Gender Country Profile
South Sudan
Commissioned by Sida, the Swedish Embassy in Juba

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List of Abbreviations

CBO  Community Based Organization
CSO  Civil Society Organisation
CRC  Convention on the Rights of the Child
CEDAW Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
DFID  Department for International Development
EU  European Union
FBO  Faith Based Organization
GBV  Gender Based Violence
GCP  Gender Country Profile
IDP  Internally Displaced Persons
INGO  International Non-governmental Organization
MGCSW Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare
NGO  Non-Governmental Organization
Penal Code South Sudan Penal Code Act 2008
PoC  Protection of Civilian site
SGBV  Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SGBV  Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SIDA  Swedish International Development Agency
SPLM  South Sudan People’s Liberation Movement
SPUs  Special Protection Units
SSNPS  South Sudan National Police Force
UDHR  United Nations Declaration on Human Rights
UN  United Nations
UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund
UNFPA United Nations Population Fund
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNPOL United Nations Police
UNMISS United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
UNSCR United Nations Security Council Resolution
Executive Summary

The Swedish Embassy in Juba places gender equality and a focus on women and girls at the centre of their mission to improve conditions in South Sudan. For this reason it has commissioned the writing of this gender country profile (GCP).

This GCP aims to set out the state of gender affairs in South Sudan. It will focus in particular on women and girls and will consider their situations in the non-conflict areas, as well as those areas directly affected by hostilities. The aim of the GCP is to provide the Swedish Embassy in South Sudan, as well as others in the donor community, national authorities and other international actors, with an assessment of the current state of gender affairs in South Sudan. The GCP seeks to identify the key gaps and priorities relating to gender in both the development and humanitarian responses, seeking to identify those places where resources and attention should be directed. It is hoped that the GCP may also guide donors in their efforts in mainstreaming gender issues in programming in South Sudan.

South Sudan is a vast and diverse country. Each of its ten states is experiencing differing humanitarian situations. While in some parts of the country there is relative stability, in others there is full-blown conflict. While a limited number of services are available for those in urban areas, for those in rural areas, conditions tend to be harder. Also, South Sudan is a highly patriarchal country, characterized by significant gender inequality. Men are seen as the heads of households, empowered with decision-making power in their families, as well as in society more broadly.

The current conflict has been characterized by large-scale violations of human rights, committed by both sides, and the intentional targeting of civilians, including through the use of widespread and targeted sexual violence. While fighting has centred largely in three states; Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile, the effects of the conflict have been felt throughout the country. Large-scale displacement, high levels of militarism and a depressed economy have affected life across the country.

Key Findings:

Laws and policies:
In South Sudan’s four years as an independent country, it had taken steps towards developing the policy environment relating to gender; drafting legislation and regulations and ratifying international obligations. Passing of new laws has been relatively slow, due largely to bottlenecks at the Legislative Assembly. A perception exists that since the outbreak of the war, critical such issues such as these have fallen off the agenda, and legislative processes have slowed. There are still many gaps, and areas where regulation or legislation is urgently required. In particular there is a critical need for a Family Law for South Sudan, as well as for new Sexual Violence legislation. While various pieces of legislation have been put in place, the biggest challenges remain around implementation.

Women and labour:
Women carry much of the burden of labour in South Sudan. Women have primary responsibility for looking after their homes and children, as well as sourcing food to feed to their children. Most consider it a woman’s role to collect firewood and water. Women are responsible for the bulk of agricultural production in the country, while men are responsible for cattle. There has been an increase in female-headed households in recent years, as men have left to fight, have been killed by war, or have left to find work, leaving women alone to take care of their families. There are few safety nets for the vulnerable in South Sudan. There is little in the way of social security or services for those in dire need. There are no facilities for the elderly and few facilities to assist those who are disabled.

Women usually lack the skills that they require to improve their livelihood opportunities. Women’s literacy rates are extremely low – estimated by some at 90% illiteracy. Women lack business skills such as numeracy; female entrepreneurs – even at the level of market workers – require business and financial
services training. There is a need for more operational vocational training centres, to train people on practical income generating activities; centres have been built in the past but are left unused. Where women are in paid employment, they often have a harder time than men. Across income levels, women earn lower wages than their male counterparts. Men are also more likely to be preferred for promotions. Women’s economic advancement also means improving women’s access to business at the higher levels – of which there has been very little. From a policy perspective, there is a need to create a favourable space for the participation of women in all spheres of government and business, and to encourage women into leadership positions in these. It is currently difficult for women to access funding to embark on initiatives. There is a need for specific loans and banking services targeted at women.

**Food security and access to water:**
Food insecurity and malnutrition are widespread in South Sudan. Women do the bulk of farming in South Sudan – with some estimating that around 60% of agricultural production is carried out by women. Conflict and insecurity are a leading cause of food insecurity. Years of conflicts have greatly disturbed agricultural production – as large-scale population displacement, the loss of land and assets, reduced access to fields for cultivation and reduced access to markets, have stood in the way of growth and production. The conflict has also contributed to the increase in price of food products – with basic staples now costing more than the population can afford. It is not just the quantity of food that is the problem. Many in the population are not getting the right types of food. South Sudanese have low levels of knowledge about the types of foods that they require. In the conflict areas many rely on food aid for their subsistence. There have been some problems around sexual exploitation in food distribution in IDP camps.

Fetching water is seen to be a woman’s job in South Sudan. Problematically, water pumps are often located far from the places where people reside. Women walking to fetch water are at risk of sexual violence. Providing populations with water wells and boreholes can change women’s lives. This can keep them from having to spend significant portions of their time collecting water, and can keep them safe by eliminating dangerous water collection walks.

**Education:**
One of the biggest problems facing women in South Sudan is the low level of education. This more than anything, keeps women from advancing in society, from empowerment, from political representation, from business and from all other walks of life. The best way to empower women – and men – in South Sudan, is to ensure that they stay in school.

There have been improvements in education in the last decade. Since 2005, school enrolment at all levels has increased, with primary school enrolments growing by 20% per year. However there are still thought to be up to 400,000 children out of school in South Sudan – and many more of them are girls. The enrolment rate of boys is double that of girls. The benefits of keeping girls in school can also be seen in various aspects of their lives. School enrolment delays marriage, leads to improved health, fewer early pregnancies and many other benefits.

**Health care:**
The state of healthcare in South Sudan is extremely poor. There are shortages and gaps at every level of the health system. Most agree that primary healthcare is a priority area for funding. A main problem is the shortage of primary healthcare facilities – particularly in rural areas. Many have to travel long distances to get to clinics. Health facilities have significant shortages of equipment and medicines. Many of the problems around health care have been exacerbated because of a decrease in government spending on health. South Sudan’s national spending on health started at 7.5%, but is now below 4%, having dropped since the start of the current conflict. There is a lack of trained medical personnel at all levels.

The priority health problem affecting women in South Sudan, is reproductive health. South Sudan has the highest material mortality rate in the world. Rates of material mortality are particularly high amongst young mothers. WHO estimates that the maternal mortality rate is 730 per 100,000 live births. It is
estimated that only 20% of women in South Sudan have access to reproductive healthcare services. There is a shortage of trained birth attendants and midwives across the country. Most health facilities do not have trained midwives on staff. Many women do not go for antenatal checks. The population has low levels of knowledge about the importance of antenatal care, and often sees this as going against the traditional way of doing things. There is a need for awareness raising efforts to get pregnant women to regularly visit antenatal care facilities.

If every women of reproductive age in South Sudan could access family planning, it is estimated by Ministry of Health representatives that maternal mortality would reduce by 30%. Family planning is therefore an affordable investment into improving reproductive health and is an important preventative tool for reproductive problems.

**Sexual and gender based violence:**
Rates of sexual and gender based violence in South Sudan are extremely high, with women and girls subjected to various forms of violence and abuse. The vast majority of women and girls suffer from some type of GBV – be it rape, sexual assault, physical assault, forced/early marriage, or psychological/emotional abuse. There is significant under-reporting of SGBV in South Sudan, due to the high levels of stigma and shame, a lack of awareness amongst women about their rights and opportunities for redress, and weak assistance services for survivors. The capacity of the state to respond to GBV is still weak. The crisis has worsened this, as fewer funds and investment are being directed at these types of services.

There are a multitude of verified reports that armed actors on both sides to the conflict have raped women in high numbers. As well as the more systematic rapes, there are also high levels of ‘incidental’ rape – carried out by the myriad of armed actors who roam the country. While venturing from their homes; collecting firewood, water, or working at markets, women become vulnerable to sexual violence.

**Men and boys:**
There is a lack of research and understanding about masculinity in South Sudan, and how this contributes to the mistreatment of women. There is a shortage of programming addressing with men and boys in South Sudan – and dealing with harmful notions of masculinity, GBV reduction and men’s participation in harmful traditional practices. Social norms change messaging aimed at men is needed. While messaging aimed at men being conducted, this often takes place as part of broader programming – rather than being packaged as men and boys work. Work is required around social norms change for men, at all levels – from the men in the communities, to the men at the top leadership positions.

There is no research available about SGBV perpetrated against men and boys in South Sudan. Homosexuality is illegal in South Sudan and is an absolute taboo. It is likely that shame is playing a role in preventing men and boys from speaking out about acts of SGBV against them.

**Women’s political participation and civil society:**
Today there are more women holding political positions and posts than in the past, however this is still limited. Many of the female appointees in South Sudan, are not representing the interests of women as a constituency. Female leaders do not necessarily put gender issues above party, family and ethnicity. There is a need for women to be selected who will represent the interests of women. Women in parliament are not speaking up. One reason is that women in South Sudan are socialised to be subservient, and not to speak out. Many of the female leaders who are in place do not have the skills and educational level to properly perform their roles.

While the 30% quota might have been met at the top cabinet level, this does not trickle down to the lower levels and to the public service. In addition, while the quota is closer to being met at national level, the picture looks far worse at state level. No State Assembly has even reached 10% women. There is a strong need for more female customary court chiefs.
There have been steps taken towards creating a ‘gender machinery’ in South Sudan, to ensure the empowerment of women. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MGCSW) was created, and there are also Gender Ministries at the state level. The capacity of the MGCSW is still very low – and at the state level capacity is typically even lower. There are problems with the linkage of the national gender Ministry with state gender ministries – with information and support not passing easily between them.

Women have been very active in civil society in South Sudan. However, civil society in general lacks capacity and skills, and this has weakened their ability to represent the interests of women. Civil society organisations work with general concepts like ‘women’s empowerment’, yet are often weak on technical skills on gender, or substantive skills in areas like health or education.

**Recommendations:**

**Laws and policies:**
- Legislative processes should be embarked on and supported for the creation of a Family Law and new Sexual Violence legislation
- Advocacy around laws is needed amongst lawmakers and legal professionals. There is also a need to support those involved in the implementation and enforcement of the laws, including the police and judiciary
- Public information campaigns are required about the existence of laws, to address the low levels of awareness amongst the public – and in particular women – about their rights and how they can claim redress for these

**Women and labour:**
- Water pumps should be placed in close proximity to communities, to reduce the time that women spend on fetching water – as well as to reduce their vulnerability to attack
- Distribute solar or charcoal cookers, to reduce the burden – and danger – of collecting firewood.
- Distribute equipment for grinding sorghum in a more time and labour effective way
- Conduct awareness raising and social norms change work, with men and women around the country, aimed at promoting a more equitable division of labour
- Provide literacy and numeracy training for adult women
- Provide female farmers with skills training on more effective agricultural methods. Female farmers can also be provided with tools and equipment
- Take steps to link female farmers up to markets and buyers. Support should also be given to farming cooperatives
- Develop specific loans and banking services targeted at women

**Food security and access to water:**
- Awareness raising campaigns are needed regarding the types of nutrition required. As women are the ones responsible for feeding their families, these campaigns should be targeted largely at them
- Careful steps should be taken to ensure that sexual exploitation is not taking place in food distributions
- Place water wells and boreholes within close proximity to where people reside

**Education:**
- Education for girls should be a priority investment area.
- Steps need to be taken to increase female enrolment in schools.
- Steps need to be taken to enhance school completion rates. Programmes that offer incentives for families in keeping their girls in school are a promising approach.
- Investment in training teachers – particularly female teachers.
• More schools should be built, in order to reduce teacher student ratios
• There is a need for a law that makes it illegal for parents to not send their children to school
• There is a need for awareness raising and engagement with communities around South Sudan about girl’s education, to educate the population on importance of educating girls
• There is a need to address the traditional practices that keep girls out of school

Healthcare and women’s health:
• Support the training of health care professionals, clinical officers and midwives. Medical stuff development is needed at all levels, but especially at the lower levels, in order that primary health care facilities across the country can be staffed
• Improve primary health care facilities, ensuring adequate supplies of medicines and equipment, and that trained medical personnel are available at all facilities
• Awareness-raising is needed for communities – men and women – about the importance of antenatal check-ups and of delivering at a health facility with trained medical providers
• There is a need for awareness-raising on the importance of family planning and birth control

Sexual violence:
• Community engagement is required about the fact that fetching water and wood are left to women – particularly as these continue to expose them to rape
• Steps need to be taken to bring perpetrators of conflict sexual violence to justice
• More support centres need to be established for survivors of sexual violence with on-going training and mentoring for staff

Men and boys:
• Further research is required about masculinity in South Sudan, and how this contributes to the mistreatment of women
• There is a need for programming addressing with men and boys in South Sudan – dealing with harmful notions of masculinity, the reduction of GBV and harmful traditional practices.

Women’s political participation and civil society:
• Steps need to be taken to ensure the appointment of more female politicians at the state levels, and also at the lower levels of the civil service
• Capacity building, skills training and support needs to be given to the gender ministries at national and state level. Efforts should be take to develop links between national and state level gender ministries in order to facilitate the passage of information and assistance between them
• It is important to work with male leaders to show them why it is important to support and promote their female counterparts
• There is a need for capacity building of those in CSOs addressing gender issues. They should be trained on technical skills around gender empowerment and GBV, as well as on administrative, management and financial reporting skills
1 Introduction

Following a historic referendum on independence in 9 January 2011, South Sudan became Africa’s 54th nation. There was a period of great optimism, growth and investment, as South Sudan began the process of creating state structures and developing the country, working to remove the effects of years of war. However within a short time, in December 2013, war broke out again. What started as a power struggle between President Salva Kirr, and his former Vice President, Riek Machar, soon spiraled into full-blown conflict with strong inter-tribal overtones.

The current conflict has been characterized by large-scale violations of human rights, committed by both sides, and the intentional targeting of civilians, including through the use of widespread and targeted sexual violence. While fighting has centred largely in three states; Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile, the effects of the conflict have been felt throughout the country. Large-scale displacement, high levels of militarism and a depressed economy have affected life across the country.

Even before the newest outbreak of war, life was difficult for South Sudanese women. South Sudan is a highly patriarchal country, characterized by significant gender inequality. Men are seen as the heads of households, and have decision-making power in their families, as well as in society more broadly. Women carry a significant burden of labour, responsible for caring for their homes and families, farming, fetching water as well as other needed resources. Women’s levels of education are low – with some estimating that up to 90 percent of women are illiterate. Their economic opportunities are highly limited. The current conflict has exacerbated these pre-existing hardships, adding further challenges to women’s already burdened lives.

