

Briefings from South Sudan

Introduction

This briefing presents the main peace and safety concerns identified by communities and their representatives during state-level roundtable discussions on strengthening community safety and addressing peace challenges, which were held between September 2020 and February 2021 in Aweil, Bentiu, Cueurbet, Juba, Malakal, Maridi, Wau and Warrap state.

The events brought together state-level and county-level authorities,⁶ heads of organised forces (military, police, prisons, judiciary and national security), United Nations (UN) agencies, national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs/INGOs), community-based organisations, community members, religious leaders, youth leaders and women leaders. The findings and recommendations outlined in this briefing are intended to reflect these discussions and the perspectives of the participants on potential ways to improve peace and stability in South Sudan. The recommendations are bold and will undoubtedly present challenges, but they present a potential way forward. This briefing reflects the views of participants at the roundtables and does not necessarily reflect the views of Saferworld.

When civil war broke out in South Sudan in December 2013, few people expected that it would last until today. The signing of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) in August 2015 did not end the war and, when renewed violence flared up in Juba in July 2016, conflict quickly spread to previously peaceful parts of the country. The civil strife has caused untold human suffering, destruction of property and livelihoods, and an increase in the number of armed groups. It has also exacerbated the polarisation of South Sudanese society along ethnic and tribal lines, fuelling inter- and intra-communal conflict. Humanitarian needs have significantly worsened in 2020/21 due to a combination of flooding, protracted subnational violence, weak governance and institutions, and some of the worst famine and food insecurity witnessed in recent years, which is likely to significantly worsen in the coming months. Access to communities in need, combined with floods and drought, displacement and the ongoing conflict, have left 7.24 million people food insecure, with 60% of people facing severe acute food insecurity.¹ Since the beginning of the conflict, a huge proportion of the population has been displaced – latest figures show that the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) amounts to 1.62 million people and the number of South Sudanese refugees fleeing the country² is 2.3 million, bringing the total to just under four million.³

Over the last year, parties to the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)⁴ have taken steps to implement some parts of the agreement, but animosity has persisted between them, with disagreements within and between the SPLM-in-government (SPLM-IG) and SPLM-in-opposition (SPLM-IO), as well as between the government and holdout groups.⁵ The formation of state and national governments has been fraught with power struggle: in some cases, politicians and officials have resorted to political manipulation and have even provoked local conflicts in order to gain access to positions. Despite the steps taken to unify the official and parallel market exchange rates, COVID-19 restrictions – and the consequent impacts of plummeting oil prices and low agricultural output – have further hastened the already rising rate of inflation, causing economic shocks which communities have not been able to absorb in the absence of government support. Floods have led to widespread famine, and this is compounded in some areas (such as in Jonglei) by poor road conditions, which make it difficult to access flood-affected communities. In other areas, conflict has prevented humanitarian access to those most in need.

Communities, especially in rural areas, have been substantially affected by these macro-level shifts and in some instances have been left to fend for themselves. Communities have been pushed to the limit in an already fragile situation, resulting in increased inter- and intra- communal violence, cattle raiding, disputes between pastoral and arable farmers, and cycles of revenge killings. Diminishing livelihood opportunities, high inflation and the rising cost of bride price have pushed some young people to take up arms and raid cattle. Women and girls have withstood the worst of this, with a rise in the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and child, early and forced marriages (CEFM).

Safety and security

In this briefing, we define security as the protection of people and their assets from violence or theft. It relates to potential harm caused by actions which are either intended to harm specific people or groups, or which indirectly cause harm to other people or groups. Safety is connected to, but is broader than, security. Safety is defined as the protection of people from harm. Such harm may arise as a consequence of insecurity but also from accidents, fire, flood, disease or other causes, including threats posed by the environment or animals.⁷

Key safety and security challenges

Communities, civil society representatives and other participants identified the following safety and security concerns at the roundtable meetings. The participants also proposed a set of recommendations for national, state and local government and civil society.

