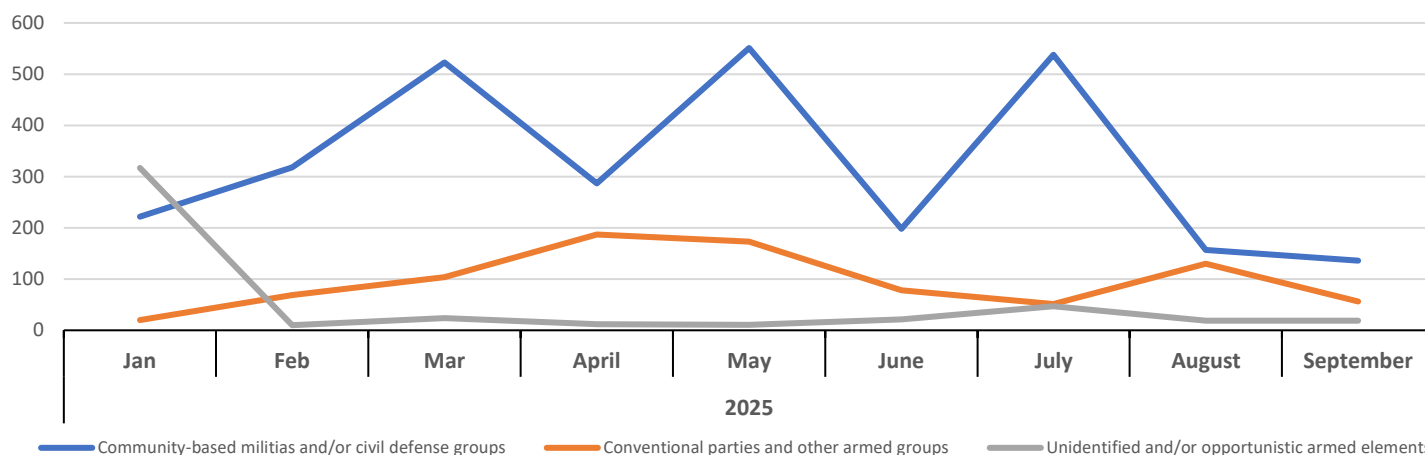
undetermined number of civilians was documented. Reportedly, the foreign armed forces indiscriminately opened fire and shelled the populated civilian settlements of Bori village and Nyainga-Muda among others, forcing the inhabitants of the area, who mostly experienced multiple displacement due to recurring clashes, to again flee and abandon their homes.

In Upper Nile State, the recurring armed hostilities between the SSPDF, supported by their allied armed group, reportedly members of foreign armed forces, the Agwelek forces under the command of General Johnson Olony, and the Abushok and Dinka-Padang militias against the SPLM/A-IO and allied White Army militia, persisted and remained a major threat to the protection of civilians particularly in high risks areas such as parts of Longochuk, Nassir and Ulang Counties.<sup>3</sup> Consistent to the previous quarter, offensives in these areas reportedly involved indiscriminate shelling, targeted airstrikes, and aerial bombardments, mainly by the SSPDF and allied forces, on civilian populated villages and settlements that resulted in undetermined number of civilian casualties, massive displacement and ripple effect to the affected population such as heightened food insecurity and access to basic services. For instance, on 15 August, the SSPDF in Nassir County reportedly shelled Burebiey settlement along the Sobat River near the Ethiopian border that hosted the displaced civilians from Nassir and other neighboring areas impacted by the armed conflict. Reportedly, the shelling resulted in 11 civilians killed and injury of 14 others. Despite the inaccessibility of conflict-affected areas, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that the actual number of civilian casualties is likely significantly higher, given that hostilities persisted in parts of Upper Nile State (i.e. Longochuk, Nassir, and

<sup>3</sup> The armed clashes between the parties to armed conflict in Greater Upper Nile region had started in mid-February 2025 in Nassir County and escalated into full-scale military operations involving multiple actors. As the hostilities intensified, the conflict expanded geographically affecting many areas along the White Nile Corridor.