The Swedish Embassy in Juba places gender equality and a focus on women and girls at the centre of their mission to improve conditions in South Sudan. For this reason it has commissioned the writing of this gender country profile (GCP). This GCP aims to set out the state of gender affairs in South Sudan. It will consider the situations of women in both the non-conflict areas, as well as those areas directly affected by hostilities. The aim of the GCP is to provide the Swedish Embassy in South Sudan, as well as others in the donor community, national authorities and other international actors, with an assessment of the current state of gender affairs in South Sudan. The GCP seeks to identify the key gaps and priorities relating to gender in both the development and humanitarian responses, seeking to identify those places where resources and attention should be directed. It is hoped that the GCP may also guide donors in their efforts in mainstreaming gender issues in programming in South Sudan.

This GCP will look at the state of gender issues in South Sudan. Most of it will focus on women – as it is South Sudan’s women who are the most marginalized – and this profile will provide an in-depth analysis of the situations of women and girls. However, the GCP will also consider men, who are also vulnerable in some ways due to their gender, and, above all who are responsible for shaping the lives of women – perpetrating the violence against them, enforcing patriarchal institutions, and denying women voices and roles in society. Any steps to improve women’s situations need to incorporate men.

South Sudan is a vast and diverse country. Each its ten states are experiencing differing humanitarian situations. While in some parts of the country there is relative stability, in others there is full-blown conflict. While a limited number of services are available for those in urban areas, for those in rural areas, conditions tend to be harder. South Sudan has over 50 tribes, who live by differing traditions and practices, all of which greatly influence the lives and experiences of women. Ethnic, religious and cultural pluralism greatly affects gender relations. Given these variances, it is impossible to neatly describe and sum up the experiences of all South Sudanese women. As such, this GCP does not aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of gender relations in the country. Rather, it aims to contribute to a greater understanding and awareness of gender inequalities in South Sudan, by identifying key issues and gaps that need to be addressed, pointing to some of the ways in which these vary across the country.
The profile aims to provide a baseline of gender information, against which later programming might be compared.

Although South Sudan is making steps towards gender equality, there is a long and challenging road ahead. There are obstacles to women’s empowerment and the improvement of women’s lives at every step of the way – deriving from societal norms, protracted conflict, continued threats to peace and security and a crippling lack of development. Given all of the challenges facing the country, it is easy to overlook the wellbeing of individual women. However, it is in the way that the lives of the countries’ most vulnerable – its women – are improved, that the strength of the new nation will be tested.

2 Methodology

In 2015, Swedish SIDA commissioned the drafting of this GCP. In a first phase of the process, a desk review was conducted. This sought to review existing reports and publications on gender issues in South Sudan. Academic publications, humanitarian and other literature were reviewed, including publications from the United Nations, World Health Organization, Government of South Sudan, SIDA and USAID.

In August 2015, a team consisting of one South Sudanese researcher and one international researcher conducted fieldwork in South Sudan. Fieldwork was conducted in Juba (Central Equatoria), Wau (Western Bahr el Ghazal) and Bor (Jonglei State). As the research team was not able to visit all states of South Sudan, these three sites were selected as each represented differing dynamics relevant to the country; Wau represented those areas not directly hit by conflict, Bor is in Jonglei State, one of the 3 conflict states, and has seen recent hostilities, and Juba is the capital, the site from where national policies and programming are held. The profile combines assessments of the national situation – how national policies and institutions and international actors address gender equality – with a targeted focus on certain states, in order to see how gender issues play out at the more local level.

The research relied on a combination of key informant interviews and focus groups discussions. Interviewees comprised of government representatives, from national and state level, representatives from civil society organizations (CSO), international non-governmental organizations (INGO), representatives of bilateral donors and United Nations (UN) officials. Focus groups were held with groups of internally displaced women living in the Protection of Civilian sites (POC) in Juba and in Bor, as well as with a group of male internally displaced persons in Juba. Focus group discussions were also held with representatives from civil society organizations in Wau and in Juba.

SIDA intends that this GCP will be used in programming, assessments and analysis of development interventions, as well as in political dialogue with the government in South Sudan. It plans that this GCP will inform decision-making as to key priorities and gaps where resources and attention should be directed. As well as using this resource in its own efforts, this GCP will be disseminated to bilateral donors, UN agencies, international actors, civil society, other embassies and the media.

Constraints and limitations

The main constraints the team faced was the short duration of the field work, the difficulties of travel in South Sudan and the accessibility of reliable data on South Sudan. The scope of the project was limited in terms of time geography and the population groups reached. As such, this GCP does not claim to be a comprehensive study of gender relations, but rather it identifies trends, gaps and priorities that need to be addressed in the context of gender in South Sudan.
3 History and Context: Independence and Conflict

When Sudan, then Africa’s largest nation, was under British colonial rule, it was divided into northern (predominantly Muslim) and southern (predominantly Christian) administrative zones. Following Sudan’s independence in 1955, the Arab Sudanese government of the North took control over the South. The South claimed it was being marginalised and demanded greater autonomy. Tensions grew, leading to the outbreak of conflict. The first war (1955-1972) came to an end with the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement. The Addis Ababa Agreement gave the South political autonomy and relative control over its land and resources, including some of its oilfields.

In 1980, the Sudanese government redrew the north-south administrative borders, reapportioning some of the oilfields in the north. In 1983, the Sudanese government implemented Sharia law throughout Sudan, including the South. This provoked significant anger in the South, leading to the emergence of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M), under Col. John Garang. Continued tensions led to the outbreak of the second civil war (1983-2005). The second civil war resulted in up to 2 million deaths and led to around 4.9 million people being displaced – internally and internationally as refugees.

A combination of war fatigue and increased international pressure led to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, finally ended the North/South war. The CPA established an interim government in South Sudan, and provided for a popular referendum in which the population would decide on whether South Sudan should take independence from Sudan. An overwhelming majority (98.8%) voted for independence. South Sudan declared itself the Republic of South Sudan in 2011.

Post-independence brought a renewed hope for political stability, democracy and development. South Sudan is made up of up to 60 disparate tribes, many of who have been hostile to each other for years. During the North/South conflict, tribal tensions and violence persisted, often taking the form of violent inter-tribal cattle raids. Inter-tribal tensions were to some extent ‘swept under the rug’, because of the larger threat coming from the North. However soon after independence, internal problems began to threaten the peace of the new nation. Many issues remained unresolved in the governance of the state, including the distribution of power between certain powerful government actors, power sharing within the ruling SPLM, elections, a new constitution and the marginalization of citizens in key decision-making processes. State institutions remained unable to deliver effective services or to produce inclusive solutions to resolving conflicts.

In December 2013, South Sudan was plunged once more into conflict. Violence erupted on the 15th December 2013 between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those loyal to former Vice President Riek Machar. Political conflict rapidly gave way to full-scale inter-ethnic conflict, primarily between the Dinka tribe, of President Kiir, and the Nuer, Dr Machar’s tribe. The government and SPLM-IO have differing views of what happened on 15 December. Government officials maintain that Machar was planning to take power by force. The SPLM-IO maintains there was no coup attempt and that Kiir and a small group of Dinka hardliners used the fighting as an excuse to arrest and purge rivals, allowing Dinka units of the Presidential Guard, SPLA, National Security and the police to carry out atrocities against Nuer in Juba.

Those fighting largely coalesced into two camps: those allied to President Salva Kiir (SPLM-In-Government/SPLM-IG) and those allied to his Riek Machar (SPLM-In-Opposition/SPLM-IO). A third force called SPLM- former detainees (also called SPLM7) also emerged, although this has been a less cohesive political force than other SPLM contenders. Regional players have also become involved, taking sides with one or the other faction. Uganda’s military support to the government has been the
most obvious examples of external interventions. The government of Sudan is also thought to have provided clandestine military and political support to the SPLM-IO. Ethiopia and Kenya, while apparently pursuing neutral positions and playing mediating roles through IGAD, are also perceived to be partisans advancing their respective national interests.

There have been various attempts at negotiating peace, most significantly those facilitated by IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development). Numerous attempts at peace had failed, and numerous ceasefire agreements violated shortly after signing. Weeks before the writing this report, both parties had signed a peace agreement, however its promise was somewhat diminished by President Kiir attaching an addendum to the version signed, lodging numerous objections to the content of the agreement. In the weeks since, further attacks have take place, violating agreements at ceasefire, opening to further question the promise of the agreement.

The civil war has caused a devastating humanitarian crisis – described by some by as one of the worst in the world. Over 2 million people have been displaced. Some are in host communities, some in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), and some in United Nations protected ‘protection of civilian’ (POC) sites. Over a third of the population has been exposed to food insecurity and famine. The conflict has been characterized by the intentional targeting of civilians, with intentional attacks on those of the opposing side’s tribes. Increased reports have come out of large-scale sexual violence used for this purpose. Dinkas and Nuer finding themselves in areas ruled by opposition forces cannot leave camps, for fear of being killed.

Even in those places that have not been reached by fighting, the war is having an effect. Displaced persons have flooded into non-conflict areas, bringing a host of challenges with them, including strain on already limited resources and services, ethnic tensions and knock on violence. The war has cost South Sudan billions of dollars. The conflict has had a terrible effect on the economy, with prices of good rising, often far beyond what the population can afford. The local currency has plummeted under crippling inflation. In the past two years, the government of South Sudan has directed most of it resources towards the war effort. This has had significant impact on services – including those services that women require.

3.1 Geography
South Sudan is a landlocked country in Eastern Africa. It has plains in the north and centre and highlands in the south. South Sudan is bordered by Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia. South Sudan is one of the largest countries in Africa covering an estimated area of 644,329 square kilometres. The White Nile, a tributary of the Nile River, flows north through the country, supporting agricultural and large wild animal populations along its way.

South Sudan is divided into 10 states, with Juba, the nation’s capital based in Central Equatoria. South Sudan’s states are illustrated below:
3.2 The population

According to the World Bank and OCHA, the population of South Sudan is estimated at 12 million people (as of July 2014). It has an almost even percentage of men and women (50.056% male, and 49.944% female). The country has a young population – about 51% of the population are below 18 years. Age distribution as follows:

- 0-14 years: 45.8% (male 2,699,556; female 2,593,241)
- 15-24 years: 19.9% (male 1,210,962; female 1,084,810)
- 25-54 years: 29.1% (male 1,622,776; female 1,742,842)
- 55-64 years: 3.2% (male 198,106; female 166,664)
- 65 years and over: 2.1% (male 136,932; female 106,806)

Life expectancy in South Sudan is 42 years. The population growth rate is 4.12%, the birth rate 37.68% and death rates 8.42%.

The average household size is 6 persons. The estimated fertility rate is 5.43 children born per woman. South Sudan has the highest maternal mortality rate in the world, with maternal mortality of 2,054 deaths per 100,000 live births.

Rates of sickness and communicable disease are high – estimated by the Ministry of Health (2013) as responsible for 25% of deaths. Two in every 10 people seen at health facilities die from malaria.

South Sudan is home to more than 60 indigenous tribes or ethnic groups. About 40% of South Sudanese speak one of the Nilo-Saharan languages. English is the official language of the country, however Arabic (including ‘Juba Arabic’ and Sudanese variants) is still used by much of the population – including many government officials and civil servants. Major ethnic groups include the Dinka, Luo, Nuer, Shilluk, Toposa, Lotuho, Didinga, Tenet, Acholi, Murle, Azande, Kakwa, Moru, Bari and Baggara Arabs.

83% of South Sudan’s total population lives in rural areas.

4 Policy Framework

In South Sudan’s four years as a country, it had taken steps towards developing the policy environment relating to gender; drafting legislation and regulations and ratifying international obligations. There are
still many gaps, and areas where regulation is urgently required. The following is a brief summary of core policy commitments that pertain to gender.

4.1 International law instruments
On achieving independence, South Sudan was admitted as the 193rd member of the United Nations General Assembly on July 13, 2011. South Sudan is also a member state of the African Union. Since independence South Sudan has taken steps to ratify a number of international obligations. Most important to gender and the protection of women are the following:

- **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights**: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a non-binding Declaration that affirms the fundamental human rights to which all people are entitled. It acknowledges the equal and inalienable rights of both men and women.

- **Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**: South Sudan ratified CEDAW in 2014. CEDAW is the most explicit human rights instrument addressing the rights of women. It guarantees the rights of women in all spheres of life, from political participation, to education, to appropriate living conditions, sanitation and food and water. CEDAW defines what constitutes discrimination against women. It also sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. In accepting CEDAW, states commit themselves to undertaking a series of measures aimed at ending discrimination against women in all forms. Such steps include incorporating equality between men and women into their legal system, abolishing discriminatory laws and adopting laws prohibiting discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises.

- **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**: South Sudan ratified the CRC in 2015. The CRC is the most widely ratified international human rights instrument in the world. Of particular relevance is the protection it confers on underage girls.

- **The Geneva Conventions**: In 2012, South Sudan signed the Geneva Conventions, binding it to uphold international humanitarian law (the laws of war) in times of hostilities. These include prohibitions on sexual violence in conflict.

- **Security Council Resolution 1325, and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda**: On 31 October 2000, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted SC Res 1325 on women, peace and security. This was the first time the Security Council addressed the unique impact of armed conflict on women, and recognized the under-valued contributions women make to conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace building. It stressed the importance of women’s equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security. The Resolution is binding on all UN Member States.

  In 2005, the Security Council called upon Member States to adopt National Actions Plans for the implementation of SC Res 1325 in their own countries. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MGCSW) is in the process of developing a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.

4.2 National policies and legislative framework
The passing of new laws has been relatively slow, due largely to bottlenecks in the Legislative Assembly and the newness of the legislative system. While certain pieces of legislation have been passed that impact on women and gender, there are still gaps in legislation protecting women’s rights – and there remains a need for further laws to be created.

- **National Gender Policy for the Republic of South Sudan (2012)**: This policy forms the framework for guiding different sectors and agencies in South Sudan around gender. It aims to
promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and to allow for mainstreaming gender into all sectors, in order to eliminate negative socio-economic practices, which impede equality between the sexes. The Policy provides guidelines for addressing gender in the following areas: political representation; economy; education and training; the labour force; agriculture and land tenure; family; poverty, income inequality and food security; health; GBV; women, peace and security; climate change and civil society and women’s movements. The policy mandates the Government to address gender inequalities. It also provides for quotas for political representation at all levels of government. It also addresses access to land, the right to inherit property, maternity and childcare and economic equity, as well as the elimination of discrimination and SGBV.

- **The Transitional Constitution of South Sudan (2011):** South Sudan’s Transitional Constitution sets out the rights to which all citizens are entitled. These include the right to life, the right to found a family (Article 15), the right to personal liberty (Article 12), equality under the law (Article 14), the rights of the child (Article 17), the right to education (Article 29), the right to public health care (Article 31), the rights to ethnic and cultural communities (Article 33), and the right to own property (Article 28).

  Notably, the Transitional Constitution requires that at least 25% of seats in the national parliament be allocated to women. Women currently hold 26.5% (88 out of 332) of Parliamentary seats at national level. It also provides for 25% participation at all levels of government – legislative and executive.

