



WORKING PAPER ON PEACEBUILDING IN SOUTH SUDAN

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For further information and feedback on this paper, please contact CARE International South Sudan Head Office in Juba.

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The picture on the front page shows women participating in a peace rally in Jonglei, 2019.

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1. Country Context

1.1. Background

South Sudan attained its independence from Sudan in 2011, but nonetheless continues to suffer recurrent conflicts. The failure to sustain peace had a devastating impact on the lives of millions of South Sudanese.

In September 2018, a Revitalized agreement on the resolution of conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) was signed to give peace yet another chance. To date, the implementation of the R-ARCSS has been challenging as parties failed to form the revitalized transitional government of national unity.

At the grassroots level, inter-ethnic rivalries and cattle raids keep ravaging parts of the country such as former Upper Nile, Jonglei and Lakes states. The causes of these include historical tensions due to distrust between communities, ethnic groups and authorities, grievances and competition over resources such as land, water, grazing land, uneven distribution of resources, lack of employment and economic opportunities (especially for youth¹), feelings of marginalization (especially among minority groups), revenge attacks and a culture of gender inequality leading to gender-based violence.

1.2. Underlying factors and trends of conflict in South Sudan.

The nature of the conflict in South Sudan is complex and characterized by the diverse patterns of decades old grievances mentioned above as well as newer challenges that further aid the fragility of South Sudan. These include lack of inclusivity (especially with regards to women), widespread lawlessness and corruption², weak institutions and governance systems and extreme lack of basic services. These factors are interwoven and represent a challenge to stability and sustainable peace.

History has proven that high level political processes alone cannot deliver long term solutions. National stability depends on addressing parallel local disputes and this requires participation of grassroots local actors in Peacebuilding. Crucial for ownership purposes is the inclusivity of grassroots (local) actors, civil society and women organizations and youth. South Sudanese civil society and women organizations have played a crucial role in advocating for Peace during the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and conducted massive civic education for the public to participate in a peaceful referendum (2011). Their active role was also fundamental during the peace process (2014-2018) where a number of them became key actors and signatories to the agreements (ARCSS-2015 and R-ARCSS 2018). However, the influence of these local actors (especially women and youth) in the transition period and beyond will need to be sustained and enhanced further.

The persistent culture of gender inequality for women and girls in South Sudan has contributed to devastating human rights violations, gender-based violence and limited access to market/livelihoods engagement and financial resources. Hyper masculinity in this context further reinforces the warrior culture attached to men's ability to demonstrate "manliness", including through "strong men" competitions such as wrestling³. These socio-cultural attributes have often deliberately negatively affected women and children including killing and abduction.

¹ World Bank, Country Engagement Note for the Republic of South Sudan period FY18-19, November 2017, p.9.

² The country was classified as most corrupt in Transparency's International Corruption Perceptions Index of 2017 and moved up slightly to #178 out of 180 countries in 2018.

³ <https://issblog.nl/2017/12/01/hyper-masculinity-a-threat-to-inclusive-community-development-in-fragile-environments-by-holly-aritchie/> Accessed 9 Dec.2019

2. Introduction to CARE's Addressing Root Causes (ARC) Project in South Sudan

Building on earlier Peacebuilding work, CARE South Sudan is currently involved in Peacebuilding and economic development in four counties in Jonglei through its Addressing Root Causes (ARC) project. ARC addresses underlying root causes of conflict in Jonglei through fostering economic resilience and positive peace. The project seeks to enhance the ability of communities to mitigate and address negative effects of economic and conflict induced shocks leading to increased social cohesion and trust.

The ARC strategy of forming Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) as well as Peace committees and Peace clubs empowers communities with skills and knowledge, improves their economic resilience and facilitates reconciliation and non-violent conflict resolution in these communities. Women and youth are involved in income generating activities and microenterprises through the VSLA approach and create market linkages with traders across different ethnic communities. They have become more confident as they acquire the right tools and skills through the VSLA trainings, widening their livelihood and economic options. Engaging communities through the peace committees and peace clubs in schools has contributed to positive relationships and trust in the targeted communities.