Trends in the number of civilians affected (January to September 2025)



Ulang Counties) at the time of reporting. Further, on 23 July and 18 September, UNMISS HRD documented the alleged recurring aerial bombardments carried out by the SSPDF and allied forces in Upper Nile State targeting settlements and villages of Burebiey, Bukteng, Deng Jok, Gom, Jikmir town, Kir, Malook, Malek, and Tor Puot in Nassir County, leading to further displacement of civilians and destruction of their properties. Reportedly, the offensives from the SSPDF and allied forces were conducted in response to the continued reports of White Army mobilization particularly around areas of Nassir County.

Unity State was marked by the alleged aerial bombardment by the SSPDF against Nyuong Nuer in Pachienjok Payam, Panyijar County that resulted in the killing of 13 civilians (seven men, four women, and two children - one boy and one girl) and injury of at least 43 others (36 men and seven women, and reportedly undetermined number of children), as well as displacement of over 2000 civilians.<sup>4</sup> Reportedly, the bombardment was in response to the i) persisting intercommunal violence between the Nyuong Nuer from Panyijar County against the Dinka-Ciec and Dinka Agaar from Lakes State, and ii) armed confrontation between the SSPDF (and allied armed Dinka elements from Lakes State) and SPLA-IO military forces that had occurred in the Shambe Port area within Yirol East County, Lakes State on 4 July 2025 and earlier in June.

Similarly, Jonglei State, as part of the Greater Upper Nile region with shared geographic stretch of the White Nile

Corridor, continued to experience airstrikes and aerial bombardments by the SSPDF and allied forces and intermittent attacks by the SPLA-IO and allied White Army, following the spillover of armed hostilities in Nassir County, Upper Nile State, from 3 May 2025 and until the time of the drafting of this brief, impacting at least twelve civilian villages and settlements in Fangak (eight) and Pigi (four) Counties. For instance, in July, the SSPDF and allied forces launched air and ground assault in a civilian populated area of Kuerthiangni village, located near the SPLA-IO position in Kuerkan Boma of New Fangak in Fangak County, displacing the civilians inhabiting the area. However, due to UNMISS HRD access limitation, the actual number of civilian casualties in areas affected by hostilities remained undetermined. The already dire humanitarian and protection concern of civilians was worsened by multiple displacement in addition to destruction of civilian livelihood, properties, and infrastructures. As in Upper Nile State, the continued allegations of White Army mobilization in Ayod County headed by the Gawaar Nuer spiritual leader may have contributed to the persisting aerial bombardments in parts of Jonglei State.

Western Equatoria State was marked by intermittent attacks against civilians and recurring hostilities between Government security forces, primarily from the SSPDF and allied militias from Azande community against the SPLA-IO and allied armed elements from both Azande and Balanda communities over competition of territorial control. Driven by multiple factors such as persisting politicized criminality<sup>5</sup>, governance vacuum, and political

<sup>4</sup> The incident happened following the earlier reported aerial bombardment and boat attack against Nyuong Nuer in June 2025, where the number of civilian casualties remained undetermined.

<sup>5</sup> While the government authorities continued to attribute the increased criminal activity in parts of Western Equatoria State to the members of the SPLA-IO, other HRD sources attributed the incidents to the members of Mobile II.

and ethnic dynamic between Azande and Balanda communities, as well as longstanding grievances, the overall conflict and political dynamic in the State remained a threat to the safety and protection of civilians, particularly in parts of Maridi, Mundri East, Nagero, and Tambura Counties. In addition to patterns of targeted attacks, road ambushes, and armed confrontations between the two opposing parties, the tension was further heightened by the alleged collaboration between the SPLA-IO and the NAS splinter group against the SSPDF. Within this context, a notable increase in civilian abduction, perpetrated mainly by the SPLA-IO was documented. Reportedly, the victims were subjected to harassment, extortion, and ill-treatment prior to their release. Further, UNMISS HRD documented incidents of violence by the SSPDF that resulted in killings and injury of civilians. For instance, in August, seven civilians (all men) were subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention by the SSPDF (from Mobile II) in Tambura County. Approximately three weeks later, six out of seven individuals were arbitrarily killed while the other was injured through gunshot wound sustained, however, managed to escape. Overall, the conventional parties to armed conflict and other armed groups in Western Equatoria State were accountable for seven civilians killed, nine injured, 19 abducted, and one subjected to sexual violence. Furthermore, as in early 2025, the spillover of conflict between the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO in Western Equatoria State at the bordering Western Bahr El Ghazal State, expanded to the SPLA-IO controlled territory of Jur-River County, displacing the civilians from the area following reports of armed offensive by the SSPDF.