The absence of the rule of law, ineffective law enforcement and a weak justice system

This was highlighted as a concern in: Aweil, Bentiu, Cueibet, Warrap state, Wau, Juba and Malakal

Across South Sudan, at state, county, *boma* and *payam* levels,⁸ the police and judicial systems have proven to be inaccessible, inefficient and ineffective, all of which has resulted in a failure of justice delivery cited to explain this, including low salaries for both judges and police, resulting in a lack of motivation and a rise in bribe-taking, limited or no transport for police officials, and protracted delays in court cases and investigations. In some cases, there were serious accusations of corruption (including bribery), impunity and a lack of transparency during proceedings and investigations. Internally displaced people (IDPs), communities living in Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites and those living in remote areas are further marginalised, with many IDPs being unable to access police stations and courts due to their location, as is the case with the PoC camp outside Bentiu town.

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It sometimes takes judges as long as five years to conclude cases in the state court in Aweil town, and that such delays lead to frustration and, at times, to people taking the law into their own hands.⁹

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The absence of the rule of law is driving conflict and insecurity across South Sudan. Community members and representatives explained that, when cases are not promptly resolved or when aggrieved parties are dissatisfied with court decisions, some people take the law into their own hands in the form of revenge killings to redress the loss of human lives or property.

Community members and representatives acknowledged that the presence of customary courts¹⁰ presented both advantages and disadvantages for communities. While customary courts were more efficient and easily accessible, the outcomes of cases handled by customary courts sometimes resulted in discrepancies between statutory and customary law. Community members and representatives noted that, in many cases, conflict stems from the overlapping mandates of the customary and statutory courts, where Con matters outside of their jurisdiction. For example, there have been instances where Chiefs have handled capital offence. Chiefs were also said to be conforming to negative traditional and social norms that adversely affect women and girls, siding with perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). On the other hand, statutory courts were sometimes accused of interfering in cases that should have been handled by Chiefs – a scenario that has created confusion among citizens.

Recommendations to national¹¹ and state governments:

- National and state governments should strengthen the judiciary and courts at county, *payam* and lower levels by increasing the number of trained judges and other court officials. This might involve creating on-the-job training and mentoring initiatives.
- National and state governments should coordinate and monitor the administration of justice throughout the country, and create mechanisms to ensure the efficient and timely resolution of legal cases.
- National government should review and revise the pay and benefits of judges, state prosecutors and police personnel so that these are in line with regional/international levels – to reduce the temptation to solicit or accept bribes – and make provisions for specific contextual challenges facing these officials, such as security threats coming from armed civilians or groups.
- National and state governments should improve police officers' access to transport – providing them with motorcycles if cars are not affordable – and allocate additional resources to facilitate speedy and independent investigation.
- National and state governments should improve security and restore peace by setting up police posts and deploying police across all counties and *payams* in the country.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Civil society representatives should petition state and national governments to improve legal and justice systems, including advocacy to increase the number of magistrates' courts at the state and county levels across the country. This will help expedite cases at the local level, where there is a greater need.
- To reduce or eliminate revenge killings, civil society representatives across the country should raise awareness among communities of the importance of maintaining trust in the rule of law, including in the judiciary and the court system.

Recommendations to Chiefs, traditional leaders and elders:

- Chiefs and elders should ensure adequate representation of women in customary courts.
- Traditional leaders and elders should exercise independence, fairness and firmness in handling cases, including those which have wide-reaching ramifications for communities, such as cattle theft.
- Chiefs should stop handling criminal cases that do not fall within their jurisdiction.

Sexual and gender-based violence

This was highlighted as a concern in: Aweil, Bentiu, Juba, Malakal, Maridi, Wau and Warrap state

Deep-rooted patriarchal cultural norms fuel violence against women and girls. Child, early and forced marriage (CEFM), intimate partner violence (IPV), elopement and abduction, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and teenage pregnancies are widespread across South Sudan.

With COVID-19 keeping girls and young women away from school, these risks have significantly increased. Although the Child Act 2008 sets the minimum age of marriage in South Sudan at 18 years, CEFM is prevalent across the country. Closely linked with CEFM is the practice of bride price (payment, usually cattle, made by the groom to the bride's family)¹² which has increased since conflict began, with families seeing this as a way to acquire wealth. Families of girls and young women arrange marriages for their daughters and agree bride prices with the grooms without the consent of the girls and young women.