The Exchange and Learning Event

In October 2019, CARE convened an exchange and learning event in Juba with different stakeholders to create a practitioners learning platform on grassroots Peacebuilding. Representatives from 17 national and international organizations operating in South Sudan attended.

The aim was to:

1. Share findings of the ARC program and receive feedback from practitioners.
2. Engage in dialogue on meaningful participation of women in Peacebuilding processes, increasing the effectiveness and sustainability of local Peacebuilding approaches and identify learning points for practical application.
3. Establish a network of Peacebuilding professionals that can develop into an informal online platform.
4. Develop capacities to engage in learning and action related to “Men engage” approaches that can guide staff to develop programming on this topic.
5. Address the question of institutionalization drawing on current best practices.

The event utilized formal presentations, group discussions and plenaries to enhance learning and exchange. The significance of the event is that it availed an opportunity for the participants to interact and reflect on their respective work and share experiences. These reflections were later consolidated into key priorities⁴ for improved future interventions and Peacebuilding programming.

⁴The following key priorities were identified: 1. Adapt Non-violence approach in programming to resolve conflict ; 2. Coordination between National and International NGOs to improve partnership; 3. Integrate the Rule of Law and Justice into programming to facilitate; 4. Meaningful women participation in decision making and Peacebuilding processes; 5. Linkages between peace committees, peace clubs, justice actors and peace commissions

3. Overview of Grassroots Approaches for Inclusive Peacebuilding in South Sudan

This section highlights the different approaches shared by participants during the learning event and other literature on grassroots Peacebuilding, albeit not exhaustive. This includes both local actors and international organizations working on grassroots Peacebuilding.

Community influencers

Various mechanisms have been utilized across different communities to resolve conflict and restore peace in South Sudan. Most involve community influencers such as **traditional and religious leaders** that reflect their cultural significance as negotiators, counsellors and advisors. Customarily conflicting parties are consulted separately before bringing it to the public. Once an agreement is brokered, a ritual sacrificial bull or sheep is slaughtered to seal the process. This is then followed by celebration of drinking local alcohol and traditional dances. Other approaches include the organization of conferences to coordinate peaceful access to water and pasture, such as used e.g. in Bahr el Ghazal to resolve the dispute between the South Sudan Dinka Ngok and the Misseriya cattle herders from Sudan.

For example, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) an international NGO uses the community influencers approach by working with **religious leaders, media, civil society groups, local authorities and other influential interlocutors** to promote social cohesion in Wau, Tonj, Rumbek, Awerial, Mingkaman, Bor, Yambio, Juba, Yei, Torit, Pageri, Magwi and Nimule. The approaches used involve gathering people around popular activities such as traditional dances, music, sports (such as football), church and schools to engage them across dividing lines. Radio programs, such as drama series for youth and participatory theaters - to collect stories which are later captured as short documentaries that are specifically tailored for the community being targeted - proved effective⁵.

Local (Peacebuilding) structures

In a research conducted by Peace Direct in 2016⁶ in Unity State on cross-border conflict involving Sudan -South Sudan pastoralists, joint **Peace Committees** previously established by Concordis International have continued to work independently despite the absence of funding. They have initiated and sustained local level peace along the South Sudan and Sudan border through dialogues. Similarly, in Jonglei, through the CARE ARC program, conflict resolution and Peacebuilding have been achieved through setting up and training **peace committees and peace clubs**. The key findings from ARC Mid-Term Review (MTR) conducted in 2019 indicate that peace committees help to resolve local conflicts and peace clubs raise awareness in schools on peaceful co-existence. Providing exposure to and knowledge about non-violent means of conflict resolution led to a change in mindsets and attitude of targeted youths. Peace committees champion dialogues, mediate and resolve disputes between individuals and communities, they monitor the fair and peaceful use of communal resources and report crimes to law enforcement agencies. Peace clubs function as positive role models and support youth leadership on community responsibilities.