- **The Child Act (2008):** The Child Act was passed in 2008 and deals with various aspects of children’s lives and protection. Section 26 addresses the rights of female children. Amongst other things, it confirms that every female child has a right to be protected from sexual abuse, exploitation and GBV, including early and forced marriage. Every female child also has the following rights: the right of equal participation in social, economic and political activities; equal rights to inheritance of property and the right to develop to their full potential and skills, through equal access to education and training. It confirms that no female child shall be expelled from school due to pregnancy or motherhood, or shall have her right to continuing her education hindered from after one year of lactation.

- **The Land Act (2009):** Section 1.4 of the Land Act states that women shall have the right to own and inherit land together with any other heirs of a deceased.

- **The Local Government Act (2009):** Section 110 of the Local Government Act provides that women should be afforded full and equal dignity with men. It states that women shall have equal pay and benefits to men, and that women shall have equal right to participate in public life. Local Government Councils are to enact legislation to combat harmful customs and traditions that undermine the status and dignity of women. Local Government Councils shall promote women's participation in public life and enforce their representation in executive and legislative organs by at least 25% representation. The Act also states that women shall have the right to own property and share in the estate of their deceased husbands. Section 108 states that "no marriage shall be entered into without the free will and consent of the man and woman intending to marry with the guidance of their respective parents".

### 4.3 Recommendations: Policy gaps that need to be addressed

Despite important steps being taken in the creation of legislation, there are still important gaps that need to be filled. A perception exists that since the outbreak of the war, critical such issues such as these have fallen off the agenda, and legislative processes have slowed.
**Family Law:** The most crucial of these is a Family Law for South Sudan. This Family Law should deal with issues such as the dissolution of marriage on divorce or death, custody and maintenance. Importantly, it should address some of the harmful cultural practices accepted in society and condoned by customary law – explicitly pointing to which law takes precedence on these matters. A process has been initiated to create this law, but as of yet, no Family Law Bill has been tabled.

**Sexual Violence Legislation:** While there is a Penal Code that prohibits sexual violence, it is felt that there is a need for targeted legislation aimed at addressing sexual violence. There are some significant gaps that this law should address. For one thing, current understandings of rape in the Penal Code are only aimed at women – in terms of this law a man cannot be raped (forceful penetration of a man would be prosecuted as a form of assault, yet not rape). In addition, currently marital rape is not considered a crime.

**Implementation gaps:** While various pieces of legislation have been put in place, the biggest challenges remain around implementation. The use of the new legislation in legal disputes and courts is still limited. As most legal professionals in the country have been educated in Arabic (many in Sudan during the North/South war), the dissemination of laws in English, the official language, has caused real challenges. Rule of law systems need to be put into place to ensure laws are implemented. Advocacy around laws is needed amongst lawmakers and legal professionals. There is also a need to support those involved in the implementation and enforcement of the laws, including the police and judiciary.¹

There are low levels of awareness amongst the public – and in particular women – about their rights, and if and how they can claim redress for these. Public information campaigns are required about the existence of laws. Steps need to be taken to build the capacity of civil society to advocate on laws.²

It is also essential that any new policies, legislation or national plans that are developed are in line with the capacity and context of South Sudan.

### 5 South Sudanese traditional practices

South Sudanese society is strongly traditional and deeply patriarchal. Men and women’s roles and positions in society are clearly defined: men are the heads of households and society, holding positions of authority; women are subservient to their husbands. Women’s roles are focused on the home and the rearing of children. Marriage is one of the central institutions shaping South Sudanese society. Marriage holds a different place in South Sudanese society to that which it holds in the West. Rather than being seen to be an arrangement between two individuals, marriage is a social institution, binding whole families, and tying together kinship groups.

Bride price holds an important function, and is a crucial economic feature in South Sudanese society. In order to marry, men must pay bride price to a girl’s family. Traditionally this was a price of cattle, but more recently this sometimes takes the form of money or other assets. The need for cattle for bride price is frequently the motive for the often-violent cattle raids in South Sudan, and a lack of bride price can be the cause of kidnapping and forced elopement. Payment of bride price can help families to increase their social status, and for impoverished families, this can be an important source of income. Traditionally

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¹ Interview with Christian Kivy, Norwegian Embassy, Juba, 6 August 2015.
² Interview with Stephen Arno, Netherlands Embassy, Juba, 7 August 2015.
bride price was supposed to represent a token of appreciation, however in recent years prices have gone up and bride price payments can be extremely expensive. In the conflict areas, many have been displaced from their lands and their cattle, disrupting their ability to pay bride price, hence disturbing an important social institution.

A problem stemming from the payment of bride price, is that some men perceive this payment to be akin to purchasing a woman. They feel that as they have purchased her, they can beat her or demand her to work. Another problem is that bride price makes it much harder for women to leave harmful or abusive marriages. On termination of a marriage, a woman’s family is supposed to pay back the bride price – and for many families, this is something that they cannot afford or do not wish to do. Hence families encourage women to stay put, regardless of the conditions of the marriage.

In South Sudan there are a number of traditional practices that are harmful to women. South Sudanese culture allows for polygamy, and men can marry as many women as they are able to pay bride price for. Polygamy is widely accepted in society and has some advantages for women as well as men. However it can lead to difficulties for the women. Polygamous arrangements can be emotionally difficult for the women involved – and when husbands decide to marry again, women opposed to this are left no choice but to remain and tolerate it, or to leave the marriage – losing along with it their homes and support. The practice of men having several sexual partners also contributes to the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

A practice that is extremely harmful to girls is that of early and forced marriages. The majority of girls in South Sudan marry before the age of 18 (mostly between 15 and 17). Often families marry off their daughters for financial reasons, as they need the bride price. As people affected by the conflict have faced increased economic hardships, this practice has increased. Early marriage can cause numerous problems for the girls involved, not least that girls out of school, discussed in a later section. It can also lead to health problems for girls, as girls falling pregnant at a young age are much more likely to have problematic or dangerous pregnancies – also discussed later. Although the Child Act 2008 prohibits marriage of children under 18, it is never enforced.

A source of much violence in South Sudan is cattle raiding. Many are killed in violent raids and re-raids. As mentioned above, cattle raiding is often motivated by the need for cows for marriage. Sometimes children and women are stolen along with the cattle. There are reports that some tribes have taken advantage of the conflict situation, assuming that village men will be away at war, using the opportunity to raid villages. Men involved in cattle raiding live on cattle camps, but come into the towns during the rainy season. During this time, they are said to behave badly and cause problems – drinking heavily, acting aggressively, and fighting and sometimes raping women.

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3 Wau, focus groups with representatives of 9 civil society organization, 3 August 2015.
4 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
5 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
6 The economy and women’s socio-economic status

6.1 South Sudan’s economy, and the effects of conflict

South Sudan is endowed with significant natural resources, including vast oil reserves, water resources, irrigable land, livestock, timber and minerals. However, despite these vast natural resources, beyond the oil fields, the country remains largely undeveloped and its resources untapped. Miles of fertile land, which remain uncultivated, are left unused for a number of reasons. Amongst these is insecurity; as people are afraid they will have to leave their lands, they do not embark on significant cultivation. Those displaced from their land in the current conflict have been unable to farm. A poor road network, much of which is impassable during the rainy season, also curtails commercial agricultural potential. An interviewee noted that, “There are miles and miles of land left unused. If this county were producing agricultural crop, it could feed half of Africa.”

However economic growth is happening in the country. The economy of South Sudan grew 24.7 per cent in 2013. It was projected to grow by 43 per cent in 2014. In 2013, the country’s gross domestic product was $1081 per capita. Much of the growth was based on trade and investment with neighbouring countries Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan. South Sudan quickly became Uganda’s biggest export market, and an integral trading partner to its neighbours.

South Sudan has the third-largest oil reserves in Sub-Saharan Africa. The country is entirely dependent on oil, which provides 98% of the country’s overall budget. This makes it the most oil-dependent country in the world – with oil accounting for almost the totality of exports, and for around 60% of its gross domestic product. Worryingly, on current reserve estimates, oil production is expected to reduce steadily in future years and to become negligible by 2035 (World Bank, 2015). Since late 2014 the decline in international oil prices has contributed to economic hardships in the country, with the decline in oil prices from $110 to $55 per barrel significantly lowering oil revenue.

Outside the oil sector, livelihoods are concentrated in subsistence agriculture and pastoralists’ work, accounting for around 15% of GDP. The economy is therefore still characterized as a subsistence economy. 85% of the working population is engaged in non-wage work, primarily in agriculture (78%), or informal trade. The unemployment rate is extremely high: only 12% (11% of men and 12% of women) are officially employed. Women dominate the informal economy, particularly informal trade. There is a lack of job opportunities for women and men alike. There are few factories, commercial farms or other industries where uneducated untrained people can earn a wage. As women are less likely to be educated – discussed below – this burden is greater for them.

The current conflict has had a detrimental effect on the country’s economy. Frontier Economics, in collaboration with the Centre for Conflict Resolution and the Centre for Peace and Development Studies at Juba University (2015), estimate that depending on the intensity of the conflict and how long it persists, the costs to South Sudan of continued conflict, could reach between US$22 billion and $28 billion over the next five years. It was estimated that in 2014 the conflict reduced potential GDP by up to 15%. Oil production has fallen by around 20% – due largely to the fact that the conflict has been fought in the oil producing areas.

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6 Interview conducted during fieldwork. Interviewee preferred to not be named.
The economic effects of the conflict can be felt far beyond the three conflict states. Military expenditure has increased tremendously, reducing the state resources available for service delivery and capital spending on infrastructure. Goods, including critical foodstuffs and vehicle fuel, are in increasingly short supply. Imports have slowed down, or their prices have spiked, due to the increased difficulty in importing goods. Attacks on the border roads have made the problem even worse. South Sudan’s currency has devalued significantly, driving prices higher. Prices of basic supplies have spiked, often out of the reach of people’s ability to afford.

The economic situations in the three conflict states (Jonglei, Upper Nile and Lakes States) have been hit the worst. The conflict has destroyed many people’s sources of livelihoods. Fighting has demolished many businesses and much of the market infrastructure. Continued fighting has lead to the displacement of many thousands from their lands, meaning those who rely on farming, fishing and cattle, are unable to pursue this. The inability to farm has lead to an increase in urbanisation or to movement to displaced person camps. However in the towns and camps too there is little employment or market activity.

Roads and transport remain major concern for the country. The road network is very poor, with much of the population, particularly those in in rural areas, having few road links to major urban centres. Most roads are dirt roads and get eroded, almost to the point of being impassable, during the rainy months. There is little in the way of public transport, particularly further from urban centres or major roads. Insecurity has also affected travel, with armed attacks taking place on roads – both politically and economically motivated. This has effected economic movement, meaning people are unable to transport goods and to buy and sell the goods they require.

Even before the war, a vast majority of South Sudan’s population lived below the poverty line, with Sudan ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world. Over half the population of South Sudan (51%) lives below its national poverty line. Female-headed households have a higher incidence of poverty than male-headed households (57% vs. 48%). An urban-rural poverty gap also exists, with a 24% poverty incidence in urban areas as opposed to 55% in rural areas. The situation has deteriorated even more as a result of the conflict. Many, in the population have become entirely dependent on humanitarian aid. Economic hardships have had a significant impact on women, who have primary responsibility for feeding their families. With men often away at war, women are left to look after their homes and families, with the declining economy causing them tremendous hardships.

There are few safety nets for the vulnerable in South Sudan. There is little in the way of social security or services for those in dire need. For example, there are no facilities for the elderly – normally people invite elderly relatives to live with them in their homes. Elderly women are said to suffer greatly, as no one within families attend to them. However the problem comes for those who do not have family members to take them in. In Wau, there is one ‘facility’ for the elderly – a building housing 9 old men and women, which used to be a stable for horses. The Social Welfare Ministry in Wau, plan to break the building down, as it is old and derelict – they speak of building another home in the future. In conflict areas people report that old people who are not able to run away from fighting are killed. People describe elderly people being burned alive in their tukuls (huts) by enemy fighters.

There are also few facilities for disabled persons. Some services are provided by CSOs and NGOs. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare runs a rehabilitation centre in Juba with the support of

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7 Discussion Group, Bor Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
8 Interview with Anne Daniel Ali and Sidonia Germano, State Ministry of Gender Child social Welfare, Wau, 5 August 2015.
ICRC. At state levels plans are still being established but today little assistance is provided for the disabled. There are also no facilities for mentally disabled persons.

6.2 The gendered division of labour

Women carry much of the burden of labour in South Sudan. Women have primary responsibility for looking after their homes and children, as well as sourcing food to feed to their children. Most consider it a woman’s role to collect firewood and water. Women are responsible for the bulk of agricultural production in the country, while men are responsible for cattle. Many interviewees reported that in South Sudan women do all the work, often unassisted by men. For example an interviewee from an INGO working in the POC said that, “Women are having to be the ones to farm and construct shelter – while the few men sit under the tree and play dominoes. They have children crying, babies are on their backs, and the few men around do not stand up to help.”

There has been an increase in female-headed households since December 2013, as men have left to fight, have been killed in the conflict, or have left to find work, leaving women alone to take care of their families. The bulk of those in displacement settings (IDP camps or POC sites) are women – it is estimated that 80% of IDP population is women and children. Life can be difficult for women with no husbands in South Sudan. The patriarchal system means that women alone have little voice, little ability to hold property or to generate income. There is no social welfare provided by the state. Women in these situations find themselves desperate and vulnerable to exploitation – including sexual exploitation. In Bor the State Ministry of Gender Child and Social Welfare conducted an assessment on street children, which revealed that the majority of street children came from single-mother households.10

While venturing from their homes; collecting firewood, water, or working at markets, women become vulnerable to sexual violence – discussed in a later section. When women have to travel longer distances to access these resources, their vulnerability is heightened all the more. Interviewees also raised the point that when women have to go to market, they are forced to leaving their children alone – leaving the children vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Interviewees stressed that there are steps that can be taken to decrease the burden of labour on women. Water pumps should be placed in close proximity to communities, to reduce the time that women spend on fetching water – as well as to reduce their vulnerability to attack. Distributing solar or charcoal cookers means women will not need to spend their time collecting firewood. Women spend a significant amount of time grinding sorghum, which they still do by hand. An COS representative in Juba noted, that “With technologies like we have today, they shouldn’t need to do this – we should give them better equipment to reduce women’s work loads.”11 Much of this work falls to young girls, which keeps them out of school – so these types of steps would also play a part in promoting girls’ education – discussed below.

Interviewees also spoke of the need to conduct awareness raising campaigns and social norms change work, with both men and women around the country, aimed at promoting the idea of a more equitable division of labour. This is, of course, a long-term project, yet one that will have significant effects on women’s quality of life.

While the Child Act (2008) establishes the minimum age for paid child employment at 14, a lower minimum age of 12 is set for light work, defined as labour that is unlikely to be harmful to a child’s

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9 Interview with Anne Daniel Ali and Sidonia Germano, State Ministry of Gender Child social Welfare, Wau, 5 August 2015.
10 Discussion group, Bor State Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
11 Interview with Victoria Akur Jonguch and Elisabeth Atong Malual, South Sudan Law Society, Juba, 7 August 2015.
health and development, and be detrimental to their attendance at school. 46% of children aged 10 to 14 participate in some economic activity, 60% of which is work within the agricultural sector. For many young girls around the country, particularly girls who are married young, the level goes above that allowed by the law.

