



# Human Security Survey 2022 Annual Summary Report

## Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan

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[protectionofcivilians.org](https://protectionofcivilians.org)

### Main recommendations to local authorities, UNMISS, and NGOs/CSOs



**Political support for the prevention of farmer-pastoralist violence** | The year 2022 saw months of tension and intercommunal violence between local farming communities and migrating cattle keepers fleeing the floods in Jonglei. Only after considerable political pressure from state government officials did the cattle keepers return to Jonglei, but with the 2023-24 rainy season approaching, and the memories of grave flooding in Jonglei during the last couple of years, expectations are that the migrating cattle keepers could return in the course of this year. **Therefore, local state and county government, law enforcement agencies as well as UNMISS should anticipate for a possible return of migrating cattle keepers to the area and develop concrete mitigation plans that protect local communities and their agricultural lands and engage the cattle keepers through dialogue;**



**Adaptation of agricultural production to climate change and the prevention of food insecurity** | Agriculture is the main economic employment sector in Magwi and Torit counties, and the Equatoria region is known to be the breadbasket of the country. However, climate change has also manifested itself here with less reliable precipitation patterns, affecting yields and harvests. To overcome the potential adverse climatic impact, **it is of paramount importance that local government officials, UNMISS and (inter)national NGOs/CSOs invest resources in developing and teaching innovative methods for farming communities to sustain and improve agricultural production, thereby safeguarding food security.**



**Investment in a social contract** | High levels of (communal) violence and an overreliance on youth militia and other self-protection mechanisms show that formal law enforcement across Magwi and Torit counties is still dispersed and insufficient. To improve security levels, **local authorities and NGOs should start to lobby for, and design, programs aimed at establishing a stronger social contract between communities and local authorities, with a focus on the roles and responsibilities of traditional chiefs and police.**



## HUMAN SECURITY SURVEY: INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY



### About us & contact

The Human Security Survey (HSS) is a unique survey methodology developed by PAX, that includes a series of complementary activities, including population-based research, active community engagement, and advocacy. The objectives of the HSS are: 1) to increase knowledge and understanding of local human security dynamics and trends; 2) to enhance the 'claim-making capacity' of civilians to hold security providers and decision-makers accountable; and 3) to inform evidence-based advocacy that enables (inter)national stakeholders to design and implement protection activities that reflect local realities. PAX currently implements the HSS in South Sudan in close collaboration with local field partners on the ground. For more information, please visit <https://protectionofcivilians.org/topics/human-security-survey/> or contact Anton Quist (quist@paxforpeace.nl).



### Facts & figures

In June 2022, 14 local enumerators were trained and deployed to the field, where they collected 492 surveys in 12 payams across Magwi and Torit counties of Eastern Equatoria State. This report summarizes the community perceptions and security dynamics observed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of data collection in the area (only Magwi County at the time) since 2020. This survey therefore reflects on the security situation in 2021-2022 (until June). The sample consisted of 51% Lotuko population, 27% Acholi and 19% Madi. Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents were women, almost three-quarters (73%) earned their livelihood as farmers and 79% of respondents were between the ages of 16-45.



## MAIN SECURITY DYNAMICS OBSERVED

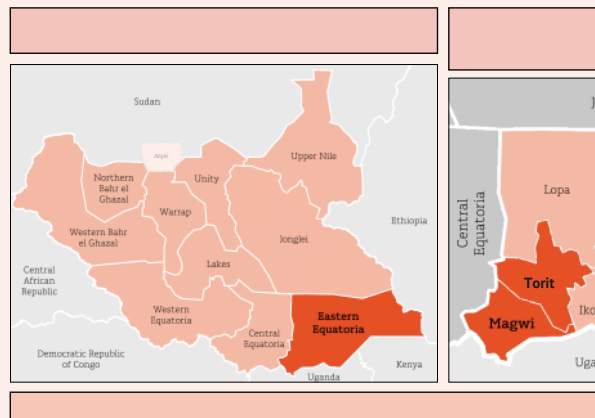


**Perceived security developments across Magwi and Torit counties show a very mixed picture.** 32% of respondents reported that the security situation over the past year 2021-2022 had deteriorated, while 30% claimed the security situation improved and 37% claimed it hadn't changed. In 2020, 64% of respondents (only in Magwi County at the time) thought that security in 2019-2020