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Across the different communities, there is no fixed amount of money or number of cattle for the bride price. Among the Nuer, a dowry can range from 50 to 60 cattle or more.¹³

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In many of the roundtable meetings, girls, young women and young men spoke of the detrimental impact of CEFM and bride price. Community members and representatives, particularly women, spoke of the commodification of women and girls, who are often seen as a source of wealth. A participant [in Bentiu] stated that the payment of a hefty bride price also has detrimental consequences on young girls and women, as it compromises their safety and security. Many women whose suitors are unable to pay the bride price are coerced into marrying a man they do not love, or alternatively opt to elope with the man they love without the knowledge of their families. This may result in violent clashes, revenge attacks and killings, and other forms of violence. Community members and representatives also said that young men involved in cattle raiding often did so to accrue a bride price.

Once married, women and girls were vulnerable to IPV. In many cases, the practice of polygamy also heightened susceptibility to violence. In Cueibet in particular, this was said to lead to child neglect, and in Aweil participants at the roundtable event blamed the practice of polygamy for the rising number of children living on the streets of Aweil town and other county administration headquarters like Gok Machar and Wanyok.

Recommendations to national and state governments:

- National and state governments should ensure that harmful and negative customs and traditions are identified, challenged and ultimately abolished through law, policy and enforcement.
- National and state governments should implement the Child Act 2008 and hold to account any parents who force their children into CEFM.
- National and state governments should ensure the adequate representation of women at all levels of government. As well as reserving 35% of positions for women, as enshrined in the R-ARCSS, the government and employers should support women to compete for leadership positions at national, state and county levels.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Civil society representatives should ensure that community security and peacebuilding approaches integrate prevention, monitoring and redress for women and communities to raise, address and prevent instances of SGBV.
- Civil society representatives should direct women to survivor-centred SGBV services, including those providing psychosocial support, access to justice, and rehabilitation through skills development and livelihood initiatives.
- Civil society representatives should raise awareness of SGBV and its impact on women, girls, families and society.
- Civil society representatives should conduct campaigns among communities across the country to raise awareness of the Child Act 2008.

Recommendations to Chiefs, traditional leaders and elders:

- Chiefs and traditional leaders should actively discourage the practice of CEFM and SGBV, including IPV, within their communities.
- Chiefs and elders should ensure adequate representation of women in customary courts and local decision-making processes and structures.

Recommendations to communities:

- Parents should support both boys and girls to enrol in schools.

Cycles of revenge killings and inter-communal violence

This was highlighted as a concern in: Bentiu, Cueibet and Warrap State.

Revenge killings are an increasing occurrence in South Sudan since the outbreak of civil war in December 2013. Community members and representatives said that revenge killings are often triggered by cattle raiding and competition over resources; on top of this, communities have been increasingly polarised since the beginning of the war. The killings can be small in scale, involving a few individuals, or may involve a large number of armed youth targeting other young people from their sections and villages as well as young people from different sections or tribes.

Community members and representatives felt that the cycle of revenge killings has worsened since the beginning of 2020, due to the deteriorating security situation. Rather than taking cases to the statutory courts of justice, which are seen as inadequate, families are opting to resolve differences through traditional systems of redress which, in most cases, involve the perpetrators' families or clans making compensatory payments of cows to the families of the victims. These situations have frequently resulted in disagreements and further violence.

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Recurring cycles of violent and tit-for-tat clashes and killings between young people within and outside the PoC camp [in Bentiu] are triggered by cattle raiding and the polarisation of communities since the 2013 civil war.¹⁴

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In Cueibet, participants also faced delays in claiming compensation payments. They stressed that authorities are slow to implement the collection of cows and even sometimes ask for payment from the victims' families before issuing arrest warrants. Some communities have also been known to select old or sick cows for compensation, which has at times angered the aggrieved families, who resort to seeking revenge to redress the loss of their family members.

