International Committee of the Red Cross

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**VIDEO NEWS FOOTAGE:**

**South Sudan: Tens of thousands of people at-risk as COVID-19 reaches crowded Juba displacement camp**

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| Footage available from the **ICRC Video Newsroom** 14May 2020Easy to preview and to download[icrcnewsroom.org](http://icrcnewsroom.org) |

**STORY**

How can you observe physical distancing when you must fit three people under a mosquito net made for one person to protect yourself from malaria?

In Juba, the capital of South Sudan, nearly 30,000 people live side-by-side in a sprawling camp known as a “protection of civilian” (PoC) site. They fled their homes to escape war and the camp is their only home. But now, Covid-19 has arrived in the camp.

“We are seeing a big increase in cases across the country. We are particularly concerned that there have been a couple of cases that tested positive in the camp here just outside Juba,” says James Reynolds, the head of delegation for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in South Sudan. “There are tens of thousands of internally displaced persons living there, so they live in quite cramped conditions and I think the big difficulty there is if you have got lots of people living in a single home without maybe running water inside that it’s very difficult for people to respect handwashing, social distancing, wearing a mask, all these things.”

To combat the virus requires rigorous hygiene and distancing measures. Clean water, at least, is available, but what about the distancing? This will be much harder, says camp resident and English teacher Kim.

“Today if we have the disease, and our population is very squeezed. We are in one place, so it will be very, very hard for us to avoid this disease, or to control this disease, because we are very close to each other.”

“For example, in our rooms you find ten people in the same room. Or you find three people under the same mosquito net. From there, how can we put the rule that says make a distance?”

Extra hygiene and distancing measures have now been introduced, but, as with children all over the world coping with the virus, these measures may be hard to stick to for the camp’s younger residents. And in the PoC, some of the vital equipment is still lacking.

“There is a need for soaps, both liquid soap and hard soap to be distributed to the communities in need,” says camp resident Lony Choul. “So that we can keep on with Covid-19 protective measures. This is one of the most challenging {things}.”

The ICRC, together with the South Sudan Red Cross, has worked in the PoC for years to help families who are separated by war stay in touch through phone calls. With cases now confirmed in the camp, the team is suspending in-person phone call sessions to not create crowds. Instead, the team is sending phone credit to those with active phone numbers so they can make the calls themselves.

“We are very sorry to hear this news in the PoC,” says the ICRC’s deputy protection coordinator in South Sudan, Cellou Mamadou Bah. “The ICRC has been working there since the establishment of this camp. We have been providing RFL services—restoring family link services—to the population. We are very close to them, we have also our own Red Cross volunteers with whom we have been working for years, and so the situation is very worrying for us.”

Everyone in the world is at risk during a pandemic. But for those displaced by conflict, living in crowded camps, prisons, or densely populated urban neighbourhoods the risk is higher.

“It is not just the camp, we’ve also got prisons, we’ve got hospitals, and many parts of Juba are quite low-income, but high density, so you’ve got the same kinds of problems with lots of people living in quite a confined area and it is very difficult for them to fulfill all of those measures,” says Reynolds.

The ICRC remains committed to helping stop the spread of COVID-19 in South Sudan, together with the South Sudan Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent, while also continuing to meet the needs of people affected by conflict and violence.

**KEY FACTS**

* 1,700 South Sudan Red Cross volunteers have reached more than one million people across the country with information about how to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
* Handwashing points are being established and donated in 14 places of detention, 11 primary health care centres, and two hospitals. In addition, 150 hand-pumps are being rehabilitated to restore access to water to 75,000 people in Juba together with South Sudan Red Cross.
* Personal protective equipment is being provided to health care workers in seven prisons as well as in 36 health centres across the country supported by the ICRC.
* More than 2,700 households in the Juba and Bentiu PoCs received phone credit to stay in touch with loved ones. Seven major prisons and a COVID-19 treatment centre were given mobile phones to help keep families in contact with each other.
* The ICRC continues to distribute seeds and farming tools and fishing kits to more than 200,000 people in the country, but with adjustments made such as physical distancing so that these efforts do contribute to the spread of disease.
* More than 300 people were admitted with weapon-related injuries into ICRC surgical wards from January to April this year. These efforts are also continuing for life and limb-threatening injuries, with infection prevention measures in place.

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**SHOTLIST**

Filming date May 2020

Locations Juba, South Sudan

Language English

ICRC producer Ali Yousef

Cameraman

**Time code LOCATION / IMAGE / TRANSCRIPTS**

0 :00 – 0 :16 Various exteriors PoC3 camp

0 :16 – 0 :51 Soundbite James Reynolds, ICRC Head of Delegation, South Sudan (English)

“We are seeing a big increase in cases across the country. We are particularly concerned that there have been a couple of cases that tested positive in the camp here just outside Juba. There are tens of thousands of internally displaced persons living there, so they live in quite cramped conditions and I think the big difficulty there is if you have got lots of people living in a single home without maybe running water inside that it’s very difficult for people to respect handwashing, social distancing, wearing a mask, all these things.”

0:51 – 1:33 Various exteriors camp, clean water distribution

1:33 – 2:00 Soundbite Kim, camp resident and English teacher (English)

“Today if we have the disease, and our population is very squeezed. We are in one place, so it will be very, very hard for us to avoid this disease, or to control this disease, because we are very close to each other. For example, in our rooms you find ten people in the same room. Or you find three people under the same mosquito net. From there, how can we put the rule that says make a distance?”

2:00 – 2:23 Handwashing, latrines, children

2:23 – 2:41 Soundbite Lony Choul, camp resident, (English)

“There is a need for soaps, both liquid soap and hard soap to be distributed to the communities in need. So that we can keep on with Covid-19 protective measures. This is one of the most challenging {things}.”

2:41 – 3:14 Various ICRC restoring family links team, camp residents calling families

3:14 – 3:42 Soundbite Cellou Mamadou Bah, ICRC Deputy Coordinator Protection (English) “We are very sorry to hear this news in the PoC. The ICRC has been working there since the establishment of this camp. We have been providing RFL services—restoring family link services—to the population. We are very close to them, we have also our own Red Cross volunteers with whom we have been working for years, and so the situation is very worrying for us.”

3:42 – 4:04 Various, prison, South Sudan

4:04 – 4:23 Soundbite James Reynolds, ICRC Head of Delegation, South Sudan (English)

“It is not just the camp, we’ve also got prisons, we’ve got hospitals, and many parts of Juba are quite low-income, but high density, so you’ve got the same kinds of problems with lots of people living in quite a confined area and it is very difficult for them to fulfill all of those measures.”

4:23 – 5:06 Various, hand washing, children playing and dancing