Safer world works through **Community Action Groups (CAG)**⁷ to ensure communities have increased knowledge and skills in conflict analysis, issues identification prioritization, joint action planning, inclusivity, conflict resolution, dialogue and networking. The CAGs work with law enforcement agencies to report cases and with community leaders to improve peaceful co-existence between communities. Their work through the CAGs has helped in generating knowledge on local conflict

⁵Search for Common Ground <https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Best-Practice--SS-2-pager.pdf> Accessed 10 Dec 19

⁶ Peace Direct <https://www.peacedirect.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Peacebuilding-Mapping-in-Unity-State.pdf> Accessed 10 Dec 19

⁷ Saferworld, *Saferworld in South Sudan report*, 2019, p.4.

dynamics and how these link to the national conflict and push for more inclusive decision making and national dialogue processes.

Legal frameworks

Plan International's work on meaningful women's participation in South Sudan focuses on trainings on the South Sudan **UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan (NAP)**. They mainly operate in Nimule (former Eastern Equatorial state). Stakeholders include women leaders and groups, chiefs, gender desks at the police stations, ABC courts and the local government. The approaches include training, advocacy, radio talk shows, awareness raising campaigns, monthly forums and grassroots dialogues. Their interventions made the ABC courts more "gender friendly" and supported women to approach the courts with cases, especially on GBV, as well as the establishment of a gender desk at the police stations.

PAX and AMA operate in former Lakes, Jonglei and Unity States on increasing women's participation in community Peacebuilding. Using the framework of the **Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS)**, PAX and AMA use the gender provisions to increase women's participation to the 35% quota stipulated in the R-ARCSS. Their approaches include lobby, dialogues, coaching and mentorship, radio shows and cooperation with other stakeholders. Such interventions have allowed for more acceptance of women in non-traditional spaces.

4. Meaningful participation of women in Peacebuilding processes

4.1 Opportunities linking women's grassroots efforts with higher level Peacebuilding efforts

Despite the unequal gendered power relation aggravated by deeply entrenched patriarchy, poverty, conflicts and cultural practices that regard women largely as care givers, opportunities for women to engage in Peacebuilding at both grassroots and national levels do exist. The United States Institute of Peace stated in 2011 that there is great potential for gender equality and respect for women's rights in South Sudan.⁸ Some of these opportunities are engraved in a number of policies and frameworks developed by the government to enhance women's participation in Peacebuilding and nation building process at all levels. These include provisions in the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (as amended), the National Gender Policy, the South Sudan UNSCR

1325 National Action Plan (NAP) (2015-2020), South Sudan Vision 2040 and the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) 2018. South Sudanese women's participation in peacemaking at community and national level is evident since the Wunlit peace process in 1999, the Liliir Covenant and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). In Wunlit, communities appointed delegates to the peace conference and each county was required to nominate three delegates, one of whom had to be a woman. During the CPA process, a significant gain was the 25 percent women's quota, which was later increased to 35 percent in the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) in 2018.

⁸ USIP, Special Report on Gender and State building in South Sudan, 2011, p. 1

These legal frameworks ushered in opportunities for the growth of the women's movement in South Sudan. To date there are more than 200 women's organizations nationwide and networks such as the South Sudan Women's General Association and the South Sudan Women's Coalition for Peace, which has members and chapters nationwide. For example, Eve Organization has wide reach in the country and is well known for its strong advocacy, Peacebuilding efforts and space creation for women to participate in Peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

At the political/national level, woman parliamentarians as part of implementing the strategy for enhancing women's political leadership in South Sudan⁹ utilized their platform of the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus to engage in regular information sharing and joint messaging to key decision-makers on the most pertinent policy priorities and their constituencies. For example, since 2018, members of the National Women Parliamentary Caucus reached out to seventeen states to establish state women caucus chapters to facilitate advocacy and a flow of information from the national level to the states and vice versa.