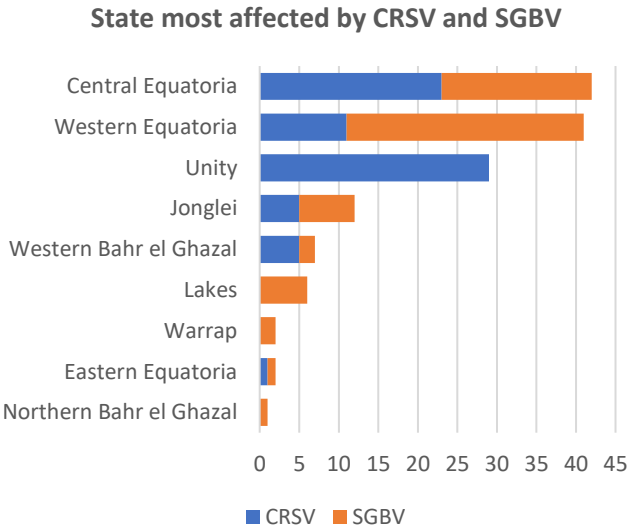
***Violence by Unidentified and/or Opportunistic Armed Elements***

Incidents of violence by armed elements which do not fall within the above-noted categories but bear a link to conflicts or violence affecting civilians based on the modus operandi of the suspected perpetrators, location, and other relevant factors (such as objective of violence, clothing, language, etc.) were also documented. Overall, violence involving these armed elements accounted for seven percent (or 85 individuals) of the total civilian victims: 26 killed, 12 injured, and 47 subjected to sexual violence. Consistent with the previous quarter, Western Equatoria State recorded the highest number of incidents and victims attributed to this category of alleged perpetrators, driven by attacks on civilians by unidentified armed elements in the context of communal tensions between the armed elements from Azande and Balanda communities in the State. Further, Unity State recorded the second highest number of victims followed by Central

Equatoria State, majority of the victims in both States were subjected to sexual violence, in a form of rape and gang-rape.

***Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)***

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) remained a critical threat to the protection of women and children, particularly girls. During the third quarter of 2025, UNMISS HRD documented 66 incidents of SGBV, affecting 74 survivors (50 girls, 23 women, and one boy) across eight states in South Sudan. Compared to the previous quarter, this represents a 78 percent increase in SGBV incidents (from 37 to 66), and a 100 percent increase in the number of victims (from 37 to 74). Among the total 74 victims, 63 percent were attributed to community members or neighbors, 29 percent to family members/relatives, six percent to unidentified armed elements, two percent to SSPDF.



Western Equatoria State experienced the highest rate of SGBV nationwide, with 25 incidents recorded involving 26 victims (16 girls and 10 women). Among these 26 victims, 16 were attributable to community members or neighbors.

Further, in addition to incidents of SGBV, UNMISS HRD documented 45 incidents of CRSV affecting 79 victims nationwide (54 women and 25 girls). Central Equatoria State experienced the highest number of CRSV incidents nationwide (36 percent or 16 incidents involving 26 victims), followed by Western Bahr el Ghazal State (22 percent or 10 incidents involving 12 victims), and Unity State (16 percent or seven incidents involving 25 victims). Collectively, these three states accounted for 80 percent of CRSV victims nationwide. Compared to the previous quarter, Central Equatoria State experienced the highest percentage increase in the number of documented CRSV

incidents (from seven to 16 incidents) and victims (from 23 to 26). Consistent with previous reports, women and girls were disproportionately affected by both SGBV and CRSV, accounting for 99 percent of documented victims (77 women and 75 girls).