Recommendations to national and state governments:

- National and state governments should improve security and restore peace by setting up police posts and deploying police across the country to deter inter-communal violence.
- National and state governments should embark on reconciling feuding tribes and communities across the country.
- National and state governments should pursue cases of intra- and inter-communal violence, making arrests, bringing the accused to trial (or other forms of hearing) and imposing heavy punishments on instigators and ringleaders.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Civil society representatives working across South Sudan should engage communities in inter-tribe/community dialogues on the drivers of conflict, including revenge killings, cattle raiding, bride prices, alcohol and drug misuse and other societal issues.
- Civil society representatives should conduct campaigns against hate speech and ethnic stereotyping in communities by spreading peace and unity messages via the media, including on social media and other appropriate methods of communication.
- Civil society representatives should disseminate the content of the R-ARCSS in local languages and in appropriate formats (such as audio, print or wall paintings) among communities in the country to raise awareness of the agreement.

Recommendations to Chiefs, traditional leaders and elders, and churches:

- Together with churches, community leaders should embark on inter-tribe/community dialogues, which include young people and women representatives, to defuse conflict and build peace.
- Community leaders, including Chiefs and elders, should encourage and instigate inter-tribe/ community visits and exchanges to build confidence and promote trust in South Sudan.

Recommendations to communities:

- Communities should encourage and show tolerance towards interethnic marriages where possible among various ethnic communities in the country to promote unity and social cohesion.

Cattle raiding and cattle-related conflicts

This was highlighted as a concern in: Aweil, Bentiu, Cueibet, Malakal, Wau and Warrap

Community members and representatives pointed out that cattle raiding – a longstanding practice among pastoralist communities in many parts of South Sudan – is a major security concern. Cattle are the foundation of socio-economic and cultural life for pastoralist communities: cattle provide wealth, are a source of pride, and are used as payment for bride prices and blood compensation. Cattle influence the way of life and relationships in these communities. Traditionally, cattle raiders used rudimentary weapons such as spears and clubs, but the introduction of small arms and light weapons (SALW) has aggravated the situation. Cattle raiding is viewed by many as one of the main drivers of conflict in the state.

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The destruction of farms by cattle, coupled with aggressive and violent behaviour by cattle herders towards farm owners, often leads to conflict. In the past, cattle migration was regulated and normally took place between late December and April or May. In recent years, herders have violated this arrangement, leading to tense relationships between farming communities in Western Bahr el Ghazal and cattle-owning neighbours from Warrap.¹⁵

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As well as the proliferation of SALW in the hands of civilians, participants also attributed the increasing rates of cattle raiding to the high bride prices required by the families of brides. They also listed unemployment, the high cost of living, the lack of alternative means of livelihood and the absence of security structures as other factors contributing to cattle raiding, and noted that the situation has been exacerbated by inflammatory statements made by officials looking to stir up violence. Community members and participants observed that cattle raiding led to additional devastation and breakdown – loss of life, SGBV against women and girls, loss of property and livestock, breakdown of healthy courtships, revenge killings and inter- and intra-communal violence.

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Cattle raiding and cattle theft within Warrap and between Warrap and neighbouring Lakes and Unity states [are] a major contributor [to] insecurity in all three states. Cultural norms equate ownership of more cows with ‘male pride’, wealth and strength and notions of being seen as a ‘real man’ in the community; this is a significant driver of cattle raiding/theft.¹⁶

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Community members and representatives feel that cattle theft and raiding are likely to continue unless local tribal chiefs and leaders, local administrators at the *boma* and *payam* levels, and county, subnational and national governments make efforts to tackle the underlying causes (such as by lowering bride prices) and impose harsher punishments.

Recommendations to national and state governments:

- National and state governments at all levels should formally criminalise cattle raiding and establish special courts to try cattle raiders and cattle thieves.
- National and state governments at the state and national levels should improve the capacity of law enforcement agencies, especially the police at *boma* and *payam* levels, to investigate cases of cattle raiding, including by developing special units.
- The national government should develop a nationwide strategy and plan to counter violent cattle raiding.
- National and state governments should enact new legislation and enforce existing laws to deter and punish the perpetrators of cattle raiding and theft.
- National and state governments, with support from the international community, should construct *hafeers* (water reservoirs) and boreholes in drought-prone cattle-keeping areas in the country, to reduce cattle migration to neighbouring states, particularly Western Bahr el Ghazal, Western Equatoria and some parts of Central Equatoria states.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Civil society representatives should carry out wider dissemination of the Bussere and Marialbai cattle migration agreements in Warrap and Western Bahr el Ghazal. They should educate communities on the need to coexist peacefully – similar resolutions reached between cattle herders and farmers in other parts of the country should also be disseminated.
- Civil society representatives should raise awareness among communities about alternative cattle-keeping practices, such as ranching.

