

The Road to Recovery from TB Disease in South Sudan



Augustino worked as a water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) technical supervisor for Rubkona County prior to the South Sudan conflict that began in December 2013. He arrived at the protection of civilians (PoC) site in July 2015 after fleeing his home in nearby Nhialdu due to fighting between government and opposition forces that forced him and his family out of their home.

His family (consisting of two wives and twelve children) were already in the PoC site – they left before him because his two-year old daughter had fallen sick while in Nhialdu and was identified and referred by an MSF outreach team to the MSF hospital in the PoC site. Here, she

was tested for TB and found to be positive. She was admitted to the hospital and started treatment.

Augustino had been coughing before arriving at the PoC site, and his condition worsened after arrival. He believes that he contracted TB from his mother, who was diagnosed with TB in the MSF hospital in Leer County, and he used to care for her at the time. His mother has since been cured.

He visited the MSF hospital four times, received treatment of antibiotics and other medication, but he was not improving. He even bought himself medicines from private pharmacies within the PoC site, but none of it worked. He had been coughing for a total of five months, with attendant symptoms such as night sweats, weight loss and sore throat.

In February 2016, he once again visited the MSF hospital and was referred to the IOM Clinic in Sector 1 for TB screening. He was confirmed as having TB after three sputum samples were collected from him and tested by the qualified IOM laboratory technologists. Soon after confirmation, Augustino began an anti-TB medication regime.

Augustino is in his third week of treatment and reports drastic improvement. His cough has improved, he has more energy and even his voice has returned. Before receiving treatment, he was considering quitting his current job as a Project Officer for the South Sudan Trust Rehabilitation and Development Organization (SSTDO), a local organization working within the PoC site and supported by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). Now, he has no plans of quitting as his energy has returned.

He currently has a four-year old child admitted at MSF and undergoing treatment for TB. The rest of his family have been screened by IOM, and they have all been found to be negative. Augustino is very grateful to IOM for providing this much needed TB testing and treatment services, something that was previously not available for the larger population living in the site.