

Message from the Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan, Mr Toby Lanzer

World Humanitarian Day

Juba, 19 August 2013: Today we are part of a global commemoration marking the work of humanitarian staff across the world. We also pay tribute to our colleagues who have lost their lives while relieving the suffering of others, often in some of the most dangerous settings.

South Sudan has one of the largest aid operations in the world. Some 17,000 staff are engaged across the country in a wide range of activities: They provide food assistance in each of the ten states, protect refugees from Sudan and other countries, and deal with the humanitarian consequences of violence in Jonglei. Our goal is to reach three million people in need with life-saving assistance by the end of the year.

Citizens of South Sudan make up the vast majority of people working in challenging conditions and at times risking their lives to deliver assistance in the most remote corners of South Sudan. Hand in hand with international aid workers, South Sudanese are distributing relief and helping communities to help themselves.

As Humanitarian Coordinator the spirit and courage of the aid workers in the deep field is an inspiration to me. In the most remote areas colleagues put the needs of others before themselves. Aid workers must be allowed to carry out their work for the benefit of communities unhindered and in safety.

World Humanitarian Day is an opportunity for all to re-commit to the values that underpin humanitarianism. As part of today's commemoration we are calling on everyone to answer a question: What do you think the world needs more of? My word is "solidarity" and I look forward to continuing in this spirit with the people of South Sudan in the year ahead.

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The Humanitarian Coordinator in South Sudan can be followed on twitter.com/tobylanzer or @tobylanzer