



Improving Sanitation in South Sudan

South Sudan is one of the worst places in the world to find a latrine. According to non-governmental organization WaterAid, more than 93 percent of South Sudanese lack access to an improved toilet—one that ensures hygienic separation of waste from humans. The dearth of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure puts millions of people at risk of illness and death from preventable diseases like cholera and acute watery diarrhea. In recent years, access to WASH infrastructure in South Sudan has worsened as ongoing insecurity displaces populations and destroys homes.

Since 2011, USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) humanitarian partner Medair has provided critical WASH services to conflict-affected populations in South Sudan's remote Renk County, Upper Nile State, where safe, hygienic latrines are hard to find. Medair

partners with communities, like that of Renk's Abayok internally displaced person settlement, to build key sanitation infrastructure. With technical support and locally-sourced, USAID-funded materials from Medair, community members dig latrine pits and construct shelters.

Forty-six year old Khamis recently built a latrine with support from Medair. Before the Medair WASH project, Khamis's household used a latrine that had no roof and flooded during the rainy season. "The new latrine is very good for us," he said, "It has a roof and it prevents people from getting diseases. Four households are benefiting from this latrine."

Khamis's family also built a tippy tap near the latrine, a simple hand-washing station made of wooden poles and a bucket. It provides a way to wash hands in areas with no running water. "We didn't have a hand-washing station before. This is much better," notes Khamis. "*Shukran* [thank you] Medair. I'm very pleased and giving thanks to Medair for preparing all this. And those who are funding the project, I'm thanking all of them."

Medair continues efforts to expand WASH services and reach those most in need in Renk. Since it began its current project in September 2015, Medair has helped people in Abayok construct more than 90 new latrines, benefitting an estimated 4,700 people.

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