6.3 Livelihoods assistance for women

It is important that steps be taken to improve livelihoods opportunities for both men and women in South Sudan. Work aimed at promoting women’s livelihoods is particularly pressing, given the burden that falls on women to support their families. Many interviewees identified livelihoods assistance for women, as a critical priority area.

Across the board, women lack the skills that they require to improve their livelihood opportunities. There are very few skills development initiatives on offer, relative to the need in the country. However, even when skills development programmes are offered, women are often unable to attend these, as they are too busy caring for children or carrying out household work. Pregnant and breastfeeding women are also prevented from training opportunities. Within organisations – as well as within government Ministries – when trainings are offered, it is often men who are selected to attend these.

The following are some of the skills that women require for economic improvement.

- Women’s literacy rates are extremely low – estimated by some at 90% illiteracy. Female entrepreneurs and farmers alike require improved literacy skills to better their ability to generate income.
- Women lack business skills. Female entrepreneurs – even at the level of market workers – require business and financial services training.
- There is a need for more vocational training centres, to train people on practical income generating activities.

Women require particular assistance in the area of agriculture. Women lack skills in agriculture, and in particular in more effective – less time-consuming – agricultural techniques. Women also lack tools and equipment, as many still farm using hoes and other tools that are extremely labour intensive. Work can be undertaken to link female farmers up with markets, in order that prospective buyers can purchase their commodities. Support can be provided to farming cooperatives – either women’s cooperatives, or mixed gender ones, facilitating women in becoming leaders in these mixed cooperatives.

A few interviewees talked of fishing as a potential area of economic development. It was mentioned that people do not like fishing, viewing this as a ‘dirty job’, one it was felt only ‘lowly people’ carry out. Encouraging the promotion of fishing activity, is another area where economic growth could be achieved and where further economic opportunities could be created for women.

Where women are in paid employment, they often have a harder time than men. Across income levels, women earn lower wages than their male counterparts. Men are also more likely to be preferred for promotions. At a policy level, it is important that steps be taken to counter this, and to ensure gender discrimination within the workplace is not accepted.

It is important to consider women’s economic empowerment across the whole value chain – not just at the lowest levels. Women’s economic advancement also means improving women’s access to business at the higher levels – of which there has been very little improvement. From a policy perspective, there is

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12 Discussion group with people in Bor State Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
13 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
a need to create a favourable space for the participation of women in all spheres of government and business, and to encourage women into leadership positions in these.

There is significant work to be done to address women’s economic empowerment at the level of policy. The different economic Ministries, such as the Ministries of Agriculture and Mining and Petroleum, need to take active steps to ensure that women are properly integrated into these industries. It is important that in these Ministries (and not just in the ‘Gender Ministries), that gender be mainstreamed into their policies. For each of these Ministries, National Actions Plans need to be developed – such as a National Action Plan on Gender in Mining and Extractives. These plans should also incorporate the private sector, so as to ensure that private sector actors in these fields also fully incorporate women.

Women’s access to credit and loan funding is another problem that was raised. It is currently difficult for women to access funding to embark on initiatives. There is a need for specific loans and banking services targeted at women.14

6.4 Ownership of land and property
Recognition and protection of women’s property rights remains limited throughout the country, despite provisions in the Transitional Constitution that recognize women’s right to own property and to inherit their husbands’ estates. Unlike in statutory law, under customary law, women’s right to access and use land is tied to their husbands and male family members. It is common for South Sudanese widows, daughters and divorced women to be dispossessed of their property.

There have been a number of strategies put in place to protect women’s land rights, including the development of programs to train, recruit and mentor women in land administration roles, and the establishment of rural paralegal organizations to provide legal advice and aid to women on inheritance and land issues. The Southern Sudanese Land Commission developed a draft Land Policy in 2011, which aimed to provide greater recognition of community land ownership and emphasizes the need for government agencies and traditional authorities to recognize and protect equal land and property rights for men and women alike. As of December 2014, the Land Policy had not yet become operational.

Recommendations:

- Water pumps should be placed in close proximity to communities, to reduce the time that women spend on fetching water – as well as to reduce their vulnerability to attack
- Distribute solar or charcoal cookers, to reduce the burden – and danger – of collecting firewood.
- Distribute equipment for grinding sorghum in a more time and labour effective way
- Conduct awareness raising and social norms change work, with men and women around the country, aimed at promoting a more equitable division of labour
- Provide literacy and numeracy training for adult women
- Provide female farmers with skills training on more effective agricultural methods. Female farmers can also be provided with tools and equipment
- Take steps to link female farmers up to markets and buyers. Support should also be given to farming cooperatives
- Develop specific loans and banking services targeted at women

14 Interview with Christian Kivy, Norwegian Embassy, Juba, 6 August 2015.
7 Food security and access to water

Food insecurity and malnutrition are widespread in South Sudan. 47% of the population are thought to be malnourished. 33% of children under the age of five are moderately or severely underweight and 34% suffer from moderate or severe stunting. According to the United Nations, South Sudan is already in a major food crisis – 6.4 million people faced food insecurity between January and March 2015. It was projected that $1.81 dollars billion would be needed to address this over the course of 2015. Food insecurity affects women in particular ways, as in South Sudan women are the ones tasked with feeding their families.

The agricultural sector of South Sudan makes up between 15% and 33% of the national GDP, with 76% of the population deriving their major source of livelihood from crop farming or animal husbandry. 53% of the food consumed in South Sudan comes from substance production, while market purchase accounts for 32% of food consumption. The remaining 15% comes from non-monetary exchanges, such as labour contributions for food. Women do the bulk of farming in South Sudan – with some estimating that around 60% of agricultural production is carried out by women.

Conflict and insecurity are a leading cause of food insecurity. Years of conflicts have greatly affected agricultural production – as large-scale population displacement, the loss of land and assets, reduced access to fields for cultivation and reduced access to markets, have stood in the way of growth and production. In a World Food Programme ‘Annual Needs and Livelihoods Assessment Survey’, 2011-2012, 23% of households reported conflict as one of the major factors contributing to food insecurity. Displaced persons returning to their lands following fighting, often find their farms damaged and unable to produce. There are also problems around missing the planting seasons due to fighting and displacement, meaning farms will not produce for the year. At the same time as many have been made unable to farm, the conflict has also contributed to the increase in price in food products – with basic staples now costing more than what many in the population can afford.

It is not just the quantity of food that is the problem. Many in the population are not getting the right types of food. As food has become more expensive, people are not eating the ranges of foods that they used to, meaning they are taking in less nutritional value. South Sudanese have low levels of knowledge about the types of foods that they require. For example, what do pregnant women require in terms of food and nutrients? What do school-age scholars require? What do sick people require?15 Awareness raising campaigns are needed regarding the types of nutrition required. As women are the ones responsible for feeding their families, these campaigns should be targeted largely at them.16

In the conflict areas many rely on food aid for their subsistence. There have been some problems around sexual exploitation in food distribution in IDP camps. Someone explained that, “People are desperate – a woman is left at home with 5 children. She doesn’t know if and when her man is coming back. She has no assets, no reproductive assets and she has mouths to feed. She will do what she needs to do.”17 Steps need to be taken to ensure that this does not occur. Providing food assistance to certain IDP communities can cause conflict between them and host communities. So too, within communities, perceived discrimination in food distribution has led to significant fighting. People interviewed in the POCs complained that the food distribution rations were too small.

15 Wau, focus groups with representatives of 9 civil society organization, 3 August 2015.
16 Interview with Masumi Yamashina and Athieng Riak, UNICEF, Juba, 6 August 2015.
17 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
There have been some problems around ‘food drops’ in the conflict areas. On a number of occasions as people have gathered to collect food, there have been armed attacks. On other occasions, immediately following food distributions, communities have been attacked by armed groups wishing to steal their food. This has led to questions about whether continued food distributions are prudent. As an Oxfam representative noted, “We are calling people for food, and then they get killed.”

It is estimated that in the conflict areas, 30% of the food that is airdropped as humanitarian aid goes to rebel fighters. This is not taken by force. “The woman who takes the sorghum is going to give it to her husband, who is a soldier.” An interviewee noted, “In terms of International Humanitarian Law, thy shalt not give food to the rebels – but this is just not relevant here. … I cook for my husband, who is a soldier. I move with him.”

Across the country, there are also challenges around clean drinking water. Where there is tap water available, this is not clean enough to drink, and can cause health problems. People in the population collect water from rivers and commercial tanks – water which is largely untreated. Challenges in accessing clean water are even greater for those in rural areas.

Fetching water is seen to be a woman’s job in South Sudan. Problematically, water pumps are often located far from the places where people reside. Women, walking to fetch water are at risk of sexual violence. Around the country, water points have become common spots where rapes take place. An Oxfam representative recalled an incident in Waat, in Jonglei state, where the local water point had become a frequent site for rape. In response, his organisation erected a floodlight on the boundary facing the water point. “Young boys came and broke the light, because it was disturbing their ‘bad things’.”

There are also reports of sexual exploitation at the water points, with people demanding sex in exchange for access to the water.

Providing populations with water wells and boreholes can change women’s lives. This can prevent them from having to spend significant portions of their time collecting water, and can keep them safe by eliminating dangerous water collection walks.

Recommmendations:
- Awareness raising campaigns are needed regarding the types of nutrition required. As women are the ones responsible for feeding their families, these campaigns should be targeted largely at them.
- Careful steps should be taken to ensure that sexual exploitation is not taking place in food distributions.
- Place water wells and boreholes within close proximity to where people reside.

8 Education for women

One of the biggest problems facing women in South Sudan is the low level of education. This more than anything, keeps women from advancing in society, from empowerment, political representation, business and all other walks of life. The best way to empower women – and men – in South Sudan, is to ensure

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18 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
19 Interview with Hazel De Wit, UNMISS State Coordinator for Jonglei, 21 August 2015.
20 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
21 Interview with Stephen Arno, Netherlands Embassy, Juba, 7 August 2015.
they stay in school. Numerous people interviewed for this GCP agreed that women’s empowerment starts with educating young girls.

It is estimated that up to 90% of women in South Sudan are illiterate, compared with 36% of men. The problem is worse in rural areas. 53% of the urban adult population is literate compared with only 22% of the rural adult population. Poverty and family income in South Sudan are directly correlated with the education level of the head of the household. 55% of households whose head has received no schooling live under the poverty line, compared to 11% of households headed by those with post-secondary education.

Primary school attendance and completion rates are low for both sexes, with 37% of girls and 51% of boys aged 6 to 13 attending school, and 6% of girls and 14% of boys completing their primary education. 10% of women complete secondary education, compared to 15% of men in the same age range. Post-secondary completion rates are low all around: only 2% of women and 3% of men above the age of 15 have completed post-secondary or higher education. Only 5% of the population receive vocational training.

There have been improvements in education in the last decade. Since 2005, school enrolment at all levels has increased, with primary school enrolments growing by 20% per year. However there are still thought to be up to 400,000 children out of school in South Sudan – and many more of them are girls. There is a two times difference in enrolment rate from boys and girls. Enrolment rates differ from state to state. There are more girls enrolled in school in Western and Central Equatoria than other states – in part because their cultures are more permissive of this. Cattle-keeping cultures in South Sudan are more suppressive of women, which is why in Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei and Upper Nile states there are fewer girls enrolled in schools.

However, enrolment rate is only one factor – completion rate is another. Rates of school completion are extremely low – particularly for girls. Girls drop out at a far higher rate than boys. An interviewee explained that the drop out rate is higher between cycles – i.e. between primary and secondary school – not within cycles. The challenge therefore is to get girls to stay in school, until they are enrolled in secondary school.

The benefits of keeping girls in school can also be seen in various aspects of their lives. School enrolment delays marriage, leads to improved health, fewer early pregnancies and many other benefits. Different approaches are being trialled to keep girls in school. One approach is providing subsidies to families for keeping their girls enrolled. UNICEF’s ‘Back-to-Learning’ campaign provides families with $100 USD if their child stays in school for a year. Similarly, ‘Girls Education South Sudan’ provides girls who regularly attend school with a small amount of pocket money to buy the things they need, such as pads and schoolbooks. Even if this money is taken by their families, this at least plays a part in allowing them to attend.

There are many reasons that parents do not educate their girls. Some of these are cultural – with many believing that educating girls is not good practice – particularly in rural areas. Teenage marriage keeps girls from schools, as when girls are married, they are no longer considered girls, and so are removed from education. High rates of teenage pregnancy also keep girls from schools, with girls dropping out once they fall pregnant, or are unable to attend when they have babies to care for. Preventing child marriage therefore remains a key means of ensuring girls are educated. Many keep their daughters from

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22 Interview with Masumi Yamashina and Athieng Riak, UNICEF, Juba, 6 August 2015.
23 Interview with Damianos Odeh and Richard Ocak, Health Pool Fund, Juba, 24 August 2015.
school for financial reasons; some families do not have funds for school fees, or require their daughters to work or to look after the home, or even to marry for economic reasons. Many girls miss schools when they menstruate – a problem that can be remedied by distributing sanitary pads and teaching girls about their correct use.

South Sudanese schools are overcrowded and under-resourced, and are unable to keep up with growing enrolment and the increasing pupil-teacher ratio. In Wau CSO members report that there are between 150-180 children in a class, so the children in the back cannot hear the teachers.24 There are many places where children still study under trees – particularly in rural areas. Many children have to walk great distances to the nearest schools, creating safety risks, as well as a disincentive to attendance. There is a shortage of trained teachers in the country. Many of those teaching, have extremely low levels of education themselves – with many having only a secondary education. In particular there is a lack of female teachers. Violence in schools was an issue that came up in interviews, with it being said that teachers hit the children.

At a policy level, there are still no laws to punish parents who do not send their children to school, leaving this decision in the hands of parents. The government of South Sudan needs to allocate more money to education. Many interviewees recommended that donors should prioritise funding for education above other concerns.

There is a need for engagement with communities around South Sudan about girls’ education, to teach the population the importance of educating girls. Awareness raising campaigns are needed in this regard. There is also a need to address the traditional practices that keep girls out of school.

The recent conflict has disrupted many children’s education. In the POC sites and some other IDPs sites, NGOs are providing schooling for children – as well as some adult education. There are often better educational opportunities for women in the POC sites than outside the camps. In Bor POC, IDPs are being trained as teachers and they in turn are teaching camp children.

**Recommendations:**

- Girls’ education should be made a priority investment area
- Steps need to be taken to increase female enrolment in schools
- Steps need to be taken to enhance school completion rates. Programmes that offer incentives for families in keeping their girls in school, are a promising approach to this
- Investment in training teachers – particularly female teachers
- More schools should be built, in order to reduce teacher student ratios
- There is a need for a law that makes it illegal for parents to not send their children to school
- There is a need for engagement with communities around South Sudan about girl’s education, to teach the population the importance of educating girls. Awareness raising campaigns are needed in this regard
- There is a need to address the traditional practices that keep girls out of school

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24 Wau, focus groups with representatives of 9 civil society organizations, 3 August 2015.
9 Health care in South Sudan

9.1 General state of health facilities

The state of healthcare in South Sudan is extremely poor. There are shortages and gaps at every level. Most agree that primary healthcare is a priority area for funding. The poor healthcare system has significant effects for women, as well as for men.