These platforms as well as the legal policies and frameworks provide opportunities and avenues for women at the grassroots to link with women at national levels and participate in Peacebuilding and contribute to national processes. Examples of how to link these various tracks are through the sharing of documents with representatives at the national level, or through public reports or press releases. Literature also suggests that a combination of these different strategies is likely to increase the impact.¹⁰

4.2 Challenges to women's participation in Peacebuilding

Although opportunities exist for women's participation in Peacebuilding, challenges equally exist. The major challenges lie in the socio-political sphere in South Sudan which is highly male dominated, militarized and characterized by violence due to armed conflicts and proliferation of small arms. Also, cultural practices such as forced and early marriage and stereotypical perceptions of women perpetuate an imbalance of power and status and do not provide a level playing field for women.¹¹ Women that get involved in such spaces and processes often have to impose and assert themselves to be given the space and be heard. Financial limitations also affect women's participation in the peace process, as well as a lack of technical skills when it comes to discussion and negotiation. This undermines women's potential to substantively contribute to the peace process and has forced women to adopt reactive rather than proactive approaches.

Participants at the learning event highlighted that at the grassroots informal peace processes, the challenges that women face include intimidation as well as the mindset that women are not supposed to speak when men talk. Often, they are allowed to speak when approved by men. In some cases, when allowed to attend meetings, women take back seats and do not lead discussions. These attitudes towards women, as well as internalization of these norms by women themselves, make it difficult for women to raise issues.

While peace committees often involve women, their involvement is sometimes more tokenistic to demonstrate inclusivity. When it comes to tough negotiations and decision making, the final word usually rests with the men. Notable exceptions are for example the election of women as paramount chiefs in former Eastern Equatorial and Wulu County (former Lakes State). The paramount chief in

⁹ https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=78fdebb6-65c1-4185-1a24-c02d25ba5bdb&groupId=252038 accessed 17 January 2020

¹⁰ ISS, *Sustaining peace. Harnessing the power of South Sudanese women*, East Africa Report, november 2019.

¹¹ https://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=imprimable&id_article=40086 accessed 17 January 2020

Eastern Equatorial leads 396 male chiefs. She is well respected and central in communal conflict resolutions and counselling¹². Comparably, the paramount chief of Wulu County was elected by the community after a series of dialogue and awareness raising discussions in the community. She sits at the community court and precedes over issues of domestic violence and mediates conflicts¹³.

5. Increasing the effectiveness and sustainability of local Peacebuilding approaches

5.1 Strategies that work to increase effectiveness and sustainability

Given the history of conflict in South Sudan, it is easy to agree that it is a challenging context to build peace. During the learning event, participants shared their experiences and agreed that to ensure a holistic approach to sustainable peace, Peacebuilding interventions should build on proven approaches and evidence-based work. Reflected below are strategies and lessons learnt for enhanced effectiveness and sustainability of Peacebuilding in South Sudan.

5.1.1 Putting community structures at the core

Various international and national organizations have effectively strengthened inclusive community structures such as Village Savings and Loans Associations, Peace committees, Peace clubs and Community Advocacy Groups to practically tackle some of the drivers of conflict, such as lack of economic opportunities and underlying causes for conflict, such as distrust, feelings of marginalization and negative gender norms. The social fabric of conflict-affected communities can be restored by working with community governance structures which organize and empower excluded groups to advocate for their interests (e.g. to local government and NGOs) and break through the negative spiral of weak governance and fragility. The community governance approach is a means to a more stable and inclusive form of governance. A study commissioned by CARE

Nederland in 2016 on theories of change of local governance and Peacebuilding¹⁴ states that local Peacebuilding structures have the potential to contribute towards the following:

- Increasing knowledge and changing attitudes towards plurality, inclusion, the political process and other aspects
- Building social cohesion so that identity or economic divides can less easily be manipulated
- Working with vulnerable individuals, particularly youth, to reduce the risk that they get co-opted into violence, particularly around political processes
- Establishing community roles in providing key security and justice functions to ensure that these are effective and not wholly reliant on still fragile public authorities with low legitimacy in the eyes of the community
- Establishing positive relations between community and local authorities that can continue even if government funding is reduced and services decline