Recommendations to Chiefs, traditional leaders and elders:

- Chiefs and traditional leaders should reduce the number of cows paid as bride price in an attempt to suppress the urge for cattle raiding and theft.

Recommendations to communities:

- Communities should discourage young people from cattle raiding and theft by imposing penalties on cattle raiders in their areas of jurisdiction.
- Communities should foster greater cooperation with government and security agents to identify and apprehend cattle raiders.

Prevalence of and easy access to small arms and light weapons (SALWs)

This was highlighted as a concern in: Cueibet, Juba, Malakal, Warrap and Wau

Community members and representatives attributed much of the conflicts across South Sudan to the easy availability of SALW to the civilian population. With guns easily accessible, almost all young men are armed. In some cases, community members and representatives felt that, at times, young men were better equipped with firearms than the police.

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With guns easily accessible, almost all young men in Gok are armed – at times better than state and county police personnel.¹⁷

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The use of firearms by youth in revenge killings, armed violence and other forms of criminality – such as cattle raiding/theft, highway robberies and targeted killings based on past grievances – are indicative of the magnitude of the challenges that need to be addressed in tandem with tackling the proliferation of SALW.

As mentioned earlier, the prevalence of SALW in cases of cattle raiding is threatening peace and stability across South Sudan and is leading to breakdown of community relationships, fuelling further conflict. For example, every year, heavily armed cattle herders from neighbouring Tonj and Gogrial counties in Warrap state move into Western Bahr el Ghazal state, preventing community members from accessing their own farmlands. In Maridi County, the relationship between communities and pastoralists have deteriorated as the cattle keepers have become more heavily armed.

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Heavily armed cattle herders from neighbouring Tonj and Gogrial counties in Warrap state, who move into Western Bahr el Ghazal state yearly with their cattle while carrying firearms. Communities from the outskirts of Wau town live with the constant fear of violence from armed cattle herders.¹⁸

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Recommendations to national and state governments:

- National and state governments should carry out comprehensive, simultaneous and peaceful disarmament across the country.
- National and state government should offer cash and cows to encourage those with weapons to turn them in.
- National and state governments should ensure that officially held weapons are properly stored and do not fall into the hands of unauthorised individuals or armed groups. This will involve increased monitoring of storage facilities and rigorous vetting of personnel responsible for providing security in weapons storage facilities.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Civil society representatives should raise awareness of the dangers of SALWs when improperly held, to encourage more responsible use.
- Civil society representatives should advocate for peaceful, inclusive and uniform civilian disarmament that takes into account the safety concerns of communities.

Recommendations to Chiefs, traditional leaders and elders:

- Chiefs and elders should discourage youth from using guns to resolve inter- and intra-communal and family disputes and grievances.

Recommendations to communities:

- Communities should cooperate with security service providers in peaceful disarmament processes.

Land and administrative boundary disputes

This was highlighted as a concern in: Aweil, Juba, Malakal, Wau and Warrap

Decades of poor land regulation, conflict and mismanagement, as well as delays in setting up county and state level administrations, have resulted in increased disputes over land and administrative boundaries across states and counties in South Sudan.

In many instances, particularly in towns, community members and representatives complained that mismanagement (deliberate or otherwise) had resulted in multiple claims to the same title. Community members and other representatives accused state governments of mismanagement; some said officials in the state Ministries of Physical Infrastructure often manipulate the system for illegal gain – as land registration is a manual process beset by poor record-keeping, the same piece of land may be sold to multiple people.

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There are many unresolved cases in both statutory and customary courts in Aweil town and in other county headquarters regarding disputes over land.¹⁹

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In rural areas, competition among communities over grazing lands and water for their animals is a major source of conflict. An increase in livestock coupled with climate change and overcrowding result in competition over land use and water points. Community members, particularly in Unity state, mentioned that disputes over the boundaries of administrative units such as *bomas* and *payams* increased after the re-division of the country into 32 states, and that the disputes had not been resolved after a return to the ten-state system.