The biggest problem is the shortage of primary health care facilities – particularly in rural areas. Many have to travel long distances to get to health clinics. Travelling can be difficult, as there might be no roads, roads might be insecure, or impassable in the rainy season. Most do not have transport. Many need to walk 8-12 hours to reach the nearest primary health care centre. Women in particular have a hard time accessing health care, being exposed to dangers when traveling long distances, such as sexual violence. Cultural practices in some places mean that women cannot go to the hospital alone. Referrals to hospitals from primary healthcare facilities are challenging, as there are few ambulances or other mechanisms to assist with transfers to higher facilities.

Even where there are health care facilities in reachable distance, these are often not fully functional. Many have significant shortages of equipment and medicines. While facilities often have basic drugs like painkillers and antibiotics, to a large extent, other medicines are not available. Hospitals and medical centres suffer from shortages of blood – there is not yet a culture of donating blood in the country.

Many of the problems around healthcare have been exacerbated because of a decrease in government spending on health. South Sudan’s national spending on health started at 7.5%, but is now below 4%, having dropped since the start of the current conflict.

There is a lack of trained medical personnel at all levels. At the top levels, there is a dearth of trained doctors, and of any specialists, particularly outside of hospitals in the main urban areas. However the more pressing problem is at the lower levels. Outside of hospitals one also cannot find trained nurses. Primary healthcare centres in South Sudan are supposed to be run by ‘clinical officers’ (officers with 3 years of training), however most clinics do not even have these – particularly in rural areas – with many facilities relying on ‘community health workers’ (9 months training). Due to the low literacy levels in the country, there are limited people who can be trained – as a certain level of literacy is required to be able to train in health. The point was made that the Ministry of Health is losing health care staff to international partners – who are able to pay them more. Care must be taken by international health partners to not provide services in a way that jeopardise the development of national health services.

Some raised the point that all of the attention put onto women’s health issues, by donors and international partners alike, has led to a neglect of other areas of need, including surgery, trauma, chronic diseases, pathological services and oncology. Other medical conditions are a source of much concern. Immunizations and vaccinations for basic diseases still do not reach all of the population. Malaria remains a significant problem – with reports that UNICEF and other organisations have not been able

25 Interview with Julia Bartsch, Kerry Page, Pamela Odhiambo, ICRC, Juba, 7 August 2015.
26 Tewodros Hailu, Consultant, World Health Organization, Bor, 19 August 2015.
27 Interview with Dr Alex Dimitri, Director General of Reproductive Health, and Dr Solomon Orero, Ministry of Health, Juba, 6 August 2015.
28 Interview with Dr Alex Dimitri, Director General of Reproductive Health, and Dr Solomon Orero, Ministry of Health, Juba, 6 August 2015.
to do mosquito net distributions this year, as the roads have not been accessible – often due to insecurity.\textsuperscript{29} There have been Cholera outbreaks in certain parts of South Sudan recently – particularly in POC sites.

The health service problems are even greater in the conflict states and rebel held area. The government does not send health staff to many of these areas, and a number of clinics have closed down due to a lack of staff and support. Government medical staff from certain ethnicities cannot travel to work in certain areas, meaning that ethnic rivalries have further affected the provision of health care.\textsuperscript{30} In Bor, all of the equipment in Bor Hospital was stolen during fighting – leaving them with an equipment shortage.\textsuperscript{31} Health services are somewhat better for those in POC sites, as it is easier for NGO partners to access the population with targeted services. However, problems remain. In Bentiu, for example, Care and IOM run health facilities, yet there are too many people using these. There are reportedly long lines to the health clinics – by 5pm hundreds of people are still waiting for outpatient treatment. A year ago 7 children per day were dying in the Bentiu POC.\textsuperscript{32}

Reproductive health

The priority health problem affecting women in South Sudan, is reproductive health. South Sudan has the highest maternal mortality rate in the world. Rates of material mortality are particularly high amongst young mothers. Most women start bearing children soon after becoming married, often in their teens. In terms of the Sudan Household Survey 2006, there were 2054 deaths for 100,000 live births. A more recent survey was conducted in 2010, but this did not assess maternal mortality. WHO estimates that the maternal mortality rate is down to 730 per 100,000 live births – however there is no official study that verifies these statistics. The Ministry of Health is currently in the advanced stage of conducting a maternal mortality survey – which it is hoped will be carried out in the next dry season.\textsuperscript{33}

It is estimated that only 20\% of women in South Sudan have access to reproductive healthcare services. While there are more services available in urban areas, most of the population lives in rural areas. Many healthcare facilities do not have antenatal services available. Most women deliver at home. One of the reasons for this is the lack of antenatal care facilities. Many women have an 8-10 hour walk to the nearest health facility – too far for a pregnant woman to walk. Most deliveries are attended to by traditional birth attendants – who have little formal training. The problem is that if there are any complications, the nearest health facilities with proper equipment and trained staff are too far to reach, thereby often resulting in mortality.

There is a shortage of trained birth attendants and midwives across the country. Most health facilities do not have trained midwives on staff. There are few gynaecologists in the country who could deal with complications – even if women could reach them. The government of South Sudan reportedly insisted that they did not want ‘community health workers’ to deliver babies – only fully trained midwives, and this resulted in a delay in producing a cadre of trained people able to assist in deliveries. As with other aspects of the health services, there are not enough educated people (particularly women) to train as midwives. One recommendation made was that steps should be taken to train traditional birth attendants on safer birthing practices, in order that they can be incorporated into the formal health system.\textsuperscript{34} Midwives are currently being trained across the country. In Wau, the first class of 18 midwives (10 male,
8 female) recently graduated and second class of 22 students (18 females, 4 males) is currently being trained.

Even when people do have access to health facilities, many women do not go for antenatal checks. The population has low levels of knowledge about the importance of antenatal care, and often see this as going against the traditional way of doing things. There is a need for awareness raising campaigns to encourage pregnant women to regularly visit antenatal care facilities. There is also a need to target men in awareness raising campaigns about the importance of antenatal care and the dangers of giving birth at home, otherwise they stand in the way of their women going. ‘Village Health Committees’ currently help to spread this message – with health promoters going door-to-door talking to families about this. Some programmes have sought to encourage women to go for antenatal care by incentivising them with ‘mama kits’, packages that include a mosquito net, soap, clothes, cloth to carry a baby, razor blades and a clip for the umbilical chord, in case they deliver at home.35

Abortion is illegal in South Sudan. Two thirds of gynecological ward beds are taken up by those who have lost pregnancies – be these natural or intentional losses – it is unclear which. It is estimated that about 15% of pregnancies are lost spontaneously, meaning that many pregnancies are being intentionally aborted. Almost no research and information exists on this, standing in the way of this being properly addressed. Further information on this issue is crucial, given that terminated pregnancies are taking up a significant number of hospital beds, operating theatre time and blood supply. In particular there is a need for research about how pregnancies terminate, whether this is intentional or not, and where and when procedures are being conducted, in order that safe prevention strategies can be developed.36

Fistula is a significant problem, often caused by births by untrained birth attendants, deliveries at home and births by young girls. It is unclear how many women in the country suffer from fistulas, however estimates are that there are tens of thousands of women in need of fistula operations in South Sudan. An annual fistula programme is being run by UNFPA, IMC and the Ministry of Health. Once a year a Nigerian doctor flies in for a month to run this. The programme is currently being held in Wau, and women with fistulas are transported from across the country. This year in Wau there were 68 Fistula patients, most of them teenagers. The cost of this programme is less than 100 dollars per surgery, which is inexpensive for a treatment that can have such significant effect on the lives of patients.37

It is important that reproductive healthcare in crisis areas not be forgotten. Pregnancy and related problems do not cease when women are displaced or in camps. In crisis areas there should be a Minimal Initial Service Package (MISP) on reproductive health in crisis, however in many areas in the conflict states of opposition held areas this is thought to not be available.

Family Planning
If every woman of reproductive age in South Sudan, would access family planning, it is estimated that maternal mortality would drop by 30%. Family planning is therefore an affordable investment into improving reproductive health, and is an important preventative tool for reproductive problems.

Women in South Sudan tend to get pregnant while they still have very young babies. Women have low levels of knowledge about how to space children in order to protect their health. There is little in the way

35 Interview with Mariana Oresto, International Medical Corps and Regina Pasquale, Wau County Ministry of Health, 4 August 2015.
36 Interview with Dr Alex Dimitri, Director General of Reproductive Health, and Dr Solomon Orero, Ministry of Health, Juba, 6 August 2015.
37 Interview with Dr Said Ahmad and Dr Oliver Batista, UNFPA, Wau Teaching Hospital, 5 August 2015.
of family planning services on offer in South Sudan. However even where services are available, people
do not take these up. South Sudanese men are typically against family planning. A Ministry of Health
representative explained, “People say reproductive health is against our culture. We hear this from all
levels; policy makers, leaders, administrators.”

Members of a focus group in Wau explained that local
people believe that having more children is better, even if there are too few resources to support them.
Many also believe that women are obliged to have as many children as possible, as pride price had been
paid, in part for this purpose. There is a need for awareness raising campaigns on the importance and
advantages of family planning and birth control – using radio and other means.

HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections

There is a shortage of current, workable data on HIV rates in South Sudan. What data does exist is not
being circulated and most actors working on HIV/AIDS issues around the country work with little
information and statistics. The last antenatal care survey found a 2.6% HIV prevalence. The rough
statistic that most people work with is 3% HIV prevalence, with rockets of up to 15% prevalence in
some areas – like in some parts of Jonglei state. There are assumed to be quite significant variances in
prevalence in different parts of the country. HIV rates tend to be higher for women than for men, and
physiologically, women have a higher chance of transmission than men.

A general view exists that the HIV rate is increasing, in part because of the increase in rape related to the
conflict – discussed in the section that follows. During the North/South war, many went to live in
neighbouring countries, countries with far higher HIV rates, and it is believed that many returned
carrying the virus – often unknowingly – meaning a swift increase might be expected.

Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) facilities are available in key urban areas. However, despite
this, people do not come forward for HIV testing. There is a need for awareness-raising about HIV
prevention and the importance of testing. Many believe that this problem is not being dealt with as
seriously as it should be.

Antiretroviral medicines (ART) are also provided in urban centres. In the conflict areas there have been
some disruptions in the provision of ART – such as when Bor Hospital was closed and ransacked.
Interrupting antiretroviral use can lead to significant health risks, including building up resistance to the
medication. Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEPs) are available in hospitals for women who have been
raped. PMTCT (prevention of mother to child transmission treatment) is provided in many hospitals.
PMTCT was previously provided in Bor, however this was stopped as a result of the fighting. The centre
where this was previously provided is now being used as a cholera treatment centre.

There is also a lack of data and information about the prevalence of other sexually transmitted infections
(STIs). There are few STI screening facilities in the country. People do not seek medical help or testing
for STIs, yet often seek treatment for secondary complications resulting from STIs, revealing to the
doctors that these infections do commonly exist. Many believe that polygamy is playing a role in the
spread of HIV and STIs. For cultural reasons many do not use condom protection.

Recommendations:

38 Interview with Dr Alex Dimitri, Director General of Reproductive Health, and Dr Solomon Orero, Ministry of Health, Juba, 6
August 2015.
39 Wau, focus groups with representatives of 9 civil society organization, 3 August 2015.
40 Moses Gakreech, Doctor in the Ministry of Health, Bor, 19 August 2015.
41 Interview with Francis Tabu, International Medical Corps, Wau Teaching Hospital, 4 August 2015.
Support the training of health care professionals, clinical officers and midwives. Medical stuff development is needed at all levels, but especially at the lower levels, in order that primary health care facilities across the country can be staffed.

Improve primary health care facilities, ensuring adequate supplies of medicines and equipment, and that trained medical personnel are available at all facilities.

Awareness raising is needed for communities about the importance of antenatal check-ups and of delivering at a health facility with trained medical providers.

There is a need for awareness raising on the importance of family planning and birth control.

There is a need for awareness raising about HIV prevention and the importance of testing.

10 Sexual and gender-based violence

Rates of sexual and gender based violence in South Sudan are extremely high, with women and girls subjected to various forms of violence and abuse. The vast majority of women and girls suffer from some type of GBV – be it rape, sexual assault, physical assault, forced/early marriage, or psychological/emotional abuse.

Domestic violence is common across the country. Rates of domestic violence were said to have rocketed during the 1983-2005 conflict, and have flourished in the traumatised society where violence has been a regular feature of life for years. Men and women alike have been socialised to tolerate domestic violence and see it as acceptable within families. The domestic violence in South Sudan is often very severe – men use sticks and other items, often causing significant injury to women. A CSO representative working on GBV in Wau estimates that 90% of men beat their wives. Many say that bride price encourages domestic violence, Men perceive themselves as having paid for a woman and therefore having the right to treat her as they will.

Sexual violence has increased in recent years. Rape is common in South Sudan – both from those who know each other and from strangers. It is noteworthy that many rapes are not called or seen as rapes. “If you rape a married women, then it is adultery – not rape. Then you pay compensation to the husband.” If a girl is raped, a perpetrator can pay bride price for her, marry her, and then it will not be considered rape either. In Bor, members of a focus group explained that rape is commonly used to force a girl to marry. A ‘suitor’ will abduct a girl and rape her. If he then pays bride price to her family, then this is not considered rape, but rather, marriage. “It’s rare for a man to rape her and leave her. Normally they marry her. If you don’t marry her, then this will cause violence in the community.”

There is significant under-reporting of SGBV in South Sudan, due to the high levels of stigma and shame, a lack of awareness amongst women about their rights and opportunities for redress, and weak assistance services for survivors. Men frequently leave their wives if they have been raped. “If the men realise the wives were raped, it’s the end of the marriage. To say, I was raped, you have to be very brave, and you have to know you have other things to rely on.” Interviewees cautioned about encouraging women to talk, where there are not suitable protective services available. “Before you can ask women to talk about these things, you must at least be able to take them to a place where they can have their needs

42 Wau, focus groups with representatives of 9 civil society organization, 3 August 2015.
43 Discussion group Bor Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
44 Discussion group Bor Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
met. If there is no support to give women, then better not to interview them to ask them to tell their stories.”

10.1 Sexual violence in conflict areas, and its use as a “weapon of war”

Armed actors on both sides to the conflict have raped women in high numbers. They have raped women of the ethnicity of their rivals – consistent with what is often found in conflicts with strong inter-ethnic elements. As the conflict has progressed there appears to have been growing levels of this intentional sexual violence taking place. The cruelty of these rapes also seem to be getting worse – with reports of burning women once they’ve been raped, raping women in front of sons or husbands, cutting open pregnant women and the like. There have also been reports of rape against men. There is a dearth of solid data about sexual violence in the conflict in South Sudan, with little research and information available about this.

As well as the more systematic rapes, there are also high levels of ‘incidental’ rape – carried out by the myriad of armed actors who roam the country. As someone explained, “Its an environment full of soldiers. Soldiers harass ladies afterhours. Soldiers misbehave when they get to places.”

A significant problem is the risk of rape that women face when they go out to collect firewood or water – or in fact any time they leave IDP camps or other safe places. In conflict areas, problems around humanitarian access have made this worse – meaning that women have had to venture further for firewood, water and food. The point was raised that what is required is community engagement about the fact that fetching water and wood are left to women – a highly problematic stance given that this exposes them to rape.