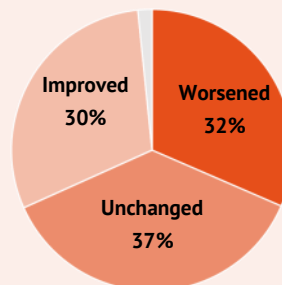
had improved and only 8% indicated that security deteriorated. Relative security levels in 2021-2022 have deteriorated most in Magwi County (46%), while 46% of Torit County respondents indicated security levels didn't change, and 37% said security improved. This can mainly be attributed to a series of (foiled) cattle raids and revenge killings in mainly the eastern parts of Torit County, while the flood-induced influx of armed cattle



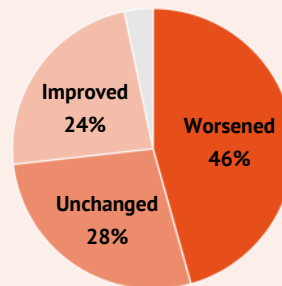
Left: Map of South Sudan. Right: Map of Magwi & Torit counties, highlighting the areas surveyed in 2022. Disclaimer: These maps are intended for illustrative purposes only and do not warrant accuracy or completeness, nor do they imply the expression of any opinion by PAX.



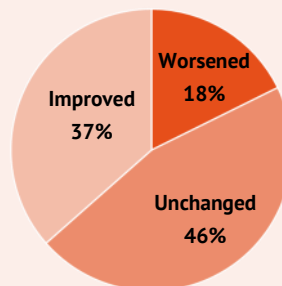
### HOW DID YOUR PERSONAL SECURITY SITUATION CHANGE SINCE LAST YEAR?



Eastern Equatoria  
(N = 492)



Magwi County  
(N = 243)



Torit County  
(N = 249)

keepers and their herds into Magwi County lead to a prolonged period of tensions and deadly clashes between local farmers and armed youth against the migrating cattle keepers from Jonglei during the first half of 2022. Additionally, many road ambushes and violent robberies, sometimes with deadly casualties, were reported along the Juba-Nimule and Torit-Kapoeta roads. Overall, 55% of respondents claimed to generally feel safe in their own community, while 42% indicated that they do not.

**Communities across Torit and Magwi counties observed changes in weather conditions and their local environment.** Most notably, respondents indicated: rainfall becoming less predictable (83% of respondents), changes in duration of dry or rainy seasons (65%), increased drought (56%) and changes in temperature (53%). Significantly, all these changes had a profound impact on agriculture, the main economic sector in the area. As community members explained during the validation session: *“Usually rains started to fall in March and April, but in the recent years it starts late, up to May and June. While the rains start late, they also continue without break, so that it also destroys the little that was planted.”* Flooding (which is the most impactful environmental challenge in many others parts of South Sudan) was only mentioned by 6% of respondents, but the flooding in Jonglei had a big indirect impact on rural

**42%**

Households reported at least one security threat in the previous year

**MOST FREQUENTLY REPORTED INCIDENTS**  
(percentage of respondents reporting an incident in Eastern Equatoria State)

**26%**

Robbery



**15%**

Killing



**15%**

Cattle raiding



**12%**

Physical assault



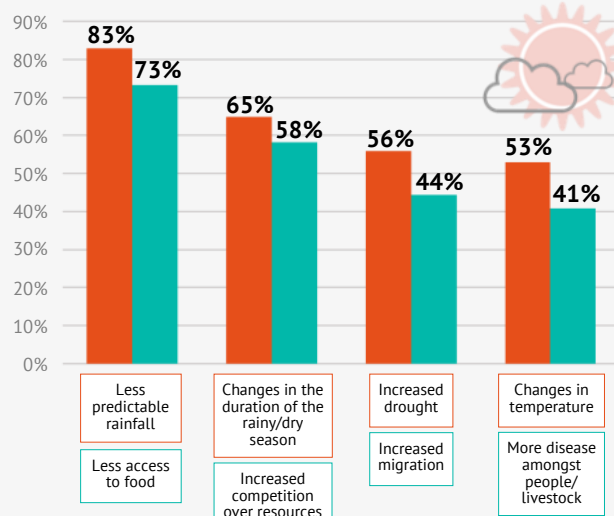
**9%**

Kidnapping



communities in Magwi, according to community representatives: *“The conflict in Equatoria today was originally created by environmental changes. If the flooding did not come to Jonglei, the Dinka Bor cattle herders wouldn't have come to the highlands of Equatoria to cause the host community destruction, lost lives and a destroyed social fabric”.*

**WHAT ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES HAVE YOU OBSERVED?**



**WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES?**

According to survey results, the aforementioned environmental changes lead to access to food being more challenging (73%) and more competition over scarce resources (58%). Community representatives added that smaller yields and harvests even lead to starvation and famine among communities, as well as to intercommunal conflict over the little resources remaining, hence creating struggles and divisions. Moreover, it was claimed that *“the insecurity in Magwi interrupted the farmers and they could not plant their crops”*, adding to the food insecurity in the area. Furthermore, a woman in the area complained that wildlife like elephants are destroying crops in Pageri area, urging wildlife officers to take note and respond. 90% of survey respondents hoped that NGOs could teach them new practices or livelihood alternatives to deal with environmental challenges, while 67% expected the local authorities to address water management and food security issues, and 62% called on NGOs to introduce community projects dealing with environmental changes.