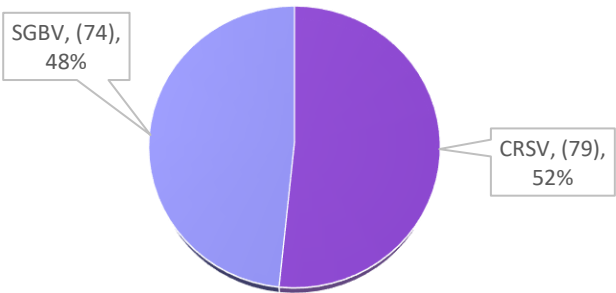
UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that incidents of SGBV and CRSV are underreported due to various factors, including social stigma, trauma, fear of retaliation, and limited access to formal justice mechanisms across South Sudan. Further, due to intersectional vulnerabilities, survivors often face social pressure to seek compensation through customary courts or to marry the perpetrator, as opposed to seeking accountability through the criminal justice system.

## GEOGRAPHICAL TRENDS

Between July and September 2025, Warrap State experienced the highest level of violence affecting civilians, accounting for 46 percent of the total number of victims nationwide (or 528 individuals), followed by Central Equatoria State (14 percent or 160 individuals), and Unity State (nine percent or 107 individuals). Notably, Eastern Equatoria and Central Equatoria States experienced 81 and 42 percent increases, respectively, in the number of documented victims compared to the previous quarter (from 53 to 96 and from 113 to 160). Whereas Jonglei State notably experienced a decrease in both number of incidents (from 36 to 24 and victims (from 232 to 58).

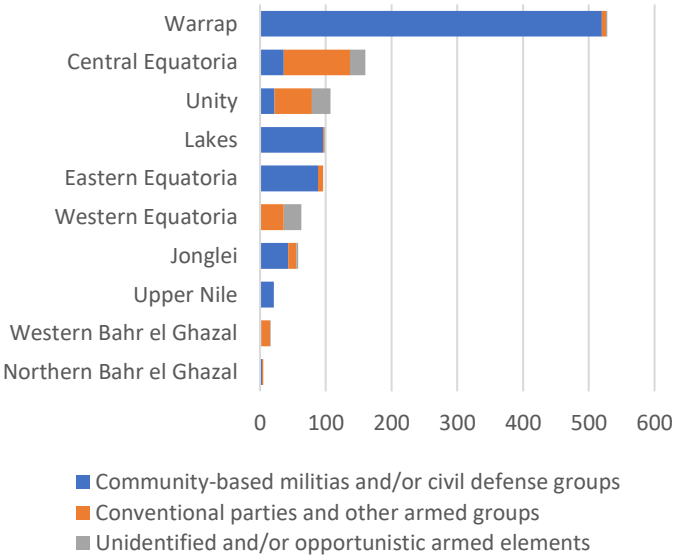
During the reporting period, persistent armed hostilities between the SSPDF and allied armed groups on one side, and the SPLA-IO and allied militia group, mainly from the White Army, significantly deteriorated the human rights and security situation in parts of Jonglei, Upper Nile, Western Equatoria, and Western Bahr El Ghazal States. Civilians in these areas were subjected to severe forms of violence, including indiscriminate airstrikes, shelling and aerial bombardments by the SSPDF and allied armed groups, resulting in undetermined number of civilian casualties and large-scale forced displacement. Due to operational constraints and limited access to conflict-affected areas, the number of civilian casualties resulting from aerial bombardments and military offensives between the parties to the armed conflict remains undetermined. Between July and September, UNMISS HRD was able to verify 13 civilians killed and 43 others injured as result of the above-noted hostilities. All armed offensives perpetrated in these areas by the SSPDF and allied armed groups targeted the Nuer inhabited communities perceived to be supporters of the SPLM/A-IO.

Total number of sexual abuse victims



Warrap State experienced the highest number of killings (200 individuals) and injuries (317 individuals), accounting for 57 percent of the total victims of killing and injury nationwide, followed by Lakes and Eastern Equatoria States at 10 percent (or 92 individuals) and nine percent (or 86 individuals), respectively.