The risks to women are not only there when women go out. Focus group members in Bor explained that at night, “Doors are locked, gunmen enter and cause problems to the family – as a result of the big war.” Its often difficult for people to tell who the perpetrators were, whether they were armed actors – and if so which side they belong to. “People can say that perpetrators wore uniforms, but these are mixed, so you can’t identify what type of uniform. When the war broke people stole uniforms from the police and army – they captured people and took their uniforms. So many people have uniforms, so you don’t know which armed actors exactly they are.”

While the situation for women is safer in the POC sites, there are also reports of rape and GBV in these sites. Someone explained, “Confinement is getting to everyone. People have started abusing women. Its GBV by fellow neighbours – not by strangers.” The challenge in the camps is that, “They cannot go out to access justice services. You keep seeing the perpetrator right in front of you.”

Protecting women from conflict rape is extremely challenging. An interviewee noted that it would be impossible for UNMISS to go out and protect women from sexual violence. UNMISS has 12,000 soldiers, spread over all 10 states. They are currently protecting over 120,000 people in their POC sites. The UN state coordinator for Jonglei noted that in Bor there are 1,800 UNMISS soldiers – with only around 700 full combat soldiers, and the rest being support staff. They do not even have enough capacity to assist with patrols for firewood – as they would not have enough personnel to guarantee women’s

45 Discussion group Bor Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
46 Interview with Ben Lopidia and Nafkote Dabi, Oxfam, Wau, 4 August 2015.
47 Interview with Masumi Yamashina and Athieng Riak, UNICEF, Juba, 6 August 2015.
48 Discussion group Bor Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
49 Discussion group Bor Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
Even policing for violence within the POC sites is difficult. In Juba, it was noted that, “We have 80 police in UNPOL – 20 per shift, for 120,000 people in the camp. Even in peaceful countries they have more police per person in the population than that”.

The United Nations Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Hawa Bangura, visited South Sudan in October 2014 to discuss conflict sexual violence with the government. An agreement was reached that the government would take action to bring perpetrators of sexual violence to justice. An initiative was embarked on by the Office of the President to address this, together with key ministries, such as the ministries of gender, health, interior, defence, information and education. However it seems that since its formation, this initiative has not had much movement. People in the population are frustrated about this. “How many times have they set up committees and what have we seen as an outcome? There is a game of both parties blaming each other about this – the government is saying it’s the opposition, the opposition is saying it’s the government. But both sides are practicing this. They are taking rape as revenge – particularly in Dinka and Nuer areas.”

**Services available for GBV survivors**

The capacity of the state to respond to GBV is still weak. The crisis has worsened this, as fewer government funds and investment are being directed at these types of services.

**Health services**

In hospitals in urban centres women can be treated for rape. Most major hospitals provide post exposure prophylaxis (for HIV prevention) as well as the morning after pill for pregnancies. In the rural areas and villages there are few health services available for rape victims. Many services for rape victims have been provided by NGOs. Problematically, since the outbreak of hostilities, NGO partners have shifted their focus to the conflict areas, leaving some parts of the countries with few facilities for rape victims.

Psychosocial support for rape survivors is in short supply. Social workers are active in the cities, but not in rural areas. Little psychosocial assistance is available in the conflict areas.

In the conflict areas reaching those who have been subject to sexual violence is challenging. Violent sexual attacks often happen when people are on the move. This means that they are often not easy to reach in the early stages – within the time needed for post-exposure prophylaxis (for HIV) or the morning after pregnancy pill.

**Police**

There are significant problems around the police and its response to rape. The police are underfunded, poorly resourced and have inadequate capacity to investigate sexual violence and apprehend offenders.

Many in the population do not trust the police. Feelings of mistrust are particularly strong amongst displaced populations – made worse by allegations of police being perpetrators of GBV during the current crisis. As a result of this many displaced women are unwilling to go to the police to report on rape.

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50 Interview with Hazel De Wit, UNMISS State Coordinator for Jonglei, 21 August 2015.
51 Interview with Jeffrey Buenger, UNMISS, Juba, 22 August 2015.
52 Interview with Regina Ossa Lullo, Director General, MGCSW, Juba, 6 August 2015.
53 Interview with Victoria Akur Jonguch and Elisabeth Atong Malual, South Sudan Law Society, Juba, 7 August 2015.
54 Interview with Julia Bartsch, Kerry Page, Pamela Odhiambo, ICRC, Juba, 7 August 2015.
55 Interview with Julia Bartsch, Kerry Page, Pamela Odhiambo, ICRC, Juba, 7 August 2015.
The Special Protection Units (SPUs) are units within South Sudanese police stations, established to provide police services to women, children and vulnerable groups. SPUs have been created at major police stations, where specially trained police provide policing services. They are supposed to address sexual and gender based violence in these units. The SPUs today are in varying states of functionality. Today there are thought to be 14 SPUs; two in Juba, one in each of the other state capitals and one each in Yei, Terekeka and Nasir.

There have been problems around Form 8, the medico-legal form that police provide to GBV survivors after they have opened a police case. Survivors should take these forms to medical facilities in order to receive medical treatment following a rape. There has been some confusion and contention around the way this form should be used. While many in the police and health system state that a woman cannot seek health care until she has gone to the police for a form, others contend that a survivor may seek health care first – particularly in urgent cases – and open a police file and collect the form afterwards. The IGP of the police recently released a circular confirming the latter position, confirming that women need not open a police file in order to receive medical care, but it will require significant efforts to create awareness about this around the country. Others problems around Form 8 include the fact that sometimes the form is not available at police stations, and sometimes police request women to pay for these, or to make their own copies of these forms. Steps need to be taken to address the problems around Form 8.

Police and law enforcement mechanisms in the conflict areas have been debilitated or destroyed, thereby providing little or no protection at all. Populations in many areas are unable to turn to police for protection, fearing the police of opposing ethnicities.

Access to justice for SGBV
Two bodies of law operate side-by-side in South Sudan, statutory law and customary law. Both systems of law are legally binding. Statutory law is implemented by formal courts, and customary law by customary courts.

Women’s redress in the formal court system is low. The system is overburdened, with a shortage of prosecutors and staff. There are only formal courts in urban centres, and those in rural areas do not have access to these. There is little in the way of legal aid – although some is provided in Juba and other urban centres – so most do not have legal assistance to help them through court processes. Where there is legal aid, this is provided to perpetrators, but not to female victims of GBV. “People expect them to come forward, but no one there to help them.”56 Rape cases are often handled badly and are frequently unsuccessful, with perpetrators going unpunished. It is important to take steps to make the formal justice system more friendly to women and better able to ensure justice in GBV cases. There is a need for lower level persons within the legal system, such as paralegals, counsellors, and those who specialise in dispute resolution.

Customary law covers issues like family law (marriage, separation and divorce), maintenance and custody of children and property rights among others. The body of law is highly patriarchal and often works against the interests of women. Customary courts hear the vast majority of cases in South Sudan - up to 90% of cases. A key reason for this is the dearth of statutory courts – while the formal courts are often located far away, each village has a customary court. The chiefs who preside over these courts are generally older men, with deeply ingrained patriarchal views that are reflected in their decisions. Chiefs are frequently unsympathetic towards women, and their judgements tend to be biased in favour of men.

56 Interview with Victoria Akur Jonguch and Elisabeth Atong Malual, South Sudan Law Society, Juba, 7 August 2015.
A subject matter division was envisaged between the different courts. Customary courts are not supposed to hear serious cases such as rape. In practice they often do. Minor cases of domestic violence may be dealt with by the customary courts, while serious cases should be sent to the formal court system. Again, this is not what happens in practice. One evident problem is the lack of clarity regarding what constitutes a ‘minor’ or a ‘serious’ offence. Customary courts favour reconciliatory approaches that encourage community harmony. In the case of rape, solutions like compensation to the family, or having the rapist marry the victims are tabled, as these are seen to allow for reconciliation in the communities.

South Sudan’s customary law permits a certain level of violence in the home and allows a man to ‘discipline’ his wife. Women may appeal to customary courts if the violence exceeds a ‘reasonable’ level. That level varies greatly depending on the location, the court, and the individual chief. Domestic violence tends to be condoned by customary courts if a wife is found to be behaving badly or not fulfilling her duties – such as by failing to cook for her husband or insulting him. Many of the women who take their husbands to court for excessive abuse themselves end up sentenced, sometimes being punished more harshly than their offending husbands.

UNPOL and UNMISS struggle to deal with rape in the POC sites as they have no jurisdiction to deal with perpetrators and frequently cannot refer them to the formal justice system for safety reasons. UNPOL can only deal with incidents within the camps if they are found to be a threat to security of the site – which they accept rape as being. In this case, a suspect can be detained in a UNPOL holding facility. If an assessment confirms that this suspect is a threat to the POC site, they have three options; handover to government (this option requires a risk assessment), expulsion from the POC (also requires risk assessment) and continued detention (reviewed every 21 days).

Recommendations:
- Community engagement is required about the fact that fetching water and wood are left to women – particularly as these continue to expose them to rape
- Steps need to be taken to bring perpetrators of conflict sexual violence to justice
- Steps need to be taken to address the problems around Form 8. Awareness raising needs to be conducted about the IGPs recent announcement that rape survivors may seek medical treatment without opening a police file and collecting Form 8
- It is important to take steps to make the formal justice system more friendly to women and better able to ensure justice in GBV cases. There is a need for lower level persons within the legal system, such as paralegals, counsellors, and those who specialise in dispute resolution

11 Women and the conflict

“If it’s after peace then government will recognise civilians, but now they don’t recognise civilians, because they kill civilians.”

The conflict has affected people across the country – not just in the conflict states. In those parts of the country not directly touched by war, the effects of war can still been felt. People displaced by hostilities have poured in, putting additional strain on already limited services. The government has put its

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57 Interview with Won Hyuk IM and Cecilia Dunster, UNPOL, Juba, 22 August 2015.
58 Focus group discussion with women in Bor POC, 20 August 2015.
resources into the war effort. This has had a significant impact on services across the country – including those services related to gender, GBV and women’s health. Those organisations operating in non-conflict areas feel that once the conflict began, all international efforts and organisations moved to conflict areas, leaving ‘peaceful’ areas with little assistance. In Wau, there were few international organisations left – and not one GBV organisation remaining.

Even in non-conflict areas, there is tension. There have been increased incidents of violence – some politically motivated, some economically motivated, and often blending the two. An interviewee described this state as “low density conflict”. Many interviewees described how women have become fearful to move around alone. Especially in areas where soldiers are posted women try to move in groups – however often even this does not help. Women do not even feel safe to the latrines at night. “If you go outside, you don’t know what will happen, so people put a pan in house to use at night. Even in Juba.”

For women in the conflict areas, the situation is worse. Between 70-90% of the displaced populations are women and children. 6% of IDPs in South Sudan live in POC sites. A good deal of the displacement is ‘secondary displacement’ – people leave and come back and leave and come back. “It’s a population on the run.” Over 600,000 South Sudanese have left the country since this current conflict began, fleeing mainly to Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. South Sudan has become the second biggest refugee producing population in Africa, after Somalia, and the 5th largest internationally.

One of the key problems in the humanitarian response at the moment, is that most of the focus is being put into the POC sites – despite the fact that only a small proportion of IDPs are in the sites. There are 2.2 million displaced persons, 1.6 million IDPs and 600,000 refugees. The 200,000 living in POC sites is, “a drop in the ocean”. Other IDPs have been being comparatively neglected. Conditions for IDPs outside of the POC sites are far worse. There are significant needs and gaps in host communities where IDPs have fled to – especially in opposition held areas. A related point is that everyone in the humanitarian community has been going to ‘red’ emergency areas. ‘Grey’ emergency areas are not being well serviced – and this is where women have become vulnerable. As an example, some describe Nimule as “the forgotten IDP case”. The town is not being serviced, there are significant gender issues there, and high rates of prostitution.

Protection of Civilian Sites
6% of IDPs live in POC sites (although this statistic changes rapidly). It is much easier for humanitarian organisations to service those in the sites, which have concentrated needy people and allow for easy access.

People in the camps are unable to work, a source of frustration for men and women alike. People in Bor POC site described it as like being a prison. In Bor people cannot leave the camp at all, for fear of being killed. In Juba, people from the POCs are able to leave to go to the market or get supplies, although there

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59 Interview with Nwanneakolam Vwede-Obahor, Human Rights Officer UNMISS, Wau, 4 August 2015.
60 Interview with Nwanneakolam Vwede-Obahor, Human Rights Officer UNMISS, Wau, 4 August 2015.
61 Interview with Nwanneakolam Vwede-Obahor, Human Rights Officer UNMISS, Wau, 4 August 2015.
62 Interview with Regina Ossa Lullo, Director General, MGCSW, Juba, 6 August 2015.
63 Interview with Joanne Allison, UNHCR, Juba, 22 August 2015.
64 Interview with Joanne Allison, UNHCR, Juba, 22 August 2015.
65 Interview with Joanne Allison, UNHCR, Juba, 22 August 2015.
66 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
are dangers to doing this. Women interviewed in the POC camps all rated charcoal as their biggest demand – as women who have to leave the camps to collect firewood risk being raped. In Bor, armed cattle raiders keep their cattle outside the POC site, and women going out to collect firewood run in to them. There are other basic needs too, including plastic sheets, ground sheets, blankets, buckets and mosquito nets. People also complained that the food rations were too small, and that they had insufficient water.

In Bor, women interviewed had been in the POC site for two years. Many did not know where their husbands and children were, as they had become lost when they fled to the camps. 80% of the women in Bor POC did not have their husbands with them and do not know where they were. Almost all of the women had children who were missing, and did not know where they were. While some NGOs were doing family tracing work, most did not have information about families’ whereabouts. This caused them much distress. A woman translating for a focus group relayed the fact that, “They don’t have problems here, but they have a problem in their mind because of this. If they think about their children, they cannot even eat.”

The point was made that the POC sites were designed with men in mind, despite the fact that most of the people in them are women and children. There is a need to take gender into consideration further in camp design. A key area of concern for women is around water and sanitation (WASH) and in particular, around latrine designs. The design of latrines have put women in danger, and there have been many attacks in latrines. In many places latrines were covered only just a plastic sheet – allowing no privacy or security. Recently latrines have begun to be built with iron sheets instead – more expensive, but safer. In many places men and women’s toilet facilities have been built back-to-back, allowing men to get into women’s latrines. Men and women’s latrines should always be separate from each other. Lighting and locks are also crucial in latrine facilities. Importantly, latrines should be situated close to where IDPs are staying, so that women do not need to walk far. This demonstrates the importance of gender mainstreaming in (non-gender) areas such as WASH.

12 Men and boys

Much of this report has focussed on women, as it is South Sudan’s women and girls who suffer most because as a result of their gender. However it is also important to think about men – first, as a factor in women’s suffering and second, in their own right, as there are many unique problems that men and boys suffer from. These problems that men suffer from frequently contribute to their mistreatment of women.

