

The Republic of South Sudan



Ministry of Health

Date: 21st November 2024

For Immediate Release

Subject: Statement on demonstration about Akobo County Hospital

Towards the end of last year, the health sector initiated the transition from the COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Project (CERSHPP) to the Health Sector Transformation Project (HSTP).

As part of this transition, all non-governmental organizations (NGOs) interested in delivering a basic package of health and nutrition services applied through the United Nations (UN) portal.

This process overseen by the management organization—United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) saw Save the Children emerged as the implementing partner for Lot 7, where Akobo County Hospital falls under.

On travelling to Akobo County Hospital to commence the delivery of health services, the Akobo Community, County Commissioner, County Health Department rejected Save the Children, causing disruption in the provision of health services that has lasted to date.

On noticing this gap, the National Ministry of Health, together with the Jonglei State Ministry of Health and development partners including UNICEF and the World Bank Group onboarded Care International to take over the delivering of health services in Lot 7 including the Akobo County Hospital.

On June 8, 2024, a month before the official start of the Health Sector Transformation Project (HSTP), the national Ministry of Health yet again sent a team that included Care International to Akobo County Hospital to assess the level of needs of the facility, in order to align it with the provisions of HSTP. However, the County Health Department, the County Commissioner and the Community once again rejected the genuine efforts from the National Ministry of Health.

The National Ministry of Health continued to engage a broad array of stakeholders such as community leadership in Akobo, Members of Parliament, and airlifted stakeholders to Juba to help fill the void in the provision of health services and ensure that Akobo County Hospital resumes operations.

In September, Care International managed to assess the Akobo County Hospital and presented their findings to a multi-stakeholder meeting comprising of UNICEF, the World Bank Group and the National Ministry of Health, late last month where the following was agreed:

Accorded Akobo County Hospital a special status similar to that of teaching hospitals of Juba, Wau, Malakal and Kiir Mayardit Women Hospital due to the fact that Akobo County Hospital is serving a large population, including cross-border communities as well as the previous services it received under the



International Commission of Red Cross (ICRC). Among the other issue resolved is the payment of incentives to more than 200 health workers.

The Ministry is finalizing minor operational arrangement to restore full operations to Akobo County Hospital, such as diesel cost to support power generation and has scheduled a meeting with Care International, World Bank Group and UNICEF next week.

Once these are in place, Care International will commence operations in Akobo County Hospital.

The Ministry remains committed to ensuring equitable access to life saving health services to all South Sudanese, including the people of Akobo County.



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