State most affected by violence



Central Equatoria State experienced the highest number of abductions, accounting for 64 percent of the total victims across South Sudan (or 101 individuals), followed by Western Equatoria State at 12 percent (or 19 individuals), whilst Central Equatoria State experienced the highest number of documented victims of CRSV, accounting for 33 percent of victims nationwide (or 26 individuals).



Further, while Warrap State experienced the highest number of victims by the community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, Unity State experienced the

highest number of civilian casualties by the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups.

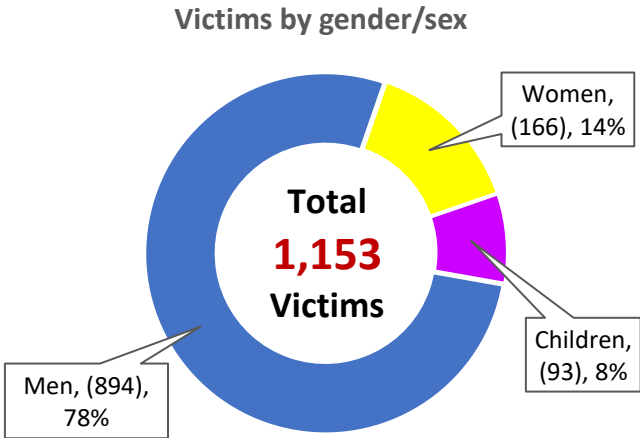
## VICTIMS

During the reporting period, UNMISS HRD documented a total of 1,153 civilian victims affected by four major forms of harms in South Sudan, representing a 24 percent decrease compared to the previous quarter, and a 46 percent increase compared to the same quarter in 2024. During the reporting period, men comprised the majority of victims (78 percent or 894 individuals), followed by women at 14 percent (166 individuals), and children at eight percent (46 boys and 47 girls).

The primary form of harm perpetrated against men was killings (52 percent), followed by injuries (37 percent), and abduction (11 percent) – largely as a result of indiscriminate attacks targeting civilians attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups in the context of inter/intra-communal violence, as well as the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups. In comparison with the previous quarter, the number of male victims decreased by 23 percent (from 1,165 to 894). Further, UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that CRSV affecting male survivors is grossly underreported due to social stigma.

The primary form of harm perpetrated against children was abduction (39 percent), followed by CRSV (27 percent), injuries (20 percent), and killings (14 percent). Abduction was the leading form of harm perpetrated against boys, whereas sexual violence was the leading form of harm perpetrated against girls. Among child victims, 58 percent were attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, 29 percent to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, and 13 percent to unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements. The highest number of child victims were documented in Central Equatoria State (22 individuals), followed by Eastern Equatoria (14

individuals) and Warrap (14 individuals) States. Compared with the previous quarter, there was a 40 percent decrease in the number of child victims (from 155 to 93 individuals) of which 62 were girls.



The primary form of harm perpetrated against women was CRSV (33 percent), followed by killing (29 percent), injury (25 percent), and abduction (13 percent). UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that many abducted women and girls were also subjected to sexual violence. Among adult female victims, 56 percent were attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups, 20 percent to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups and 23 percent to unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements. The highest number of adult female victims was documented in Warrap State (57 individuals), followed by Unity State (39 individuals), and Central Equatoria State (29 individuals) States. Compared with the previous quarter, the number of adult female victims decreased by 16 percent (from 198 to 166).

## PERPETRATORS

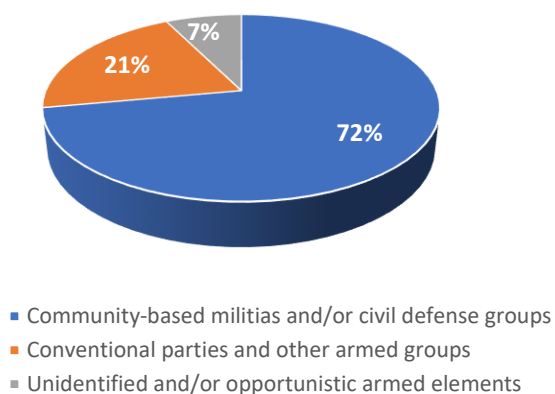
UNMISS HRD identified three major categories of alleged perpetrators involved in conflict-related violence affecting civilians: i) community-based militias and/or civil defense groups; ii) conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups; and iii) unidentified and/or other opportunistic armed elements. During the third quarter of 2025, the majority of victims were attributed to community-based militias and/or civil

defense groups (72 percent or 831 individuals), followed by the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups (21 percent or 237 individuals), and unidentified and/or opportunistic armed elements (seven percent or 85 individuals).