**42% of all surveyed households reported at least one security incident affecting them during 2021-2022.** The three most frequently reported security incidents were robberies (26% of respondents reported this incident), murders (15%) and cattle raids (15%), which all showed an increase compared to the Magwi results of 2020, with cattle raids seeing the highest growth (from 6% to 15%). These incidents mostly affected adult men and were mostly blamed on criminals (25%), people from

neighboring communities (15%) and local armed youth (12%), which seems consistent with the violence following the influx of Jonglei cattle keepers in the first half of 2022, leading to many reports of cattle raids and ambushes and revenge killings involving these armed cattle keepers and local armed youth militias protecting local communities. Police officials during data validation also requested bringing more attention to the worrying rates of suicide plaguing the area.



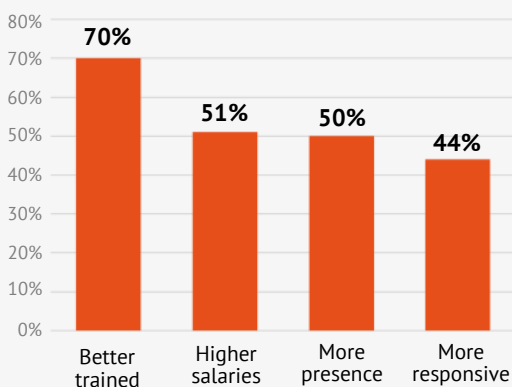
**70% of the respondents indicated that they reported the security incidents they experienced to an outside actor.** These reports were directed to traditional chiefs (72% of reporting respondents), the police (56%) and local armed youth (30%), among others. 72% of the respondents reporting their cases were not satisfied with the resolution by these actors, because the perpetrators of the incidents were not caught (94%) or the perpetrators were not punished (54%).



**The most accessible security actors across Magwi and Torit counties are communal chiefs (84%), local armed youth (68%) and the police (49%).** All three of these local security actors were considered to be performing well, where 83% of respondents reported good performance from communal chiefs, 84% from local armed youth and 66% from the police. Concerning the most accessible security actor (the chiefs), community members think that chiefs should receive (more) training (70% of respondents), that they need higher salaries (51%), and that they should be more present in the community (50%). Additionally, prominent recommendations for other actors are summarized as follows: armed youth are seen to need better training (72%) and police need higher presence in the community (77%). As an aside, more women are also requested to join the police force (84%). Additionally, 88% of respondents think dispute resolution is best handled by local chiefs. The national government in Juba was credited for taking effective steps to reduce communal violence by 47%, with 32% disagreeing.



### WHAT IS NEEDED TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF COMMUNAL CHIEFS?



**Civilian disarmament continues to be a continuous issue.** Self-protection (*“people need arms to provide their own security”*) is supported by 57% of respondents over communal disarmament (*“disarmament of civilians is needed”*; 39%). Nevertheless, it should be noted that participants of the data validation preferred communal disarmament. Adding to the above, 82% of respondents think it is important for civilians to meet with members of local government and the organized forces (security actors) to advocate for better protection in their community. More than two-thirds of respondents (69%) agree with the statement: *“in my payam we trust local armed youth for our security more than any security actors from outside”*, while 61% thinks that their community relies on local armed youth to provide protection and security (compared to 31% relying on police). 80% of respondents agreed that *“it is best when security forces are recruited from within our community, because they know us.”*



**According to community members, the main change needed to prevent future violent conflict is economic development (48%).** In addition to this, respondents also indicated a preference for changes such as the implementation of the R-ARCSS peace agreement (40%), better access to basic services (36%), improved governance at the national level (33%) and improved community relations through local reconciliation and dialogue (30%), among other less mentioned factors. Almost half of respondents (47%) expect the security situation to improve in the next year, while 22% thinks security will get worse.



**Conversely, the main factor identified which may cause continued conflict, was poverty or lack of livelihood opportunities (52%).** Other prominent factors include poor governance at the national level (34%) and a combination of four different factors which received similar respondent approval, namely: high crime rates, competition over resources, cattle raiding + increasing dowry prices, and tribalism or discrimination between ethnic groups (all 31%).



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