Recommendations to national and state governments:

- County and state land departments should maintain proper land acquisition and record-keeping through state and county land registry systems – supported by national government.
- National and state governments at all levels should introduce proper land registration systems to reduce corrupt practices by town planners and officials in land departments.
- National and state governments should introduce electronic land registration (with biometric data storage capacity) to minimise corruption by surveyors, town planners and town clerks at the state Ministries of Physical Infrastructure.
- The national government should establish an independent organisation to resolve land disputes that emerged after the creation of the 32 states.
- The state Ministries of Physical Infrastructure should conduct periodic land audits to identify and rectify irregularities in land allotment by surveyors at the land department – the national government should support state level officials in conducting this task.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Civil society representatives should advocate to national and state governments the need for, and the benefits of, electronic land registration to avoid corrupt practices by officials in the land department.
- Civil society representatives should lobby the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure to adopt electronic and/or biometric systems for the allotment of land at all levels.
- Civil society representatives should raise awareness of existing land policies and by-laws and mobilise communities to petition government to reform any of these laws that are considered inadequate.

Recommendations to Chiefs, traditional leaders and elders:

- Chiefs should organise and support local level communal dialogues between communities to resolve land disputes peacefully.
- Community leaders should promote respect for the ancestral homelands of different communities, including grazing patches.
- Chiefs and elders should promote a spirit of peaceful resource-sharing between and among neighbouring communities.

Economic hardships/food security and climate change

This was highlighted as a concern in: Aweil and Bentiu

Runaway inflation in the country and the sharp increase in market prices of basic commodities such as food, water, clothes and other goods and services have made these unaffordable to many South Sudanese. The inability of the government to create job opportunities, coupled with limited foreign direct investment in South Sudan, mean that there are few opportunities for young people to access decent employment. The effects of climate change and environmental degradation, along with high rates of unemployment and limited livelihood options, have forced some young men to resort to criminality, such as theft, robbery and cattle raids, to provide for themselves and their families, adding to insecurity in many parts of South Sudan. Community members and representatives also raised the issue of civil servants' salaries, which are often paid late and do not allow for a decent standard of living.

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As a result of joblessness, many young people are compelled or lured into violent illegal activities. Those who resort to violence engage in robbery and theft to survive, while others abuse alcohol and drugs to cope with their frustrations. Standards of living are very low, with many people unable to acquire basic commodities like food.²⁰

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Community members and representatives also spoke of the added burden on women, who head the majority of households in South Sudan and are often the sole or principal providers. Many delegates reported that, in these harsh economic times, women's vulnerability to violence had increased when they were unable to provide enough food for their families. Equally, women have been taking on more (unpaid) caring responsibilities, with many family members becoming weak due to the scarcity of food.

In oil-rich Unity state, community members and representatives identified that oil production and oil spills were major factors contributing to insecurity and displacement in the state. Adding to this, pollution generated by the oil industry has contaminated water supplies, leading to diseases and the loss of livestock, which both affect people's livelihoods and ability to work.

Climate change has also significantly affected communities' food security. In many parts of South Sudan, communities are experiencing shortages of food because of long droughts in the dry season, or flooding in the wet season. Some communities cannot access food and other services because of poor road conditions and insecurity.

Recommendations to national and state governments:

- The National Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission should work closely with humanitarian agencies and relevant government institutions on programmes to address predicted food insecurity across the country.
- National and state governments bordering Sudan should initiate bilateral discussions with the Government of Sudan for the reopening of the border between the two countries, so that the flow of goods and services into South Sudan can resume.
- National and state governments should explore ways of attracting foreign direct investment, thereby increasing employment, especially for young people.
- The states and national chambers of commerce should regulate the prices of commodities to minimise the exploitation of citizens.
- National and state governments should set up vocational training centres to equip young unemployed people, including women, with vocational skills.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Civil society representatives, with support from the international community, should ensure that food security and livelihoods programmes reach populations affected by floods and other natural disasters across the country.
- Civil society representatives should train and encourage communities to adopt easily replicable farming methods, such as ox ploughing and the planting of drought-resistant crops, to improve productivity.