### **Community-based Militias and/or Civil Defense Groups**

While inter/intra-communal violence is historically common among pastoralist communities in South Sudan, the entrenched patterns of violence among various ethnic groups, tribes, and sub-sections have been exacerbated by the alleged involvement and support of the conventional parties to the armed conflict. Further, political elites at the local and national levels have allegedly contributed to the intensification of violence, including by instigating or participating in the planning of attacks, and by providing financial and logistical support as well as military-grade weapons and ammunition. In this context, inter/intra-communal violence is often linked to the broader political and security dynamics in South Sudan.

**Civilian casualties by type of perpetrators**



Compared to the previous quarter, UNMISS HRD documented a 14 percent decrease (from 203 to 174) in the number of violent incidents, and a 20 percent decrease in the number of victims (from 1,035 to 831) attributable to community-based militias and/or civil defense groups. Warrap State experienced the highest number of victims attributable to these groups (520 individuals), followed by Lakes State (96 individuals), and Eastern Equatoria State (88 individuals). In these three States alone, community-based militias and/or civil defense groups were responsible for a total of 704 victims, representing 84 percent of all victims documented across South Sudan. Among violence attributable to these groups nationwide,

the highest number of victims were attributable to armed elements from Dinka sub-groups in Warrap State (65 percent or 546 individuals). The primary form of harm perpetrated by community-based militias and/or civil defense groups was killing (54 percent), followed by injury (38 percent), abduction (six percent), and sexual violence (two percent).

### **Conventional Parties to the Armed Conflict and other Armed Groups**

Compared to the previous quarter, UNMISS HRD documented a 25 percent decrease (from 101 to 76) in the number of violent incidents, and a 46 percent decrease in the number of victims (from 438 to 237 individuals) attributable to the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups. Central Equatoria State experienced the highest number of victims attributable to this category of perpetrators (101 individuals), followed by Unity State (57 individuals), and Western Equatoria State (36 individuals) States. Among the conventional parties to the armed conflict and other armed groups, the highest number of victims were attributable to government security forces (50 percent), followed by SPLA-IO (37 percent), and NAS splinter groups (13 percent).

UNMISS HRD has reasonable grounds to believe that members of foreign armed forces supported SSPDF operations against the SPLA-IO and allied militia groups and may have directly participated in hostilities.

