



AFRICA/SUDAN - Emergency malnutrition: the number of deaths in South Sudan has doubled with a daily average of 5 children and 2 adults

Khartoum (Agenzia Fides) - More than 170 000 refugees have had to walk for weeks to cross the border and escape from the conflict and food insecurity in the Sudanese states of the Blue Nile and South Kordofan. Many have arrived in the four refugee camps of Batil, Doro, Jamam and Yida, in extremely vulnerable and precarious conditions. In two camps, the conditions of life are particularly frightening and have devastating consequences on people's health. Since June, an average of 5 children die every day in the camp of Yida and in the camp of Batil and one child in three is malnourished. Malnourished children are further weakened by diarrhea, malaria and respiratory infections. In the camp of Yida, which has just doubled the number of beds available, there are more than 55 000 refugees from the State of Unity.

According to the new epidemiological data, reported by the humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders with regards to the mortality rate, from June to July 4 children under the age of five die every day, due to diarrhea and severe infections. The mortality rate for adults is 2 deaths per day per 10 000 people. In the camp of Batil, in the Upper Nile State, where up to 34,000 refugees live, the preliminary results of another new epidemiological survey conducted by MSF, to July 31 show a global child malnutrition rate of 27.7% and a severe acute malnutrition rate of 10.1%, five times the emergency threshold. The situation is worse for children under two years of age: 18% are suffering from severe acute malnutrition. The study also shows a mortality rate for children under five years of age of 2.1 deaths per day per 10 000 people over a period of 4 months. What worsens the situation is the rainy season that has made access routes impassable. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 03/08/2012)