

PLACE

Juba

DATE

14 Oct 2020

UNHCR South Sudan welcomes the donation of 440 000 masks from Switzerland

The UN Refugee Agency received today in Juba 440 000 masks from Swiss Humanitarian Aid, part of a larger three million face mask donation Switzerland made to UNHCR, to boost the protection of frontline workers from COVID-19.

UNHCR South Sudan is grateful for the donation of 440 000 face masks from Switzerland. These personal protective equipment items, part of a larger donation that Switzerland made to the UN Refugee Agency, recently arrived in Juba and will be soon dispatched to refugee hosting areas. To mark the occasion, UNHCR and the Swiss Cooperation Office and Consular Agency held a joint press conference at UNHCR warehouse in Juba today. The event was attended by the Minister of Humanitarian and Disaster Management, and the Deputy Commissioner for Refugee Affairs of South Sudan.

The lack of personal protective equipment is one of the main challenges in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in remote areas where the majority of refugees are hosted in South Sudan. Protecting frontlines workers and humanitarians is pivotal to ensure there are no disruption of services. “The use of these PPEs will decrease the risk of exposure to the virus for our staff and community outreach workers,” says Felicia Mandy Owusu, UNHCR Assistant Representative for Operations, welcoming the donation, “UNHCR would like to thank Switzerland for standing with refugees.”

Switzerland has generously contributed, since 2019, more than 1.5 million USD to UNHCR to protect and assist displaced persons in South Sudan.

“The need for protection and humanitarian assistance in South Sudan was already very high even before the current pandemic broke out,” explains Marcel Stoessel, Deputy Head of Mission at the Swiss Cooperation Office and Consular Agency in Juba, “We are glad to be able to make a contribution with these masks so that services to the forcibly displaced can be maintained at a time when South Sudan is confronted with multiple crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic.”

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