Respondents were asked about ways in which men were vulnerable in South Sudan. Many raised the issue of street boys, seen to be an increasing problem across the country. In particular people noted the high numbers of street boys in Juba, Wau, Kuajok and Aweil – as an example, there are an estimated 3000 street children in Wau alone. While there are some street girls, the vast majority of street children are boys. They live in harsh and unsafe environments, with no shelter, little food and no medical treatment. They are often subject to violence, such as beatings by shopkeepers. Many children on the streets get into crime, and girls are frequently pulled into prostitution or transactional sex. Boys land up

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67 Alexander Oring, Bor POC Camp Officer and Assistant Camp Manager, Acted, 19 August 2015.
68 Interview with Battu Beatrice Jambawai, Women protection advisor, UNMISS, 20 August 2015.
69 Focus group discussion with women in Bor POC, 20 August 2015.
70 Interview with Masumi Yamashina and Athieng Riak, UNICEF, Juba, 6 August 2015.
71 Peter Athum, and Anjelo Aluk, Norwegian Refugee Committee, Bor, 20 August 2015.
on the streets for many reasons, including displacement, being orphaned by war. Many explained that before the North/South wars there were almost no street children, but now it is very common.72

Another form of male vulnerability is forced recruitment into fighting forces. Boys as young as 12 are taken to fight. In the current conflict, when fighting groups require more fighters, they go into villages and force men to join their ranks. Particularly in opposition held areas, it is reported that all men are pressured to go to war. Those who refuse are abused or punished. One approach used is public shaming – armed groups blast messages on loudspeakers saying things like; “If you are not coming to fight, you are a woman, and we will harass you publically.”73 As well as being dangerous, armed recruitment can have significant effects on men and boys. They are also more prone to using sexual violence against women – in fact some explained that raping women back home was framed as a ‘reward’ for their contributions to the war effort. An interviewee explained, “A young boy who was in war, and did lots of killing and bad things, and little to eat – as soldiers are not getting good food. He returns to town with a gun hanging from shoulder, blood on his hand, and all those sleepless, foodless nights. What do you expect from his behaviour?”74

Unemployment rates are high, and the number of jobless men has risen significantly as a result of the current conflict. Particularly IDP men would have lost their livelihoods – their land and their cattle – and are left with few activities by which they can generate income. This has reportedly led to feelings of helplessness and despondency amongst men, as well as to alcohol abuse. Someone explained that, “Before, men had their roles. Now they have lost their cattle, and so the men have nothing to do. While women struggle, the men sit and drink. The mother has to go to market, while the girl cares for the home. We need to engage the men.”75 Another interviewee noted, “Displacement affects men the most – women just get on with it. Men don’t know what to do with themselves. The ones who were empowered really struggle with it. This results in psychosocial issues from people disempowered.” The problem is that men’s problems and dissatisfaction have largely remained unaddressed, not seen as a priority in a country with so many pressing issues. These feelings are said to contribute to high rates of GBV. There can be negative consequences for women who are empowered and earn money – as their men reportedly struggle with this.

There are strong expectations in South Sudan of what it means to be a man and pressure put on men to conform. When circumstances – like war or poverty – stand in the way of people acting out clear gender roles, they struggle with this. “When you are man, you have to be indeed a man. You have wives. But if you don’t have any income, then you are not able to get married – because you have no access to cows.”76 The men of South Sudan have grown up in militarised and violent environments, with this affecting their notions of masculinity. An interviewee recalled conducting a drawing exercise with children in a POC site. All of the children were drawing soldiers, helicopters, military vehicles and machine guns. Being raised in this way makes young men vulnerable to being pulled into conflict.

There is a lack of research and understanding about masculinity in South Sudan, and how this contributes to the mistreatment of women. What does it mean to be a “real man” in South Sudan? What is leading to the lack of support that men provide in the home? What is driving the sexual violence and domestic violence? Are there any positive values that can be built on, rather than the primarily negative attitudes that are being displayed at present?

72 Discussion Group, Bor Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, 19 August 2015.
73 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
74 Interview with Nasser Shawkat Haider and Arike Kassim, Oxfam, Bor, 20 August 2015.
75 Interview with Masumi Yamashina and Athieng Riak, UNICEF, Juba, 6 August 2015.
76 Interview with Battu Beatrice Jambawai, Women protection advisor, UNMISS, 20 August 2015.
There is a shortage of programming addressing men and boys in South Sudan – and dealing with harmful notions of masculinity, GBV reduction and men’s participation in harmful traditional practices. Social norms change messaging aimed at men is needed. While messaging aimed at men is being conducted, this often takes place as part of broader programming – rather than being packaged as men and boys work. Work is required around social norms change for men, at all levels – from the men in the communities, to the men at the top leadership positions. Both masculine and feminine concerns need to be mainstreamed into all programming. It is critical to include men in women’s empowerment programmes. “What we want to prevent is men saying you have corrupted our women – we need to include men from the start to mitigate these reactions and backlash.” There is a need to identify male champions, who will promote the advancement of women.

Men’s concerns and vulnerabilities are often neglected in programming. For example in the area of health, so much attention is being put onto women’s health (like reproductive health), that there is little funding or investment in the types of medical problems that men suffer from. There are clear problems evident around men’s health seeking behaviour – there are fewer men in outpatient attendance, with men only seeking healthcare when problems are more urgent, leading to worse prognoses. However, little is being done to tackle this.

**Recommendations:**
- Further research is required about masculinity in South Sudan, and how this contributes to the mistreatment of women
- There is a need for programming addressing with men and boys in South Sudan – dealing with harmful notions of masculinity, the reduction of GBV and harmful traditional practices

### 13 Women’s political participation

South Sudan’s Constitution (Article 16 (4)(a)) states that “All levels of government shall: promote women’s participation in public life and their representation in the legislative and executive organs by at least twenty-five per cent as an affirmative action to redress imbalances created by history, customs, and traditions.” This figure was subsequently raised to 30% with a Presidential Decree.

While today there are more women holding political positions and posts than in the past, this is still limited. There are a number of problems standing in the way of women being able to participate politically. One problem is finding the appropriate trained women to fill the quota positions – as there are reportedly a shortage of trained women available for these roles.

Interviewees challenged the notion that the presence of women automatically equals gender equality. This is a ‘quantitative approach’ to gender, and one that does bear out in practice. It was pointed out that many of the female appointees in South Sudan, are not representing the interests of women as a constituency. Having 30% females there is not enough – what is more important is having the right women in place – not merely handpicked female political appointees. Interviewees complained that the selection of female politicians is not done in consultation with women’s groups, but rather, female

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77 Interview with Ben Lopidia and Naflkote Dabi, Oxfam, Wau, 4 August 2015.
78 Interview with Linda Ehrichs, Canadian Embassy, Juba, 7 August 2015.
79 Interview with Lansana Wonney and Jean Bushayaja, UN Women, Juba, 24 August 2015.
80 Interview with Francis Tabe, International Medical Corps, Wau Teaching Hospital, 4 August 2015.
parliamentarians are picked by political parties, in line with party interests.  

Someone explained that, “Government said they needed 25%, so then they choose those who should be in Parliament. The party chooses – the people who choose are men. The women who get there are the ones that tow the line of those men.” Many women reproduce patriarchal power structures. Female leaders do not necessarily put gender issues above party, family and ethnicity. Like men, women are divided in terms of political denominations, and this often trumps their agendas as women. “They talk to political interests, rather than to the voices of women.” Just having a woman there does not necessarily mean that the interests of women as a constituency are represented. Women need to be selected who will represent the interests of women.

A bigger problem is that those women in parliament are not talking. Cultural factors are largely to blame for this. Women in South Sudan are socialised to be subservient, and not to speak out. It is very challenging to shake this socialisation after being appointed to Parliament. Someone noted, “How many women meaningfully participate? They are there in numbers, but their voices are not there. You are grown up in Africa knowing that if a man is talking you do not talk. The women are not speaking.” Women who are in Parliament do not have the confidence to articulate themselves. Adding to the problem is that male politicians are also not giving them opportunity and space to talk. There are negative perceptions of politically active women.

Another barrier to female participation are the low levels of education amongst women. Many of the female leaders who are in place do not have the skills to properly perform their roles. Interviewees reported that due to the low educational levels of South Sudanese women, even women who get into Parliament can often not follow parliamentary discussion. Female politicians need to be provided with more information from the lower levels and state levels, in order that they can know and understand their role and the needs of the women they are representing.

While the 30% quota might have been met at the top cabinet level, this does not trickle down to the lower levels and to the public service. In addition, while the quota is closer to being met at national level, the picture looks far worse at state level. No State Assembly has even reached 10% women. In Yambio, as an example, women do not even make 2% of the State Assembly. Interviewees made the point that when people give you the figure of women at national level, this conceals the realities at the state level. There is a critical need to ensure women’s involvement in local government in all 10 states. “Everything is done in Juba – but at the state level there is nothing. There is a need to bring the states up to the level of Juba.” In addition to state governments, there is a need for female customary court chiefs. Traditional courts scarcely have women chiefs, and this stands in the way of women participating in these courts, and achieving meaningful justice from them.

There have been steps taken towards creating a ‘gender machinery’ in South Sudan, to ensure the empowerment of women. The Ministry of Gender Child and Social Welfare was created, and there are also Gender Ministries at the state level. The capacity of the MGCSW is still very low – and these are even lower at the state level. There are problems with the linkage of the national gender Ministry with state gender ministries – with information and support not passing easily between them. Interviewees noted that some of the women appointed to gender sections and ministries do not understand gender issues – with representative appointed for political reasons, rather than because they have any knowledge.

81 Interview with Stephen Arno, Netherlands Embassy, Juba, 7 August 2015.
82 Interview with Lansana Wonney and Jean Bushayaja, UN Women, Juba, 24 August 2015.
83 Interview with Linda Ehrichs, Canadian Embassy, Juba, 7 August 2015.
84 Interview with Jacob Atem and Caroline Rukundo, Norwegian People’s Aid, Juba, 6 August 2015.
85 Interview with Lansana Wonney and Jean Bushayaja, UN Women, Juba, 24 August 2015.
86 Interview with Lansana Wonney and Jean Bushayaja, UN Women, Juba, 24 August 2015.
or interest in gender issues. In 2013 gender advisors were appointed in all government ministries, as a means to mainstream gender concerns into all areas. However, the point was made that just placing them there has not been enough – and there is a need to interrogate the extent to which these appointees have fulfilled their roles and actually created gendered results and real mainstreaming within the ministries.

Interviewees spoke of the need to create a pool of female role models, which should be created and supported. In particular there is a need to identify South Sudanese female role models who remained in the country during the North/South conflict – and not only to promote those who grew up outside the country. Training and skills development should be provided to female leaders and politicians in order to allow them to better perform their duties. It is important to work with male leaders to show them why it is important to support their female counterparts.

It is not only at the top levels of politics that women’s voices are not being heard. This problem is even greater at the local level. Across the country women struggle to represent themselves and express themselves. Women have been socialised in subservience and silence, and they lack confidence to stand up and speak for themselves. Interviewees spoke of the part that adult education could play in addressing this. Someone said, “Even being able to sign their names will give them a lot of confidence.” In particular female youth have no voice in society. One interviewee described them as the “invisible female youth”. Once they are married they are not considered youths anymore. Issues relating to adolescent girls are often lost on the agenda.

Women in the conflict areas have struggled with this as they have suddenly found themselves thrown into positions as heads of households and communities – by the absence, enlistment or death of male family members. Interviewees explained that becoming heads of families could feel very traumatic for women – who still felt that such leadership is not their role and that, “without a man, they have nothing”. People described the fact that who are raised to only listen to their fathers, would not listen to their mothers when the fathers not there. Many women are stepping up in these areas. For example in the POC camps there are women’s associations and female leaders who speak for the interests of women in the camps. They assist women in arranging water at the watering points, getting firewood and charcoal and dealing with the other problems facing women. They tend to be selected by the women themselves.

Some women were included in the peace negotiations between the government and the SPLM-IO. Three out of ten members of the opposition’s negotiating team were women and, as a result of national and international pressure, three women were then placed on the government negotiating side. Questions have been raised about whether their representation translated into real influence on concerns facing women. Interviewees reported that at the start of the process, women went to the peace talks, but were not allowed to enter the meetings. In September 2104, women were allowed into the meetings, but as observers, and only later were they allowed to participate.

Women’s civil society involvement in the peace talks has been limited. The ‘South Sudan Women General Association’ (SSWGA) led and mobilised women for participation in the peace process. The SSWGA travelled to Addis Ababa, were the talks were being held, and presented a position paper on the women issues that needed to be addressed in the current resolution. The problem was, that women’s civil society was not unified on their position in the peace talks. There were reportedly three different groups who were claiming to be the ones to represent South Sudanese women in the peace process – and
each of them accused the others of not being the legitimate ones. Many suggested that their influence would have been stronger if they had had a united voice representing all women.

Civil society
Women have been very active in civil society in South Sudan. However, with some notable exceptions, civil society in general lacks capacity and skills, and this has weakened their ability to represent the interests of women. There is a significant need for capacity building of those in civil society organisations addressing gender issues. Civil society representatives lack skills in the ‘technicalities’ of their fields. Interviewees noted how they work with general concepts like ‘women’s empowerment’, yet are often weak on specialised or technical skills, or hard skills in areas, like health or education. While CSOs might be talking about gender, their level of knowledge and engagement on women’s empowerment, and how this can be achieved is minimal. Civil society organisations also lack administrative skills, skills in project planning, leadership mechanisms, accounting, reporting and management systems.

Funding for South Sudan’s civil society has reduced since the outbreak of the current conflict, causing them further challenges. CSOs lack resources and logistics facilities. The point was made that donors are sceptical of CSOs and are afraid to take the risk of supporting their gender work, because their structures and financial reporting capabilities were so weak. However it is critical that there be international investment in building the capacity of local organisations to tackle gender issues. It is also important that a range of civil society organisations be supported – not just the “usual suspects” that numerous donors are already supporting. A few CSOs in Juba tend to be awarded the bulk of projects and funding, when capacity building and growth efforts are needed more broadly – and in particular in the other states. Someone made the point that it would be useful to develop mentorship schemes between CSOs in Juba and those in the states, in order to strengthen the relationships between these, and allow further opportunities and funding to those organisations at state level. There is a need for small grants to be given to the CSOs to implement gender related activities.

The current NGO Act and security laws are limiting the space for CSOs, as are restrictions on the media. The point was made that sometimes, “The government looks at them like rivals.” There is a need to work with government towards supporting the role of civil society.

Recommendations:

• Capacity building and skills training needs to be provided to women in Parliament, in leadership and in the civil services
• Steps need to be taken to ensure the appointment of more female politicians at the state levels, and also at the lower levels of the civil service
• Capacity building, skills training and support needs to be given to the gender ministries at national and state level. Efforts should be take to develop links between national and state level gender ministries in order to facilitate the passage of information and assistance between them
• It is important to work with male leaders to show them why it is important to support and promote their female counterparts
• There is a need for capacity building of those in CSOs addressing gender issues. They should be trained on technical skills around gender empowerment and GBV, as well as on administrative, management and financial reporting skills

90 Interview with Ben Lopidia and Nafkote Dabi, Oxfam, Wau, 4 August 2015.
91 Interview with Christian Kivy, Norwegian Embassy, Juba, 6 August 2015.
14 Key points for dialogue with government

The donor community should leverage its influence with the government to raise the following points pertaining to gender.

**Peace and cessation of hostilities:** Donors must push the government to make peace and cease hostilities before all else. There is a need to respect human rights, despite the fact that a conflict is being fought. Donors should communicate with government that they will not engage with them in the same way until peace is reached. Government must permit humanitarian access at all times.

**Spending on services that women require must resume:** Government must resume spending services that women require; on women’s health and SGBV services, on women’s advancement and on gender empowerment. Many of the government funds that were being spent on this have been redirected to the war effort. Investment in gender equality and women’s services cannot cease because war continues.