Recommendations to communities:

- Communities should revive relevant, traditional climate change-resistant farming methods alongside relevant modern farming methods to improve crop yields and harvests.

About Saferworld

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. We work with people affected by conflict to improve their safety and sense of security, and conduct wider research and analysis. We use this evidence and learning to improve local, national and international policies and practices that can help build lasting peace. Our priority is people – we believe in a world where everyone can lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from fear and insecurity. We work in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Saferworld has been working in South Sudan since 2002. We work on community safety and security, peacebuilding, small arms and light weapons control, and conflict-sensitive development. Since 2012, we have implemented community security programmes with eight civil society partners in 16 locations across eight of the former ten states: Central, Western, and Eastern Equatoria; Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal; Warrap; Lakes; and Jonglei.

Since the outbreaks of conflict in December 2013 and July 2016, we have included peacebuilding and reconciliation programming in our work. Recently, with funds from the European Union and UK Aid Direct projects, we are implementing peacebuilding activities across the country to address intra- and inter-community conflict and gender-based violence.

Cover photo: Hope in short supply as fighting in South Sudan escalates ahead of decisive Addis peace talks, 2018

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Notes

- 1 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) (2020), 'South Sudan: Food Insecurity & Acute Malnutrition Analysis: October 2020–July 2021', December (http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/South_Sudan_TWG_Key_Messages_Oct_2020-July_2021.pdf)
- 2 Many of the refugees have fled to Sudan and Uganda, with others also fleeing to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Kenya.
- 3 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), (2021) 'South Sudan Humanitarian Snapshot', June (https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/south_sudan_humanitarian_snapshot_june.pdf)
- 4 R-ARCSS was signed in September 2018, after the failure of the ARCSS that was signed in August 2015.
- 5 The National Salvation Front (NAS) under Thomas Cirilo and the South Sudan United Movement/Army (SSUFA/M) under Paul Malong
- 6 These included deputy governors, state government ministers, state advisors, members of state parliaments, county commissioners and municipal council members, chairpersons of state peace commissions, members of relief and rehabilitation commissions, and members of state legislative assemblies.
- 7 RedR (2008), 'Management of Staff Safety Course Manual', p 5.
- 8 *Payam* is the second-lowest administrative unit at the county level, while *boma* is the third lowest.
- 9 Saferworld (2021), Enhancing people's resilience in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, South Sudan, February (<https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1337-enhancing-peoples-resilience-in-northern-bahr-el-ghazal-south-sudan>)
- 10 Local chiefs preside over the courts in accordance with the customary laws and norms of each community at the boma and payam levels.
- 11 In particular, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- 12 This is a feature of largely pastoralist communities. In some cases the bride price might be 100 cows.
- 13 Saferworld (2021), Promoting peace and resilience in Unity state, South Sudan, February (<https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1339-promoting-peace-and-resilience-in-unity-state-south-sudan>)
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Saferworld (2021), Enhancing people's resilience to resolve conflicts in Western Bahr el Ghazal state, April (<https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1345-enhancing-peoples-resilience-to-resolve-conflicts-in-western-bahr-el-ghazal-state>)
- 16 Saferworld (2021), Amplifying people's voices to contribute to peace and resilience in Warrap, South Sudan, March (<https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1343-amplifying-peoples-voices-to-contribute-to-peace-and-resilience-in-warrap-south-sudan>)
- 17 Saferworld (2021), Contributing to people's safety and peace in Cueibet, South Sudan, January (<https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1334-contributing-to-peoples-safety-and-peace-in-cueibet-south-sudan>)
- 18 Saferworld (2021), Enhancing people's resilience to resolve conflicts in Western Bahr el Ghazal state, April (<https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1345-enhancing-peoples-resilience-to-resolve-conflicts-in-western-bahr-el-ghazal-state>)
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Saferworld (2021), Promoting peace and resilience in Unity state, South Sudan, February (<https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1339-promoting-peace-and-resilience-in-unity-state-south-sudan>)

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