¹² <https://www.peacewomen.org/content/south-sudan-south-sudans-sole-female-traditional-chief-fights-equality> accessed 5 December 2019

¹³ <https://medium.com/@oxfamsouthsudan/susan-the-first-female-paramount-chief-in-wulu-90bfb7115616> accessed 5 December 2019

¹⁴ Spearing, M. *Addressing state fragility from the bottom up through inclusive community governance: Exploring theories of change*, 2016, p. 33.

5.1.2 Collaboration with Community Leaders and Local Government

One important factor for successful grassroots Peacebuilding in South Sudan is the inclusion of traditional leaders, people of influence and the local government due to “the historical legitimacy they enjoy.”¹⁵ This includes capacity building of traditional authorities, as well as linking them to local government. Involving local government can also be necessary to create entry points for programming and to increase the impact of certain interventions. AMA and PAX for instance in former Lakes State involve state government officials to open and legitimize certain activities. Experiences by SFCG demonstrated the usefulness of involving local governments in two communities in Eastern Equatorial to resolve land disputes. In the same state Eve Organization for Women Development also collaborated with state authorities to facilitate access to certain communities and provide clearances. CARE in Jonglei through its ARC project also refers some conflicts to state officials. In Nimule – former Eastern Equatorial State, Plan International works with Local government to strengthen the ABC courts and established the gender desk at the police station to support gender issues and gender related violence.

Caution must be practiced to ensure that NGOs remain independent and in charge of their own agenda’s. As observed by participants of the event, the collaboration and participation of community leaders and local government works well at the local level and can be further enhanced through regular meetings to strengthen partnership, capacity building and sensitization.

5.1.3 Use of Innovative Strategies to inform Relevant Programming

Practitioners in the field of Peacebuilding utilize media such as the local FM radio to target a wider audience and hard to reach areas. Radio programs include information sharing on peace process, drama series aired to target issues such as peaceful co-existence and gender-based violence. Some utilize participation in live community theaters through collecting relevant and credible stories from the communities to shape constructive narratives that engage diverse groups. Others explore social gatherings such as church events to enhance Peacebuilding.

5.2 Challenges to effectiveness and sustainability of Local Peacebuilding

One of the critical setbacks to grassroots Peacebuilding is the recurring conflict and the ensuing militarization and proliferation of arms that exacerbate inter and intra communal violence. Practitioners linked this to the complex loyalties and informal patronage networks that fuel conflict and undermines Peacebuilding efforts at the grassroots. For example, the influence of political leaders incites communities against each other which can result in politicized and ethicized peace committees, negatively influencing the credibility of the committees. Inclusivity in this context means overcoming ethnic exclusivism and political manipulation as well as addressing perceptions of specific male and female conflict “issues”.

Agencies implementing Peacebuilding activities are also restricted by scarce funding for Peacebuilding activities. Most Peacebuilding projects are short term and, in some cases, quick fix solutions or a one-time off event to address communal conflict. Practitioners observed that the effect of these short-term interventions is short lived. Furthermore, some donors consider Peacebuilding as a post conflict matter and not a priority given the humanitarian crisis and the unpredictability of the security situation in the country. The recently emerging triple nexus approach (relief-development-Peacebuilding) which emphasizes joint context analysis, joint programming and longer-term funding for conflict-affected states could potentially contribute to a shift in donor priorities for South Sudan.

¹⁵ Idris, I (2017) *Lessons from local governance programmes in South Sudan*. K4D Helpdesk Report 236. Brighton, UK: Institute for Development Studies, p.3.

Government restrictions are another challenge to Peacebuilding. Many NGOs and civil society activities are monitored and, in some cases, censored by government security apparatuses. These restrictions cut the grassroots from receiving adequate information on the peace agreement. For a truly inclusive process, space for information sharing needs to be created and opened up for the participation of civil society.