### **Unidentified and/or other Opportunistic Armed Elements**

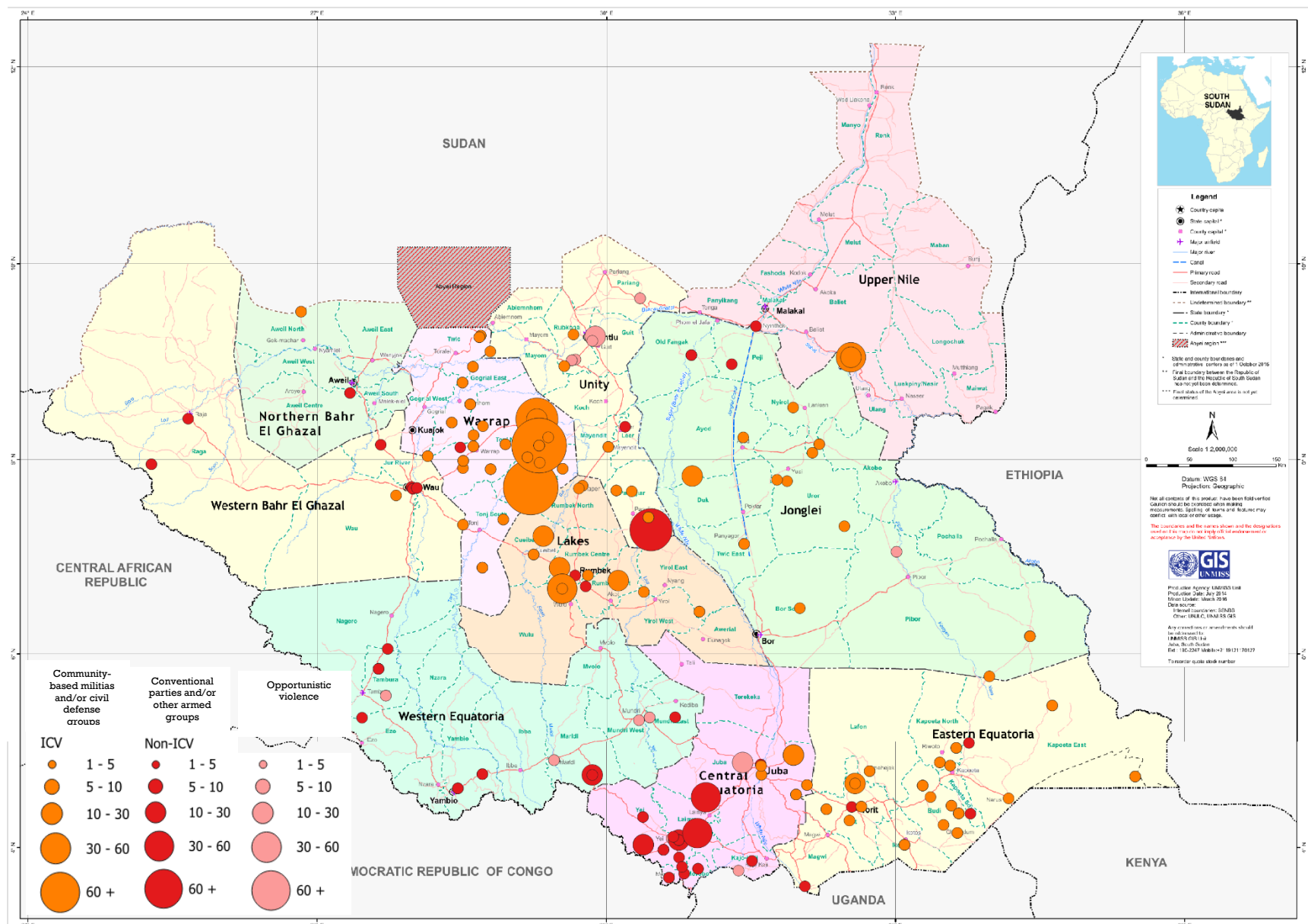
Compared to the previous quarter, UNMISS HRD documented a 40 percent increase (from 30 to 42) in the number of violent incidents, and a 93 percent increase in the number of victims (from 44 to 85) attributable to unidentified and other opportunistic armed elements. Unity State experienced the highest number of victims attributable to this category of perpetrators (28 individuals), followed Western Equatoria State (27 individuals), and Central Equatoria (23 individuals) States.

# Location of Violence Affecting Civilians in South Sudan July – September 2025

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN  
States and Counties

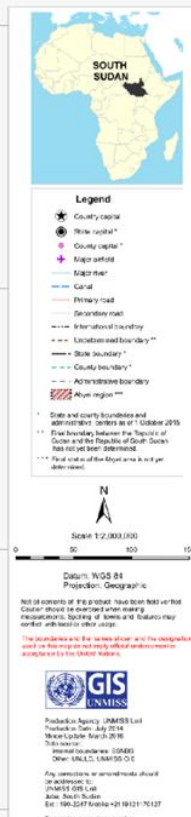
Scale: 1:2,000,000  
Scale No. (S) 14/2001/001/471/025/235/001/001/001

Edition 1



**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN**  
States and Counties

Figure 3



Killed	Injured	Abducted	CRSV
• 1 - 5	• 1 - 5	• 1 - 5	• 1 - 5
● 5 - 10	● 5 - 10	● 5 - 10	● 5 - 10
● 10 - 30	● 10 - 30	● 10 - 30	● 10 - 30
● 30 - 60	● 30 - 60	● 30 - 60	● 30 - 60
● 60 +	● 60 +	● 60 +	● 60 +