**Bring perpetrators of sexual atrocities to justice:** Action must be taken to bring to justice those who commit crimes against women in the conflict areas. Government promises to take actions on this must be carried out. Steps should be taken to ensure immediate disciplinary action within the SPLA for those found to be committing violations. The legal system also needs to be strengthened to follow up on (non-conflict) GBV cases.

**Relevant protective legislation needs to be passed:** A Family Law for South Sudan, and sexual offences legislation should be passed as a matter of urgency. Government must work to implement laws supportive of women and to strengthen the capacity of the police and the legal system to enforce these.

15 Knowledge gaps: Shortage of data, research and analysis

There is a lack of workable data on numerous subjects in South Sudan. This research revealed that significant knowledge gaps stand in the way of effective programming around gender. Areas where further research and up to date data are require include the following:

- **Sexual violence in conflict:** Why is it happening in South Sudan? What are the incidence statistics? Where is this happening geographically? Are services available close to these areas? How can this best be targeted? What is the incidence of sexual violence against males as well as females?

- **Termination of pregnancies:** Why are pregnancies terminating? What percentages of these terminations are intentional or unintentional? Where are planned terminations of pregnancy taking place and by whom? This information is critical given the number of hospital beds taking up by terminating pregnancies.

- **There is a lack of data about HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections:** What are the HIV rates in various states? What are the key forms of transmission? What are the rates of various sexually transmitted infections? How might prevention campaigns best be conducted?

**Need for better assessments:** There is a need for better monitoring and evaluation of programmes on gender. This should be insisted on by donors. Importantly, there is a need for increased interrogation about whether programmes are causing harm. There is a need consider gender in the monitoring and evaluation of all programmes – including those that do not relate to gender.
**Problematic research on gender:** There are certain problems with the ways research on gender is being derived. There is a need for analysis of what women require *from their perspective* – not from external / expert perspective. There is a need to talk to the women themselves. An interviewee made the point that in studies on gender, consultants talk to organisations acting in the areas, yet frequently do not talk to the women themselves to better understand their needs. What do local women think? What do they want?

It seems where locals are consulted, the same groups are spoken to each time. For example, focus groups are frequently held in the POCs, with the same group of IDP men and women, who have their answers and responses perfectly practiced. Someone commented that, “They send you the same group every time – they have learnt the script – they are wearing the NGO tea-shirts. It’s like tourism.”

**16 Advice for donors**

As part of this research, development and humanitarian actors were questioned about the ways in which donor funding is directed. The following key points were raised.

**Donors not prioritising gender and GBV:** Someone commented that, “GBV is the angle everyone is using in advocacy, but I’m not sure it’s a priority of donors.” One of the reasons that donors avoid gender programmes, is that in these it is harder to measure and identify tangible results – as opposed to things like food or other distributions. Mainstreaming gender must form a part of every programme at every level. It should not be called gender mainstreaming, it should be seen as part of context analysis. Thought needs to be put into evaluating whether proposals are truly gender sensitive – it is not a box ticking exercise.

**Humanitarian versus development funding:** Many interviewees believed that when the current conflict had broken out, funds had been redirected from long-term development spending towards humanitarian programming. However the donors questioned disputed this, saying that these funds come from different funding sources altogether, and that following a short break in development programming, when things were too unstable, development funding had in fact increased over the past year. The point was made by interviewees that even in those states affected by conflict, some parts of the states are stable enough to embark on longer-term community development efforts – so that we are not restricted to ‘band aid’ work and food distributions. They noted that it is crucial to identify where there is sufficient stability and community buy-in, and to begin humanitarian-to-development transition programmes, which work to develop community resilience, “rather than just dropping free stuff on a community.”

**Allocation of funding:** Many raised the point that much of the funding provided by donors is short term. People argued that longer-term donor support is required to assist the government to build systems. It seems that since the current crisis, 5-year projects have been replaced with those of 2 – 3 years durations. There now seem to be more projects focussed at the community level, rather than the government level, as a result of questions about government legitimacy and what they are spending funds on.

**Bottom up approach:** The recommendation was made that donors need to employ a ‘bottom up’ approach in South Sudan. CSOs complained that instead of being able to design and shape their own

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92 Interview with Lansana Wonney and Jean Bushayaja, UN Women, Juba, 24 August 2015.
93 Interview with Laetitia Beuscher, EU Humanitarian Aid, Field Expert, Juba, 7 August 2015.
94 Interview with Linda Ehrichs, Canadian Embassy, Juba, 7 August 2015.
initiatives, these are frequently imposed on them. Projects are designed from above, and civil society is asked to implement these, with these often not taking considering of local needs. The point was made that often it is NGOs/CSOs benefitting from programmes, more than the beneficiaries. Donors need to be more flexible and to involve beneficiaries in programme design. Project designs need to have increased accountability to affected populations.

**Need to focus on people – and women – outside of the POC camps:** In terms of humanitarian response, most of UNMISS and UNPOL’s activities are POC centred – along with those of many other humanitarian organisations. This is because there is a short-term necessity demand they are responding to. But the danger of only concentrating on POCs, is that this might make them necessity for decades. An increased focus should be placed outside of the camps – to create conditions in which people can leave POC sites. There is a need to concentrate on medium and long-term strategies.

**Begin considering ‘return’ issues:** Return issues – those relating to the return of IDPs to their lands and communities – will be significant once hostilities end. Return issues will greatly impact on women, given that such a high proportion of those displaced are women. A UN POC Advisor noted that, “Poverty, overlapped with illiteracy – these issues will all be huge when it comes to return and reintegration. The starting point for women was bad, but this will get worse.”

### 17 Conclusion

One of the people interviewed for this GCP noted that there is no place in the world where it is more difficult and more dangerous to be a woman. Life was hard for women before the latest outbreak of hostilities and has become ever more so. Life is hard for men too; displaced, disempowered and raised in perpetual violence. However their burden has often been levelled against their women, with frustrated men turning on women all the more.

When respondents were asked what were the biggest gaps and priorities relating to gender, a number answered that this was too difficult to say – “everything is a priority.” South Sudan has been described as “the perfect storm”. Conflict has fallen upon famine, has fallen upon often-harmful cultural and traditional practices. South Sudan’s women fall at the eye of the storm, systematically disadvantaged every step of the way.

The arrival of peace and ending of war will be a much needed step towards the improvement of women’s lives in South Sudan. However the road beyond is long and challenging, and there remains much to be done to improve the lives of women around the country. Until this happens, life will continues to be desperately hard for women in the world’s newest country.

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95 Interview with Stephen Arno, Netherlands Embassy, Juba, 7 August 2015.
96 Interview with Won Huyuk IM and Cecilia Dunster, UNPOL, Juba, 22 August 2015.
97 Interview with Jeffrey Buenger, UNMISS, Juba, 22 August 2015.
Annex 1: List of actors consulted and interviewed

**Juba:**

- **Masumi Yamashina**: Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF
- **Athieng Riak**: Child protection Officer, UNICEF
- **Christain Kivy**: Programme Officer, Norwegian Embassy
- **Regina Ossa Lullo**: Director General, MGCSW
- **Dr Alex Dimitri**: DG Reproductive Health, Ministry of Health
- **Dr Solomon Orero**: Senior Technical Advisor, Ministry of Health
- **Jacob Atem**: Media Project Coordinator, Norwegian People’s Aid
- **Caroline Rukundo**: Gender advisor, Norwegian People’s Aid
- **Dorothy Drabuga**: GBV project coordinator, Voice for Change
- **Reuben Abila**: Programme manager, Voice for Change
- **Victoria Akur Jonguch**: Legal Aid Attorney for GBV, South Sudan Law Society
- **Elisabeth Atong Malual**: Legal Aid Attorney for GBV, South Sudan Law Society
- **Edla Muda**: Senior Gender Coordinator, Oxfam
- **Joseph Palato**: DG, Reproductive Health, Ministry of Health
- **Linda Ehrichs**: DG, Reproductive Health, Ministry of Health
- **Stephen Arno**: Political Officer, Netherlands Embassy
- **Aisha Glasford**: GBV Protection Coordinator, American Refugee Committee
- **Jessica Brandt**: Grants Coordinator, American Refugee Committee
- **Fifi Sabang**: Country Director, American Refugee Committee
- **Laetitia Beuscher**: Field Expert, EU Humanitarian Aid
- **Julia Bartsch**: Mental Health Delegate, ICRC
- **Kerry Page**: Health Coordinator, ICRC
- **Pamela Odhiambo**: Political Officer, ICRC
- **Irene Scott**: GBV Protection Coordinator, American Refugee Committee
- **Florence Miettaux**: Country Director, American Refugee Committee
- **Joanne Allison**: Field Expert, American Refugee Committee
- **Won Hyuk IM**: Police Advisor, UNPOL
- **Cecilia Dunster**: Community Policing, UNPOL
- **Jeffrey Buenger**: Senior POC Advisor, UNMISS
- **Lansana Wonney**: Dept Country Representative, UN Women
- **Jean Bushayaja**: UN Women
- **Richard Ock**: Health Pool Fund
- **Damianos Odeh**: Team Leader, Health Pool Fund

**Wau:**

- **Linda Ferdinand**: Director, Women Training and Promotion
  Chairperson, Vulnerable Children Society
- **Cdeto Akulo Satro**: Former Director, Women for Enhancing peace Society
- **Lucia Remijo**: Former Director, Women Association Development
- **Elizabeth Mario**: Project Officer, CEPO
- **Budgorni Stephen**: Chairperson, Youth Org for Community Development
- **Samuel Arkangelo Duba**: Finance, Lulu Works Trust
- **Ulimy Batisio**: UN Women
Arkangelo Julo Kust  
Deputy Chairperson  
Youth Org for Community

Gabriel Dhal  
Former Director  
Global Development Service

Idris Fatur  
Secretary General  
Women for Enhancing Peace

Monica Clario  
Coordinator  
Saint Mary Association

Teresa Bazilio  
Deputy Director  
Women Training and Promotion

Nwanneakolam Vwedeh-Obahor  
Human Rights Officer  
UNMISS

Sarah Ungele  
Gender Officer  
UNMISS

Mariana Oresto  
Reproductive Health Officer  
International Medical Corps

Regina Pasquele  
Reproductive Health Officer  
County Ministry of Health

Manal Mohammed Wedate Alla  
Field Delegate  
State Ministry of Health

Regina Gabriel  
Health Education Officer  
State Ministry of Health

Dr Benjaman Chimolo  
Technical Officer  
World Health Organization

Francis Tabo  
Gynaecologist  
International Medical Corps

Stanslaus Barnaba Mijok  
Doctor  
World Health Organization

Nancy Hamad  
Field Delegate  
ICRC

Ben Lopidia  
Programme Manager  
Oxfam

Nafkote Dabi  
Emergency Food Security  
Oxfam

Anne Daniel Ali  
Director General  
State MGCSW

Sidonia Germano  
Deputy Director Gender  
State Ministry of Social Welfare

Joseph Okello  
Midwife, Peer Educator  
Wau Teaching Hospital

Dr Said Ahmad  
Doctor  
Wau Teaching Hospital, UNFPA

Dr Oliver Batista  
Doctor  
Wau Teaching Hospital, UNFPA

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**Bor:**

Moses Gakreech  
Doctor  
Bor Ministry of Health

Tewodros Haiu  
Consultant  
World Health Organization

Alexander Oring  
Assistant Camp Manager  
Acted

Riak Afeio Peter  
Social Worker  
MGCSW, Directorate of Gender

William Ajang  
Social Worker  
MGCSW, Directorate of Social Welfare

James Ayuen  
Inspector for Child Welfare  
MGCSW

Deng Makuol  
Child Protection  
MGCSW

Martha Anyieth  
Focal Person for Gender  
MGCSW

Paul Samuel  
Acting Director  
MGCSW

Thandi Ngwenya  
Team Leader  
Non-Violent Peaceforce

Innasi Jeeverajah  
Child Protection Officer  
Non-Violent Peaceforce

Peter Athum  
Shelter  
Norwegian Refugee Council

Anjelo Aluk  
WASH  
Norwegian Refugee Council

Louis de Leon  
Reports officer  
IGAD

Nasser Shawkat Haider  
Roving Programme Manager  
Oxfam

Arike Kassim  
Public Health Engineering  
Oxfam

Battu Beatrice Jambawai  
Women Protection Advisor  
UNMISS

Andre Mathurin  
Gender Advisor  
UNMISS

Linda Onias  
State Focal Point  
IOM

Hazel De Wit  
State Coordinator for Jonglei  
UNMISS

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**Focus group discussions:**

Focus groups with women in Bor POC.
Focus group with women in Juba POC 3.
Focus group with men in Juba POC 3.
Focus group with representatives of civil society organizations in Wau
Annex 2: Bibliography

1. The World Bank (March 2015): Economic Overview of South Sudan
6. Isolio, Mabel etal. (2012). National Gender Policy for the Republic of South Sudan
7. The Transitional Constitution of South Sudan (2011)
8. USAID Gender Assessment /South Sudan (2010)
13. Comprehensive Gender Assessment for South Sudan (2011)
17. The Child Act for South Sudan (2008)
20. UNFPA, UN Women, NPA, UNHCR: Gender-Based Violence and Protection Concerns in S.Sudan, (2013)
21. Comprehensive Gender Assessment for South Sudan (2012)
26. The Transitional Constitution of South Sudan (2011)
31. South Sudan Transition Strategy (2010)
32. South Sudan ANC Sentinel Surveillance 2012
33. Gender Assessment USAID/Southern Sudan (2010)


40. The Transitional Constitution of South Sudan, 2011.

41. Key Actors include the followings: South Sudan Government institutions – ministries of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Education, Health, Interior; Women’s Caucus, and the Head of the Gender Committee at the National Legislative Assembly (NLA), and other relevant institutions.

42. Academic and Research Institutions – University of Juba’s Center for Peace and Development Studies, Office of the Dean of Students, and other relevant institutions, the Sudd Institute and Ebony Center for Strategic Studies (ECSS).

43. Civil Society Organizations – South Sudan Women’s General Association, SPLM Women’s League, South Sudan, Voice for Change, South Sudan Law Society (SSLS), Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO), etc.

44. Officials in International Organizations– That will include UNDP, USAID, NPA, UNMISS etc. and foreign diplomatic mission in South Sudan.
Annex 3: About the Author

Orly Stern is a researcher and human rights lawyer from South Africa. She works as an independent research consultant, focusing on issues relating to conflict, gender, security sector reform and the law. Her work has focused largely on conflict in Africa, and she has conducted field research across the continent including in South Sudan, Sierra Leone, northern Uganda and the Central African Republic.

Orly has been working on South Sudan since 2010. She was the editor of the book, Hope, Pain and Patience: The Lives of Women in South Sudan published in 2011, which documents the lives in South Sudan. Orly has written extensively on gender issues in South Sudan, including, amongst others, writing on women’s security and the law for the Small Arms Survey, writing a Guidance Note on the Safety and Security of sexual violence survivors for UNFPA, and conducting an assessment of the Police’s Special Protection Units for DFID.

Orly is currently in the completion phase of a Doctorate in law at the London School of Economics, where she has conducted a feminist critique of international humanitarian law. She holds an LL.M in international human rights law from Harvard Law School.