6. Recommendations for future programming

6.1 Recommendations for women's meaningful participation

The workshop participants provided the following reflections on the best practices and recommendations for women's meaningful participation:

6.1.1 Strengthened Advocacy efforts for meaningful women's participation

Advocacy has proven effective in enhancing women's participation in Peacebuilding at national and grassroots' levels. Recognizing that enhancing women's meaningful participation is crucial in sustaining peace, Civil Society, INGOs and women's organizations should organize a joint and well-tailored advocacy strategy around the inclusion of women in key positions in local government structures, as well as realization of the 35 percent quota at all levels. This requires strengthening the nexus between grassroots women groups, national women's organizations and coalitions and INGOs.

6.1.2 Increased cooperation among women's groups

During the learning event, participants noted that there is an increase in the participation of women in Peacebuilding due to enhanced cooperation among the existing women's groups in the country. These include among others, the South Sudan Women's Coalition for Peace and the South Sudan Women's General Association that have both national and grassroots reach. This suggests that such structures need to be further strengthened to close the gaps between women at the grassroots and national levels such that Peacebuilding initiatives happening at national level can reach down to the grassroots and vice versa. This will enhance capacity building, mentorship and counselling necessary to build confidence among women to take up leadership roles at both community and national levels.

6.1.3 Enhance capacity of women in Peacebuilding

The ARC project demonstrated that grassroots women who participate in community peace dialogues and whose capacity is built on a range of issues such as women leadership, women's rights, conflict mediation and resolution are more informed and confident in bringing in a women's perspective at both the formal and informal grassroots peace processes. To enhance this, INGOs and Civil Society Organizations should continue strengthening existing platforms such as peace committees and women groups at community levels to institutionalize learning, build capacity and confidence among women and girls. These platforms can provide counselling, organize peace conferences and exchange visits to improve networking and promote inclusive peace. Awareness on the different policies and frameworks that support women's meaningful participation and leadership is also crucial, these include the Local Government Act, the R-ARCSS, the SS Gender Policy and the SS UNSCR NAP among others. More so, is the need to identify more young female leaders and role models that can encourage confidence among the women to take lead roles and work together with their male counterparts in the communities.

6.1.4 Involvement of Men in dialogues on Women's participation

Involving men and community leadership in dialogues on women's participation in Peacebuilding yielded positive results, e.g. the election of two women paramount chiefs in Wulu county and Eastern Equatorial as illustrated above. Engaging influential actors at the community level helps change mindsets on women's leadership. Equally important is that INGOs, Civil Society and Women's Organizations and groups conduct regular dialogue between men and women and translate some of the policies and frameworks such as the R-ARCSS and the SS UNSCR 1325 NAP into local languages to allow local and community leadership structures to understand and participate in awareness raising on the negative social norms and cultural values that discriminate against women and girls' participation.

6.1.5 Lobbying for Funding

Women's participation in formal peace processes is often not structurally funded and made possible only through designated funds of women's activists and groups. To ensure women effectively participate in Peacebuilding at both grassroots and national level, it is crucial that INGOs and women's organizations lobby for more and long-term funding and that the donor community increase the funding for women's participation in Peacebuilding. There is especially a need for more funding for grassroots women's activities.¹⁶

6.2 Recommendations for increasing effectiveness and sustainability of Peacebuilding interventions

6.2.1 Improved Coordination

National and local peacebuilders including INGOs in South Sudan should narrow the gap between their efforts through better coordination, such as through this exchange and learning event, to be more effective and bolster credibility of their work. This will enhance local ownership and capacity of actors such as chiefs, youth and women leaders and other key influential personalities to continue addressing local problems beyond the life of specific interventions.

6.2.2 Guidelines for local peace structures

To increase effectiveness in Peacebuilding, practitioners should invest in strengthening the structures of the peace committees and clubs through development of guidelines for the committees and clubs. Existing guides such as the CARE Peacebuilding manuals and others can be utilized to inform such initiatives.¹⁷ Practitioners should however be sensitive and safeguard peace committees against domination certain groups, territories and politicization. This will avoid creating tension and enhance credibility of Peacebuilding efforts. Peace clubs should further be replicated beyond schools, notably to the cattle camps.

¹⁶ ISS, *Sustaining peace. Harnessing the power of South Sudanese women*, East Africa report, november 2019, p. 12.

¹⁷ CARE South Sudan Peacebuilding Manual https://www.careneland.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CARE-Peacebuilding-manual-v0.2_Final.pdf

6.2.3 Gender

Incorporating gender adequately in the Peacebuilding initiatives is essential to make Peacebuilding more inclusive and ensure effectiveness and sustainability. Conflict and its aftermath can create unique opportunities to reconstitute unequal gender relations and can have significant positive impact for women and girls.¹⁸ There is also evidence that women can play a particularly important role at community level to build peace and social cohesion and should be supported to bring these skills to national level peace processes.¹⁹ Literature specifically mentions that women's participation in peace processes can 'increase the chances that the community will buy into the process and that the root causes of the conflict will be addressed, particularly as women can bring a different perspective to that of warring factions regarding what peace and security mean.'²⁰

6.2.4 Working with local government champions

To increase the sustainability and effectiveness of Peacebuilding, authorities (at local level) should be involved and lobbied directly to increase understanding and support for local Peacebuilding efforts. One of the best practices that the participants of the learning event, as well as literature on Peacebuilding, emphasizes, is to work with champions within local government.²¹ A champion is someone who is already quite positive about peace and community involvement and has the potential and vision for change in their community. These champions' role is to foster governmental uptake of grassroots voices. Strengthening the capacity of these actors is of great importance and requires an adaptive training and coaching approach that is monitored closely and complemented with lobby and advocacy strategies (e.g. presenting successful case studies to authorities²²).

6.2.5 Long-term and flexible funding

In South Sudan, sustained and focused international attention has been crucial in Peacebuilding in formal and informal processes and will continue to be imperative to maintain momentum for Peacebuilding. International partners need to consider long term engagement for Peacebuilding in complex contexts such as South Sudan to be able to rebuild communities. Short term interventions should be considered as entry points. Donors should increase funds for triple nexus programming, allowing for flexibility to respond to changes in political and security dynamics and ensure strong coordination with and inclusion of international and local organizations on their programs.

¹⁸ CARE Nederland, The Political Participation and Influence of Marginalized Women in Fragile and Conflict Affected Countries, Global Study Report, 2018, p. 4.

¹⁹ Cardona, I et al. 2012. From the ground up: Women's roles in local Peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone. Brighton: IDS.

²⁰ ISS, *Sustaining peace. Harnessing the power of South Sudanese women*, East Africa Report, november 2019, p. 3.

²¹ University of York: http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/80478/1/Bush_2004_Peace_Unity_and_municipal_governance.pdf, p. 52. Accessed 20-01-2020

²² CARE, *Advancing towards promoting inclusive governance in fragile settings. Learning brief*, 2018, p.3 <https://www.carenederland.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/CARE-Learning-Brief-v0.4.pdf>

About CARE

CARE's work in what later became South Sudan began in 1979. During the 1980s activities centered on Wau in Western Bahr el Ghazal, Unity State, North Kordofan and the Nuba Mountains with a focus on relief assistance due to the 1983-84 drought emergency. In 1993 CARE expanded activities to include a separate Southern Sudan operation in conjunction with Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS). Throughout the 1990s CARE's work in the southern Sudan was entirely emergency response. Following the birth of independent South Sudan in 2011, CARE established the South Sudan Country Office in Juba. Despite many challenges throughout, CARE has been a consistent presence in the country over the past four decades delivering relevant services, forging strong relationships with local communities, while remaining impartial.

Special Thanks

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